

**City of Gig Harbor Planning Commission
Minutes of Work-Study Session and Public Hearing
January 19, 2006
Gig Harbor Civic Center**

PRESENT: Commissioners Jim Pasin, Harris Atkins, Theresa Malich, Scott Wagner, Jill Guernsey and Chairperson Dick Allen. Staff present: Jenn Sitts, Rob White, John Vodopich, Mayor Chuck Hunter and Diane Gagnon.

CALL TO ORDER: 5:10 p.m.

Chairman Dick Allen called the meeting to order and introduced Mayor Chuck Hunter who wished to say a few words to the Planning Commission. Mayor Hunter expressed his appreciation for the Planning Commission's service to the community. He stressed their importance to the character of Gig Harbor as the stewards of Gig Harbor's assets. Mayor Hunter invited them to come and talk to him at anytime.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

MOTION: Move to approve the minutes of January 5th, 2006
Wagner/Atkins – unanimously approved

OLD BUSINESS

1. **City of Gig Harbor, 3510 Grandview Street, Gig Harbor WA 98335** –
(ZONE 04-51) Work session on draft ordinance relating to creation of GHMC 17.14 Land Use Matrix

Senior Planner Jennifer Sitts went over her staff report highlighting the few items left to complete relative to the matrix. She asked that the Planning Commission look over the proposed ordinance carefully and let her know if they find anything that needs changing.

Ms. Sitts reviewed the discussions held at the last meeting in December where they had finished all the review of the zones. She noted that there were still question marks in schools in the Mixed Use District. The question was whether public facilities included schools and how this had been applied in other zones. She pointed out that there were four zones that call out public facilities but do not include schools and that if we maintain that and were consistent we would change these question marks to dashes. She then read the intent section of the MUD; she then gave her interpretation of the intent.

Chairman Allen asked which zone had the most in common with the MUD and Ms. Sitts answered that the Neighborhood Business District had the most in common. Mr. Wagner then asked if staff saw schools as being part of a community use in this zone and Ms. Sitts answered that perhaps it was size issue as neighborhoods were more compatible with smaller schools.

Jim Pasin clarified that in the Mixed Use District the underlying zone criteria can be utilized and in this situation the underlying zone was R-1 and schools were allowed; therefore, it seemed

reasonable to allow schools in the Mixed Use District. Ms. Sitts agreed and added that given that reasoning she also would recommend that they be allowed.

Harris Atkins stated that although he agreed with Mr. Pasin the intent of the zone seems to say that it should be more of a neighborhood size school rather than a community school. Ms. Malich agreed; however, she thought it should be a conditional use and Mr. Pasin agreed. Ms. Sitts reminded the commission that making it a conditional use would be a change to the code. Mr. Atkins suggested that perhaps not all of them should be permitted. Commissioner Malich pointed out there was a small private school in that area and she felt that they should be careful about creating a non-conformity.

Scott Wagner proposed that they make it a permitted use and then look at whether they should be conditional later. Mr. Pasin stated the given the circumstances he also felt that for the time being they should be permitted. Consensus was reached to make schools a permitted use in the MUD.

Mr. Pasin pointed out that there are three levels of public schools, (elementary, middle schools, and high schools) and suggested that perhaps this should be addressed in the definitions. Discussion was held on how some schools would fit into two of the existing categories and that primary and secondary schools were applied and allowed in the same zones so it really would not have impact to separate them further. Consensus was reached to leave the definitions as they are.

Senior Planner Jennifer Sitts went on the next item in her staff report which was the definitions which may need revisions. The first one was Accessory uses and structures and Ms. Sitts read the definition aloud and explained that her concern was that it seemed limited to residential sites and the current definition is not as strict. She asked the commission if they felt the definition should be re-written to allow for non-residential uses. Mr. Wagner stated that didn't think it was intended to preclude those uses on a commercial site. Ms. Sitts pointed out her suggested language in italics. Discussion continued and it was decided to leave it as written as any accessory structure to a commercial use would be allowed as part of that commercial structure.

