

**City of Gig Harbor Planning Commission
Work Study Session
Civic Center
April 18, 2013
5:00 pm**

PRESENT: Harris Atkins, Rick Gagliano, Craig Baldwin, Pam Peterson and Reid Ekberg. Jim Pasin and Bill Coughlin were absent

STAFF PRESENT: Staff: Lindsey Sehmel, Jennifer Kester and Lita Dawn Stanton

5:00 p.m. - Call to order, roll call

Approval of minutes

MOTION: Move to approve the minutes of April 4, 2013 with a change to last paragraph changing the word “though” to “thought”. Gagliano/Peterson – Motion carried.

Mr. Atkins asked how everyone felt about how informal straw polls should be handled in the minutes. He wondered if it should be identified who voted which way in those polls or was it enough to just say what the majority decided. Everyone agreed that it was enough to just indicate the majority opinion unless someone wanted to be identified as having voted a certain way. When there is a formal vote that is not unanimous, individual members would be identified.

WORK-STUDY SESSION

1. Downtown Building Height Amendment –

Final recommendations on building height for the downtown commercial zones of DB and abutting WC.

Ms. Kester pointed out the drawings on the white board that illustrated the goals of the proposed code language. She explained that she thought the commission should discuss the existing versus final grade issue again as it became clear in developing these illustrations that you could conceivably have three story buildings and exceed the 27'. She noted that this wasn't the initial goal of this proposal and wasn't what had been advertised as the goal. Discussion followed on possible development scenarios. It was decided that they should add a clause that it would be measured from existing or final grade whichever is the most restrictive.

Mr. Gagliano asked that the wording regarding “terraced” buildings be changed to “stepped down” in order to prevent misunderstandings or different interpretations. He also asked that the wording referring just the roof might need to be clarified because someone might argue that something is not a roof but rather a terrace. Additionally he suggested that they use the word “elevation” in order to prevent someone from arguing

volume. He also asked about the portion that says “to follow topography”. Discussion was held on whether safety rails were included in the calculation. Ms. Kester said that staff would work on definitions and clarified language and check the section on balustrades in the Design Manual. It was noted that the phrase “to follow topography” was not needed. It was decided to add language stating, “Safety rails surrounding roof top patios and gardens are excluded provided the safety rail is 60% transparent”. Mr. Ekberg asked if rooftop gardens or patios were included in the gross floor area. Ms. Kester read the definition and said that it didn’t seem to meet the definition.

Ms. Kester asked for everyone to read the recommendation and provide comments. Mr. Atkins asked if in the first paragraph where it states that the application was initiated as part of the city’s downtown visioning, if that was true and Ms. Kester said it was. Mr. Gagliano said he thought it was downtown visioning and revitalization and everyone agreed. Mr. Gagliano also suggested that it should say “inhibit the preservation or redevelopment of character defining buildings” and everyone agreed. It was decided to remove the phrase “as those are generally accepted downtown areas”. Other minor changes were made to the recommendation.

Ms. Kester asked if they wanted to vote on this recommendation tonight. Mr. Atkins suggested that staff rewrite this recommendation and they vote on both recommendations at the next meeting.

Discussion was held on the comments received at the public hearing on the residential height issue. Ms. Sehmel explained that she would be unable to provide the topographic information that they had asked for as some of the information was in CAD rather than GIS and would take more staff time to develop. Further discussion was held on whether to measure the residential height from the property line or the sidewalk. The Planning Commission concluded that measuring from the property line was appropriate as height is always measured within the property of the subject development.

OTHER BUSINESS

Discussion of upcoming meetings – May 2, 2013

Ms. Kester said she would send out both the recommendations prior to the meeting for the commissioners to review. Mr. Gagliano suggested that the City Council be made aware that there are other issues that the commission didn’t tackle at this time. Mr. Gagliano suggested that they include a letter to the City Council explaining all of the issues along with those that the commission would like to have added to their work program at some time in the future. Mr. Gagliano also emphasized the need for the City Council to procure additional parking space to make these changes effective. Ms. Kester said she would put together a cover letter. Discussion was held on the content of the letter.

Adjournment

MOTION: Move to adjourn at 6:42 p.m. – Gagliano/Ekberg. Motion carried.