

**APPROVED MAY 8<sup>TH</sup>**

**CITY OF EDMONDS  
PLANNING BOARD MINUTES**

**April 24, 2013**

---

Chair Reed called the meeting of the Edmonds Planning Board to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers, Public Safety Complex, 250 – 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue North.

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT**

John Reed, Chair  
Valerie Stewart, Vice Chair  
Todd Cloutier  
Bill Ellis  
Philip Lovell  
Neil Tibbott

**STAFF PRESENT**

Stephen Clifton, Community Services/Economic Development Director  
Mike Clugston, Senior Planner  
Karin Noyes, Recorder

**OTHERS PRESENT**

Jim Underhill, Highway 99 Task Force

**BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT**

Kevin Clarke (excused)  
Ian Duncan (excused)

**READING/APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**VICE CHAIR STEWART MOVED THAT THE MINUTES OF MARCH 27, 2013, BE APPROVED AS AMENDED. BOARD MEMBER TIBBOTT SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**ANNOUNCEMENT OF AGENDA**

The agenda was accepted as presented.

**AUDIENCE COMMENTS**

No one in the audience indicated a desire to address the Board during this portion of the meeting.

**HIGHWAY 99 CORRIDOR UPDATE**

Mr. Clifton advised that he was present, at the request of the Planning Board, to provide an update on several of the activities and projects that are either under way or planned for the Highway 99 Corridor. He noted that Jim Underhill, Chair of the Highway 99 Task Force, was also present to participate in the presentation. He specifically reviewed the following:

- **State Route (SR) 99 International District Enhancement Project.** In 2004 the City contracted with Makers and Berk & Associates to complete an enhancement study and accompanying market analysis to assess design and economic issues relevant to business growth along the Highway 99 Corridor in Edmonds. Their key recommendation was to build on the burgeoning cluster of international businesses that are largely anchored by the Ranch 99 Supermarket, BooHan Plaza and other specialty plazas. The International District is located between 238<sup>th</sup> Street Southwest and 224<sup>th</sup> Street Southwest on SR 99. The goal is to help strengthen the International District's identity by improving visual

identity/aesthetics and pedestrian comfort with new gateway elements, including new artist-made, pedestrian-level lighting, new district signage on custom light poles, resurfacing of the island at 76<sup>th</sup> Avenue West and the addition of a solar-lit sculptural piece on the island as part of the gateway. Through a competitive process that was facilitated by Cultural Services staff and the Edmonds Arts Commission, Seattle Artist Pam Beyette was selected to design and fabricate pedestrian lighting arms and a stand-alone sculptural piece. The graphic district identification signs were designed by FORMA. The goal is to create a visual gateway and identify the Edmonds International District while enhancing the pedestrian experience and safety. Construction of the project is underway and should be completed by the end of June. A celebration event will then be scheduled.