The next definition that Ms. Sitts had a question on was Parks. She pointed out that the proposed definition was circular as the definition itself includes parks. She read the definition of parks from Webster's dictionary and suggested adding to the definition that it be the principal use. Mr. Wagner voiced concern that it left too much room for interpretation. Mr. Pasin stated that he felt that the word principal should be left out of the definition as it would leave more discretion and asked for consensus on leaving the definition as written.

Commissioner Atkins pointed out that parks are permitted everywhere with the exception of two zones where they are conditional and questioned whether there was adequate protection if someone wants to put in a park and in the corner build a small rendering plant. Ms. Sitts pointed out that that the plant would be the most intense use. Mr. Wagner voiced concern for keeping someone from building a park that is smaller than primary.

MOTION: Move to leave the word principal out of the definition of parks.
Pasin/Wagner – Motion passed with Wagner and Pasin voting in favor
Malich and Atkins voting against and Chairman Allen breaking the tie
voting in favor.

The next item in Ms. Sitts staff report was the Parking table. Ms. Sitts explained the table and asked if the commission would like to review the items highlighted in blue as the other items seemed clear. The commission agreed.

Schools, higher educational – Ms. Sitts explained that higher educational schools were colleges in our current code and it does not define parking for colleges, there are only calculations for elementary, junior high or high school. She suggested that because the Community Development Director is allowed to make a determination by taking the use that is most like the use being proposed, they use the requirement for houses of religious worship. Mr. Wagner stated that he didn't see houses of religious worship as being comparable.

Discussion followed on the calculations for different uses and what would be a good number given that most students in a college are drivers. Ms. Sitts suggested that perhaps you could do one parking stall for every four seats as for an auditorium. Mr. Wagner stated that he was comfortable doing as she suggested. Ms. Sitts said she would change the definition to just say class rooms and made the change to the parking requirements for higher educational facilities to read, "One off street parking space for every possible four seats in the class rooms based on maximum capacity as determined by the International Building Code." Everyone agreed it should be added to the list of possible changes and something that should be studied further.

Parks - Ms. Sitts explained that because they could be boat launches or ball fields that may require more parking than other more passive activities, the suggestion she had was that the Community Development Director shall determine on a case by case basis what parking calculation shall be applied because the uses would be so different.

Mr. Pasin expressed concern with there being that much discretion and felt that there had to be some kind of standard that had to be applied.

Ms. Sitts reminded them that this was something that they could look at later, but there is nothing currently in the code and since they are creating this table without changing the code they couldn't make the change at this time.

Mr. Wagner stated that he thought it needed to be on the list of future changes as a priority item as there are some big park projects coming our way. Mr. Pasin agreed. Consensus was reached to put it on the list as a priority and leave the definition as proposed by staff.

Mr. Pasin suggested that given the time left in the meeting, they put the rest of the items in the parking table as suggested by staff and then put all these issues in the list of changes or to talk about parking as a whole, and everyone agreed.

Ms. Sitts then went over the each of the highlighted items and explained her reasoning for her recommendation.

The last item for review was the proposed ordinance. Ms. Sitts asked that the Planning Commission please take a look at it and let her know if there were any errors.

Commissioner Atkins went over his changes which were mainly of a housekeeping nature.

He pointed out that in the RLD and RMD manufactured homes have to be 1000 sq ft and in the new matrix that restriction was not brought forward. Ms. Sitts explained that there had been recent legislation that stated that we cannot regulate manufactured home any differently so that regulation cannot be carried forward.

Jill Guernsey arrived at 6:30.

Mr. Atkins pointed out that the parking requirements allow for parking to be traded for landscaping and Ms. Sitts agreed to make a footnote.

On page 15, Mr. Atkins stated that the new definition of essential public services is slightly different than what it is currently and it seems that they should be the same. Ms. Sitts agreed. She referenced that in the Public Institutional District there is a definition and the easiest way would be to remove that as all the definitions should only be in the definitions section.

Page 16, Mr. Atkins pointed out that currently C-1 doesn't allow uses with excessive nuisance factors and we have created a definition which allows moderate nuisance factors and he was just questioning how that determination would be made. Ms. Sitts read the current permitted uses section of the C-1 zone and suggested that they could place a footnote in the matrix or a performance standard in the zone.

