

PLANNING BOARD MINUTES

April 25, 2001

Chair John Dewhirst called the regular meeting of the Planning Board to order at 6:45 p.m. in the Council Chambers, Public Safety Complex, 250 – 5th Avenue North.

PRESENT

John Dewhirst, Chair
Beverly Lindh, Vice Chair
Stan Monlux
Joanne Langendorfer (arrived at 7:15)
Jim Crim
Cary Guenther

ABSENT

Virginia Cassutt
Bruce Witenberg

STAFF PRESENT

Rob Chave, Planning Division Manager
Duane Bowman, Development Services Dir.
Steve Bullock, Associated Planner
Karin Noyes, Recorder

Ms. Cassutt and Mr. Witenberg were excused from the meeting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION BY MR. CRIM, SECONDED BY MS LINDH, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF APRIL 11, 2001 WITH THE FOLLOWING CORRECTIONS:

1. PAGE FIVE, THIRD PARAGRAPH FROM THE BOTTOM, SECOND LINE, CHANGE “BE” TO “BY.”
2. PAGE SIX, FIRST PARAGRAPH, SECOND LINE, CHANGE “THEIS” TO “THIS.”
3. PAGE SIX, SIXTH PARAGRAPH, SECOND LINE, DELETE THE “N.”
4. PAGE EIGHT, LAST PARAGRAPH, SECOND LINE, CHANGE “DEAD” TO “DEED.”

MOTION CARRIED.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF AGENDA

There were no changes made to the proposed agenda.

REQUESTS FROM THE AUDIENCE

There was no one in the audience to address the Board during this portion of the meeting.

CONTINUED REVIEW OF DESIGN GUIDELINES AND POTENTIAL CODE AMENDMENTS TO IMPLEMENT THE DESIGN GUIDELINES (JOINT MEETING WITH THE ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN BOARD)

The following Architectural Design Board members were in attendance: Shawn Mahoney, Carreen Rubenkonig, Linda Goodrick, Rob Michel and Tom Bykonen.

Mr. Chave advised that there are a number of unresolved issues related to the proposed design guidelines, and staff is seeking further input from the Planning Board and the Architectural Design Board (ADB).

Roof Height and Design

Mr. Bullock distributed copies of a number of drawings illustrating the various types of roofs that have been used for development in Edmonds. He said the current code does not allow flat roofs over 25 feet in height. Also, the roof height is limited to 25 feet unless the City approves a modulated roof design. Approved modulated roof designs are allowed to be up to 30 feet in height.

Mr. Bullock said the first illustration is of a flat roof construction. After adding the roof, wall and parapet, the maximum height of the inside of the building can only be 23.5 feet tall. The next illustration is of a pitched roof at a maximum height of 30 feet. In this case, the interior height of the structure is 25 feet. The third illustration is also of a pitched roof design, but with a vaulted interior. This allows an additional ½ to 1 foot of interior height, but the exterior of the building appears to be the same as the second illustration. He said staff supports the concept of allowing a vaulted interior so that developers can gain extra height to enable them to build more interesting structures and recoup some of the high costs of land.

Mr. Bullock referred to the fourth illustration and explained that the most shallow roof pitch allowed by the code in order to gain the extra five feet in height is 4:12. He noted that a 4:12 pitched roof would rise five feet with a run of 15 feet. If the building were 30 feet in depth, then the roof would meet in the middle. However, for buildings that have a greater depth, the rooflines do not meet. The result is a portion of flat roof that is greater than 25 feet in height, which is not allowed by the City codes. In order to accommodate the code in these situations, mansard style roofs are being used. False roofs are being created, to enable the roof to meet the code, but no benefit in appearance is provided from the street level. Also, it is likely that the ADB would require a developer to put some type of dormer around the outside of the mansard to break up the roofline. With the 4:12 pitched roof and dormers around the building, however, the profile from the street appears to be a square block and views are blocked up to 30 feet for the entire length of the roof structure.

