

**City of Gig Harbor Planning Commission
Minutes of Work-Study Session
January 3, 2008
Gig Harbor Civic Center**

PRESENT: Commissioners Jim Pasin, Harris Atkins, Jeane Derebey, Joyce Ninen and Dick Allen. Commissioners Theresa Malich and Jill Guernsey were absent. Staff present: Jennifer Kester, Tom Dolan and Diane Gagnon.

CALL TO ORDER: 6:00 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

It was decided to reference the waterfront zones specifically on page 2 2nd paragraph and to remove the phrase “if they meet that definition” as it was redundant. Commissioner Pasin asked for clarification of a sentence in the first paragraph on page 3 and it was decided to remove the second half of the sentence which said “and Ms. Kester added that we could add a specific definition” and replace it with “in the waterfront zones”. Mr. Pasin also pointed out that he meant to express his disapproval of the 65,000 square foot limitation rather than 35,000 as stated on page 4.

MOTION: Move to approve minutes of December 20th, 2007 as amended. Ninen/Pasin – Motion passed unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS

1. **City of Gig Harbor, 3510 Grandview Street, Gig Harbor WA 98335** – Proposal by the City Council to amend the definition of gross floor area; create definitions for underground parking, basement, finished grade, and original grade; amend parking requirements to include maximum number of parking spaces for uses; and reconsider the maximum building sizes for WC, WM and WR zones.

Senior Planner Jennifer Kester went over her memo on underground structures and an e-mail from Randy Boss. She stated that she hoped to have them review the memo and then develop a memo to the City Council at the next meeting.

2. Introduction of the first quarter work program:

- Implementation of Neighborhood Design Areas in Design Manual
- Grandfathering Nonconforming Structures Inside and Outside the Waterfront Zones/ Triplexes in R-2 zone
- Removal of Mixed Use District Overlay and determination of appropriate underlying zoning
- Limiting Office Uses in Waterfront Millville
- Appropriateness of RB-1 zoning district locations and allowed uses

Ms. Kester went over the first quarter work program, explaining that the work program won't get final approval until the City Council meeting of January 14th. She then gave a brief overview of each item in the first quarter, noting that the proposals do not have to be done in any specific order and that there will be one public hearing for all of them.

Implementation of Neighborhood Design Areas in the Design Manual

Ms. Kester talked about some of the proposals included in this amendment and that one of the issues were what do we do where neighborhood design areas meet.

Commissioner Jeane Derebey said that she thought that this would be difficult without knowing exactly what the design criteria would be in each area. Ms. Kester stated that she thought the opposite was true as the criteria would be difficult to develop if we're unsure how they would be implemented. She went on to say that the goal within this quarter was to talk about what the intent was and how neighborhood design areas should be implemented. Commissioner Harris Atkins asked if we would try to identify criteria and who would review them and Ms. Kester said yes; however, it could be a very simple approach. Ms. Derebey supported approaching it from a simplified standpoint. Mr. Atkins noted that they would get to those specifics at a later date. Ms. Kester pointed out where there are commercial areas that are not necessarily abutting parcels but could be addressed with some kind of hatched area on the map. Planning Manager Tom Dolan suggested that staff could look over the map and come up with some real life examples and case studies to help the discussion. Mr. Pasin said that he thought that the other area where there will be a problem is when someone owns three parcels and maybe one is in one design area and two are in another. Ms. Kester agreed that that would have to be addressed as well, pointing out that it would additionally complicate the situation if someone did a Boundary Line Adjustment and now their parcel is in two different neighborhood design areas. Mr. Atkins expressed that they may not understand the transition areas between these areas enough to come up with a fool proof solution.

Ms. Kester noted that they could discuss this after completing the other four items in this quarter since they will result in a public hearing and text amendment; whereas, this is merely a discussion.

Commissioner Joyce Ninen asked if the neighborhood design areas will have its own section in the design manual and Ms. Kester said that yes it will probably be its own chapter. Mr. Pasin pointed out that if you read the residential section, historic district section and the zone transition section it will become apparent what some of the issues may be. Mr. Atkins suggested that they devote an entire meeting with some DRB members to discuss this issue. Ms. Kester also stated that it may need to be discussed with a sub group.

Mr. Pasin said that he felt that how the design manual gets organized relative to this issue will become very important. Ms. Kester agreed that it will be important to look at how it is organized and integrated.

Ms. Ninen stated that she thought it would be helpful to have a refresher course on the design manual. She asked which area Ms. Kester felt would be good to start with and Ms. Kester answered that she had thought northwest industrial would be a good one to start with. Mr. Atkins asked if that was an area of great demand and Ms. Kester said that it was the area that our design manual does the worst job being specific. Mr. Pasin said that he felt the standards were restricting development from the intent of the zone. Ms. Derebey asked if this item was something that should be dealt with in the first quarter and Ms. Kester explained the thought process behind the items in this quarter and that it would have to be brought before the Planning and Building Committee if they wanted to change it. Ms. Kester reiterated that in order to continue the discussion on Neighborhood Design Areas, the Planning Commission wanted examples of transition areas, a refresher on the design manual and to get Design Review Board members involved. Mr. Pasin pointed out that maybe the Planning Commission needed new design manuals. Ms. Kester said that when the new comp plan is printed staff will also get them new design manuals.

Ms. Derebey asked about the comp plan amendment for 2008 that Mr. Atkins had asked about, pointing out that the land use map does not really reflect to goals of the city. Mr. Dolan said that he felt that it was important that our land use map and zoning map are consistent. Ms. Kester noted that the hurdle will be concurrency because if we up the designation to something that increases the intensity it will require concurrency which we do not have. She noted that if we are lowering the designation it will not be an issue. Additionally, she stated that the 2008 comp plan amendments will be looked at in the third quarter. Mr. Atkins noted that the impact of these two documents being incompatible is that we are encouraging development that is inconsistent with current policies and goals.

