

PLS

ENGINEERING

NARRATIVE

FOR THE

WOOD DUCK SPRINGS

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND

ZONING MAP AMENDMENT

Submitted to

THE CITY OF VANCOUVER

FOR

SONGBIRD HOMES LLC

10013 NE Hazel Dell Ave. PMB 504

Vancouver, WA 98685

(360) 901-1024

June 2023

General Information

Applicant:

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Location:	SW & SE ¼ of Section 8, T2N, R2E, WM
Parcels:	105241000, 105242000, 105190-000,005;010, 986042813
Address:	8008 Unit A ,8208 and 8122 NE 63rd St. 6506 and 6510 NE 82nd Ct.
Project Size:	13.86 acres
Zoning:	R-9
Comprehensive Plan:	UL
Current Use:	Single family residential
School District:	Vancouver
Elementary:	Walnut Grove
Middle School:	Gaiser
High School:	Fort Vancouver
Water District:	Vancouver
Sewer District:	Clark Regional
Fire District:	Vancouver Fire
Park District:	B
Transportation Impact Fee:	Pacific

Project Discussion

The Wood Duck Springs Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Map Amendment proposes to rezone parcels 105241000, 105242000, 105190005, 105190010, 105190000, 986042813 from R-9 to R-18. This involves a Comprehensive Plan Amendment to move the parcels from an Urban Low to an Urban High designation. The site encompasses six parcels totaling approximately 13.89 acres. Currently the project site includes a mix of existing single-family residences and vacant land. Future development plans for the site would likely retain two of the existing homes as an office or amenity space with the remainder of the site developed with apartments and condo/townhomes in a variety of densities. The applicant intends to provide a diversity of unit types and unit styles so that a wider range of housing needs may be met. This would include apartment units ranging from 1 to 3 bedrooms, townhouse style units that are 2 stories without garages and townhouse style units that are larger and have garages. The applicant is desirous of creating homes for sale at the bottom portion of the ownership market as they believe that the first step to wealth creation is a long-term controlled housing costs created via a 30-year mortgage. But the applicant is concerned about the negative legal environment for condominiums in Washington State at this time and would most likely create rentals for those units. One of the options that the applicant is reviewing is to build larger 3-bedroom units that could be condo converted at a later date if the liability laws become more favorable. The current applicant would likely also be the one to develop the site including site and building construction. A formal application for site development will be submitted after the proposed comprehensive plan and zoning map amendment.

Neighborhood Layout –

The applicant would propose that the 2 story tall townhouse style units would be built along the western side of the project in an attempt to build into the existing neighborhood. This is the only section of the abutting property that is expected to remain nearly the same for the foreseeable future due to the small existing lots as well as a long term commercial business; all of which are served by the existing private road that directly abuts to the projects west side. The applicant would also look at placing more townhouse units along a portion of the east side in an attempt to blend into the neighborhood as the parcel to the east with an existing house would be large enough for some infill redevelopment in the future.

The project north and a portion of the east abuts to City of Vancouver open space that is an undeveloped park. The applicant has already had discussions with the City of Vancouver Parks department in efforts to understand future park (Kelly Meadows) development plans as well as how the projects could benefit each other through better planning. This discussion included being able to generate better open space utilization, reducing expected parks impact on wetlands by moving a planned path from parks land to the applicant land, options for recreation along the trails, exploring build/PIF credits, trail connectivity, donations, trail materials within wetland buffers, land donation and overall planning and timing.

Density:

With 13.89 acres, the site could accommodate a maximum of 250 units (18 units per acre). With potential roadway dedications the net site area may be less, and the maximum unit count could be

around 235 units. Under the current zone (R-9) the maximum density would be approximately half of the proposed plan or 125 single family units.

