

PLANNING BOARD MINUTES January 28, 2004

Chair Young called the regular meeting of the Planning Board to order at 6:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers, Public Safety Complex, 250 – 5th Avenue North.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

James Young, Chair
Janice Freeman, Vice Chair
Jim Crim
Judith Works
John Dewhirst
Ronald Hopkins

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT

Virginia Cassutt
Cary Guenther

STAFF PRESENT

Duane Bowman,
Rob Chave, Planning Division Manager
Steve Bullock, Senior Planner
Karin Noyes, Recorder

Board Members Guenther and Cassutt were excused from the meeting.

SPECIAL PRESENTATION BY PUBLIC AGENCIES ON DOWNTOWN PLANS AND PROJECTS

Mr. Chave explained that the Planning Board is starting to review and ultimately update the City's Downtown/Waterfront Plan, which was originally completed in 1995. Since 1995 numerous things have happened, including many things that were consistent with the plan as well as some that were unanticipated. Mr. Chave said that in preparation of the Board's review of the Downtown/Waterfront Plan, staff invited some of the important agencies in the downtown/waterfront area to provide brief updates of what they are doing with their plans and projects.

Edmonds Crossing and Commuter Rail – Stephen Clifton

Stephen Clifton, Edmonds Community Services Director, said his department is working on two major projects, the Edmonds Crossing Multi-Modal Center and Sound Transit. He explained that the Edmonds Crossing Project is a multi-modal transportation center that the City hopes to one day locate at Point Edwards. He said the project would also include the relocation of the existing ferry terminal from Main Street to Point Edwards in order to meet the operational requirements to accommodate future growth in travel along the SR-104 corridor. This project would also include a train station that meets the needs of inner-city Amtrak and commuter-city Sound Transit passenger service while providing amenities for passenger comfort and convenience. The project would include a transit center to meet the needs of the local bus system and regional transit system, in addition to providing opportunities to connect the downtown business center with the multi-modal terminal through the use of a local circulator service. The project would also include flexibility to operate the facility to respond to the changing travel demands for transportation providers in the future. Mr. Clifton emphasized that safety features would be included in the transportation center project, specifically grade separation between the train traffic and other modes of travel such as auto, pedestrian, bicycle, etc. It would also include vehicular parking and holding areas and safer and more convenient waiting areas for bus, train and ferry riders.

Mr. Clifton said the primary purposes of the Edmonds Crossing Project are:

- Facilitate transfers between ferry, rail, bus, automobile, pedestrian and bicycle modes of transportation by integrating all at one location.

- Increase public safety and facilitate ferry loading and unloading operations by providing a grade separation between the railroad tracks and other modes of transportation.
- Reintegrate the Edmonds downtown core and waterfront by removing the staging and loading and unloading areas of the ferry traffic from the downtown area.
- Increase the capacity of the ferry terminal to meet future demands. Edmonds is one of the fastest growing ferry routes in the State system.
- Eliminate and avoid the queuing and staging of vehicles along SR-104 by providing sufficient on-site vehicular storage.

Mr. Clifton displayed the Modified Point Edwards Alternative Layout for the project. He briefly described how the proposal would realign SR-104 beginning at the Pine Street intersection. The holding lanes would extend in a westerly direction, over the existing railroad tracks, crossing over the northern edge of Marina Beach Park and the southern edge of the Port of Edmonds. The plan includes 560 parking stalls, 490 of which would be used for long-term parking. A parking structure, a terminal building and eight holding lanes for 835 cars are also part of the plan.

Mr. Clifton pointed out that the overall benefits of the Edmonds Crossing Project include:

- Elimination of traffic and congestion and queuing along SR-104.
- Improvements in safety.
- Reintegration of the Edmonds downtown core to the waterfront.
- Redesign of the Pine Street/SR-104 intersection to preclude ferry traffic from accessing the multi-modal center from east of SR-104.
- Significant amounts of environment benefits.

Mr. Clifton displayed a slide to illustrate the concept of reintegrating the downtown core to the waterfront. He explained that the portion of the existing ferry terminal which currently sits atop pilings would be removed. The portion of the existing terminal which sits on the concrete and earth would remain. This hardscape area would allow a connection between Brackett's Landing South and Brackett's Landing North parks, creating an incredible waterfront for the possibility of festivals, arts events, etc.

Next, Mr. Clifton explained that one element of the Sound Transit Plan calls for commuter rail services, which will eventually link Everett with Seattle, Tacoma and Lakewood (a total of 82 miles through three counties). He advised that three commuter rail stations are planned along the north corridor, including Everett, Mukilteo and Edmonds. The Edmonds station is located between Main and Dayton Streets. At full build out, the Edmonds Station elements will include a loading platform along each side of the Burlington Northern/Sante Fe Railroad tracks, ticket vending machines, canopies, parking areas, storm drainage control, lighting, signage, a bus transfer station, landscaping, and station art. He displayed pictures to illustrate the plans for this station.

Mr. Clifton reviewed that plans for the northern half of the Edmonds Station include a transit station between James and Main Streets, which would be located between the railroad tracks, the existing WSDOT parking lot and Skippers. Platforms would be located on each side of the railroad tracks. Vending machines, shelters and lighting would be placed on both sides, as well.

Mr. Clifton displayed a planned view of the southern half of the Edmonds Station, most of which includes the renovation and restoration of the existing parking lot, with the addition of landscaping, increased lighting, pathways, handicap access ramps, vending machines, etc. He noted that parking for Phase I of the Edmonds Station project is currently being accommodated in this area. He displayed other pictures to illustrate the plans for the Edmonds Station Project.

Mr. Clifton advised that when the Sounder North is in full operation, the plan calls for eight trains per day, or four round trips. This is a reduction of two round trips from the originally proposed operational plan. Service for Sounder North is being phased in, and interim improvements were made in December of 2003 at the Edmonds Station. Phase I of the Sounder North service began on December 22, 2003 and includes one round trip train between Everett and Seattle. The charge is free until February 2nd. He further advised that Sound Transit is currently in the process of working on final designs and intends to start construction on the west platform of the station later in 2004. Any station construction would be based on the

successful conclusion of ongoing negotiations with the Burlington Northern/Santa Fe Railroad. He said that, at this time, Sound Transit intends to add one roundtrip train in 2005 and two more in 2007. He highlighted that once the Edmonds Crossing Project is constructed, both Amtrak and Sound Transit at the Edmonds Station would relocate to the Edmonds terminal.

Park Plans and Projects – Arvilla Ohlde

Arvilla Ohlde, Edmonds Parks and Recreation Director, said the Parks Department has a wide variety and diverse amount of recreation programs and facilities for the entire City. The City has waterfront parks that extend from Brackett's Landing North all the way to Marina Beach, including the fishing pier and the Edmonds Marsh. The recreation facilities in the downtown area include City Park, the Civic Center, and the Anderson Center. In addition, there are beautification corner parks and a flower program dispersed throughout the City during the summer months.