- **Swedish Edmonds.** The new cancer treatment center opened on April 2<sup>nd</sup> at the east side of the campus near SR 99. The public was invited to attend a celebration and tour the new facility on April 17<sup>th</sup>. The new center allows people in the community to receive necessary treatment without having to travel to the eastside, Everett, or Seattle. City staff has met with representatives of Swedish Edmonds to discuss development issues prior to them undertaking master planning for the campus. They anticipate a master plan application will be submitted to the City within the next year.
- **Community Health Centers of Snohomish County Building.** Community Health Centers of Snohomish County is proposing to construct a new 25,000 square foot facility along SR 99, just south of Les Schwab Tires. Site plans and elevation drawings have been submitted to the City, indicating that the building will be constructed to meet LEED Silver standards.
- **Connecting with Our Community.** Edmonds Community College (ECC) hosted a “Connecting with Our Community” breakfast on March 6<sup>th</sup>. This was a “meet and greet” event to begin the process of connecting with business owners in the vicinity of the International District as a first step in improving relationships. Attendees included business owners from the International District area and representatives from ECC, the City of Edmonds and the Chamber of Commerce.
- **Behar Project.** Renovation of the old Shuck’s and O’Brien Auto Parts store at the southeast corner of the intersection at SR 99 and 228<sup>th</sup> Street Southwest into three leasable business spaces is nearly complete. A sign package application was reviewed by the Architectural Design Board (ADB) on April 3<sup>rd</sup>, and the property owner is currently seeking tenants. The property owner, Behar Company, previously submitted an application to the City to develop a mixed-use project (Edmonds Green) on this property. However, as a result of the economic downturn that started in 2008, he was unable to move the project forward. The project would have provided approximately 130,000 square feet of retail space, 70,000 square feet of office space, and 237 residential units. A video of the proposed project can be viewed by visiting the Behar Company’s website. The property owner has indicated that if he could find someone to lease at least 100,000 square feet of commercial space, the project could move forward within the next year. Staff has contacted the ECC and a number of businesses to see if they would be interested in leasing space in this location.
- **Edmonds Gateway/SR 99 Revitalization Project – Phase 1.** The City staff and elected officials are working with Representative Marko Liias to secure \$10 million in this year’s state budget to allow the City to begin planning for Phase I of this project. The City recognizes that they cannot replicate the significant transition that occurred in the City of Shoreline. Unlike the City of Shoreline’s portion of SR 99, the City of Edmonds’ portion has been built out with sidewalks on both sides. However, the project could include wider replacement sidewalks, new street lighting, center medians, better stormwater management, landscaping, etc. At this time \$10 million has been included in the Senate or House Transportation Budget, and the City is hopeful that the funding will be approved.
- **228th Street Southwest Corridor Improvement Project.** As part of this project, a new roadway will be added from SR 99 to 76<sup>th</sup> Avenue West, creating a new east/west connection from SR 99 to Interstate 5 and the Mountlake Terrace Park-n-Ride. The project also includes installing new traffic signals at the intersections of SR 99 and 228th Street Southwest and 76<sup>th</sup> Avenue West and 228<sup>th</sup> Street Southwest. The center median will be extended on a portion of SR 99 to restrict left turns and improve safety. Sidewalks would be added on both sides of the street. The project is fully funded by grants, with no City match required. The City received a \$536,000 Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Surface Transportation Grant for design and right-of-way acquisition to improve safety at the intersection, and a \$4,233,000 FHWA Highway Safety Improvement Program Grant for additional design, right-of-way acquisition and construction. This is the largest grant that any City in the state received, and he congratulated the Public Works Department staff. The design work is 75% complete and the right-of-way acquisition phase is taking place now.

Construction should take place between May and December of 2014. In addition to the previously mentioned grants, the City also received grant funding to complete Phase 3 of the lighting project on SR 99. They are working to get the design work done so the lighting project can be combined with the 228<sup>th</sup> Street Southwest Corridor Improvement Project. This will enable them to reduce construction costs.

- **Highway 99 Task Force.** The Highway 99 Task Force works to focus on the “big picture” for the community that surrounds the highway. For example, there are many long-standing, stable neighborhoods with good and affordable housing. It is important to identify development possibilities and address the needs of these neighborhoods at the same time.
- **Connections to the Interurban Trail.** The City must figure out a way to draw people from the Interurban Trail to the SR 99 Corridor. It is important to capture some dollars and provide services to the daily and weekend riders. One idea is to provide signage directing people to certain amenities, restaurants, stores and the hospital facilities. Riders take note of which communities serve their rides and then it is noted on a blog or website.
- **Community Transit’s Rapid Ride Bus Service (Swift).** There are two stops along the Edmonds portion of SR 99 for the Swift line, which allows riders to go all the way from Everett to Aurora Village, where they connect with Metro buses to take them to downtown Seattle and elsewhere. Although Community Transit cut service in recent years by 37%, the Swift line has become the agency’s highest ridership route, frequently drawing more than 100,000 riders per day. In 2012, one of every seven Community Transit passengers rode a Swift bus. Between 2010 and 2012, the Swift rapid transit service along SR 99 between Everett and Shoreline has seen a 59% increase in the number of boardings per hour.

Board Member Lovell pointed out that the new light poles in the International District seem to be spaced too far apart to provide adequate pedestrian lighting. Mr. Clifton said the space is consistent with the lighting analysis. Board Member Lovell asked how much of the project has been completed. Mr. Clifton answered that, as the result of a weather-related work stoppage, Phase 2 is not quite finished. The remainder of Phase 2 will proceed in June. As he reported earlier, the City recently received funding to move forward with Phase 3 of the project, perhaps in conjunction with the 228<sup>th</sup> Street Southwest Corridor Improvement Project.

