



PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Vancouver City Hall – Council Chambers – 415 W. Sixth Street
PO Box 1995 – Vancouver, Washington 98668-1995
www.cityofvancouver.us

Marjorie Ledell • Steve Schulte • Larry Blaufus • Zachary Pyle • Nena Cavel

October 11, 2022

REGULAR MEETING

Vancouver City Hall - 415 W. Sixth Street, Vancouver WA

CALL TO ORDER

The October 11, 2022, meeting of the Planning Commission was called to order at 5:01 p.m. by Chair Ledell.

ROLL CALL

Present: Marjorie Ledell, Zachary Pyle, Larry Blaufus, Nena Cavel and Steve Schulte

ADOPTION OF MINUTES

Motion by Commissioner Schulte, second by Commissioner Blaufus, and carried unanimously to adopt the September 13, 2022, minutes.

COMMUNICATIONS FROM CHAIR AND STAFF

There were no communications from the Chair or staff.

WORKSHOPS

5:02 P.M. FOURTH PLAIN FORWARD UPDATE

Shannon Williams, Senior Planner, CDD; Angelica Martinez, Associate Planner, CDD;
Paul Burgess, Executive Director, Fourth Plain Forward

Rebecca Kennedy introduced the workshop. Shannon Williams presented background on the Fourth Plain area and organizational structure. Angelica Martinez presented statistics on the community in the Fourth Plain area and the economic impact to the community from COVID 19. Staff continued the presentation with the Fourth Plain Forward action plan goals, the City's support for small businesses in the corridor, projects to prioritize pedestrian safety, and the development of transit-oriented and affordable housing options including the Fourth Plain Commons development. The Fourth Plain Commons will include a shared office space, a commissary kitchen, a community event space, an outdoor plaza, and a play area. Paul Burgess presented on Fourth Plain Forward's programs and events, the transition of the organization from a business district association to a community development corporation and the strategic pillars and programmatic areas for the organizational transition. Staff concluded the presentation with next steps and events in the area.

Commission Discussion

The Commission and staff discussed the following topics:

- Was the funding provided to small businesses during COVID effective in preventing them from closing? Staff responded in talking with the businesses in the area, many were able to stay afloat, and only a few businesses closed entirely during the pandemic.
- What has been helpful to encourage participation in public outreach? Staff responded meeting the community where they are and using multiple types of strategies to gather feedback.
- For those who are using transit in this area, what are their destinations? Staff responded C-TRAN would be able to provide that information.
- Are the affordable housing units existing or new facilities? Staff responded it is a mix of both, preserving existing affordable housing, and building new units as well.
- Balancing the action plan goals with the needs of those who are traveling through the area to get to other parts of the City. Staff responded the Complete Streets project will address those needs. There is also a parallel route on SR 500 that recently had major modifications to prioritize vehicle throughput over multimodal access.
- Percentage of traffic that could shift to SR 500 from Fourth Plain and the travel speeds. Staff responded the modeling does show a shift to SR 500, but also 18th Street, so staff are looking at traffic calming there as well. There are many examples from other cities that indicate high-speed vehicle throughput is not good for small businesses, and that slowing traffic down and making it safer for people to walk, bike, roll and take transit supports business growth.
- Finding the balance between taking time for outreach and taking action for the community. Staff responded that they have built outreach into the strategic process, but that the Commons project is a longer-term project than most.
- Importance of maintaining the identity of this neighborhood, understanding how we manage growth and anti-displacement goals.
- What have you learned from public outreach that is surprising? Staff responded it is key to build trust with the community.
- What can the Planning Commission do to address housing affordability? Staff responded the Commission can continue to make decisions that require growth to be absorbed throughout the City.

COMMUNITY FORUM

No members of the public were present to speak during Community Forum.

PUBLIC HEARING

6:40 P.M. 2022 ANNUAL REVIEW COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND ZONING CODE MAP AND TEXT CHANGES

Bryan Snodgrass, Principal Planner, CDD

Rebecca Kennedy introduced the workshop. Bryan Snodgrass presented an overview of three Comprehensive Plan and zoning map designation change requests, one Comprehensive Plan text change, and sixteen zoning text changes.

The first Comprehensive Plan zoning map change is the Stutesman proposal to change from general commercial to R-22. The applicant, Ron Stutesman, presented an overview of the application for rezone of the property.

Public Testimony

No members of the public were present to provide testimony.

Commission Discussion

There was no deliberation by the Commission on the Stutesman proposal.