Mr. Wagner voiced concern with determining what is excessive and Mr. Atkins agreed. Ms. Sitts agreed that excessive was not well defined, but emphasized that they needed to put the performance standard somewhere. Everyone agreed and also decided to add the review of a possible definition of excessive be added to the list of future changes.

Page 31 section 123 and 125, Mr. Atkins stated that he thought there was just a typographical error as the subsection reference was wrong. Ms. Sitts checked the code and agreed that it should be changed.

Mr. Atkins stated that on page 3 in the introduction to the land use matrix where it explains what the matrix does in paragraphs c d and e, it seems redundant. Ms. Sitts agreed and suggested keeping f and removing the others.

The Planning Commission praised Ms. Sitts for putting all this information in a cohesive form and bringing it all together so eloquently. Concluding the matrix, she pointed out that she did print out a list of the proposed changes for presentation to the city council.

Chairman Dick Allen opened the public hearing at 7:00 p.m.

PUBLIC HEARING

Chairman Allen asked Community Development Director John Vodopich to brief everyone and explain the DSEIS and the associated Comprehensive Plan Amendments. Mr. Vodopich explained that in July 2005 the City had considered the environmental issues and issued a

Determination of Significance and called for an SEIS, which was supplemental to the initial environmental impact statement for the comprehensive plan. He went on to say that the City had retained David Evans and Associates to complete the study. He explained that this hearing is an optional hearing and is not required; pointing out that the process was outlined on a color graph that had been passed out to the Planning Commission and is on the back table. Mr. Vodopich then went over the comment period and the process which will follow.

Mr. Vodopich then introduced Mark Personius, Land Use Consultant and Mike Birdsall from David Evans and Associates who have a power point presentation.

Mark Personius went over the intent of the DSEIS and explained that it was non-project in nature although it did analyze some site specific transportation data for North Gig Harbor. He explained that basically they are assuring consistency between the land use map and the transportation element of the comprehensive plan, noting that they were not looking at critical areas as those are looked at the project level. He continued by saying that the theme is to analyze the long range impacts from build-out in North Gig Harbor and went over the three proposed land use map amendments submitted by the Bingham family, Franciscan Health Systems and Tallman/Halsan showing a map of the property locations. He then turned the presentation over to Mike Birdsall.

Mr. Birdsall then went over the consistency between GMA and the city's comprehensive plan, explaining that cities are required to accommodate anticipated growth and outlining what jurisdictions need to do to achieve consistency.

He then outlined the link between the comprehensive plan and the city's development regulations, explaining that jurisdictions must prohibit development if it causes the level of service to decline below the adopted standards.

Mr. Birdsall explained that the DSEIS provided two alternatives. He further explained that one alternative was a no action alternative and the other the preferred alternative which was to revise the transportation element, land use element and level of service policies.

He then went over the NGH traffic mitigation study. Mr. Birdsall went over what the study provides and identifies explaining that it was the main source of data that the EIS draws its conclusions from. He then went over the traffic model illustrating a map of the analysis area. He stated that they did a land use inventory of existing, pipeline and full build-out.

Mr. Birdsall showed the existing Burnham interchange roundabouts and talked about their already planned improvements. He stated that their analysis showed that this interchange would be overwhelmed if the pipeline of currently approved projects is realized. He further stated that these impacts came about because of an over reliance on this interchange with no alternatives. He went on to say that the second source of traffic problems is that some of the traffic in the corridor is coming from outside the city.

Mr. Birdsall went over their findings and explained that one of the solutions is to go to a different type of interchange and the best concept they came up with was a single point urban interchange. He explained how this works and that there were several in the state and they are

very effective for high volume intersection. He went on to say that there were two other elements and a few of them are rather large in scale. Mr. Birdsall also stated that in the study area itself there were several proposed large and small road improvements and that they also looked at a reduced build-out to reduce trip generation. He explained that they found they could reduce trip generation 20% by changing the zoning.