Board Member Lovell observed that the three commercial spaces that were recently created when the building at the corner of 228<sup>th</sup> Street Southwest and SR 99 (Behar Property) was renovated are still vacant. Mr. Clifton agreed that the property owner is currently looking for tenants to fill the spaces. Board Member Lovell questioned the developer’s decision to renovate the building when it would be demolished if and when the Edmonds Green Project moves forward. Mr. Clifton advised that most of the improvements were façade upgrades. The inside of the building was gutted to make three tenant spaces. The property owner has one tenant lined up, but he does not want to start leasing the space until tenants have been found for the remaining two spaces. Board Member Lovell pointed out that the proposed Edmonds Green Project shows development backing up all the way to the cliff that drops down to the Interurban Trail. Mr. Clifton agreed that a multi-level parking garage has been proposed for this location.

Board Member Lovell recalled that the Planning Board has discussed potential zoning changes on SR 99 in order to enhance development opportunities. One particular option would be to simplify the parking requirement to allow flexibility for developers to decide how much parking is needed for a proposed development. He asked if parking was an issue with either the Swedish Edmonds Cancer Treatment Center or the Community Health Center of Snohomish County building. Mr. Clifton advised that there are multiple parking areas on the hospital campus site, as the parking demand for medical uses is very high.

Board Member Lovell pointed out that merging traffic onto SR 99 from 76<sup>th</sup> Avenue West creates a nightmare because there is a traffic light at the next intersection and traffic backs up. He asked if the City has plans to improve this situation. Mr. Clifton said that channelization improvements in this location are being planned, and he would ask the City Engineer to provide the Board with drawings of the proposed project.

Board Member Lovell noted that four major activity nodes have been identified along SR 99. He suggested that landscaped medians and center turn lanes, similar to those provided in Shoreline, would help ameliorate the problems associated with the

triangular lots that are difficult to develop. Mr. Clifton cautioned that the \$10 million grant will only get improvements on the City's nearly two-mile stretch of SR 99 started. Significantly more funding will be needed to complete the entire project.

Board Member Lovell asked about future plans for the site where the Burlington Coat Factory is currently located. Mr. Underhill explained that in addition to the Burlington Coat Factory, the upper portion of the building is occupied by small antique stalls that are very active. He cautioned the Board not to underestimate the benefit of these businesses. However, the buildings are very old, and the Highway 99 Task Force has had discussions with the property owners to determine their plans for the future. Mr. Clifton reported that he and Mr. Underhill have been working to land a major department store on the site. While their efforts have not yet been successful, they will keep trying.

Board Member Lovell asked Mr. Clifton and Mr. Underhill to provide specific direction about how the parking standards could be amended to encourage future redevelopment on SR 99. Currently, the parking requirement is based on the size of a structure and the type of use. Mr. Clifton said he and Mr. Chave have discussed the concept of having an "average parking standard." He explained that it is difficult to apply the current parking standards to multi-use developments where uses change over time. Sometimes prospective tenants cannot locate in a space because there is inadequate parking to meet code requirements for the use. An average parking requirement would make it easier for landlords to find tenants.

Vice Chair Stewart suggested that it would help Mr. Behar's marketing efforts if the Edmonds Green Project were to be LEED certified to a certain level. Mr. Clifton said staff discussed this option with the property owner a number of years ago, and the project seemed to be heading in that direction. The project's overview page, which is available on the Behar Company's website, talks about the project being a transit-oriented, urban village and the goal is to locate office, residential, retail and restaurant uses all in one location. Vice Chair Stewart asked if any consideration has been given for getting a dot.com business to take over the entire building at the intersection of 228<sup>th</sup> Avenue Southwest and SR 99. Mr. Clifton answered that at this time, the property owner is open to leasing the property to any type of business.