Motion by Commissioner Pyle, seconded by Commissioner Cavel to recommend to City Council approve the Stutesman rezone as described from CG to R-22 based on the October 11, 2022 hearing discussion and staff report findings.

Commission Deliberation

- Commissioner Blaufus had some concerns with the traffic but was supportive of the motion.
- Vice Chair Pyle noted there is long term potential for maximizing density on the site if it were to stay commercial, but there is a large amount of commercial zoning in the area with opportunity that has yet to be utilized and was supportive of the motion.
- Commissioner Cavel deferred to the property owner and was supportive of the motion.
- Chair Ledell was supportive of the motion as it makes sense for the area and there is a need for residential housing.

Roll Call Vote

Nena Cavel	Yes
Larry Blaufus	Yes
Steve Schulte	Yes
Zachary Pyle	Yes
Marjorie Ledell	Yes

The motion passes 5-0.

Staff continued the presentation with the Schwartz proposal, with a change from residential to commercial.

Commission Discussion

The Commission and staff discussed the following topics:

- Has staff heard from the City of Camas on this proposal? Staff responded they heard from the City of Camas early in the process and they didn't indicate a preference or concern.
- The type of business? Staff responded it's a marketing consulting business.

The applicant, represented by Steve Hornstein and Todd Johnson, presented on the application. They indicated that the area near the property along SE 1st Street is transitioning to a busy road and connection to Camas. There are already commercial and multifamily developments along SE 1st Street and a signalized intersection near the property to address the increase in traffic. The applicant described the other businesses and developments in the area. The applicant also indicated that multi-family could work for this property as an alternative new designation, particularly mixed-use, though if the business were to

grow as proposed, it would not comply due to the addition of employees in a non-conforming use in a residential zone. The applicant indicated their preference for a commercial designation.

Commission Discussion with the Applicant

The Commission discussed the following topics:

- The possibility of changing the zoning to multi-family residential. The applicant responded they would need to complete a SEPA analysis. He also was unsure of the neighbor's reaction to a rezone to multi-family rather than commercial.
- Any consideration of including the neighboring properties in this application? The applicant responded not at this point in the process, but there is interest from neighboring property owners.
- The impetus to rezone the property as opposed to seeking office space to rent. The applicant responded to grow a home-based business is a significant investment and finding office space to rent and improve would be another significant investment.

Public Testimony

No members of the public were present to provide testimony.

Staff responded to the applicant's presentation with further details on the recommendation, agreeing that the area is in transition, but had concerns with the proposal brought forward in isolation of other nearby properties. Additionally, a multi-family zone made more sense to address the needs of employment and housing in the City.

Commission Discussion

- How do decisions like this affect the neighboring properties and how they are viewed in the Comprehensive Plan update? Staff responded there will be more information on the current commercial development market as part of the Comprehensive Plan process, and it will also provide an opportunity to look at this area comprehensively.
- Issues with scheduling another hearing to reconsider an updated version of this application. Staff responded there's an option for a Planning Commission meeting in November. There is a Council workshop scheduled for November 14 and hearing on December 19. It would be difficult to move the workshop and hearing with Council.

Motion by Commissioner Cavel to approve the Schwartz proposal. The motion failed due to the lack of a second.

Motion by Commissioner Schulte and seconded by Vice Chair Pyle to recommend to City Council to deny the Schwartz rezone as described from R2 to CC based on the October 11, 2022 hearing discussion and staff report findings.

Commission Deliberation

- Commissioner Schulte had concern with the residential zoning south of SE 1st Street and could set precedent for other developers to make similar requests.
- Vice Chair Pyle was supportive of the motion in order to maintain efficient development patterns for this area.
- Commissioner Cavel did not support the motion as there is no active plans for redevelopment of other properties in the area.

- Commissioner Blaufus was supportive of the option to amend the application to multi-family rather than commercial, and to make an effort to complete that process in this round of updates.
- Chair Ledell was supportive of the motion.

Roll Call Vote

Nena Cavel	No
Larry Blaufus	No
Steve Schulte	Yes
Zachary Pyle	Yes
Marjorie Ledell	Yes

The motion passes 3-2.

Staff continued the presentation with the Lieser School redevelopment, with a change from R-6 to R-30.

Victor Caesar, Development Director for the Vancouver Housing Authority (VHA), was present to represent the applicant. VHA and the City of Vancouver conducted extensive community outreach in the neighborhood, including pop-up events, attending Vancouver Heights Neighborhood Association meetings, a community picnic, and an open house and garage sale event.