Grandfathering Non-conforming Structures Inside and Outside the Waterfront Zones/Triplexes in R-2 zone.

Ms. Kester went over the proposal and reminded the commission of a previous discussion on this topic. Mr. Dolan noted that on January 28th the Council will be considering the draft ordinance on an interim solution and that they are expecting a recommendation from the Planning Commission on a permanent solution. She explained that currently (except in the shoreline area) if a structure is damaged beyond 50% then it can't be replaced. She further stated that there had been some discussion of whether or not people should be able to rebuild. She noted the information that she had provided outlining how many triplexes and fourplexes were in the R-2 zone, 33% of the dwelling units in that zone are nonconforming. Mr. Pasin stated that they had had some discussions during the formation of the matrix and asked that perhaps they could look at some of those notes. Mr. Dolan pointed out that there were some other items within the proposed ordinance that dealt with process changes.

Removal of the Mixed Use District Overlay and determination of appropriate underlying zoning

Ms. Kester stated that this item had been on the work program for a couple of years. She noted that the City Attorney and the Planning and Building Committee had expressed the overlay should probably be removed. She further explained that if the overlay is removed it will effectively down zone some of the properties; therefore, we need to look at what the properties should be zoned. She stated that the MUD could become a zone; they could just leave the zones as they are or they could come with entirely different zones. Mr. Pasin said that what had always bothered him with this is that they don't seem to know what they really want in this area. Ms. Kester said there was a Mixed Use District land use designation in the Comprehensive Plan which might help. Mr. Pasin stated that with the advent of Harbor Hill Drive the vision for that area may not be the same. Mr. Atkins asked what the original intent was and Ms. Kester said that at that time there was a big push for mixed use types of development and for some flexibility. Mr. Dolan said that it isn't necessarily the uses that are allowed there that is the problem, but rather the process. Ms. Ninen said that mixed use zones are very popular and Ms. Kester said that the issue is just that people need to know what could be built next to them. Mr. Pasin said that the mixed use zones were really for more of an urban setting. Ms. Kester said she would bring the policies out of the comp plan to the next meeting to help with the discussion. She also noted that there had been a rezone to ED in the area. Ms. Ninen also noted that there is a proposed connection road and that it would make sense to have more retail development. Mr. Atkins said that once Harbor Hill Drive connects to Burnham it could really be a traffic issue if we add more retail uses here. Ms. Kester stated that traffic models that have been run have always assumed that this area is mixed use.

Limiting Office Uses in Waterfront Millville

Ms. Kester said that this item had been around the longest, proposed in 2005. She noted that it had been proposed prior to the land use matrix and the applicant was proposing the office uses only be allowed as incidental uses in existing buildings. She noted that this had come about as a result of an approved 3500 sq ft office building that has yet to be built. Additionally, Ms. Kester noted that they would have to think about what is incidental. She noted that office uses also have different impacts than some of the other uses already allowed in this zone. Mr. Allen said that he thought that the 3500 sq ft limit solved the applicant's concerns. Ms. Kester stated that it had been pointed out to the applicant and they still wanted to move forward with this amendment. Ms. Kester then pointed out that this would make a couple of buildings nonconforming.

Acting Chair Harris Atkins called a five minutes recess at 7:25 pm. The meeting was reconvened at 7:30.

Appropriateness of RB-1 zoning district locations and allowed uses

Ms. Kester stated that the Planning Commission had requested this back in 2006. She pointed out that she had provided the minutes and power point presentation that went to the Council on the RB-1 zones. Ms. Ninen noted that there were 12 RB-1 areas. Ms. Kester said that a lot of these items in this quarter will have heavy public involvement.

Ms. Kester then asked the Planning Commission which of the items they wanted to tackle at the next work study session.

Ms. Derebey stated that she would like to look at the RB-1 zoning, the mixed use overlay and nonconforming structures. Ms. Ninen agreed as she felt they should be able to get those done. Mr. Pasin said that he would like to look at nonconforming structures, the mixed use overlay and office uses in Waterfront Millville at the next meeting and leave the RB-1 issue until the meeting after that. Ms. Derebey said that she felt that there was more information for the three she had proposed. Mr. Atkins said that he felt the RB-1 issue was large. Ms. Kester stated that she felt that the nonconforming structures, mixed use overlay and office uses in Waterfront Millville could be covered at the next meeting. Ms. Derebey suggested working on just nonconforming structures and the mixed use overlay since everyone agreed on those. Ms. Kester agreed that working on those at the next meeting and then work on the other two at the February meeting was a good approach. Mr. Atkins agreed. Ms. Kester stated that she was shooting for either February 21st or March 6th for a public hearing. Mr. Dolan assured the commission that staff will make sure and get ample notice out for the public hearing.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

January 17th, 2008 – Work Study Session

Ms. Kester said that at the next meeting she will have a finalized memo for the City Council. She went through the memo she had provided and pointed out what she had changed. Ms. Ninen asked about Mr. Boss's e-mail regarding the 24' entrance and Ms. Kester said that she was thinking they could still forward their recommendation to the City Council and see if they agree with the Planning Commission approach and then we will discuss the specifics such as Mr. Boss's concerns, when we have a public hearing.

Mr. Atkins noted for the record that at the next meeting they will hold election of officers, finalize the memo to the City Council and then move on to a work study session on the two proposed amendments.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Move to adjourn at 7:45 p.m. Derebey/Pasin – Motion passed.