

**City of Gig Harbor Planning Commission and Design Review Board**  
**Minutes of Joint Work-Study Session**  
**April 19th, 2007**  
**Gig Harbor Civic Center**

**PRESENT:** Commissioners Jim Pasin, Joyce Ninen, Dick Allen, Theresa Malich and Harris Atkins. Board members John Jernejcic, Charles Carlson and Rick Gagliano were present. Staff present: Jennifer Kester and Diane Gagnon. Kurt Latimore from the Latimore Company was also present.

**CALL TO ORDER:** 5:30 p.m.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

**MOTION:** Move to approve the minutes of April 5th, 2007 as written. Atkins/Ninen – Motion passed unanimously.

**UPCOMING MEETINGS**

Senior Planner Jennifer Kester explained that the next meeting is scheduled to be a public hearing on May 3<sup>rd</sup>; however, it seemed there may be a problem with a quorum and she asked for a poll of who would be attending from the Planning Commission.

Joyce Ninen – Yes  
Harris Atkins – Yes  
Theresa Malich – No  
Dick Allen – Yes  
Jim Pasin – No  
Jill Guernsey – No  
Jeane Derebey – Unknown

Ms. Kester then asked if it became necessary to reschedule the public hearing to a special meeting on Monday the 7<sup>th</sup> of May would everyone be able to attend and everyone said they could except for Ms. Malich. She stated she would let them know by e-mail what date was scheduled after speaking with Jeane Derebey. In addition she said she would e-mail the final ordinances prior to the public hearing.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**1. Design Review Process Improvements – Batch 1b** – Discussion of the second batch of proposed amendments in Phase 1.

Ms. Kester went over the four elements of this phase of process improvements.

## Complete requirements

Senior Planner Jennifer Kester displayed the draft language for this element. She noted that she and Kurt Latimore had met with Dave Freeman a local architect and brainstormed about complete requirements at different stages of review. She went through the Design review application requirements listed in 17.98.040.

Commissioner Joyce Ninen asked if perhaps retaining wall locations should be shown on a site plan and everyone agreed. She noted that they were asked for on the grading plan but should also be shown on the site plan.

Commissioner Jim Pasin stated that all of these requirements are expensive and time consuming but especially the tree inventory. Ms. Kester noted that it seemed important to the community in order to decide what trees should remain. Board member John Jernejcic noted that it was important to the community to retain significant trees and asked how it was determined where the trees are if you don't do a survey. Mr. Pasin said that he didn't disagree with the practice but he didn't feel that it was justified. Mr. Gagliano said that it seemed that there needed to be more regulations rather than less. Ms. Ninen suggested that perhaps they add language that allowed larger sites to perform a sampling.

Commissioner Harris Atkins asked what the definition of a significant tree was and Ms. Kester read the definition. Mr. Carlson noted that you do have to have an inventory in order to decide what should be saved. Mr. Gagliano suggested that there needed to be more in the definition of significant trees that dealt with species and size. Ms. Kester added the suggestion to the list of changes for Phase 2.

Ms. Kester added the word "significant" before the words "vegetation plan" for Item B. Mr. Atkins asked where the requirement was for a landscape plan and Ms. Kester said that it was within the requirements for site plan review. She also pointed out where in the requirements it stated that if landscaping is being used for mitigation then the applicant would have to provide drawings of the proposed landscaping.

Ms. Kester noted that storm water retention facilities should be added to the requirements for a site plan. Mr. Gagliano also noted that retaining wall heights should be added to the grading plan requirements. It was suggested by Mr. Gagliano that the word "preliminary" be added to Item E, Site Section Drawings.

Mr. Allen expressed concern with whether existing grade was being documented. Discussion followed on whether a small project would need a surveyor to do that. Ms. Kester explained that existing and proposed contours are asked for currently. Mr. Gagliano pointed out that if cuts are made before the topography is done then there could be a problem. Ms. Kester noted that height inspections are done at the building permit stage which is two or three levels of detail above design review. Discussion followed on whether this level of detail should be required at design review. Mr. Allen asked if there will be a requirement for topographic information prior to clearing and grading and Ms. Kester said yes at the civil plan stage for a clearing and grading permit and added that those plans are stamped by a surveyor.

Mr. Jernejcic suggested that two of the items for utilities and grading should be combined. Ms. Kester said that perhaps there should be a separate item for clearing limits. Mr. Gagliano said that utilities and grading are two different things and should be submitted on two separate pages and Mr. Jernejcic agreed. Ms. Kester went over situations where the DRB may want to know about utilities. Gagliano asked if there was somewhere that told the applicant that these items were part of a basic application and Ms. Kester said that they are asked for in the basic application. He then suggested that it be made clear which items were overlapping. Ms. Kester pointed out that a DRB application can be submitted early and that this was a topic of discussion for later in the meeting when early DRB review is discussed. Mr. Gagliano said that he felt that applicants would never submit all this detail without submitting for site plan review. Mr. Gagliano suggested that there be language added saying that only elements that are applicable need to be submitted and Ms. Kester added the phrase “if applicable” at the beginning of the list.

Gagliano suggested that the word “all” be removed from the reference to dimensions in Item H, Elevation Drawings. Discussion followed on how much detail is needed for trim and cornice. Mr. Pasin suggested that the word “detail” be replaced with “design” and everyone agreed.