Mr. Bullock advised that the fifth and last illustration shows the difference between a pitched roof and a stepped back, flat roof at increasing levels of height. The illustration identifies about one foot between each terrace. The dashed line identifies a profile of the roofline of a 4:12 pitched mansard roof design. He noted that the ADB approved a building with a flat, stepped-back roof design as illustrated because they felt it would encroach less into the air space above the 25-foot line than would a mansard style roof with dormers. Other amenities such as awnings along the front of the building and stepped-back balconies also provided façade elements to the project. Mr. Bullock said the ADB has indicated that they would like the design guidelines to allow flexibility for the more interesting roof designs to occur.

Mr. Bykonen clarified that this issue is not really about building height. There is no thought or intent to raise the building height limit above 30 feet. The intent is to allow flexibility in the guidelines for more creative roof designs than what has been allowed over the past 20 years in Edmonds.

Mr. Dewhirst inquired if the ADB feels that the proposed design guidelines language (Pages 33 and 34) would allow sufficient flexibility to accomplish the ADB's goal. He noted that the Edmonds Stakeholder's called this particular guideline too restrictive.

Mr. Bullock said that at their last meeting the ADB talked about the proposed guideline that would limit the portion of terraced roof over 25 feet in height to 65 percent of the total roof space. He said the ADB supports the proposed guideline that would allow terraced, flat roofs if terraced with a minimum 18-inch change in height between each portion. They also

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supported the concept of allowing each terrace to be no more than 20 percent of the total roof square footage. However, they expressed concern about the provision that would limit the total roof area above 25 feet to 65 percent of the roof. Mr. Chave suggested that a 65 percent limit on terraced roofs would discourage flat roofs.

Mr. Bykonen said he doesn't have a problem with allowing all flat roofs as long as they are terraced with horizontal modulation, as well as vertical modulation. Mr. Mahoney suggested the requirement for an 18-inch height change is an arbitrary number. He noted that the last illustration provided by staff only had a one-foot height change between the terraces.

The Boards discussed the need for both height modulation and vertical face modulation. Ms. Goodrich noted that the wall modulation issue is addressed in the guidelines starting on Page 40. Ms. Rubenkonig added that while the two types of modulation are not addressed in one section, developers must look at both the height modulation and the wall modulation. Mr. Chave suggested that wall modulation be addressed along with the guidelines for terraced roofs. He recommended that the Boards review approved building samples to determine what the wall modulation requirements should be. Mr. Mahoney suggested that one way to ensure proper wall modulation while preserving the view would be to use a 4:12 pitch requirement guide to insure that terraced roofs fall within the angle of a 4:12 pitched roofs. This would be similar to the fifth illustration provided by staff.

Mr. Chave inquired if the Boards would support the terraced roof option being allowed in multi-family zones. At this time, terraced roofs are allowed in commercial zones only. They are also allowed in multi-family zones, if the structure does not exceed 25 feet in height. In order to exceed the 25-foot height limit in the multi-family zones a pitched roof is required. The Boards discussed whether a flat roof design is appropriate for multi-family zones. Mr. Michel advised that he wouldn't build a terraced roof design in a RM zone because it would significantly reduce the amount of square footage available on the interior of the building.

Mr. Michel said the Edmonds Stakeholders' greatest concern is related to what is allowed in the center portion of a pitched roof. He questioned why what happens in the middle of the roof matters if it can't be seen from the street. Mr. Guenther agreed and pointed out that stepping a flat roof up and down increases the opportunity for water to gather and leak into the structure. Mr. Crim agreed that this type of roof could result in maintenance problems because of the wet climate.

Mr. Crim said he suspects that the intent of allowing the height limit to increase five feet with a pitched roof was to accommodate a greater height while still protecting the view corridor as much as possible. Ms. Rubenkonig recalled that the City is not in the position of protecting view corridors. Instead, she said the Boards must decide whether or not the guidelines provide an opportunity for more interesting roof designs.

