

Planning Commission
February 26, 2019
Meeting Minutes
Approved: *K. M. J.*



6:30:01 PM

Chair Kathryn Beck called the meeting to order. Commissioners in attendance: Christine Lavra, Greg Tidsel, Michael Zelinski, Adam Yanasak, Carly McGinn, Alex Lark, and Michael Finch.

Commissioner Absent: Chris Holland

Voting Alternates: None

Staff Present: Allan Giffen and Kathy Davis

Commissioner Reports

None

Staff Comments

None

General Citizen Comments

None

Item 1: Riverfront Redevelopment Plan – Landfill Site – public workshop

Allan Giffen, Planning Director, presented information on the landfill site challenges, prior planning decisions, the 2009 master plan concept and Planned Development Overlay (PDO), the proposed changes to the master plan for the landfill site, the phasing of development, building concepts and heights, and next steps.

Commissioner Zelinski commented that the proposal would allow for additional housing units, which would enable the city to reach population growth targets under the Growth Management Plan. He asked if there was an analysis prepared to address the changes in the commercial and residential traffic demands. Mr. Giffen responded that there is a traffic memorandum available on the website.

Commissioner Lark asked about affordable housing incentives. Mr. Giffen responded that Shelter Holdings requested that the residential areas of the site be designated as a multiple family property tax exemption area, which includes a requirement for affordable housing. Commissioner Lark asked about expanding the Metro Everett incentives to the landfill site. Mr. Giffen responded that there are bonus incentives for businesses and residential developments in Metro Everett; however, the residential incentives only address greater heights, which would not be financially viable for the landfill site.

Commissioner McGinn was concerned about the location of the parking areas. She would prefer that the public open space, trails, and parks along the periphery of the site were activated by the commercial area. She would also like to have the playground included in the activity of the commercial area. She stated that the greenspaces are under-served by the development itself and it can really be something spectacular if they were integrated a little bit more in the fabric of what is happening with the commercial uses.

Commissioner Lark referred to the planned development overlay section of the zoning code and asked if the proposed configuration of the site was constrained by the building footprint approved in the Master Plan. Mr. Giffen responded that the Planned Development Overlay section of the code talks about administrative modification of the site plan or master plan. Administrative approval does not include building coverage. The proposal does not increase the building footprint, but changes the configuration of the site.

Commissioner Yanasak asked about parking. Mr. Giffen responded that the parking standard in the current development agreement requires 1 ½ parking spaces per one unit for multiple family housing. The concept behind the current development is to have shared parking between the commercial and residential uses. The amount of parking in a shared configuration does not affect the overall demand. The supply is sufficient for all the housing units and commercial uses. Commissioner Yanasak asked about visitor parking. Mr. Giffen responded that City Council requested abundant parking to meet the anticipated public demand beyond the needs generated by the commercial and residential uses.

Commissioner Finch asked about expiration of the master plan. Mr. Giffen responded if the amended plan is good for three years. A final development plan is submitted within that three-year period; however, that can be extended for a year. If not extended during that time, the master plan would have to come back before Planning Commission and City Council.

Commissioner Zelinski asked about the amenity spaces in the buildings. Mr. Giffen responded that could include lobby area and recreation area for residents of the building, while some of it could include retail or restaurant space if there is enough demand.

Commissioner Finch asked if there were pedestrian improvements and landscaping planned along the entire length of Riverfront Boulevard or just in the area constructed during Phase 1. Mr. Giffen responded the majority of the landscaping is in the Phase 1 area; however, there will be median landscaping in the entire roadway. Commissioner Finch asked if there would be mid-site connections to the Everett Station or the downtown. Mr. Giffen responded not over the railroad tracks to Everett Station.

Commissioner Beck asked about the developable land. Mr. Giffen responded that the original developable pads identified in the 2009 master plan are not changing. Commissioner Beck asked about fiscal impacts of the land use changes. Mr. Giffen responded that there was a study done during the original master planning process; however, that matter is not part of the criteria for the land use

decision on the master plan revisions. He added that the information is being prepared for City Council and he would pass that information to Commission when submitted.