Vice Chair Stewart pointed out that the property is located on the Swift line, which is a positive attribute. She said she is glad to hear that ridership has increased in such a short amount of time. She suggested that ridership would increase even more rapidly if Community Transit were to provide better connections to the Swift line. These connections are clearly missing from some points in Edmonds. Mr. Clifton said that he recently made a presentation to the Sound Transit Committee for the North Line about the possibility of adding a stop at 220<sup>th</sup> Street Southwest and Interstate 5. Mayor Earling offered his support and a letter was sent to Sound Transit. The City of Mountlake Terrace also offered support for a rail station in that location. Approximately 40,000 cars go through this intersection in the east/west direction each day, making this an excellent location for a station. As a result of this effort, a station at 220<sup>th</sup> Street Southwest has been included in Phase 3 of Sound Transit's light rail project.

Chair Reed recalled that about three years ago, the Board heard a presentation about potential redevelopment of property near the Safeway site. Mr. Clifton advised that Stanley Piha owns the property just west of the Safeway site, and he has expressed a desire to redevelop the property as a multi-use building that includes both residential and commercial uses that do not generate a lot of traffic. Chair Reed asked if this project is still moving forward. Mr. Clifton answered that the proposal is inconsistent with current zoning, and the property owner would like a rezone to increase the amount of residential density allowed on the site. The staff has discussed the idea of creating a new General Commercial (CG) 3 zone that could be applied to certain areas along SR 99 to encourage transit-oriented development. This type of zoning would allow Mr. Piha to move forward with his proposed development.

Chair Reed asked how often the Highway 99 Task Force meets. Mr. Underhill answered that the task force currently meets on a quarterly basis. However, for a number of years they met on a monthly or bi-monthly basis. The task force currently focuses their efforts on projects that are taking place now, will take place in the near future, or have been proposed. He noted that the cancer center project improved the visual appearance of the site immensely and has enlightened the neighborhood. Other projects along SR 99 have resulted in incremental improvements that have changed the feel of the neighborhood. There is currently a neighborhood buzz that was not present when he first moved to the area 18 years ago. Things are happening that are having a positive effect on the neighborhood and businesses near and along SR 99.

Mr. Clifton and Mr. Underhill provided a brief update on their discussions with Top Foods and the company's future plans for the site. They indicated that potential changes appear to be on the horizon, and Mr. Clifton pointed out that the site is

large enough to accommodate another significant project. Moving forward with the Edmonds Green Project would likely spur the property owner's desire to move forward with more development on the Top Foods site.

Chair Reed reminded the Board that SR 99 received a lot of interest in the recent Strategic Plan survey. He summarized that the Planning Board is very interested in what the Highway 99 Task Force is doing. He suggested it is important for the task force to work closely with both the Planning Board and the Economic Development Commission (EDC) to implement changes in the parking standards and zoning and to implement the various projects identified in the Strategic Plan related to SR 99. He reported that the EDC discussed the idea of changing zoning to allow casino uses along SR 99, but decided not to pursue the change. He said it is difficult for him to identify the projects along SR 99 that would generate revenue for the City. While the medical facilities would not generate significant revenue, the current auto dealerships do. Mr. Clifton reported that the auto dealerships that are located along SR 99 had their best month ever in March. He noted that the City receives \$1.5 million in sales and use taxes from businesses along SR 99, which is nearly five times more revenue than the City receives from businesses in downtown Edmonds.

Chair Reed recalled that some time ago, representatives from Swedish Edmonds Hospital came before the Board to discuss their ideas for potential redevelopment of the hospital campus. He questioned if it would be appropriate for the Board to meet with representatives from the hospital again as they prepare to move forward with their master plan. Mr. Clifton suggested it may be too early for the Board to meet with hospital representatives, as their master plan ideas are only conceptual at this point. He noted that the Highway 99 Task Force has raised some safety issues related to the intersection at 216<sup>th</sup> Street Southwest and SR 99, and the Public Works Department is aware of these concerns. In addition, staff has met with representatives from the hospital and Haggren (owners of Top Foods) to discuss potential pedestrian connections between the two properties.

Mr. Underhill said he has participated on the Highway 99 Task Force for nearly a decade. With the help of City Council, Planning Board and staff, as well as outside contractors, incremental changes have occurred to alter the feel, activity and buzz in the neighborhood next to the hospital. Additional changes are planned to further enhance this area. He suggested that future efforts should be focused on the north end of SR 99. He noted that a lot of improvements are occurring along the City of Shoreline's portion of SR 99, and this can create momentum for change on the City of Edmonds' southern portion of the corridor.