Public Testimony

Dean Van Nostern expressed concern with the increase in people and vehicles with this development, the change to the neighborhood feel, an increase in noise and the effects on housing values.

Nathaniel Sukkau was concerned for the character of the neighborhood and an increase in traffic. He expressed interest in more information on this development regarding who this will serve, the seismic considerations for the building, utilities for this area, and impacts to police and fire services for the neighborhood. He also urged continued engagement with homeowners, realtors, and the community.

The applicant responded that VHA is in phase one of this project to update the zoning. The building has not been designed yet, which is why there is limited information on infrastructure at this point in the process. VHA is working with the community to gather input on how the site should be repurposed, and the tradeoffs of different options for the site. If this application is approved, community engagement will continue regarding the building design and VHA will work with the Fire Department and others who live in the area to continue to gather feedback on the site.

Commission Discussion

The Commission discussed the following topic:

- Will traffic studies consider this development as well as the Heights and other developments on Fourth Plain? Staff responded there is a comparison in the staff report of number of trips generated under the existing zoning and the proposed zoning. Eric Hahn with Streets and Transportation responded a comprehensive traffic study has not been completed yet but will happen at the next stage of this application, during the site plan review. If there are impacts to traffic from these developments, there would be direct mitigation at the time of develop. This could include intersection upgrades and turn lanes. Staff expect to be able to mitigate traffic impacts based on the density of this development.

Motion by Vice Chair Pyle and seconded by Commissioner Cavel to recommend to City Council to approve the Lieser School redevelopment rezone as described from R-6 to R-30 based on the October 11, 2022 public hearing discussion and staff report findings.

Commission Deliberation

- Vice Chair Pyle supported the motion as this development is an opportunity for thoughtful cohesive infill that fits the neighborhood and preserves green space. The public’s concerns will be addressed at later stages of the development process.
- Commissioner Cavel supported the motion due to the denser infill and proximity to amenities and transit in the area.
- Chair Ledell supported the motion, as the development is a good fit for the neighborhood, and it reiterated that it is incumbent upon the City to continue robust and ongoing communication involving the community to shape redevelopment.

Roll Call Vote

Nena Cavel	Yes
Larry Blaufus	Yes
Steve Schulte	Yes
Zachary Pyle	Yes
Marjorie Ledell	Yes

The motion passes 5-0.

Staff continued the presentation with the School District capital plans and impact fees. LeAnne Bremer was present to represent the Battleground, Camas, and Vancouver School Districts.

Public Testimony

No members of the public were present to provide testimony.

Motion by Commissioner Schulte, seconded by Commissioner Cavel to recommend to City Council to approve the proposed adoption by reference in the Vancouver Comprehensive Plan of the updated Battle Ground, Camas and Vancouver School District capital facilities plans as described, and include associated updated school impact fees in VMC 20.915.060 as indicated in the October 11, 2022 public hearing discussion and staff report findings.

Roll Call Vote

Nena Cavel	Yes
Larry Blaufus	Yes
Steve Schulte	Yes
Zachary Pyle	Yes
Marjorie Ledell	Yes

The motion passes 5-0.

Staff concluded the presentation with the sixteen zoning code text changes, including a discussion of the removal of the Central Park Overlay.

Public Testimony

Bruce Kubat was present to comment on the removal of the Central Park Overlay. He has forested property in Central Park and was concerned with changes to the neighborhood including potential impacts to the forested area and wildlife in the neighborhood.

Commission Discussion

The Commission and staff discussed the following topics:

- The City’s policy for tree maintenance and removal. Staff responded there are requirements to replace and mitigate tree removal. This change would not trigger a removal of the forested areas in Central Park.
- Infill development is consistent with the environmental goal of preserving tree canopies.

Motion by Commissioner Cavel and seconded by Commissioner Schulte to recommend to City Council to approve the proposed adoption of zoning code text changes as described in the October 11, 2022 public hearing discussion and staff report and addendum findings.

Roll Call Vote

Nena Cavel	Yes
Larry Blaufus	Yes
Steve Schulte	Yes
Zachary Pyle	Yes
Marjorie Ledell	Yes

The motion passes 5-0.

ADJOURNMENT 8:22 P.M.

Marjorie Ledell, Chair

To request other formats, contact Julie Nischik, Community Development Department | 360-487-7813. WA Relay: 711 | julie.nischik@cityofvancouver.us