Commissioner Yanasak asked if there would be an opportunity for other access points to the site. Mr. Giffen responded that there would not be an opportunity for other at-grade access because of the railroad tracks.

Commissioner Lark asked if there were any options to address access to Everett Station. Mr. Giffen stated that there would be frequent transit services between Everett Station and the Riverfront.

Commissioner McGinn asked if bicycle and pedestrian access was at 41st Street. Mr. Giffen responded yes. Commissioner Lavra stated that there is Pacific Street access if you go north through the Eclipse Mill site that would provide access to the Everett Station. Commissioner McGinn asked if there was some connectivity then between the Lowell neighborhood and the Riverfront development.

Commissioner Beck responded that there is a pedestrian bridge and then on the north end of the site there is a nice trail to ride bikes.

Citizen Comments

Alex Alexander, 3914 52nd Street SE, distributed his Lowell Riverfront History report to Commission. He reviewed the report and presented information on the evolution of Snohomish River floodwater levels along with his projections on a timeline mean extrapolation to 2147.

Glen Bachman, 433 Crown Drive, stated that he is a current member of International Council of Shopping Centers. In the past 5 to 6 years, the Riverfront retail model is what the industry experts find to be the most successful.

Barb Barclay, 4324 29th Drive SE, was concerned about increased dwellings along the main corridor and the increase of residential traffic in the area. She was excited about the retail uses; however, was concerned about increased density and traffic.

Megan Dunn, 221 Main Street, stated that the Riverfront development does have an impact on the Lowell neighborhood. She stated that there was a need to do a thorough market and financial analysis to know what the impacts are. Can Everett support three movie theaters? She was also concerned about increased traffic.

Diane Fink, 4404 Riverfront Blvd, concerned about increased traffic from the additional residential uses. She asked about the timing of the review process. Mr. Giffen responded that if Planning Commission took action on March 26, then the matter would go before City Council a month later for public hearings. If Council takes action at their public hearing, presuming that they approve the amendment, the developer can obtain building permits for possible summer construction.

Donna Thornberry, 3109 44th Street SE, concerned about increased traffic from the additional residential uses and increased traffic access from 41st Street due to train traffic.

Lori Young, 3451 31st Drive, concerned about train traffic and increased traffic at peak hours. She lives in the Towns at Riverfront and she was concerned about having the main road right at their doorstep. She suggested speed bumps to help deter traffic. She was concerned about one way in and one way out. She suggested a dog park. She would like the playground moved. She was also concerned about the homeless population along the Riverfront trail.

Katrina Lindhal, 2515 E Grand Avenue, agreed with Commissioner McGinn regarding retail space connections to the greenspace and the river. She did not like the parking areas along the river.

Commissioner Lavra asked Mr. Evans about settlement in the areas around the buildings that are not pile supported. Eric Evans, Shelter Holdings, responded that 21-26 inches was the range of settlement anticipated over the next seven years. At the landfill site, all the garbage needed to be compressed. Below the garbage, there are compressible soils such as bog and peat materials and eventually there is bearing sand. Fill material was placed on the site and left for a long period-of-time to consolidate all the piles and reduce the amount of settlement to approximately three feet. They monitored the site for five years and during that process, they were able to evaluate how the site settled after the surcharge was removed. Some of the ranges were as little as six inches where there was little refuse to as much as 26 inches.

Mr. Evans stated that piles support the buildings. The buildings are located in a strategic area where the piles go down as much as 85 feet. The piles are at 20-foot centers supported by beams that run as a network between the piles. Those piles will extend beyond the back and front of the buildings so the walkways are at the same grade as the building. Outside of the building footprints, settlement happens overtime. He stated that there could be a couple inches in the first 4-5 years. As settlement occurs, they will resurface parking lots.