Mr. Clifton recalled that in a recent presentation, Roger Brooks stressed the importance of creating gateways into the City. He reported that he has met with owners of the Campbell Nissan property, who have expressed interest in helping create a gateway on the grassy slope near their property. Other property owners in the area have indicated support, as well.

Mr. Underhill referred to the posters that were provided to the Board Members to advertise the City's new semi-professional soccer team, the Sea Wolves. As the team's general manager, he invited the Board Members to attend some of their events.

### **DISCUSSION ON EDMONDS WAY ZONING**

Mr. Clugston reviewed that concerns have been raised about the new "Compass" development that occurred on property located on Edmonds Way that is zoned Community Business – Edmonds Way (BC-EW) and Multi-Family – Edmonds Way (RM-EW). The City Council asked the Planning Board to review the development that resulted from the new zones and recommend whether any changes are warranted. Concerns were specifically related to the height and setback requirements, incentives for low-impact development, ground floor commercial requirements and landscaping requirements.

Board Member Lovell said he recently walked through the Compass development, taking pictures to illustrate some of the concerns that have been raised. He reviewed his pictures, specifically noting:

- The mixed-use building in the BC-EW zone is located very close to the highway, and the height of the building is very imposing.
- The lower portion of the mixed-use building is constructed of rough-poured concrete.
- The mixed-use building is setback from the street by a 3.5 foot planting strip along the curb of the highway, an approximately 4.5-foot sidewalk and an approximately 6-foot landscaped area.

- While the landscaping between the street and the mixed-use building is pleasant, the sidewalk does not feel safe given the high speed of traffic on the highway.
- None of the commercial space has been leased.
- The five-story residential building is set back further from the street than the adjacent mixed-use building, and the ground floor residential units are below the street level.
- Council Member Petso pointed out that some parking spaces are not long enough, and cars extend beyond the allotted space. She noted that the zoning requires that parking must be enclosed within the building, and it is not.
- A retaining wall was required to address the steep slope behind the residential building.
- A key or card is required to access the residential parking spaces. The carports provided behind the building are labeled strictly for the residents, and there is no public parking.
- Although the zoning code allows an additional five feet of height for building architecture and modulation, the architectural design of the back elevation is not particularly exciting.
- Garage parking is available for residential tenants and commercial tenants and their customers. The height of the cavernous parking garage is roughly 18 feet, which is not a great view from the backyards of adjacent residential properties.
- The only area for public parking for visitors is accessible from 232<sup>nd</sup> Street. There is no signage to direct people to the public parking area.
- The most significant low-impact development feature on the site is the rock bio-swale, which is fairly sizeable and located between the highway and the retaining wall. Overflow from the bio-swale is discharged into the City's stormwater system.
- The sign for the Compass development creates a sight distance concern for people exiting the site onto Edmonds Way from 232<sup>nd</sup> Street.

Board Member Lovell said he read the emails submitted by Council President Petso regarding the two zones, which were created to accommodate a development proposal. The BC-EW and RM-EW zones have only been applied to three areas along Edmonds Way. The BC-EW zone requires commercial uses on the ground floor, but allows for a mixture of uses, including residential, on the upper floors. He said Council President Petso expressed concern that the mixed-use building was constructed too close to the street, and there was no longer sufficient space to accommodate bicycle lanes. He said he does not believe Edmonds Way is an appropriate place for bicycle lanes given the high speed of traffic. Council President Petso also expressed concern that extra height was granted without the applicant providing any significant low-impact development features other than the drainage swale. She suggested that instead of asking a developer to incorporate low-impact development features where feasible, low-impact development components should be required. She also suggested that perhaps the ADB did not require enough from the developer to create an aesthetically pleasing design.

Board Member Lovell said he has read the code language for the BC-EW and RM-EW zones and verified that the base height for the BC-EW zone is 35 feet. An additional five feet in height is allowed if a developer incorporates a low-impact development feature. Another five feet in height is allowed if a development incorporates building articulation and roof modulation. The maximum height limit in the BC-EW zone is 45 feet. Chair Reed noted that the maximum height in the BC-EW zone is measured at the property line. However, the language also implies that an additional five feet would be allowed if a developer incorporates distinct design features into the design.