Ms. Ohlde said one of the goals in the Comprehensive Park and Open Space Plan was that the City would expand opportunities for public enjoyment of the shoreline access. The Parks Department was able to accomplish many of the things identified in the Downtown/Waterfront Plan, including the acquisition of properties and development. The City of Edmonds elected officials and citizens have provided support to a point where they own their entire waterfront for public use, which is a remarkable achievement. With the completion of the waterfront acquisition, Edmonds has an opportunity to become a walkable community. The recreational programming will continue to emphasize the public's demand for a healthy community. Ms. Ohlde said that although the Parks and Recreation Department can provide a waterfront walkway, it is also important to have other economic drivers that encourage people to linger and stay.

Ms. Ohlde said the continuation of the Edmonds Underwater Park is one of the key goals of the plan. This is currently located on the north side and has 40,000 users each year. This park is a huge attraction to outside visitors and supports one entire business in the City. If and when the ferry is relocated, the land underneath the existing ferry terminal would revert back to the City and could be converted into a significant public amenity. Ms. Ohlde said the Downtown/Waterfront Plan also talks about the option of providing day use moorage on the end of the existing ferry terminal. Right now there is no opportunity for recreational day use moorage, and this could be offered on a seasonal basis.

Ms. Ohlde pointed out that if the ferry terminal is relocated, the ferry holding lanes along SR-104 would revert back to some other use than a street. This could provide an opportunity for the City to expand into a plaza area. At this time, there is no space along the waterfront for gatherings such as the Arts Festival, etc.

Ms. Ohlde said the Edmonds Marsh is a key piece of the downtown. Right now, the Audubon Society lists the marsh as the beginning point in their bird watching trail system. This is a huge amenity for the City, and it has been advertised throughout the area by the Audubon Society. She noted that bird watching is the number one recreation activity in the State of Washington. To accommodate this demand, the City has provided a walkway and viewing platforms on the north half of the marsh. They also have access from SR-104 to allow visitors to go to the east side of the marsh. The final portion of viewing areas that needs to be completed is the corner by the Deer Creek Hatchery. The environmental plan that was completed for the marsh emphasized that the marsh should never be encircled with a walkway, since this would result in loss of habitat and bird life. Leaving the southwest corner pristine is key to the marsh's function.

Ms. Ohlde advised that the acquisition of the Deer Creek Hatchery is part of the Comprehensive Parks and Open Space Plan. The hatchery is currently being run by the Laebugten Chapter of Trout Unlimited, which is a non-profit agency. If there can be a negotiation with UNOCAL, this is a key piece of property that should be preserved.

Ms. Ohlde said that the Comprehensive Parks and Open Space Plan identifies a family aquatic center as a primary project that the community would like to have. One of the key sites that has been considered for this facility is where the old Edmonds/Woodway High School was located. While this is a large project that would require a bond issue, the community has identified it as a need. If constructed, the facility could become an economic driver for the City.

Ms. Ohlde said the Civic Field is key to the community and should be preserved in its current use of providing space for many community activities. The stadium has been preserved. There have been indications in the community that they would like to have an additional skateboard park within the downtown core somewhere. At this time, the City has only one skateboard park that was constructed in partnership with the City of Lynnwood. The Parks and Open Space Comprehensive Plan identifies a skateboard park somewhere in the downtown.

Ms. Ohlde said the Frances Anderson Center is an amazing magnet for recreational programs. Nearly 1,000 people per day come through the facility. With the recent renovations that have been done on the site, the site has been preserved for the future.

Ms. Ohlde said that over the last year, the Parks and Recreation staff began to work with a team to create the Public Urban Design Guidelines, which were recently adopted by the City Council. This is a key document that the Board members should review since it applies not only to the parks system but the public corridors throughout the City. The plan talks about ways to link the parks and other economic amenities to encourage economic growth. She suggested that as the Board talks about linking all of the public and private facilities together, this document could be used as a significant resource.

South County Senior Center – Farrel Fleming/Jeanette Wood

Farrel Fleming, South County Senior Center, advised that the Senior Center just started their first comprehensive strategic planning process that will look at every aspect of the center (programs, services, fundraising, membership, public relations, building, etc.) They anticipate having this completed within the next five or six months, and they would like to make a presentation to the Board at that time. He said the center would be inviting participation from all of the stakeholders in the community.

Mr. Fleming advised that the Senior Center is a non-profit corporation that was founded 36 years ago. He explained that the partnership between the Senior Center and the City of Edmonds is a unique event in the State and County, and this presents advantages for the seniors in the community. Because the Senior Center is non-profit, there are a variety of funding sources available that the City does not have. The City will spend \$50,000 in 2004 to address issues related to the building, but in return they receive seven full-time staff and an active senior center with 2,500 people regularly involved. The Senior Center offers health programs, meal programs social work programs, education, etc.) By comparison, the City of Lynnwood has a small city-owned, city-managed storefront senior center with only a fraction of the programs offered at the South County Senior Center. But it costs the City of Lynnwood at least \$200,000 per year to operate their program. Mr. Fleming emphasized that the partnership between the Senior Center and the City is unique. It allows the Senior Center to manage the programs, and the City to manage the structure.

Mr. Fleming said the Senior Center's strategic plan would maximize the use of one of the best locations for a senior center in the United States. However, they have not yet determined whether this would require significant changes in the structure or not. He said he looks forward to coming before the Board in six months to share the results of the Senior Center's strategic plan efforts. In addition, they would like the Board to be involved in their process in some way.

Jeanette Wood, South County Senior Center, thanked the City of Edmonds for offering a strong partnership and an awareness of the senior center and its impact on the community. She said their senior members are passionately committed to the site they are in now, and the Board of Directors supports this passion. She said the strategic plan process will conclude at the May board meeting. At that time, the plan will show an upgrade to the facility to make the best use of the site. Ms. Wood said the seniors also asked her to thank the City very much for the new bulkhead. They think it is great.

Port of Edmonds – Chris Keuss

Chris Keuss, Executive Director, Port of Edmonds, provided a brief description of the Port's current master plan. He explained that the Port Commission would be meeting throughout the next month to review their strategic and master plans. They will probably be coming back before the Board in a few months with an updated master plan.

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Mr. Keuss said the Port's current master plan process started in 2000, when numerous task groups, focus groups, public meetings and Commission meetings were held to discuss the various elements of the master plan. The master plan was reviewed and approved by the Port Commission in April of 2002. It was presented to the Planning Board and the City Council for review later that year, and the document was included in the City's Comprehensive Plan at that time.

Using a map that was displayed on the screen, Mr. Keuss reviewed the various elements of the Port's master plan. He identified the location of the current Port facilities, and pointed out where the proposed Fine Arts Center of Edmonds (FACE) building would be located. He explained that the FACE project would be an artist in action program, and after receiving numerous public comments both pro and con, the Commission felt strongly about having this element on the waterfront. He explained that during certain months of the year, there is not a lot of activity happening at the Port's waterfront. It is hoped the FACE facility will bring visitors to the waterfront year round. A footprint of 14,000 square feet is planned for the facility, which would be two-stories high. A number of existing parking spaces would have to be eliminated, and the Port's master plan identifies a new parking lot in the northeast corner of their property. The plan is to complete the parking area before the fine arts center is constructed.