Mr. Crim also recalled that the intent is to create guidelines that can be administered by the staff as much as possible by making them more straightforward. He said that if they could limit the number of times a project has to go to the ADB for review, they would have met their goal of streamlining the process.

The Board agreed that the center section of a pitched roof should be allowed to remain flat because it is not seen from the street level. They suggested that this change be made before the public hearing to allow the public to comment on the issue.

Mr. Bullock said that if this section is changed, he anticipates that some members of the public will respond by saying that if the City allows the flat well area of mansard roof to be up to 30 feet high, why not allow a builder to have a 14:12 pitched roof with a flat area across the top. This would allow the developer to elevate the interior space of a building to about 29 feet in height.

The Board agreed that flat roofs should be allowed, but more vertical and wall modulation should be required. They also agreed that Section 1b.i on Page 34 of the draft design guidelines should be replaced with the language proposed by the Edmonds Stakeholders.

Restricted Façade Materials

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Ms. Lindh recalled the Stakeholder's recommendation that the list of restricted materials be eliminated from the design guidelines. Mr. Bykonen said the ADB has struggled with this issue because they feel that any of the restricted materials, if used properly, can be successful.

Mr. Chave suggested that the guidelines could be changed to not necessarily prohibit the use of the listed materials. The guidelines could place a limit on the use of these materials and require any use above that limit to have ADB review and approval.

Mr. Mahoney expressed his opinion that the restricted materials section should be eliminated and the majority of the Board members agreed.

Garage Doors

Mr. Dewhirst requested input from the ADB regarding the garage entry/door location standards found on Page 17 of the design guidelines.

Mr. Michel suggested that this issue should be addressed by the Engineering Department and not by the design guidelines since it is related to a safety issue rather than a design issue. Mr. Chave advised that the intent is to make sure that this issue is considered during the design phase of the project rather than waiting until the design is completed and then the Engineering Department requires a change. Mr. Michel noted that other engineering issues are not called out in the design guidelines. Mr. Chave recommended that the word "shall" be changed to "should" to make this a guideline and not a requirement. The Boards concurred.

Licensed Professional

Mr. Crim said that since the plans must be submitted early in the design process, he is not sure that a licensed professional is essential. He said this would be a more appropriate requirement for a building permit. Mr. Mahoney suggested that perhaps this section should be reworded to encourage all large buildings to be designed by a licensed architect. Mr. Bykonen said that there is some point in which the drawings become complicated enough that the City might want to require that a certified design professional be involved. But he is not sure where that point is. He said he feels the City should allow people to design their own small projects. He suggested that the City obtain information about how other jurisdictions address this issue. Ms. Langendorfer agreed that this information could be used to support a decision either way.

Ms. Rubenkönig suggested that this proposed guideline is perhaps a reaction to the ADB's concern of several years ago that people were bringing incomplete and poor quality plans before the ADB for review, and the ADB was having to help them design their projects. Unfortunately, this happened on smaller projects more than on larger ones.

Mr. Michel said he has designed over 200 buildings in Edmonds over the past several years. While he is not a licensed architect, he has had more buildings approved in Edmonds than any other architect. He felt that requiring the stamp of a licensed architect would discriminate against unlicensed people who have been designing buildings for years. He noted that since June of last year, the ADB has only had one questionable submittal, and it was done by a licensed architect.

The Boards agreed that for preliminary plans, a stamp by a licensed architect should not be required.

Building Massing

Mr. Chave said that on Page 35 the design guidelines reference small, medium and large projects and lists options that could be used to meet the massing requirements. While these massing options can easily be done in most zones in the City, staff is concerned about their impact to the commercial zones in the downtown area. In the downtown BC zone there is not a lot of

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area to allow flexibility to create significant massing elements on the site. According to the design guidelines, a large building in the downtown area would require all three of the massing elements, and staff does not feel this is feasible.