Board Member Lovell summarized that the Compass development appears to meet the code requirements for both the BC-EW and RM-EW zones. In his opinion, the Board should consider increasing the setbacks in the BC-EW zone to provide a greater separation between the sidewalk and the highway. He suggested that the setbacks in the BC-EW zone should be consistent with the setbacks currently proposed in the draft Westgate Plan. The RM-EW zone already requires a greater setback.

Mr. Clugston provided an aerial photograph with a topographical overlay to illustrate the slopes that exist on the properties that are zoned RM-EW and BC-EW. He said he suspects that the zoning for these sites was created to allow for additional height to take into account the changing topography. The question is whether the zoning allows the buildings to be set too close to the street. He noted that the parcels were previously zoned Community Business (BC), which allows 25-foot tall buildings with no setback requirement. The RM-EW zone requires an additional four-foot setback in exchange for additional height. This setback area is consistent with the current setback requirement of 15 feet for multi-family zones. Chair Reed

said the actual provision requires not only a four-foot setback with Type III Landscaping, but the top stories must be stepped back an additional six feet, as well. Mr. Clugston pointed out where the stepback is located on the residential building. He suggested the Board provide some direction about what they believe reasonable height, stepback and setback requirements should be.

Mr. Clugston reminded the Board that the current BC-EW and RM-EW zoning was adopted in 2007 at a time when low-impact development techniques were cutting edge. The remainder of the City's code does not contain standards for low-impact development, either. He suggested that perhaps they could create a menu of low-impact development features and require an applicant to provide a certain number of the features in order to obtain the additional height. He summarized that while the Compass developer may have provided enough low-impact development features to meet the intent of the code, concerns have been raised that it is not enough.

Vice Chair Stewart expressed her belief that, regardless of whether the upper stories of the building are stepped back or not, a 15-foot setback is still too close for the building to be located in proximity to the street. She suggested that a 20-foot setback would probably be better. However, she urged the Board to consider more than simply allowing an applicant to exchange setback for height. Again, Mr. Clugston reminded the Board that the properties currently zoned BC-EW and RM-EW were previously zoned BC, which limits building height to 25 feet, but no setback would be required. He provided a zoning map to identify the exact location of the BC-EW and RM-EW zones. He explained that when the Edmonds Way area was annexed into the City in the mid 90's, BC was likely the closest zoning designation to the previous county zoning. He cautioned that Board against broadening their discussion to include all BC zones. Instead, he recommended they focus on addressing the issues raised by the City Council related to the BC-EW and RM-EW zones.

Board Member Ellis pointed out that, besides the Compass property, there are only two other properties along Edmonds Way that are zoned BC-EW. Chair Reed agreed. However, he pointed out that the BC-EW and RM-EW zones were created at the request of a private property owner, and any property owners along Edmonds Way can submit an application asking for a rezone to one of the new designations. Mr. Clugston agreed that there are a number of implementing zones for the Edmonds Way Corridor, including BC-EW and RM-EW. In theory, the two zones could be applied to other properties along the corridor. However, it is important to remember that the zones were created for areas where topography was a concern.

Chair Reed observed that many of the concerns that were raised regarding the Compass project were related to code compliance. He suggested that clarifying the language would likely solve the problem. For example, the parking provision requires that 50% of the parking must be enclosed inside the building or buildings. Perhaps the spaces within the parking structure fill this requirement, and the cars parked against the lower level units that stick out from the covered areas are not out of compliance. He suggested that clearer language would address this issue.

Chair Reed recalled that when the Board discussed this issue in February with Mr. Chave, he indicated that setbacks were of particular concern. He also talked about standards for low-impact development and that using the words "when feasible" was probably not a good choice. The language should be more specific.

Chair Reed noted that a public hearing on proposed amendments to the BC-EW and RM-EW zones was tentatively scheduled for May 22<sup>nd</sup>. He suggested the Board and staff would need more time to discuss the issue before presenting draft amendments at a public hearing. The remainder of the Board concurred.