Mr. Keuss referred to the new building that was proposed in the master plan for the Edmonds Yacht Club. He said the Edmonds Yacht Club has indicated that they do not have the funds to build a new building. They are currently located on the bottom floor of the Anthony's Homeport Restaurant, and they have no immediate plans to move. The Commission will consider this location as they review their master plan.

Mr. Keuss advised that the master plan identifies a new building in the location of the existing Port administration building. The existing building would be demolished and replaced with a two-story structure to house the administrative offices, marine retail and marine services. He emphasized that this is a long-range proposal and there is nothing specific on the drawing board currently for this space. However, he pointed out that there are seismic concerns associated with the existing administration building, and something will need to be done to address the problem. The Commission is currently reviewing the various options available. They will either spend money to retrofit the building or demolish the building and relocate to another location.

Mr. Keuss referred to the area identified in the master plan as a marine retail complex. The master plan identifies these two buildings to each be 10,000 in size, and one is slated to be a marine retail complex. It was the hope of the Commission that the Port could bring in a marine retail outlet to serve the boating community, but they have been unsuccessful up to this point in time. The other building identified in this area was intended to be used by a workyard vendor to manage the workyard. At the time the Commission was reviewing the current master plan, the workyard was not a profitable venture for the Port. However, over the last year and a half the situation has been reversed. He noted that the Commission would review the marine retail complex site to determine if the area would be better used for some other purpose.

Mr. Keuss said the existing Anthony's Homeport Building was originally scheduled to be demolished and rebuilt. However, restaurant owners have indicated that they are happy with the current facility, and they are not interested in rebuilding. Therefore, the master plan will be updated to indicate this. Mr. Keuss said the Commission has been discussing plans to develop a public plaza on the waterside of the Anthony's Homeport Restaurant building. He noted that the public focus groups identified a desire to expand the opportunities for the public to visit the waterfront.

Mr. Keuss said that the area along the north boardwalk would be widened, and amenities such as benches, tables, planters, etc. would be added.

Mr. Keuss referred to the dry stack facility that is located at the south end of the marina. He identified the area where the current dry stack storage facility is located, as well as the area that has been identified for dry stack storage expansion. He noted that the expansion would eliminate a number of parking spaces, and the tenants have expressed concern about this. The Commission will be reviewing the expansion program and possibly relocating it to the east lot that is currently being used for the storage of boats. Adding racks in this area would allow the boats to be stacked, more than doubling the capacity.

Again, Mr. Keuss reminded the Board that the Port Commission would be updating their master plan over the next few months. The updated plan would likely be presented to the Board within the next few months.

Arts Plans – Frances Chapin

Francis Chapin, explained that her role as the Edmonds Cultural Resources Coordinator includes being the City's liaison with the Edmonds Arts Commission, she works directly with programs for visual, literary and performing arts for the City. She also represents the interests of all of the local arts organizations such as the ballet, symphony, museum, Driftwood Players, etc. She said she also works with marketing Edmonds to foster cultural tourism. She works with the Chamber of Commerce and other organizations at the City, County and State level. Finally, she said she works with economic development through the arts. Because of her many responsibilities, she said she would be pointing out a number of projects that are not all City projects.

Ms. Chapin said she believes that arts are integral to the identity of Edmonds. It is important to note that the arts are currently helping to shape the future of Edmonds, and they will continue to do so. City planning efforts already reflect the value of the arts for the community. It is included in the Shoreline Master Plan, the Hyatt Palma Visioning Process, the Urban Design Guidelines, and the Community Cultural Plan, which is an element of the Comprehensive Plan. The Community Cultural Plan was originally completed in 1994, when the Downtown/Waterfront Plan was originally created. However, it was updated in 2001 and will be again in 2005.

Ms. Chapin summarized some of the activities that are taking place now or are planned for the near future. She noted that one of the main five goals of the Community Cultural Plan was to develop facilities for use by artists as gathering places for the public and as cultural destinations for the community and region. The FACE Project is one of these kinds of projects and will bring people to the waterfront all year round. It will provide opportunities for artists, citizens and visitors as a cultural destination.

Ms. Chapin said one facility that actually was an outgrowth of the Community Cultural Plan is the Floral Arts Conference Center. This facility was privately funded, but is now under the guidance and ownership of Edmonds Community College. It provides a much needed gathering space. Ms. Chapin said that the new Artworks Facility would open in one more week. The Edmonds Arts Festival Foundation has worked with the City to lease space in the old public works facility that can be used for artist workshops, special exhibits and other art related activities.

Ms. Chapin said the most exciting project right now in terms of facilities is the Edmonds Center for the Arts. This is a testimony to the dedication of Edmonds in creating a multi-purpose performing arts center. It also preserves the history of the community by preserving the old high school auditorium building. The current plan is to renovate the facility in 2005. The new facility will be 7,040 square feet in size, with parking space provided. It will be accessible by train, car, and the ferry terminal. It will be the closest large performing arts facility for people who live on the Kingston side of the Kitsap Peninsula. Ms. Chapin said the Edmonds Center for the Arts is an exciting project, and it is important to link the new facility with the downtown core, the waterfront and the ferry terminal.

Ms. Chapin concluded that all of the projects she has noted have great potential to be economic drivers. The projection for the Edmonds Center for the Arts is a regular usage of about 85,000 people per year by the fifth year of operation. She emphasized that this type of development shapes the economic, as well as the aesthetic and visual future of the region. She said it is important to keep this in mind. Also, all of the projects have the potential for partnerships in education for both youth and adults.

Ms. Chapin said the public plaza concept has been stressed repeatedly in the Community Cultural Plan. There has been an expressed need for some kind of open plaza area in the downtown for gatherings, concert venues, festivals, and perhaps even the summer market.

Ms. Chapin said Edmonds aspires to being, and in many ways is, a walking community. One of the things the arts can do for a community is enhance pedestrian connections. Art elements are often the features that can entice people along corridors and contribute to people feelings comfortable in physical spaces. Linking the downtown and the waterfront has been a

concern of the community over the years, and art is one way that these linkages can be created. It can also contribute to the scale and the feeling of comfort. She referred to the public art installation that was put in at the intersection of Fifth and Main. While this is a busy intersection, the public art served to create a much more pedestrian friendly atmosphere. They still have the same amount of traffic, but people now enjoy the intersection in a way they didn't before.

