Planning Commission
Meeting Minutes
May 7, 2019
Approved: KMd

EVERETT
WASHINGTON

6:29:44 PM

Acting Chair Christine Lavra called the meeting to order. Other Commissioners in attendance: Carly McGinn, Adam Yanasak, Michael Finch, and Greg Tisdel.

Commissioners Absent: Kathryn Beck, Chris Holland, Michael Zelinski, and Alex Lark.
Voting Alternate: Michael Finch

Planning Staff Present: Allan Giffen, David Stalheim, Karen Stewart, and Kathy Davis

Meeting Minutes

Motion: Commissioner Tisdel made a motion to approve the April 16, 2019 meeting minutes. Commissioner McGinn seconded the motion.

Vote: Commissioner Tisdel, yes; Commissioner Finch, yes; Commissioner Yanasak, yes; Commissioner McGinn, yes; and Acting Chair Lavra, yes.

Motion Carried.

Commissioner Reports

None

Staff Comments

Allan Giffen, Planning Director, stated that City Council approved the amendment to the Riverfront Redevelopment Master Plan for the landfill site on May 1, 2019. There is no meeting scheduled on May 21, 2019. The next meeting is on June 4, 2019.

General Citizen Comments

None

Item 1: Shoreline Public Access Plan – proposed action

Karen Stewart, Environmental Planner, stated that there were no comments received during the SEPA review process. She did send a notice to the Department of Commerce regarding the Shoreline Public Access Plan update.

Motion: Commissioner Yanasak made a motion to open the public hearing. Commissioner McGinn seconded the motion.

Vote: Commissioner Tisdel, yes; Commissioner Finch, yes; Commissioner Yanasak, yes; Commissioner McGinn, yes; and Acting Chair Lavra, yes.

Motion Carried.

Citizen Comments
None

Motion: Commissioner McGinn made a motion to close the public hearing. Commissioner Finch seconded the motion.

Vote: Commissioner Tisdel, yes; Commissioner Finch, yes; Commissioner Yanasak, yes; Commissioner McGinn, yes; and Acting Chair Lavra, yes.

Motion Carried.

Ms. Stewart reviewed the findings in the resolution with Commission.

Commissioner Yanasak asked about public comments. Ms. Stewart responded that the City worked with the Shoreline Advisory Committee during the review of the Shoreline Master Program and Shoreline Public Access Plan. The stakeholders included the Port and Navy. The City worked on issues during that process.

Motion: Commissioner Finch made a motion to approve the Resolution 19-12. Commissioner Tisdel seconded the motion.

Vote: Commissioner Tisdel, yes; Commissioner Finch, yes; Commissioner Yanasak, yes; Commissioner McGinn, yes; and Acting Chair Lavra, yes.

Motion Carried.

Item 2: ReThink Zoning – residential discussion
David Stalheim, Long Range Planning Manager, presented information on residential land use and zoning, economic equality and housing affordability, high capacity transportation, and code simplification questions to help start thinking about the appropriate distinctions between residential uses.

Rethink Residential Zones (Broad Policy) Discussion
Commissioner Finch referred to the single family sales graph and asked how the number shown for Everett compares to other cities in Snohomish County and in King County cities outside of Seattle. He commented that it was probably at the low end of most other communities especially in King County but likely in Snohomish County as well. Mr. Stalheim responded that is true in terms of cost.

Commissioner Finch asked if the allocation of land, 46% for single family and 9% for multiple family, was for land area. Mr. Stalheim responded yes. Commissioner Finch asked if the percentages would change if they were based on the number of possible dwelling units and added zoning classifications like urban mixed use that accommodates more residential. Mr. Stalheim responded that there is more land base that allows residential than in the numbers presented. He didn't know how those numbers compared to other communities. Mr. Stalheim stated that more density can be provided in multi-family, commercial, and mixed use areas. Those are the areas that have the most capacity in terms of growth potential.