Traffic Impacts:

Apartment buildings generate 6.74 average daily trips (ADT) per unit and single-family homes generate approximately 10 ADT per unit according to the ITE trip generation manual. Development under the proposed plan would generate 1685 ADT, and development under the current zone would likely generate 1250 ADT. The proposed rezone would result in a 35% increase in trips that would have otherwise been planned for in this area. Based on previous projects and traffic studies in the area, we do not believe the additional traffic will cause any capacity issues on NE 63rd Street. A traffic study specific to the proposed development will be completed to ensure that the existing street system has adequate capacity for the proposed development.

Additionally, this project solves a major issue around intersection spacing along 63rd by moving the access portion of this project to its east boundary directly opposite the intersection that is one of the major direct routes to the south.

Comprehensive Plan Map Amendment Approval Criteria

VMC 20.285.050

The following discusses the criteria that must be addressed for a comprehensive plan and zoning map amendment, and how this proposal complies:

A. Overall proposed map amendments reviewed under this chapter shall be approved only if demonstrated by the proponent to be in the public interest, as based on a review of all applicable principals from the following:

1. How the proposal is more consistent than the existing designation with applicable policies of the Vancouver strategic plan and comprehensive plan.

Response: The request is consistent with Objective 6.2.1 of the Vancouver Strategic Plan: “Develop a broader range of housing choices through incentives, changes in regulations and implementation of the Affordable Housing Task Force recommendations.” The intent of this amendment would be to allow zoning that would increase the overall supply of housing in the city, which would result in lower purchase prices and rental costs. While this does not provide “affordable housing” it goes a long way to make housing more affordable. The applicant has a great deal of experience in townhouse construction and has ideas that can create even more affordable products in the for-sale market. Unfortunately, within the existing codes this would require a condominium development which currently has significant issues due to current laws and insurance issues. In the event that laws change and the project can be converted into condominiums, the site would allow for home ownership at a relatively low price point. Since the adoption of the strategic plan housing prices have continued to soar. This is partly due to a high demand for housing in the Vancouver region that far outpaces the new housing supply. The first step to increasing affordability is to increase supply so that the basic tenants of the Econ 101 supply demand curve can be followed.

2. *How the proposal is more consistent than the existing designation with each of the following objectives as applicable:*

a. *Encourage more intensive development to locate in major urban centers and corridors, particularly downtown Vancouver. Encourage development of distinct neighborhoods served by commercial nodes, and discourage urban sprawl and strip commercial development;*

Response: The site is within 0.5 miles of NE Andresen Rd. and approximately 1.5 miles from the nearest access to I-205, both major corridors in the area. Higher density residential development in this area would discourage urban sprawl. NE 63rd Ave is an arterial that crosses I-205 and should be expected to be even more of a corridor as redevelopment happens.

b. *Provide development of uses which are functionally integrated with surrounding areas and neighborhoods in terms of local shopping, employment, recreational or other opportunities;*

Response: The site is adjacent to Kelley Meadows Park and very near to Green Meadows Golf Course, providing ample recreational opportunities. Vancouver Mall, Costco and Home Depot are nearby providing employment and local shopping opportunities. A higher density residential development would integrate well with these areas. The applicant is also willing to work with the City of Vancouver Parks department on the development and integration of recreation required by the development and advantageous to the Park and the neighborhood.

c. *Provide development which is compatible and integrated with surrounding uses in terms of scale, orientation, pedestrian enhancements, and landscaping;*

Response: The north end of the site includes a wetland area that will create a buffer between the site and the uses to the north, directly north of that wetland area is Green Meadows Golf Course. To the east is a city park along a majority of the shared property line. At the SE corner there is a single-family residence adjacent to the site. The south end of the site is bounded by NE 63rd Street, a collector arterial. On the west end of the site the applicant is proposing to 2 story townhomes that will blend in better to the neighborhood and will abut the existing private road to the west. This site is well positioned to be developed with a higher intensity use that will not have a significant effect on the existing neighboring uses. The site will have direct access to NE 63rd street and will only be directly adjacent to one single-family home that also has redevelopment potential.