Ms. Chapin said that increasing visibility of the arts reaches one of the goals of the Community Cultural Plan. It also contributes towards defining and reinforcing the identity of the downtown and waterfront areas. It certainly adds to the nature of it being a cultural destination. The waterfront walkway is an outstanding example of the use of art and art elements in a pedestrian corridor that is now a destination for many people. Sound Transit has an art program. Because the Edmonds Arts Commission wanted something that is more significant than funding was available for through Sound Transit, they entered into a joint partnership to raise private money. The sculpture has been created and will be sited temporarily at the SR-104 Mini Park. Eventually, the sculpture would be moved to the north end of the loading platforms and will become a landmark in a major gateway to Edmonds.

Ms. Chapin said the concepts of using art elements have been included in previous planning efforts, and the City is now seeing the fruits of some of these efforts in the downtown/waterfront area. The urban design guidelines incorporate numerous ways that art can work to define gateways, corridors, and gathering places through signage, sidewalk inlays, artist designed flower basket poles, stand alone sculptures, etc. She said art continues to be a key component in the planning process in Edmonds. Facilities, the capacity to produce programs, public art, and urban design are all part of what creates a vibrant and economically viable downtown for the future of Edmonds.

Edmonds Community College Activities and Partnerships – Rick Asher

Rick Asher, Dean of Humanities/Social Sciences, Edmonds Community College, said part of his responsibility is to lead a campus-wide initiative to increase the college's presence in the community in arts, culture and civic engagement. In addition, he said he has a role in facilitating the ACT Organization, which is a group of representatives from the City, School District, College, Library, South County Chamber of Commerce and other groups that have a stake in arts culture and civic engagement. Mr. Asher said the college feels very honored to be invited to be a part of the presentation. The college is involved with many of the programs that were presented by Ms. Chapin. They work with the Edmonds Arts Festival Foundation, who has been a great supporter of the College. The College's Art Department has worked very closely with the Arts Festival Board for years.

Mr. Asher said the College is excited about the FACE Project, and the College's Art Department has worked with the developers of that project. They are hoping that not only will the time come when they can do tours through the FACE facility, but that they might also offer classes and send their students there. The College already has ideas for ways they would like to use the Artworks Facility that will be opening soon. The college also uses other facilities throughout the City such as the Frances Anderson Center and the Edmonds Theater.

Mr. Asher advised that the College is very involved with the Edmonds Center for the Arts Project. They hope to use this facility as their major performing venue. At this time, the college does not have an auditorium on campus, even though they have had one of the strongest music programs in the northwest for decades. They have performed everywhere except on campus in a real concert facility. They are excited about being one of the major resident groups in the Edmonds Center for the Arts. They are also exploring the possibility of the college serving, at least in part, to manage that facility. They see this as part of their role in the community. Mr. Asher said they will be considering the possibility of holding a professional technical program in theater arts as a part of that facility so that they could actually offer an educational program tied to the center, training students who would then work in the facility.

Mr. Asher said the Floral Arts Conference Center is currently managed by the College. They have much interest in developing the area from downtown to the Floral Arts Center and to the Center for the Arts. That corridor could be an extension of the downtown with perhaps more commercial businesses so that people can stroll from downtown to the Floral Arts Center and the Edmonds Center for the Arts.

Mr. Asher said the College is and hopes to continue to be part of the various activities that take place in Edmonds. The College has worked closely with the Edmonds Rotary Club for several years on the Jazz Connection that takes place each May. Next week they will start their second year of an international film festival on campus, and they are hoping this will become a community-wide festival using facilities that are located in Edmonds. The College collaborates with the City of Edmonds to sponsor the Writers on the Sound Conference that takes place every year. He said that they love to be part of anything that Edmonds is doing.

Mr. Asher said the College President asked him to make sure that he emphasize that the college is always very interested and willing to be part of economic development in Edmonds. They offer training facilities and other types of support to entice new businesses to the area as well as to support businesses that are already here. The college provides training on or off site. Anything that has to do with economic development is of great interest to the College and they want to be involved. The College President particularly mentioned that the college is interested in the collaborative development of the Dykes Property (Old Safeway site).

Mr. Chave summarized that there is a synergy of events going on in Edmonds at this time, and this may present some unique opportunities for future planning. The Board is looking forward to working with each of the groups throughout the year as they update the Downtown/Waterfront Plan.

Board Member Dewhirst noted that the Port's current master plan only covers the Port property west of the railroad tracks. He questioned if the Port Commission has considered the possibility of including the area to the east in their new master plan. Mr. Keuss answered that the Port does own the property where the Harbor Square Business Park and Harbor Square Athletic Club is located. It is currently under lease by Harbor Square Associates. Over the years, the Port Commission has discussed redevelopment opportunities with Harbor Square Associates, and these negotiations will continue. The Commission has expressed interest in reviewing the property for inclusion in the Downtown/Waterfront Plan.

THE BOARD TOOK A FIVE-MINUTES RECESS AT 7:05. THEY RECONVENED AT 7:10 P.M.

READING/APPROVAL OF MINUTES

BOARD MEMBER CRIM MOVED THAT THE MINUTES OF JANUARY 14, 2004 BE APPROVED AS CORRECTED. BOARD MEMBER DEWHIRST SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF AGENDA

There were no changes made to the proposed agenda. However, Board Member Freeman noted that the fourth bulleted item under Item 6a should read, "Increase the fee for employee parking permits by \$25/year."

AUDIENCE COMMENTS

There was no one in the audience who expressed a desire to address the Board during the portion of the meeting.

PUBLIC HEARING ON THE DRAFT DOWNTOWN PARKING STUDY

Mr. Bullock reviewed the history of the draft downtown parking study. In 2003 the City Council commissioned a parking study for the downtown area. This study has been completed, and the City Council accepted the findings towards the end of 2003. They directed the Planning Board to review the document and consider the changes they feel are justified with the current chapter of the Edmonds Community Development Code (ECDC) as it relates to parking. He said tonight's hearing is a preliminary public hearing to accept public testimony and find out how the public feels about the parking consultant's recommendations. He noted that throughout the study process, the consultant talked with stakeholders, property owners, and

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others in the downtown area. This public hearing is the Board's opportunity to solicit comments that can be considered when looking at potential changes in the code related to parking requirements and parking management in the downtown area.

Mr. Bullock said that one major finding identified in the study is that the downtown area has more than enough parking available when all of the on-site and on-street parking is considered. The consultant did an inventory of the parking and looked to see how many cars used the stalls at any given time in the City. The consultant also completed a turn over study to see how long cars stayed in a particular spot. Mr. Bullock referred to the graph that was provided to illustrate the findings of the term over study. The study indicates that the majority of the people parking in the pedestrian oriented retail stalls were there for less than one hour at a time. Only 13 percent stayed for the entire day.

Mr. Bullock said that the current code allows the City to issue employee parking permits to employees of downtown businesses so they can park in the three-hour parking spaces that are located in the outlying streets for longer than three hours. However, employee parking permits cannot be used to park in the downtown core. He noted that of the more than 500 parking spaces available for employee parking, only 350 permits were issued last year.