Mr. Chave said staff suggests that the Board consider eliminating the massing requirements for buildings in the downtown, but require them to pay a lot of attention to the façade design and wall modulation. He described some of the existing buildings in the downtown and indicated why they would not have been able to meet the proposed massing requirements.

Ms. Goodrick said she is hesitant to eliminate the massing requirement for the downtown area because the future of Edmonds is going up and out. It is important to require these elements now. Mr. Michel agreed that it would be wonderful to require the proposed massing elements, but the property owners would suffer significantly because they would not be able to develop their property to its full potential.

Mr. Dewhirst noted that there is not one building on Main Street that would meet the proposed requirements. He said that if the City wants to maintain the village appearance of the downtown area, the massing element would be in conflict. However, he suggested that the massing elements might be an effective tool to use on the development of vacant parcels between the downtown area and the waterfront.

The Boards did not make a specific recommendation regarding the massing issue.

Bay Windows in the Right-of-Way

Mr. Chave said that the City recently received a development proposal for the downtown area that included bay windows that hung out over the right-of-way. This is a significant departure from what has been approved by the City in the past. The City Council seemed receptive to the concept and asked that the Planning Board review the issue and provide a recommendation. He said staff feels this option could fit into the design guidelines as an incentive item. For instance, bay windows could be allowed to overhang the sidewalk and/or right-of-way, but the City would expect some public benefit in return such as an awning across the entire building front to provide weather protection for pedestrians. However, he advised that this concept would only be applicable to the downtown area.

Mr. Michel said that the concept described by staff is good. He suggested that the incentive idea be expanded to include other areas of the design guidelines, as well. He said builders would be excited if the City were to offer incentives for providing elements that benefit the public.

Tree Replacement

Mr. Chave recalled that the Planning Board agreed that tree replacement would only be required for significant types of trees (not including weed trees). They also agreed that the replacement ratio should be 1:3, and that the replacement trees could be located off site, but within the neighborhood, if the subject property will not accommodate the replacement on site. The Board concurred with their previous decision.

Public Hearing

Mr. Chave advised that the staff plans to hold a public workshop session regarding the draft design guidelines in the near future. The Edmonds Stakeholders group will be invited to participate along with other members of the public. He recommended that members of the Planning Board and the ADB also participate. He said he anticipates that this meeting will take place within the next few weeks. Mr. Bykonen, Mr. Crim, Ms. Lindh, Mr. Monlux and Mr. Mahoney all volunteered to participate.

THE BOARD TOOK A FIVE-MINUTE BREAK AT 8:55 P.M.

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REVIEW OF LOCATIONAL CRITERIA REGARDING COMMUNITY CHURCHES ON COLLECTOR STREETS

Mr. Chave advised that the City Council adopted a moratorium on the location of community churches located on collector streets within the City and requested that the Planning Board review the issue and make a recommendation. The Council's concern is whether or not community churches (those larger than 22,000 square feet) should be permitted to locate on collector streets. He referred the Board to the map that was provided which identifies the location of the arterial and collector streets and existing churches.

Mr. Chave said that while the Council was reviewing the Community Facilities Ordinance, the City's legal counsel advised of a law which prohibits churches from being regulated stricter than schools. As a result, the Council created two classifications for churches instead of the three that were recommended by the Board (neighborhood church and community church). These classifications were intended to equate church size to primary school size (based on traffic considerations) as required by the law. The Council is seeking feedback from the Board as to whether the adopted criteria is consistent with the Planning Board's recommendation. The Council is specifically concerned about the impact this ordinance would have on churches that are located on collector instead of arterial streets. Mr. Chave explained that the community facilities ordinance, as proposed, would require that community churches be located on or within 1,200 feet of an arterial street. The Council has asked the Board to review the location of the existing collector streets and consider whether or not community churches should be allowed to locate on those streets.

Mr. Monlux noted that the differences between minor arterial and collector streets are minimal, and he said he does not have a problem with allowing community churches to locate on these streets. The Board concurred. He also noted that most of the properties along the collector streets are already developed, making it difficult, if not impossible, to construct new churches along these streets. Mr. Bowman pointed out that the majority of the existing churches are located on collector streets.