He went over the complexity of the long range solution and the importance of city/county/state cooperation. He also reminded everyone that these are long term solutions and that in the short term capacity is limited. Additionally, he added that a park and ride lot was also recommended for the GHN area.

Mr. Birdsall then went over the changes needed at the comprehensive plan level and the need to amend the transportation element. He explained the lead agencies and their estimated costs, stating that the city share would be approximately 25 million. He further explained that in order to accommodate the two comp plan amendments in the context of near term improvements, it is necessary to adjust to LOS policy to make room for those. They felt it would lead to an LOS E in the roundabout serving SR 16 westbound. He noted that there is a precedent for doing this limited adjustment as it has been done in downtown.

He explained that in order to reduce trip generation by 20% they were recommending removal of the mixed use overlay in the Burnham Drive area, with the exception of the Sportsmen's Club as there is a proposal for that site that would tie in to Harbor Hill Drive. The second issue examined was to adopt a trip generation lid of 22 units per acre. Medical office buildings are a high trip generator and if these properties were fully developed it would create traffic problems. He went on to say that they also recommended encouraging senior housing as they are a low trip generator.

Mr. Birdsall then went back to the trip generation table and showed the result of all these recommendations, explaining that the land use changes are necessary in the short term to allow the current proposals to go forward.

Mark Personius concluded by saying that the comment period ends on February 1st and that they will issue a final SEIS when all the comments have been received and the City Council will have final review and adoption. He reiterated that the preferred alternative is approval of all three comp plan amendments and the short term traffic mitigation identified in the DSEIS and opened the floor for questions.

Commissioner Jill Guernsey asked about the traffic analysis of the proposed hospital. She noted that on page 61 of the DSEIS it adjusts the pm peak hour trips from 725 to 535. She asked if that was based on an updated analysis by the hospital late last year, was it correct, were they comfortable with that analysis and is it a more correct analysis of the pm peak hours rather than the one DEA did originally.

Mike Birdsall answered that he was comfortable with that analysis and stated that the hospital had located seven different hospitals that had this unique combination of office and hospital on the same site and gathered traffic information illustrating that there was considerable internal

traffic which reduced the external traffic. He stated that they clearly showed that the net trips leaving the complex were less.

Ms. Guernsey asked, out of the 535 trips, how many would go down to the roundabout and Mr. Birdsall answered that he hadn't worked out that number but supposed that it would be most of them. Ms. Guernsey noted that they had talked about transportation impacts that will need to be done later and wondered what other surprises they could predict.

Mr. Birdsall answered that the hospital is here now and our recommended solution as a whole will take ten years. The hospital wants to be built, so it is difficult to find a set of mitigations that can be done in the existing set of roundabouts. He added that the hospital will add to the existing traffic impacts and traffic will back up onto freeway ramps and they will need to be lengthened and widened to keep traffic from backing up on the freeway.

Discussion followed on where those trips were coming from and that most of that information was in the traffic study published for the hospital.

Community Development Director John Vodopich pointed out that this a unique situation and that what is different in this EIS is that we know for certain how big and how many beds there are and David Evans was able to take that information and recommend the mitigations so the intent is that we won't see any surprises. Additionally, he stated that the city attorney could consider a development agreement to achieve certainty that their traffic mitigations will not increase. Mr. Vodopich noted that the State Department of Transportation will also have to agree to these improvements.

Commissioner Harris Atkins asked about the background traffic that will be generated in the UGA and where did those numbers come from. Mr. Birdsall stated that they came from the Pierce County traffic planner and how they are accounting for their growth in rural areas, noting that it is about a 1% per year allowance.

Discussion followed on the various interchange improvements and which would have the largest impact on the study area.

Commissioner Pasin then asked about the park and ride that was recommended and where they recommend siting that. Mr. Birdsall stated that he would put it along Canterwood Blvd., near the hospital. Mr. Vodopich asked that he explain how the park and ride would help. Mr. Birdsall explained that a park and ride in the wrong place can be a nasty trip generator, but that they felt that along Canterwood Blvd would be a good place because most of the customers would be coming from Purdy by way of the connector under the highway from the north and never enter the interchange area.