Mr. Bullock explained that the parking study consultant identified the total number of on-street and on-site parking spaces that were available in the downtown area and divided this number by the amount of square footage of building space. The consultant found the ratio to be one parking space for every 500 square feet of building. The consultant believes the City is over parked for what they need right now, and he made several recommendations for change. The consultant emphasized the importance of managing the parking resource for the good of the entire downtown.

Mr. Bullock reviewed the conclusions and recommendations presented by the consultant in the report. He noted that all of the recommendations fall into two major areas of change. One deals with the management of on-street parking through permits, fees and time limits. The second area relates to off-street parking regulations and the amount of parking required by buildings and uses in the downtown area.

Mr. Bullock advised that the consultant has recommended several modifications to the ECDC to accommodate on-site parking. He reviewed each as follows:

- There should be a flat parking rate for all new commercial development of one parking stall for every 500 square feet of gross commercial space.
- Because the zone allows for mixed use, residential uses should be required to provide one parking stall for each residential unit.
- Regardless of how little or how much parking is now available for existing buildings in the downtown, they should be considered as having enough parking. From the Planning Department's perspective, one of their trials is trying to determine what uses are allowed to go into a building. The current code requires that anytime a use is changed to a more intense use than what was originally located on the site, businesses must find additional parking to meet the requirements for the more intense use. The Downtown Parking Committee, as well as Planning Department staff, believes this is a barrier for businesses who want to locate in the downtown area. The proposed change could potentially make it easier for businesses to locate in the downtown area.
- The in-lieu-of parking program should be eliminated. During the 20 years of its existence, it has not accumulated enough funds to allow the City to purchase land and develop a public parking lot or garage. The money collected has allowed the City to do a parking study and other things related to parking, but it has never come anywhere close to realizing its intended goal. If the recommended changes were made to the ECDC, there would be very little incentive or need to use the in-lieu-of parking program.

Mr. Bullock advised that the consultant's second set of recommendations are related to parking management issues. He briefly reviewed the consultant's recommendations as follows:

- Allow parking permits for 100 percent of the employees of businesses in the downtown area. This would allow more of the 500 parking stalls that qualify for employee parking to be utilized. Currently, the code allows up to 50 percent of the employees of a downtown business to purchase parking permits.

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- Increase the employee permit fee from \$25 to \$50 per year.
- Develop a plan that would prohibit employee parking on the primary downtown retail streets.
- Raise the fee for parking violations.
- Improve signage to better identify public parking areas.
- Ensure that there is an adequate enforcement policy and program.

Mr. Bullock referred the Board to the memorandum they received from staff prior to the public hearing. This memorandum included draft language for ECDC 17.50, which is the City's off-street parking regulation. He said that in the draft, staff attempted to address some of the recommendations made by the consultant as they relate to the requirements for on-site parking for new development in the downtown area. Staff's intent was to encourage discussion and make sure there is a lively debate so the Board can obtain as much benefit as possible from the public hearing. However, it was not the staff intent to limit the public hearing to the off-street parking regulations. He emphasized that the Board is soliciting comments on all aspects of the study.

Mr. Dewhirst said that when he read through the study, he was surprised that there was no mention of commuter parking in the downtown area. He recalled that a few years ago ferry commuter parking was a big issue in the City. Mr. Bullock said commuter parking is still a problem, but not as significant as in the past because of the changes made previously to the parking restrictions. He noted that there is a small mention of commuter parking in the report, and staff has been working with the City's Traffic Engineer to address this issue as part of the management strategies proposal that will come before the Board later in the year.

Board Member Freeman inquired if the requirement of one parking stall for every 500 square feet of space is the minimum that would be allowed. Mr. Bullock answered affirmatively. He advised that the Board could decide to change that number.

Board Member Young asked how the City would enforce the employee parking regulations. While he agrees with the concept, if there is really a problem, it will be up to the employers to deal with it. Mr. Bullock answered that enforcement is yet to be determined. He noted that one idea is to use the in-lieu-of funds to purchase some hardware for traffic enforcement staff to use. This would allow them to monitor parkers by license plate number. They could then check the license plate back to a data base of employees and the enforcement officer could ticket based on this information. He cautioned that enforcement is a big issue that will ultimately be left up to the City Council.

Board Member Young opened the public hearing. He noted that the Board received written correspondence from Mr. Don Kreiman.

Bob Gregg, 16550 – 76th Avenue West, said he is the developer of the two projects at Fifth and Walnut. He referred to ECDC 17.50.01(C), which applies to parking in the downtown business area. He said he strongly supports the recommended change as proposed. He specifically referred to the note that was provided for Section C.1. He said the consultant has suggested that building space of 1,500 square feet or less be exempted from the requirement completely. He said that while there is precedence for this in other areas, the pedestrian zone in Green Lake has exempted anything that is 5,000 square feet or less. He said that while he could live without this exemption, there is definitely a precedent for it.

Next Mr. Gregg referred to the note that was provided for Section C.2. He said the consultant is recommending one parking stall for every residential unit in the downtown area. Mr. Gregg said he agrees that this would be appropriate since mixed-use development must also provide parking for the commercial spaces. Typically, the commercial parking spaces are empty during the evening hours when more residential parking is needed. To require two parking spaces per residential unit plus the commercial parking spaces would result in having too much parking available. He agreed with the consultant that for mixed-use buildings, one space per residential unit would be appropriate.

Mr. Gregg shared his experience in developing the mixed-use building at the corner of Fifth and Walnut, which was completed within the past six months using the current zoning regulations. He said this project was not designed to meet the unique conditions on the site. It was designed to meet the parking requirements. They had to limit the number of residential units to ten because that was all the parking they could fit in. In addition to providing two parking spaces per residential unit, they were also required to provide eleven on-site parking spaces for the commercial space. The parking lot is empty

right now. The first three units were purchased by people who have only one car. He noted that the business space is still vacant. He explained that this is not due to lack of interest. They have had to turn down interested businesses such as a floral shop, art studio, laser eye clinic, and numerous small food shops because there is not adequate parking space to meet the parking requirements. Offices with no walk in customers are the only types of commercial uses that would be allowed in the building. He said he would anticipate filling this space within 30 days after the proposed changes are implemented. He said perspective tenants are surprised at the amount of parking that is available on site.

Mr. Gregg referred to his project on the other side of Fifth and Walnut. A design has been drawn showing 22 residential units, but this cannot be built because they will not be able to obtain financing as a result of the significant number of parking stalls that are required for the residential units. The average price of these units would have to be over \$500,000. If the regulations were changed as proposed, they would still have to provide 22 stalls for the residential uses and 30 stalls for the commercial uses. However, by reducing the number of parking stalls required, the average price of the units would drop to less than \$300,000. He said he would wait to proceed with this project until after the parking regulations have been changed. If the regulations were changed, Mr. Gregg concluded that developers would be able to provide affordable housing with more than ample parking, as well as the kinds of businesses the City wants to encourage on the lower level of mixed-use developments. The proposed changes would help to revitalize the downtown area, and he encouraged the Board to recommend approval.