Discussion was held on whether a master sign plan should be required. It was decided that it should only be required to submit a sign plan showing the general location and size of proposed signage rather than a master sign plan. It was noted that it should be required that it be consistent with GHMC Section 17.80. Item J was changed to equipment screening rather than just equipment.

Discussion was held on Item K, Color and Material. Mr. Jernejcic said that he felt that colors and materials were very important. He suggested that a color and material board be required and it was suggested that it be left to the discretion of the board to decide when and if they want to see a color and material board. It was decided to add language in this item that says if going to the DRB the applicant must submit a color/material board. It was decided that for Item L the word “detail” should be removed so that it just said “Fencing”. The same was done for Item M, so that it just said “Light Fixtures”.

Mr. Gagliano asked for more specificity in Item O, Design Review Board review. Everyone agreed that it needed to be rewritten.

### Timing of Clearing

Ms. Kester explained this element of the process improvements. She stated that she had run this change through engineering to make sure that it would be okay with them. Mr. Pasin commented that “issued” had been changed to “approved” and Ms. Kester explained that is the language that engineering uses.

### Early DRB Review

Ms. Kester explained this portion of the process improvements and went over what the code says currently and how it relates to what is being proposed.

Discussion followed on what order applications will be required to be submitted, noting that Design Review applications must be submitted either before site plan review or at the same time. Ms. Kester asked if they would like it noted in the ordinance and said she would ask the City Attorney if it was possible.

Mr. Latimore noted that in the old process they had to choose their path; whereas, with this new process they can submit an early DRB application whether they are going the administrative route or through the DRB.

Ms. Kester went over the changes and additional language being proposed as a result of the last meeting. She asked if they wanted specific language about being able to submit earlier and how soon something is reviewed when it is a complete application. She cautioned them about putting something specific if it can't be met. Mr. Gagliano spoke in favor of making it a policy rather than putting it in print. Ms. Kester explained what would happen when certain changes are made after a DRB recommendation. She also stated that the way the DRB writes their findings will have to change to either be more or less specific to allow for the administrative changes. Mr. Latimore noted that when there are administrative changes the DRB will be notified and given the chance for appeal. Mr. Gagliano noted that there should be a phrase added that if you are submitting your application prior to site plan review these requirements are stand alone; however, if you are submitting for both, these may be duplicative. Ms. Kester said that the note could be added to the checklist given to applicants.

Mr. Pasin said that with this change applicants will expect to get to the DRB early. He said that he felt that there should be some kind of time requirement for when they have to get to the DRB. Ms. Kester suggested adding something to the intent statement. Discussion followed on how much this was improving the process and whether there should be a required time frame. Ms. Kester felt that a more general requirement would work. She estimated that it would take about a month to get an early DRB review project to the DRB. Mr. Gagliano stated that they needed numbers to take this proposal to the City Council. Ms. Kester added a note to add language for intent to process early.

Mr. Gagliano suggested that the reference to a notice of application being sent out for PRD's should be changed to Subdivisions to make sure that the DRB gets notified of all multi-lot developments whether they are a PRD or not. Everyone agreed.

### Administrative Alternative Option

Ms. Kester explained the two options in this process. She said that the first option for an administrative alternative was during the building permit process when a minor design review alternative was needed and the other option was for a project that had gone to the DRB and the Hearing Examiner and then an applicant wants to make a minor change. She asked that they look at what constitutes a small project and what criteria will have to be examined for approval.

Mr. Gagliano suggested that language be added to include renovations and/or remodels. Mr. Jernejc pointed out that it could be a 15,000 sq ft house. Everyone agreed to add language for renovations and/or remodels of single family residences.

Ms. Kester then asked about the criteria and whether it should just say “meets the intent” or should it still say “equivalent and/or superior”. Everyone agreed that both the criteria should remain.

Discussion followed on the administrative alternative option of design review board recommendations. Ms. Kester explained the language and went over the items that would be allowed to be modified administratively. Mr. Gagliano pointed out that he felt that Item 1b made it so that someone could argue that they were allowed to modify those things. Ms. Malich said that she had a problem with the word substantially.

Mr. Gagliano suggested removing 1b. Discussion followed on this item. Ms. Kester read the definition of a minor adjustment to a site plan. Mr. Jernejcic suggested that when the DRB makes their findings they will have to phrase them knowing that they may be tweaked so if they don't want something tweaked they would have to make it really tight.

Mr. Gagliano asked about the requirement for the DRB to be noticed of the administrative decision and he asked if there was an opportunity for appeal or perhaps a way for the DRB to be noticed prior to the decision.

Ms. Malich said she really didn't feel comfortable with this section without the City Attorney looking at it.

Mr. Carlson said the final decision is the Hearing Examiners and if the DRB process is earlier this will result in the Hearing Examiner having more latitude. Mr. Gagliano suggested perhaps using the same language that is in the minor site plan amendment section.

Ms. Kester asked if they wanted to send it to the City Attorney with no limitations and the majority agreed. Discussion followed on the process used by other jurisdictions and what the cost and staff savings may be from making these changes.

## **ADJOURN**

**MOTION:** Move to adjourn at 8:55 p.m. Atkins/Ninen – motion passed.