To the SW of the proposed area is an area that was developed under R-18 code while that land was under Clark County jurisdiction.

d. *Conserve or enhance significant natural or historical features;*

Response: The applicant will retain the existing wetland and buffer areas located on the north end of the site. Additionally, the applicant is willing to work with the City Parks department to move planned park trails out of the wetland area and onto adjoining lands, thus reducing wetland impacts. The applicant has also demonstrated unique design features in the past in an effort to enhance wetland function. If possible, they will seek to duplicate this demonstrated success.

The applicant would also explore solar systems atop parking lot covers as well as on top of southerly facing apartment roofs. The applicant has used innovative hot water systems, lighting, appliances and design elements to reduce energy usage and would use these as well as others to reduce the carbon footprint of this development.

e. Provide adequate provision of transportation, water, sewer, and other public services;

Response: Site access will be provided directly from NE 63rd Street with access across from the existing 81st Ave intersection. A water main is located in NE 63rd Street and CRWWD will be the sanitary sewer purveyor. The site can be served with sanitary sewer with the development of parcel 105210000, and a potential easement from the park property (105240000) as well as a portion of it from sanitary sewer located within NE 63rd Street.

f. Provide significant family wage employment opportunities and broadening of the Vancouver economy;

Response: Not applicable, this is a proposal for residential zoned property. The applicant is investigating commercial uses that are appropriate to the area and development and is open to having 5% of the gross floor space being commercial use.

g. Provide for the formation and enhancement of neighborhoods and communities; and

Response: The redevelopment of these parcels will result in an attractive development, with improved public roadways that will be designed to build in with the nearby neighborhood.

h. Provide affordable or below-market-rate housing opportunities.

Response: The proposal does not include affordable or below-market-rate housing, but the increase in housing supply will help make housing more affordable in the area. Apartments are an attractive affordable alternative in today's market. If laws changed at the State of Washington level the applicant would be interested in developing smaller units that would most commonly be sold as a condominium.

3. Scope of review. Review and evaluation of proposed comprehensive plan or zoning map changes shall consider both the likely and possible future use of the site and associated impacts.

Response: The applicant intends to provide typical apartment units within the central portion of the project after the comprehensive plan and zoning map change approval and blend into the neighborhood with 2 story townhouse units along the west side. The request is a change from a lower density to a higher density, however it is still a residential zone so only residences will be proposed. Impacts created would be those of a higher density residential development, with typical impacts to local schools, emergency services and streets. Impact fees will be required to be paid to offset these impacts.

4. Cumulative Impacts. The review of individual comprehensive plan map or policy amendments, other than exceptions noted in VMC [20.285.040](#), shall also consider the cumulative transportation, land supply, and environmental impacts of other plan amendments proposed within the same

annual cycle. (Ord. M-3922 § 13, 07/06/2009; Ord. M-3701 § 9, 05/02/2005; Ord. M-3643, 01/26/2004)

Response: The impacts of this development will need to be reviewed in conjunction with the other plan amendments within this review cycle.

ZONING MAP AMENDMENT APPROVAL CRITERIA

VMC 20.285.060.A. sets out the applicable zoning map amendment approval criteria not involving associated comprehensive plan map amendments.

This proposal is required to demonstrate the following:

1. How the proposal is more consistent with applicable policies of the Vancouver strategic plan and comprehensive plan than the existing designation; and
2. That a change in circumstances has occurred since the existing designation was established.

A. Consistency with Vancouver Strategic Plan

The City adopted a 2016-2021 Strategic Plan, and updated it in November 2018.

The request is consistent with Objective 6.2.1:

- 6.2.1 Develop a broader range of housing choices through incentives, changes in regulations and implementation of the Affordable Housing Task Force recommendations. Page 23.

In the final 2016 report the Affordable Housing Task Force discussed potential tools and programs to increase the supply of affordable housing units in the city. One of the high priority items discussed was amending zoning/development regulations to encourage affordable housing options.