Commissioner Finch stated that in regards to housing affordability, he wasn't sure if the issue was the result of housing costs or incomes. Mr. Giffen responded that Everett has the lowest median household income than in other areas of Snohomish County. Median household incomes in Everett are around $55,000 while they are $70,000 in Snohomish County. Mr. Stalheim added that the City is looking at other things in terms of housing strategies and income is part of that. Zoning is a component of the housing strategy.

Commissioner Yanasak asked to what extent is zoning the issue as opposed to economics or factors unique to Snohomish County. Mr. Giffen responded that it was a complex issue, it isn't just one or two factors that influence the cost of housing in a community. It is a regional housing market. Everett doesn't have the vacant land to build on that other surrounding jurisdictions have. Most of Everett's growth is going to be through redevelopment which is more costly than building on vacant land.

Commissioner McGinn stated that when she initially read through the housing information, it indicated an issue with income more so than an issue with housing costs. It is important to make sure that Everett does stay an attractive place to develop. There is construction in Everett, so there are developers who are clearly very interested in investing in Everett despite the redevelopment expense. Focusing on issues of light rail and streamlining the code so that development has a clear path even if it is developing brownfields or redeveloping existing sites will make Everett attractive for developers.

Mr. Stalheim referred to the land use and low income block groups map, and asked about possible zoning strategies that would help integrate lower income families into single family neighborhoods. Commissioner Yanasak asked if it was a zoning change that would allow low income families to move into other areas or was it an economic issue not unique to Everett.

Commissioner McGinn stated that the map shows that those low income areas appear to be located on the transit corridors. From a code perspective, she suggested creating transit corridors that are more vibrant and attractive for all families by adding more services, and encouraging more multi-family projects and mixed use projects that provide more stores and services for all income levels. Rather than segregating low income from other incomes, make it more convenient to develop those kinds of properties along transit corridors.

Mr. Stalheim asked Commission about infill or smaller units in single family neighborhoods which provides for another housing type that has lower rents or even home ownership. Commissioner McGinn

stated that accessory dwelling units are a better fit in single family neighborhoods and an appropriate way to introduce density into established neighborhoods.

Commissioner Tisdel asked about the condominium market. Mr. Stalheim responded that housing type is a type of home ownership. Condos or townhomes could fit into single family neighborhoods. Commissioner Tisdel asked about condo conversions. Mr. Stalheim stated that there are no rules to address condo conversions. In Metro Everett, regulations were added to the code for unit lot subdivisions which are a townhouse style of development.

High Capacity Transportation

Mr. Stalheim reviewed the high capacity transit and transit route maps with Commission.

Commissioner Tisdel asked about displacement of lower income buildings due to redevelopment. Mr. Stalheim responded that if an area is rezoned or redevelopment occurs, the City can look at strategies or a percentage incentive to address provisions for low income housing. Commissioner Tisdel asked about the zoning strategies. Mr. Stalheim responded in exchange for increasing heights or reducing the parking requirement, the code could require a portion of the development to be in affordable housing. Commissioner Yanasak commented that a good mechanism to expand economic diversity into other areas of the City would be through zoning incentives for affordable housing.

Commissioner McGinn suggested that the City meet with developers who have worked locally to discuss development and construction costs. Having that conversation with the development community would go a long way towards determining what kind of incentives would really pay off the most. Mr. Stalheim responded that during the Metro Everett process, staff did have a couple sessions with the development community to discuss the incentives.

Commissioner Tisdel asked if the City kept track of how many low income units were occupied. Mr. Giffen responded that the City does require an annual report from property owners that have gone through the multiple family tax exemption program. The rent charged to the affordable units can't exceed 30% of their monthly income. Mr. Stalheim added that occupancy of those affordable units is high.

Rethink Residential Zones (Code Simplification) Discussion

Commissioner Finch asked if there were ways to cleanup and simplify the code to make it easier to develop in Everett. He didn't feel that the current code was an impediment to development and felt that there were bigger issues at play.