MOTION BY MR. CRIM, SECONDED BY MR. MONLUX, TO RECOMMEND TO THE CITY COUNCIL THAT THE WAY SECTION 17.100.020 IS WRITTEN IS ACCEPTABLE TO THE BOARD. MOTION CARRIED.

INTRODUCTION OF THE 2001 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENTS

Mr. Chave referred the Board to the information that was provided by staff regarding the three Comprehensive Plan amendments that have been proposed.

Proposed Rezone and Map Change

Mr. Chave explained that this rezone proposal is for a small piece of property immediately east of the car wash on the north side of SR-104 and east of the Westgate commercial area. The request is to change the use and zoning from its current multi-family designation to match the commercial property to the west. Mr. Chave noted that the subject property and the properties identified as 9531 and 9521 on the map were the topic of a previous Planning Board review and recommendation to the Council. The Council was undecided on what to do with these properties, and no changes were made. Mr. Chave said staff is now suggesting that the Board consider the subject property as a separate issue.

Mr. Dewhirst reminded the Board of the significant debate that took place at the Board level regarding this whole area. He said that he and Ms. Cassutt met with staff to create drawings of potential land use solutions. They discussed the concern about limiting the number of driveways by using a master plan concept for the entire area. This would allow the City to address the property's proximity to Edmonds Way while providing a buffer for the residential properties at the same time. Mr. Chave said the property owner of the subject property is interested in selling the property to the owners of the existing commercial development. Therefore, it is likely that the same access points could be used for both.

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Mr. Dewhirst said he would like to consider the concept of a master plan zone for the whole area and proceed with a unified Comprehensive Plan amendment to address the needs of all of the properties. He said he is not in favor of addressing this individual property as a separate issue. Mr. Monlux and Ms. Langendorfer agreed with Mr. Dewhirst that the City should consider the entire area at the same time.

Mr. Bullock said that he is currently reviewing a project that includes the entire large lot behind the subject property, as well as to the side of the subject property. Eight of the lots are located in the single-family residential zone and access will be from 96th Avenue and 228th Street. The other two lots are located in the multi-family residential zone fronting onto Edmonds Way. If a rezone of the property is not approved, the property owner will combine the lots or sell the property so that someone can build condominiums or apartments on the site. However, the owner of the gas station has also expressed an interest in buying a portion of the subject property if it is rezoned. He would agree with Mr. Dewhirst's recommendation if there was no action pending. But since there is a subdivision application and development proposal in the process for these properties, perhaps the Board would want to consider the Comprehensive Plan amendment now.

Mr. Chave said staff has informed the property owner that the City would bring the issue before the Board for consideration as a possible Comprehensive Plan amendment this year. The property owner has not actually applied for the rezone. He said that the City does not have the staff resources to study a larger area at this time, but they can deal with one specific proposal for rezone. If the Board does not want to consider the rezone request at this time, the property owner could file his own application and the Board would be required to act upon it.

Mr. Bullock further explained that the property owner would develop Phase 1 of his project (the single-family homes) regardless of whether the property is rezoned or not. But, if the property were going to be rezoned to neighborhood business, he would like to sell a portion of the subject property to the adjacent property owner for a business use. The remaining portion of the subject property would be developed as multi-family residential. If the rezone to neighborhood business does not take place, the property owner would build or sell the property for a multi-family residential use.

Mr. Dewhirst said he feels it is the property owner's responsibility to submit a rezone application for the Board's consideration. He said he does not see any benefit to the public by proceeding with the rezone application as proposed by staff. The Board concurred.