Option for Council Consideration	Description	Estimated Time for Staff to Develop and Present to Council	City Direct Costs/ Staff Time	Cost to Property Owner/ Developer	Potential to Increase Affordable Units	Considerations and Details Additional information to follow based on Council guidance and staff analysis.	Task Force Priority
EXPAND SUPPLY OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING							
Amend zoning/ development regulations to encourage affordable housing options	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow/promote alternative housing, e.g.: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Cluster/cottage housing ○ Corner-lot duplexes ○ Micro-housing and single room occupancy (SRO) housing ○ Shared housing, including rooming/boarding houses • Reduced parking requirements 	Medium to Long	\$\$	\$	Medium	Details: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May be effective at increasing overall supply over a long period of time, but affordability not guaranteed • Marketing incentives/opportunities to property owners and developers • Can use current staff, but may be contracted out Questions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires determination of priorities among several options • Need to determine appropriate level of incentives Task Force comments: Support for allowing a wider variety of housing types and sizes. This option may also provide low-income homeownership units, an opportunity to address affordable housing apart from rentals.	High

The intent of the option would be to increase the overall supply of housing in the city which would result in lower purchase prices and rental costs. While this does not provide “affordable housing” it goes a long way to make housing more affordable. Since the adoption of the strategic plan housing prices have continued to soar. This is partly due to a high demand for housing in the Vancouver region that far outpaces the new housing supply.

In response to the strategic plan and the Affordable Housing Task Force recommendations, the City Council studied and approved housing code updates. The Housing Code Updates webpage states the following as a

purpose of the update:

“Vancouver, like many communities, is facing a housing crisis. As the city continues to grow, there is a desire and need for new types of housing that would allow residents to live more affordably while also maintaining neighborhood livability. However, current city zoning rules prohibit many of these housing options. Changes to the development code can create opportunities for the private sector to deliver a more diverse, affordable housing stock.”

The project goals of the housing update are stated as the following:

“The goal of the project is to update City codes to allow for different, smaller and more affordable types of housing choices. Many are recommended in the Affordable Housing Task Force report (2016) and many are similar to what is allowed in Clark County and other Washington cities nearby and statewide.”

The specific goals include:

- Allowing for the development of diverse housing types to meet changing demographic needs and consumer preferences
- Expanding market rate, middle income, and affordable housing choices
- Maintaining neighborhood livability with incremental, rather than wholesale, change
- Providing more opportunities for people to live near where they work and attend school, and reduce costly commutes
- Facilitating development in areas with full existing public services

The current proposal is consistent with this plan and will help meet the City’s goals. The general proposal associated with the zone change will accomplish the following:

- The Wood Ducks Springs Rezone project will add diversity to the housing options in the immediate vicinity of the site.
- The rezone will not have a large effect on adjacent homes as the proposed access is directly from an arterial street.
- The future project would blend into the existing neighborhood as it would place 2 story townhomes on the west side by existing small lots, place apartments within the center and north portions of the project. This would also match the streetscape to the west in the R-18 zones.
- The site is located near schools, stores, and public transport that has the potential to reduce costly commutes.
- The project in is an area with full existing public services.

B. Consistency with the Comprehensive Plan

The applicant is requesting a concurrent change in the Comprehensive Plan designation. The current and proposed plan designations are residential and are compatible. The proposed plan results in a higher density but can be designed to have less of an impact on the neighboring lower density community.

Table 1-5. Vancouver comprehensive plan land use designations

Comprehensive Plan designation	Corresponding Zoning	General Intent
Residential		
Urban Lower Density	R-2, R-4, R-6, R-9	Predominantly single-family detached residential development, with some allowances for duplexes, townhouses, and single-family homes on small lots using infill standards
Urban Higher Density	R-18, R-22, R-30, R-35, MX	Predominantly apartments and condominiums, with some allowance for attached housing (such as duplexes, townhouses, and small-lot single-family homes) and mixed use

This request furthers the Community Development policies on page 1-14 to 1-15 of the Comprehensive Plan:

CD-2 Efficient development patterns Encourage efficient development throughout Vancouver to ensure achievement of average density of 8 units per acre set by countywide planning policies. Encourage higher density and more intense development in areas that are more extensively served by facilities, particularly transportation and transit services.