Chris Guitton, Executive Director, Greater Edmonds Chamber of Commerce, 1012 Viewland Way, thanked the staff for having been so helpful in keeping the Chamber informed and for discussing issues and solutions with them since May of 2003. He thanked the Board for their time as well.

Mr. Guitton said the Chamber supports most of the recommendations being made by the consultant and staff at this time. They agree with Mr. Gregg that the proposed changes would be a great improvement for businesses in the downtown. The Chamber does, however, have two issues to call to the Board's attention. First, the Chamber is concerned that the parking requirement for commercial buildings with no on-site visitors would go from one space for every 800 square feet to one space for every 500 square feet. This would create a condition where new commercial buildings with no on-site visitors would no longer be constructed in the downtown area.

Mr. Guitton said the Chamber's second concern is related to the employee parking permit requirements. If the City is going to enforce parking more seriously, they will actually force employees to purchase permits. Since the consultant is also proposing that the parking permit fee be doubled, the end result is that an employer's parking costs could quadruple. While this would still be a very affordable parking cost, they should keep in mind that the net cost would be four times greater, and it might be difficult to sell the change to the downtown business owners.

Mr. Guitton concluded his statements by saying he believes the proposed changes are good and would benefit the business owners in the downtown area significantly. He urged them to recommend approval.

Karen Wiggins, Chair of the Downtown Edmonds Parking Committee, 152 Third Avenue South, said that she and her husband have 40 years of construction history in Edmonds. She referred to Mr. Guitton's concerns related to employee parking permits. She clarified that just because the City would allow employers to purchase parking permits for 100 percent of their employees, it does not mean they would be required to do so. The permits would be available for those businesses that need them. For instance, owners of older buildings typically purchase permits for employees so that they can keep the parking that is available near their business for customers only.

Ms. Wiggins explained that the Downtown Edmonds Parking Committee has been trying to complete the parking study for the past seven years, and she urged the Board to move forward with a recommendation to the City Council as soon as possible. She noted that she also has a concern with changing the parking requirement for commercial uses in the downtown to one parking space for every 500 square feet of commercial space. Buildings that are all commercial would not be able to meet the parking requirements. In fact, she suggested that even mixed-use developments would have to provide compact parking spaces in order to meet the requirement. She suggested that perhaps there should be a separate parking requirement for buildings that are all commercial.

Ms. Wiggins reported that the parking study indicated that there were many empty parking spaces, and part of this was due to vacancies. However, it is importance to understand that requiring more parking spaces could result in more empty space in buildings. She suggested that maybe the City could consider some changes that would help the new buildings that have been developed but remain vacant because the parking requirements do not allow certain uses. She said it is a shame that property owners have to turn away good businesses. Mr. Bullock pointed out that the proposed changes would help these property owners out significantly. The residential parking requirement would be changed to one parking space per unit.

Ms. Wiggins said the Downtown Parking Committee talked about the problems associated with commuter parking. The consultant has suggested that the City create an ordinance that would prohibit overnight parking. Parking permits could be issued to people living in the residential units to allow them to use the on-street parking spaces. This type of an ordinance would help resolve the problems associated with commuter parking.

Ms. Wiggins said the Downtown Parking Committee spoke with a representative from the Police Department, who indicated that they give tickets to cars parked on the street during the night for more than the time limit allowed. So commuter parking is still a problem. Maybe the reason it has not been brought up for quite some time is that the property owners who are impacted have given up.

Ms. Wiggins said there currently is a problem with employees parking along the street in prime shopping areas. The parking committee modeled an ordinance that has been used successfully by the City of Kirkland for a number of years. Their ordinance restricts employee parking to certain areas.

Earl Garrison, 210 Third Avenue South, said that Ms. Wiggins covered most of his issues. However, it appears that the public hearing is slanted an awful lot at the inner City area and not towards the fringes of the downtown area where he lives. He questioned what could be done about people parking for days at a time along his street without receiving any violation notice. He questioned if the City has an enforcement officer to take care of these situations. He said people living along these streets are being significantly impacted by employees who are forced to park outside of the downtown core. He said that in order for him to get a parking spot in front of his home, he would have to get up at 5 a.m. or wait until 10 p.m. He said he is concerned about what can be done or will be done about forcing the people that need to park in the City into the fringe areas that are neighborhoods. A lot of cars are parked there during the days, and most do not have permits. While the City has given him a permit to park in front of his home, he can never find a spot.

Brad Butterfield, 654 Fifth Avenue South, Suite 300, said that for the past 20 years his firm has been fortunate enough to provide architectural services for numerous projects in the Edmonds BC zone. He said he has worked on mixed-use buildings in the downtown area, and one of his projects includes the largest underground parking garage in the downtown. After all of his experience in working with the City staff, the proposed changes are a breath of fresh air. He asked that the Planning Board wholeheartedly recommend that the City Council approve the recommendations. They make a lot of sense and will allow developers to offer more affordable housing, especially the consultant's recommendation to change the parking requirement to one parking space for every residential unit.

Mr. Butterfield invited the Board Members to visit his underground parking garage at the Windermere Building after 5 p.m. It is virtually empty. He said it makes sense for the City to start looking at the mix between the residential parking that is needed in the evenings and what is needed for the commercial uses during the daytime hours. He urged the Board to accept the recommended changes as submitted.

Robert Applebee, 3840 Northeast 155th Street, Lake Forest Park, said that for the last two years he has worked in downtown Edmonds. He said he finds the parking study to be an excellent reflection of what he has seen over the past few years. He works in offices in different locations and ends up parking in both on-site and on-street parking. He moves around a lot, but he has never had a problem finding a parking space. He concluded that the parking study is reflective of the actual conditions that exists, and he supports the recommendations as proposed.

Don Kreiman, 24006 – 95th Place West, said he is in favor of the consultant's proposed changes with a few modifications as follows:

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- Increase the cost of a long-term employee parking permits only \$5 per year, not \$25.
- Do not exclude employees from parking downtown and do not fine them if they do. Enforcing the three-hour limit should eliminate the problem.
- Do not convert the 4th Street parking lot to three-hour parking. The City would incur a \$4,200 annual loss of revenue per the parking study. This money could be used to fund the parking enforcement officer.
- Have the parking enforcement employee be the responsibility of the Development Director. The employee could also act as a liaison to the downtown merchants, providing answers about City codes and ordinances, thereby increasing good will.

Mr. Kreiman suggested that parking should be managed like a business. Anyone should be allowed to lease a long-term parking permit at market rates in designated areas. There is ample room since at the peak of sales only 350 of the 500 available permits were leased and that number has been declining. The City leases two lots for long-term parking at a rate of \$35 per month per space. These lots are full, and according to the parking study, have a ten-year waiting list. This is pent-up demand, and may also resolve the potential problem of ferry travelers parking illegally in Edmonds neighborhoods.

Mr. Kreiman thanked the Downtown Parking Committee for all of their hard work. He said he applauds the parking study and hopes it gets passed, especially to allow the uses of the building to dictate what the parking should be.