Commissioner Yanasak asked about the number of zones within each zoning category. Mr. Giffen responded in regards to the multiple family zones, the 1957 code had the R-3 (29 units per acre) and R-4 (58 units per acre) zones. The R-5 (no maximum density limits) zone was added in 1980. During housing discussions in the 80's, there was a niche missing between single family zones and multiple family zones allowing 29 units per acre, so a lower density multiple family zone (R-3L), and zoning for townhomes (R-

1A and R-2A). Currently, most of the R-4 zoning located in Metro Everett was rezoned to urban residential which allows for maximum density limits.

Development Standards

Mr. Stalheim reviewed the Development Standards Table with Commission.

Commissioner Yanasak stated that the City could review the numbers and determine if the minimum lot area, minimum lot width, lot coverage and others still made sense in regards to density and the housing types. The goal should be a livable community that people want to live in and a quality of life that is desirable. Mr. Stalheim responded that during neighborhood discussions, there were concerns about the size and architectural character of buildings. In regards to the multiple family zones, there are two different front setbacks in two out of three zones. The reason for the difference was to maintain that same rhythm of the streetscape between single family and those transition areas.

Commissioner Finch stated that in some cases the nuance does matter because it represents a transition between different types of buildings and so when thinking about simplifying the classifications it is important to take stock of those nuances. Commissioner Finch stated that it was important to promote a diversity of housing types in various areas of the City that are appropriate for existing character and promote new character. He felt there is plenty of development capacity in Everett for new and affordable housing types as zoned today. The challenge is how to promote that level of development and create an amenity base that results in a high quality of life for a diverse population.

Commissioner Tisdel stated it has to work for the developer. Commissioner McGinn added that developers are always willing to work within the code framework; however, costs can become an issue. She stated that definitely encouraging a diversity or refining the housing types to be very specific from accessory dwelling units to large mixed use developments. She asked if it was possible to have different incentives for the different housing types. Mr. Stalheim responded that some of those incentives have already been built into the parking chapter such as shared parking in a mixed-use development. The City will continue to explore those types of incentives. She suggested using Hopeworks as a model of one housing type.

Housing Types Discussion

Mr. Stalheim reviewed the housing types with Commission.

Commissioner McGinn commented that the fourplex shown was not compatible in a single family neighborhood. She stated that most neighborhoods would be initially upset about more density; however, she felt in the long run what makes the most difference to a neighborhood is building design.

Commissioner Lavra commented that the triplex and the courtyard apartment shown were not compatible in a single family neighborhood.

Commissioner Finch commented that it would depend on the single family zone because not all single family zones in the City are equal. There are different characters of single family homes in different areas. The duplex shown would fit into the single family homes in the Northwest neighborhood; however, he didn't feel the courtyard apartment would fit as well in the same location. He suggested that many of the housing styles shown are better suited to areas where there are amenities such as transit in close proximity.

Commissioner McGinn commented that front and rear setbacks do make a difference depending on the neighborhood, but also how those setbacks are treated in terms of landscaping. She stated that it would be inappropriate to have parking in the setback in a residential neighborhood. She commented that the courtyard apartments with all the landscaping could fit into a single family neighborhood.

Commissioner McGinn commented that the 2nd set of housing types appear to create walkability and don't appear to be out of place in single family neighborhoods because of the building designs.

Commissioner Finch commented that he felt the housing types would fit better in transition areas but not in all the single family neighborhoods. Commissioner Yanasak agreed.

Commissioner Tisdel stated that a developer could purchase a number of properties for redevelopment in a single family neighborhood which could make it easier for the next developer to come along and purchase properties for redevelopment. Commissioner Yanasak commented that redevelopment would shift the character of a single family neighborhood.

8:04:36 PM **ADJOURNED**

Planning Commission Secretary — Date: 6/4/19

Administrative Assistant — Date: 6-4-19