Response:

- The site is near a full-service grocery store/commercial area, elementary school, community park, and C-Tran Bus route 78 on NE Andresen Rd.
 - Safeway and Walgreens are both approximately 1/4 mile from the site. This is approximately a 5-minute walk. There is also a Starbucks (inside Safeway), Chase Bank, State Farm Insurance, The UPS Store, Sprint Store, Great Clips, Nail Salon, Drive through Coffee, and Subway.
 - Walnut Grove Elementary is south of the site.
 - Raymond E Shaffer Community Park is located approximately 1/4 mile to the southeast. This is a 10-acre park that connects to another 7-acre park to the south.
 - C-Tran Bus route 78 stops at NE Andresen Rd and NE 63rd Street. This is less than a 1/2 mile from the site.
 - The northbound and southbound busses arrive every 30 min from 6:00am to 9:00am and 3:00pm to 6pm
 - The northbound and southbound busses arrive every 60 min from 9:00am to 3:00pm and 6:00pm to 10pm

CD-3 Infill and redevelopment- Where compatible with surrounding uses, efficiently use urban land by facilitating infill of undeveloped properties, and redevelopment of underutilized and developed properties. Allow for conversion of single to multi-family housing where designed to be compatible with surrounding uses.

Response:

- This is a relatively small infill project, where the intent is to convert the existing underutilized land into an apartment housing project.

In addition, the request fulfills both CD-9, facilitating compatible uses adjacent to each other, and CD-10, placing housing near services (complementary land uses).

Chapter 3 of the Comprehensive Plan contains the City’s Housing element. The Plan recognizes the need for diverse housing:

*As the baby boom generation ages over the next 20 years, there is likely to be a greater need and demand for smaller units, retirement homes, and assisted living.
Page 3-3.*

The plan notes that most residential housing is single-family housing (57%). *Id.* Housing affordability is also a City concern:

The Growth Management Act requires local jurisdictions to demonstrate that regulations allow and encourage housing for all economic segments of the community. Table 3-3 provides a breakdown of local households by income ranges, and the general share of Vancouver housing they can afford to buy or rent without having to spend more than 30% of their income.

There are several policies that would be furthered by this request, including:

H-1 Housing options

Provide for a range of housing types and densities for all economic segments of the population. Encourage equal and fair access to housing for renters and homeowners.

H-2 Affordability

Provide affordable housing by formulating innovative policies, regulations and practices, and establishing secure funding mechanisms. Target affordability programs toward households with incomes below the median.

C. Change in Circumstances

The proposed zone change is in response to the current housing shortage and affordability crisis that is currently occurring in SW Washington. This shortage of housing within the area that the subject property lies represents a change in conditions or circumstances since the zoning designation was established. The proposed zone change will result in additional housing units that will increase the housing supply in the area and contribute to improving housing affordability.

According to the 2016 Affordable Housing Task Force Report issued by the City of Vancouver, it was noted that:

Vancouver, Washington and the surrounding communities are experiencing an unprecedented demand for rental units. In June 2015, the vacancy rate in Vancouver was just below 2%, down from 3.8% at the end of 2010.1 The tightening market has led to a dramatic increase in rents. Between October 2014 and October 2015, the increase in median rent for a 2-bedroom, 1-bath unit in Vancouver was the highest in the nation at 15.6% (a jump from \$900 to \$1,040 per month). Page 2.

While this report was issued in 2016, conditions have not improved in recent years. This report recognizes that higher densities can promote more affordable housing.

CONCLUSION

Approval of this application would result in a development that can be served by existing urban public services and will provide more flexibility in density and housing types, resulting in more affordable housing.