City Council Member Dave Orvis, 7828 – 93rd Place Southwest, emphasized that he was not present to speak on behalf of the City Council. He said he likes the parking study because of what it would mean for the average citizen in Edmonds, as well as visitors. It means they would have more opportunities to park. There are immediate things that could be done to improve the situation such as changing on-street parking to three-hour parking. Once implemented, downtown parking spaces would no longer be tied up with long-term parking. He said he also believes that providing better signage to identify the location of available parking would help. He also likes the concept of requiring employees to park outside of the downtown core area.

Council Member Orvis said that while reducing the parking standard for residential development in the downtown is a controversial issue, the proposed change should help developers fill their vacant commercial space. Half of the parking spaces that have been set aside for residential uses could be used for commercial uses. This would allow a greater variety of commercial uses to occupy the commercial spaces, and visitors and residents will benefit by having more variety. He said that one of the main drawbacks to siting a business in Edmonds is the in-lieu-of parking fund. He agreed that this fund should be eliminated, and he would like to encourage more businesses that are geared towards customers coming into the shops. He felt the City should encourage restaurants and retail shops in the downtown area. Council Member Orvis said it is also important to grandfather older businesses. These businesses typically have higher ceilings which are more conducive to business. It is important to make better economic use of the older buildings so that they can preserve some of the history of the downtown.

As far as strategy, Council Member Orvis suggested that it would be best for the Board to split the issue into two logical parts such as employee parking requirements and development standard changes. If the issue were brought before the City Council in separate pieces, controversy over one recommendation would not prevent other recommendations from moving forward. This type of process would increase the likelihood that all of the recommendations would go forward.

Board Member Crim asked about the total square footage of the Fifth and Walnut Building that was just completed. Mr. Gregg answered that the commercial level is 7,500 square feet including the common area. Board Member Crim suggested that rather than having different parking standards depending upon the use, one parking space should be required for every 500 square feet of building space. This standard could apply to whatever use is in the building (commercial or residential) and would make it simple for the staff to figure out. Mr. Gregg suggested that it would be difficult for the City to blend the residential and commercial parking standards together. Residential units range from 900 to 2,400 square feet in size, whereas the commercial space could be measured in one lump. He said the current code has different parking standards for every type of use. The benefit of standardizing the requirements, even though it may result in a higher requirement in some cases, is that building owners and developers would know exactly what the requirements are. He said he supports the requirement of one parking space for every 500 square feet of commercial property. He explained that his new building was

designed to meet the current standards, but it does not meeting the market requirements. If the proposed changes were adopted, the plans would meet the market codes.

Board Member Crim recalled that the Board has previously discussed the transition of the buildings on the fringe of the BC zone. If the consultants' recommendation of requiring one parking space for every 500 square feet of commercial space is approved, the commercial space could be occupied by a variety of uses that are not currently allowed because of the parking restrictions. He suggested that it is also important to allow residential space to transition into business space over time so that ground floor levels could be used for something other than residential.

Board Member Dewhirst said it is his understanding that if the City had no parking requirements, a developer would have to satisfy the requirements of the financial institution in order to obtain financing. Mr. Gregg answered that banks look at development plans, and developers are required to hire a consulting firm to identify what would work, what the market would demand, and what the institution would finance. The parking required by financial institutions fits closely with what is being proposed by the consultant. He noted that with his new project, the financial institution is requiring him to provide at least 60 parking stalls.

Board Member Freeman agreed with the consultant that it is important to grandfather existing buildings. However, she questioned whether grandfathering would go far enough to protect older buildings and allow them to be rebuilt if they are significantly damaged by earthquake, fire, etc. Mr. Bullock referred to the non-conformance section of the code, and explained that if a building is destroyed by more than 50 percent of its value, it would have to be rebuilt in conformance with the existing code requirements. This could potentially be a problem when trying to save the downtown buildings. Board Member Freeman said she feels it is very important for the City to make provisions for these buildings.

Mr. Chave said the City Attorney would be addressing the impact of non-conformance on historic buildings specifically. Perhaps this would provide an opportunity to offer an incentive for a property owner to list the building on the Register of Historic Places.

Board Member Works asked staff to describe the current parking enforcement situation. Mr. Bullock said the City shares a parking enforcement officer with the City of Mountlake Terrace, and this officer has to split the duties between parking enforcement and animal control. However, the animal control aspect takes first priority. The way it is currently set up, it is difficult for the parking enforcement officer to mark tires and keep track of how long cars have been parked in specific locations.

Mr. Chave advised that at the next Planning Board Meeting, the Board would be reviewing potential code amendments and administrative actions required to implement the parking study. The idea is to talk about specific code amendments that would be necessary. The Board could invite a representative from the Police Department to talk about enforcement of parking regulations.

Board Member Works expressed her concern about the parking enforcement officer using technology to record license plate numbers. She suggested that visitors to downtown Edmonds might be uncomfortable with having their license numbers checked. Mr. Bullock clarified that the officer would only be checking plates to make sure the cars do not belong to downtown business employees. No data would be collected on other visitors to the downtown. Board Member Crim asked how the officer would differentiate between an employee who comes downtown to work or to shop. Employees should be allowed to park anywhere in the downtown while they are shopping.

Board Member Hopkins inquired if it is staff's intent to replace ECDC 17.05.02.B with the requirement of one parking space for every 500 square feet of office space. If so, would it apply to the entire downtown business area? Mr. Bullock answered affirmatively, and clarified that it would only apply to the BC zoned areas in the downtown. The standards in this section would still apply to other areas in the City.

Board Member Young asked how the consultant came up with his recommendation that one parking space be required for every 500 square feet of commercial space. Mr. Bullock answered that the consultant reviewed the City's current parking regulations and the various types of business uses to determine the current ratio for parking space to commercial areas. He

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also considered how much of that parking space is currently be used. The consultant's calculations indicated that the existing parking availability is close to one parking space for every 500 square feet of commercial space. The consultant has recommended that this amount of parking would not be considered over parked, and it is a very appropriate parking pattern for the downtown. Because the existing situation is one parking space for every 500 square feet of commercial space, that is what the consultant recommended for the new standard.

Mr. Chave added that the proposed ratio for commercial parking would continue to support mixed uses in the downtown. He cautioned that the City probably does not want to encourage the construction of office buildings with no on-site service. That is not the type of business that is contemplated for the downtown area.

Mr. Bullock said staff believes that most of the debate and controversy will center around changes to the development standards. Therefore, staff would be supportive of having something built into the ordinance that would require a reevaluation of the development standards after a year or two. However, he emphasized that staff believes that taking some action now would be better than continuing at status quo.