Common Siting Process for Essential Public Facilities

Mr. Chave explained that the Growth Management Act mandates that counties and their cities which plan under GMA must adopt a common siting process for the location of "essential public facilities" which are of a countywide or statewide nature. Many of these facilities are difficult to site and the proposal by Snohomish County Tomorrow is to provide a consultation and advisory forum for the sponsors of such facilities in order to obtain assistance in siting decisions. He noted that the advisory review board does not have the authority to overturn a local land use decision, but it does have the ability to make a determination on whether or not the sponsor's proposal was given due consideration according to the adopted criteria for essential public facilities and to recommend arbitration as an alternative to the normal appeal process. He said staff recommends approval of the interlocal agreement, which indicates that the City agrees to adopt legislation by September 1, 2002 to implement the common siting process and review criteria for Edmonds.

Woodway Meadows Property

Mr. Chave said that this issue is in reference to property located in southwest Edmonds which was donated to the City by Snohomish County. This property is currently being used as an alleyway between two residential subdivisions. The City has adopted a temporary use that involves utilities and emergency access only, and has requested that the Board review these uses. Part of the Board's charge is to look at this property in relationship to the bike and walkway plans. He recalled that the City just completed their bikeway plan update, and the walkway plan update will take place in the near future. However, staff is fairly confident that neither of these two plans will include the subject property.

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Mr. Chave said staff has requested that both the Fire Department and the Engineering Department provide their recommendation for possible uses of the site. Mr. Chave said the Engineering Department would like to amend the official street map to indicate whether or not this property is considered a right-of-way. If it is a right-of-way, it should be for emergency access only. The Fire Department will address the safety issues and the Parks and Recreation and Engineering Departments will address whether or not the property is appropriate for bike or walkway paths. Mr. Chave concluded that the Board has been asked to hold a public hearing and make a recommendation to the Council.

The Board requested that staff provide a map indicating where the surrounding properties connect to the right-of-way. Mr. Dewhirst requested more information regarding alleyway dimensions as identified in the street plan. Mr. Bullock replied that there is nothing in the engineering standards to identify what the specific width an alleyway must be. The Board asked that staff provide a description of the subject property, specifically indicating its width and depth.

CONTINUED REVIEW OF DESIGN GUIDELINES AND POTENTIAL CODE AMENDMENTS TO IMPLEMENT THE DESIGN GUIDELINES

Mr. Chave said this item was placed on the Board's agenda as a report to allow staff to present the draft document with writing in the margins which identifies the changes made and describes how the new language varies from the original. Mr. Bullock added that the few changes made in response to the City Attorney's comments are shown in the draft in underline/strikeout format.

REVIEW OF EXTENDED AGENDA

The Board reviewed that on May 9 two public hearings have been scheduled—one related to the PRD regulations and the other related to a contract rezone application. Also, Mr. Chave indicated that staff would have the first draft of the design guidelines matrix available for the Board's review. Mr. Dewhirst requested that staff provide a report for the May 9 meeting outlining the design guidelines issues that are still unresolved so that the Board can rap up this portion of the project and begin to discuss the code amendments necessary to implement the guidelines.

The staff advised that a public forum workshop related to the design guidelines would be scheduled sometime before May 9, if possible. Staff indicated that they would place advertisements in the newspapers and notify all of those who attended the last public hearing.

Mr. Chave advised that the City Council discussed the issue of allowing bay windows to encroach into the rights-of-way. The Council requested input from the Board regarding this issue. Mr. Chave recommended that the issue be placed on the May 9 agenda to allow the Board to solidify their recommendation. The public hearing would be at the Council level because they have total discretion about what can occur in the rights-of-way. The Board should discuss what types of bay windows should be allowed and the type of criteria that should be placed upon the use. The Board's recommendation would be considered by the Council during their deliberations.

PLANNING BOARD CHAIR COMMENTS

Mr. Dewhirst reviewed the schedule for the Walkable Communities Workshop that will be held in the afternoon on May 11, 2001.

PLANNING BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

There were no Board member comments during this portion of the meeting.

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MOTION BY MR. CRIM, SECONDED BY MS LINDH, TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 10:05 P.M. MOTION CARRIED.

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