Mr. Evans stated that stormwater runs into a shallow aquifer to a perimeter leachate system. The consent decree states that no water should be added to the landfill, so irrigation is not allowed except to establish the initial landscaping. The irrigation for the green space areas discharges to a sump system to bypass the landfill.

Commissioner Beck asked if storm drainage was treated in the same treatment facility as the leachate system. Mr. Evans stated that all of the stormwater is bypassed and collected by filter cartridges that go out to outfalls then discharge to wetlands. She asked if drainage was the responsibility of the City. Mr. Evans responded that the Riverfront Boulevard is a public road and maintained by the City. The road in the mixed-use shopping district is owned and maintained privately.

Commissioner Yanasak asked about the traffic and parking challenges. Mr. Evans referred to Traffic study on the website – the traffic engineer was not at the meeting to respond. He stated that there has

been a tremendous amount of planning for the traffic on the Riverfront site. Mr. Evans added that he had no concerns about traffic on the site. Housing supports the small shops. Part of the reason for the phasing is to adapt to the market but also adapt to the retail environment.

Commissioner Zelinski asked Mr. Evans based on your current projections of absorption rates, what you think the buildout would be for the project. Mr. Evans responded that the City is currently reviewing the construction plans for Riverfront Boulevard. It includes the methane collection, the median islands, the sidewalks, and the landscaping. They would like to begin road construction in the summer months. They would like to start drilling the shafts for the piling this summer. They hope to open the theater and restaurants by April 2021. Every year from that point, they would open another phase.

Commissioner Finch asked Mr. Evans to break down the Phase 1 components. Mr. Evans responded that the Phase 1 uses include the specialty grocery store, 10,000 s.f. increments of smaller retail shops in the mixed-use buildings, the public plaza, and theater.

Commissioner Finch asked how this development would stand out as uniquely Everett from an aesthetic standpoint. Mr. Evans stated that the buildings would have an historic industrial character through roof forms and the material palette. The public plaza walkway appears as a dry riverbed.

Mr. Evans stated that in regards to traffic and speeds, the intent is to raise the pedestrian pathway across Riverfront Boulevard.

Commissioner Beck asked whether there was any flexibility to use the retail spaces for another type of use such as maker spaces given the retail market. Mr. Evans responded that there are 230,000 sf of retail space available, and he felt there was potential for more. The project as proposed is to start with 125,000 sf of retail with the intent to grow it to 230,000 over time.

Commissioner McGinn asked if the Phase 1 grocery and theater use would be sustainable over time. Mr. Evans stated that he has been working with a specialty grocer with a variety of product, and a theater group.

Mr. Giffen asked Mr. Evans to address the temporary road. Mr. Evans responded that there was originally an emergency access road through the property to access the Eclipse Mill site. Under the Consent Decree, that road is not available for public access. It was only for emergency purposes. The reason the road is only available for emergency access is that there is not a methane collection system at that location. There is perimeter methane collection but there is not a methane collection system under the entirety of the landfill. The Department of Ecology wants to prevent people from being on the landfill without the methane preventative measures.

In response to the Eclipse Mill Townhome homeowners' complaints about the train delays, they wanted to come up with an interim solution to help the residents. There has been about five feet of additional fill placed on the landfill. The Department of Ecology approved the proposed temporary access road to

allow the Eclipse Mill site residents to use on a temporary basis. Fencing and speed signs are required. Before residents can use the road, somebody has to sign a release. That paperwork is with the Eclipse Mill Townhomes Owner Association. Once the association signs and the City signs, the temporary access road will be available for residents to use.

Gary Youngley, cofounder of Shelter Holdings, thanked everyone who commented and provided assurances that they are very committed this community.

8:50:03 PM ADJOURNED



Planning Commission Secretary

3-19-19
Date



Kathy Davis, Administrative Assistant

3-19-19
Date