Board Member Dewhirst expressed his concern that the Board not drag this issue out for an extended period of time. He said he worked in a community that decided to get rid of parking standards altogether. They only retained a few standards relating to residential development. They waited for problems to occur, and five years later found it is still working. He said that because lenders require developers to meet certain parking standards, there has not been a problem. He said it does not make sense to him to reduce the parking requirements for condos and single-family residential development to one space for every unit, but still require two spaces for every unit in multi-family developments in the downtown. He said that in a space that is tight like the downtown area, it doesn't make sense to require two parking spaces per unit when the goal is to get more density and uses. Again, he said he does not see the point of having parking standards at all for the BC zone.

Board Member Dewhirst agreed with City Council Member Orvis, that the Board should package their recommendations separately. That way, one controversial issue will not sink the entire project. He said he would like the staff to work with the numbers and see what would happen if the City had no parking standards for commercial development in the downtown. He asked that staff contact financial institutions to find out what they would require. He felt that one parking space for every 500 square feet seemed too high.

The Board directed staff to gather information from financial institutions regarding their parking requirements. They also asked staff to look at projects that have occurred in the downtown and see what the difference would be if the proposed parking standards were applied. The Board also agreed to separate the recommendations into packages for City Council review as recommended by Council Member Orvis.

Board Member Dewhirst agreed with Board Member Freeman that the Board should further review the non-conforming standards as they relate to the parking requirements for buildings that are destroyed and need to be replaced. Board Member Crim agreed, also, and suggested that rather than requiring buildings to be listed on the historic register, the standards should apply to all buildings that are grandfathered. He noted that there are some disadvantages to being listed on the historic register. Board Member Freeman said she, too, would rather the City created non-conformance standards that apply to all grandfathered structures in the City.

Mr. Bullock said that, at this point in time, staff is still waiting for additional information from the City Attorney's office related to the non-conformance chapter of the Code. However, staff could contemplate how the City might deal with the parking requirements for non-conforming structures and provide some ideas for the Board to consider.

Board Member Young said the testimony provided by the public was excellent, and the Board now has a basis for reviewing the proposed revisions. However, there were some legitimate questions raised that need to be addressed before the Board can make a recommendation to the City Council. He said he does not want to drag this issue out longer than necessary, but perhaps staff could provide additional feedback to the Board at their last meeting in February. The remainder of the Board agreed that this item should be scheduled for discussion at the February 25th meeting.

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UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Board Member Young said he had an electronic discussion with two of the Board Members regarding the Board's recommendation on the hedge regulation that was forwarded to the City Council for consideration. He reported that at the January 27th City Council Meeting, the City Council agreed to back the concept of the City getting out of the business of regulating hedges. He suggested that the Board members read the details of the City Council's discussion when their minutes become available.

Board Member Young said a few Board Members have expressed a concern about the way the ordinance was written. There are provisions in the findings that make reference to allegations that he does not feel are appropriate for the ordinance. He referred to the "whereas statement" relating to the vast sums of public money that is being expended on enforcement of the existing hedge regulations. He noted that no specific dollar amounts have been identified and the proposed change is not likely to save the City a considerable amount of money.

Board Member Freeman referred to the term "embroiling the City into the disputes," which is part of one of the "whereas statements". She recalled previous Board discussion that the word "embroiling" should be replaced with "involving."

Mr. Bowman advised that the City Council has set the public hearing on the hedge regulation ordinance for March 2nd. If the Board wants to make additional changes, they should get these to him as soon as possible. He can then redraft the ordinance as directed by the Board and advertise the ordinance to the public with the new language.

Board Member Crim recalled previous Board discussion that the Community Development Code is not the place to regulate issues such as hedges. They agreed that the real reason for their recommendation that the City get out of the business of regulating hedges was that the City did not have the power to do it effectively. This should be made clear in the ordinance.

BOARD MEMBER CRIM MOVED THAT THE ORDINANCE BE AMENDED BY CHANGING THE SECOND WHEREAS STATEMENT TO READ, "WHEREAS, THE CITY COUNCIL FINDS THE ENFORCEMENT OF THE CITY'S CURRENT HEDGE REGULATIONS IS EXTREMELY DIFFICULT; AND" BOARD MEMBER FREEMAN SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

Mr. Chave reviewed that the February 11th agenda would include a quarterly report from the Parks Department, a review of the City Park site access and circulation plan, a review by the City Attorney on methadone treatment facility regulations, a City Attorney review on the essential public facilities regulations, and a discussion related to the parking regulations.

Board Member Dewhirst questioned when the Board would have an opportunity to follow up on questions they have related to the presentation by public agencies on downtown plans and projects. Mr. Chave said this discussion should probably be scheduled on the February 11th agenda, as well. Board Member Dewhirst said he has a lot of questions and it would be good to have an opportunity to ask follow up questions of the presenters. He said the Board also needs to discuss how they plan to break up into committees to discuss the various aspects of the Comprehensive Plan review.

Board Member Works inquired if the Board is still planning to have a retreat. Mr. Chave said the Board should schedule a date for the retreat to occur. Board Member Dewhirst suggested that perhaps the retreat would be the appropriate time for the committees to report their findings back to the Board. Board Member Young suggested that a retreat be held soon so that the Board can talk about dividing into committees and how this work would fall into the Comprehensive Plan process.

PLANNING BOARD CHAIR COMMENTS

Board Member Young reported on the Highway 99 Task Force. He advised that two focus group meetings were held with residents living along the Highway 99 corridor. Participation was good, and the residents really wanted to feel more a part of

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Edmonds. They appreciated the opportunity to participate in the process. They indicated that the traffic along Highway 99 really did not bother them, but they do not want any changes that would cause more cut through traffic in the neighborhoods. They also indicated that they did not want to have more multi-family development along the corridor, but that has been identified as one of the goals for Highway 99.

Board Member Young advised that the next set of focus group meetings would be with the business owners during the last weeks of February. The focus group meetings are headed by John Owens and the Makers Group. Once they have gathered and summarized the information from both sets of focus groups, they will make a presentation to the Planning Board about what people who are in the Highway 99 corridor think the next logical steps should be. This presentation should take place sometime in mid March.

Mr. Chave reported that the City Council considered the Board's recommendation on the amateur radio antenna regulations at their January 27th meeting. They scheduled a February 17th public hearing on the recommendation as forwarded by the Board. The staff also provided the City Council with a package of all the work the Board has done on the quasi-judicial decision making process. Staff advised that the Board had concluded that the City Council should get out of the quasi-judicial making process as much as possible. The City Council basically concurred, and asked that the Board forward a code amendment to that effect for their consideration.

Board Member Young noted that the City Council requested that the representative from the WCIA provide them with the same presentation that he made before the Planning Board. They noted that this would allow the City Council to televise this important information to the members of the community to clarify why the quasi-judicial decision making process should be revised.

PLANNING BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Board Member Freeman said she watched a portion of the January 27th City Council Meeting on television. She expressed her concern that one City Council member suggested that people do not come to the Planning Board meetings because they are awkward to attend. Board Member Freeman noted that the Planning Board meetings are held at the same time in the evening and in the same location as the City Council meetings. She said she would like this statement to be clarified for the public.

THE MEETING ADJOURNED AT 9:02 P.M.

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