The Board discussed what the appropriate setback requirement would be for the BC-EW and RM-EW zones. Board Member Lovell pointed out that multi-family residential is the predominant zoning along the Edmonds Way Corridor and requires a setback of 15 feet. He suggested that a 15-foot setback for the BC-EW and RM-EW zones would be consistent with surrounding properties. Board Member Ellis observed that a 15-foot setback requirement would not necessarily require that the sidewalks be set back further from the street. Mr. Clugston noted that while an additional five-foot setback might make pedestrians more comfortable by providing the perception of more space, requiring a wider planting strip between the street and the sidewalk would actually improve pedestrian safety.

Mr. Clugston advised that the form-based code that has been proposed to implement the Westgate Plan calls for moving buildings closer to the street. Although he does not now know what the actual setback requirement will be, the intent is to move

commercial buildings towards the edge of the property. The bank that was recently developed at Westgate has an 8-foot landscaped setback.

Board Member Tibbott observed that the setback for the residential building constructed on the RM-EW zoned property is consistent with development along Edmonds Way towards the west. The Comprehensive Plan calls for more residential development and better pedestrian access along Edmonds Way to create more urban appeal, and the Development Code has not been updated to implement this policy. While he acknowledged that there is nothing the City can do to change the situation that was created by the Compass development, the City should provide a better buffer between the traffic and pedestrians along Edmonds Way. Mr. Clugston said he does not believe there is adequate right-of-way width to increase the buffer area between the street and the existing sidewalks. However, the buffers could be enhanced through additional landscaping. Board Member Tibbott asked if it would be possible to reduce the speed limit on Edmonds Way. Mr. Clugston reminded the Board that Edmonds Way is a state highway and is outside of the City's jurisdiction. Board Member Tibbott asked if staff has reached out to the Washington State Department of Transportation during the Westgate planning process for help in creating a more pedestrian-friendly environment.

Board Member Cloutier said the Westgate Plan calls for a five-foot landscape strip with a five-foot sidewalk. He suggested that pedestrian safety along the corridor has to do with how close the sidewalk is to the road. A combined 18-foot setback from the road would match the setback provided for the residential building in the Compass development. He noted that it would be even better if the sidewalk was further away from the road. The Board agreed that the setback requirement for the BC-EW and RM-EW zones should be consistent with the setbacks called out in the draft Westgate Plan. Chair Reed suggested that the zoning language could also require a safety barrier of some type to keep cars from driving over the sidewalk and into buildings.

Mr. Clugston agreed that the code language for the BC-EW and RM-EW zones could be tweaked, but addressing the height and setback issues will be more complicated because of the properties' location on Edmonds Way and because they are located next to zones that allow development close to the street. Board Member Cloutier suggested that the Board review the Edmonds Corridor lot-by-lot to determine where greater setbacks would make sense.

Chair Reed reminded the Board that concerns have also been raised about building design in the BC-EW and RM-EW zones. In fact, building articulation and roof modulation is a requirement in order to obtain additional height. He expressed his belief that the design of the Compass development is less than he would like it to be. Mr. Clugston advised that the ADB reviewed the design for the Compass development and found it to be consistent with the policies in the Comprehensive Plan and the provisions in the Development Code. However, he acknowledged that more specific design criteria could be incorporated into the BC-EW and RM-EW zoning provisions. He noted that there are currently no specific design guidelines for multi-family residential zones, and there are no requirements for guest parking.

Chair Reed pointed out that the Comprehensive Plan includes design guidelines for the downtown, as well as general guidelines for all other areas of the City. Mr. Clugston noted that these are design guidelines and not design standards. However, the City recently adopted specific design standards for the BD zones that are much more specific and useful in encouraging the design features that are important. He suggested that some of these same standards could be incorporated into the BC-EW and RM-EW zoning language. Developers could be required to incorporate a certain number of the standards into their design in order to achieve additional height.

Vice Chair Stewart suggested that the Board seek input from the ADB regarding appropriate design standards for the BC-EW and RM-EW zones. The remainder of the Board agreed that this feedback would be helpful. Chair Reed suggested they start by reviewing the general design guidelines contained in the Comprehensive Plan.