Commissioner Pasin asked why there was no public transportation element identified in this document. Mr. Birdsall answered that they understood that Pierce Transit was already considering an increase in service in this area.

Mr. Pasin then referenced the recommended removal of the Mixed Use Overlay and asked if they had they considered recommending increased zoning in other commercial areas of Gig Harbor so

that they could build out and not require people who live on the other side of Gig Harbor to travel to do their shopping in Gig Harbor North. Mark Personius answered that they had focused on the Gig Harbor North area and the recommendation is driven purely from a traffic impact standpoint which doesn't mean that this overlay couldn't exist elsewhere.

Discussion followed on the timeframe for the recommended changes with Mike Birdsall emphasizing that in both cases they are talking about a very substantial construction project taking possibly 10 years. He stated that this is a 20 year plan that could take many different paths.

Commissioner Pasin asked if there had been consideration given to the costs of dealing with the roundabout versus improving the 144th interchange to better spend the money. Mr. Birdsall answered that there are short term and long term considerations that could be looked at as strategies for this area and stated that their analysis says both are needed.

Clare Hardy, 2906 N. Union, Tacoma WA 98407 Ms. Hardy stated that she was a land use consultant who has been working with the Sportsmen's Club and Mr. Scott Edwards. She said that Mr. Edwards had purchased the 5 acres adjacent to the gun club because the gun club is a pipe stem lot and if the Harbor Hill extension didn't happen their access would be inadequate. Ms. Hardy expressed that they would like this 5 acres to remain in the Mixed Used Overlay. She further noted that when Harbor Hill is built there will be a light commercial zoning designation rather than an R-1 which might be appropriate. She also stated that she had some housekeeping items that she would put in her written comments.

Joe Kunkel, Hammes Co., 1325 4h Ave., Suite 1030 Seattle WA 98001 – Mr. Kunkel stated that his company is the developer for St. Anthony Hospital and that he is the Project Manager. He stated that he would also follow up with written comments upon further study. Mr. Kunkel went on to say that they had worked with David Evans and Associates early on and provided a market study and demand by zip code which shows where the demand will be coming from and DEA utilized that information. He stated that the baseline situation has some problems and that it appears to be some of the project specific mitigations are more reflective of projects already in the pipeline and not a result of our project. He also noted that that there had been a lot of time put into this by city staff, ourselves and elected officials and thanked the Planning Commission for their time.

Dave Enger, Mirae Associates Inc, 11410 NE 122nd Way, Suite 320, Kirkland WA 98034-6927 - Mr. Enger stated that he was representing Douglas Howe who owns a 40 acre property on Bujacich Rd across the street from the correctional facility. He stated that this property had just recently been annexed and that Mr. Howe plans to develop the property and has a preliminary site plan but has not submitted to the city or prepared a traffic impact analysis. He said that they had met with City staff and have indicated that any development sending any traffic through the Borgen roundabout cannot get a traffic concurrency certificate. Mr. Enger stated that he felt this was basically a moratorium as anything in North Gig Harbor will generate trips, therefore, Mr. Howe cannot develop his property. He stated that they appreciated that work was being done toward a resolution, but noted that Mr. Howe's property is outside the study area of the draft SEIS, which raises several questions as to whether there is a basic assumption that properties west of SR16 don't have an impact on the interchange and if so why are they being restricted by

not being able to receive a traffic CRC. In conclusion, Mr. Enger stated that they felt it was important this comprehensive plan amendment give a means for properties outside the study area to develop and that any traffic impact mitigation fees which come out of this process need to be fair.

There being no other comments, Chairman Allen closed the public hearing at 8:55 p.m.

Senior Planner Jennifer Sitts explained that the next step is that the comment period will close and Planning Manager Rob White will provide the comments to David Evans and Associates who will develop an SEIS towards the end of February. She went on to explain that the Planning Commission will receive the Comprehensive Plan Amendments and formulate their recommendation to the city council.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

February 2nd, 2006 – Work-Study Session and Public Hearing

ADJOURNMENT

Move to adjourn at 9:00 p.m.

Malich/Guernsey – Motion carried