Chair Reed summarized that the Board would like to change the setback requirements for the BC-EW and RM-EW zones to be consistent with the setback requirements proposed in the draft Westgate Plan. The language should also be amended to make it clear that the maximum height allowed in the zone is 45 feet. The Board agreed to discuss the issue again before scheduling a public hearing. Mr. Clugston agreed to come up with some ideas for proposed amendments as per the Board's discussion. They agreed to continue their discussion on May 22<sup>nd</sup>. Staff would also invite the ADB to provide feedback regarding design elements that could be added to the zoning provisions to address design concerns.

Vice Chair Stewart recalled that the City has set aside funding to complete a traffic study of the Westgate area. Chair Reed said the traffic study would include the entire cross section of SR 104 and 100<sup>th</sup> Avenue West and would address ingress, egress, pedestrian traffic, bicycle lanes, etc.

Board Member Tibbott asked if the Compass development utilized incentive zoning or a development agreement in order to go beyond the standard height limit. If not, he asked what negotiation procedure the City used to determine that the proposal warranted the additional height. Chair Reed answered that the BC-EW and RM-EW zones allow an additional five feet if a development provides certain features. Rather than being incentive zoning with choices, the BC-EW and RM-EW zones offer incentives zoning with specific requirements. Board Member Tibbott summarized that the project met the zoning requirements so it was allowed the additional height, but there was no give or take negotiation related to design.

Board Member Tibbott questioned how the project's design obtained approval from the staff and the ADB. Board Member Lovell explained that the project met the requirements set forth in the Development Code, which was theoretically modified to create incentives for the developer to be able to go higher. In exchange for the additional height, the City required certain things of the developer, and the developer met the criteria. Council President Petso has suggested that the applicant did not offer enough public benefit to warrant the additional height. Mr. Clugston suggested that this concern could be addressed by creating a menu of low-impact development features an applicant can incorporate into a project. The applicant could be required to implement a certain number of the features on the list in order to obtain the additional height.

Board Member Tibbott expressed his belief that the Compass development is visually uninteresting. There is no modulation, and the buildings are too close to the road. The additional height makes the buildings even more imposing for pedestrians. He expressed concern that negotiations with the developer were inadequate, and the City did not get the kind of amenities he would expect for the additional height. Mr. Clugston said there was no negotiation. The ADB reviewed and approved the project because it met the zoning requirements and the guidelines in the Comprehensive Plan. He asked the Board to share their thoughts on the types of low-impact development features the City could require in exchange for the additional height.

Board Member Tibbott observed that Edmonds Way used to be a major thoroughfare where cars passed back and forth between SR 99 and the waterfront, and not a lot of thought was given to it being a residential neighborhood. The corridor has rapidly transitioned from a thoroughfare to something of a residential neighborhood. He suggested that the Development Code should be amended so that the new residential buildings look more like homes than barracks. He suggested that some of the design standards for the BD zones should be applied to zones along Edmonds Way, as well.

Vice Chair Stewart said she looked up incentive zoning and found that community improvements might include additional open space, affordable housing, specific building features, public art, LEED certification, etc. Mr. Clugston agreed to create draft amendments to the BC-EW and RM-EW zones for the Board's continued discussion on May 22<sup>nd</sup>. The amendments could include a setback requirement consistent with the setback requirement currently proposed in the draft Westgate Plan, options for step backs for upper stories, and additional features that would have to be included in the design in order to obtain the additional height. Again, Chair Reed suggested that staff start by incorporating appropriate design standards that have already been adopted for the BD zones, as well as the general design guidelines in the Comprehensive Plan.

Board Member Ellis reminded the Board that concern was also voiced that the term "where feasible" left too much wiggle room for developers. He felt it would be appropriate to provide a menu of features a developer must incorporate into the design in order to obtain the extra height. Mr. Clugston agreed that this approach would provide some flexibility for developers to choose the features they want to include in the design, but it would also ensure that developers include some public benefit in exchange for the additional height.

Board Member Ellis summarized that the change in zoning was adopted a long time ago without any concrete plan to show what it would look like once implemented. The zoning changes were made with the idea of encouraging the type of development they now have, but now the City Council has decided they do not like the end result. They have asked the Board to consider amendments. The problems are not a result of City staff's failure to adequately implement the code.

Board Member Cloutier asked if there is a nationally-recognized standard the Board could use to determine the appropriate distance that pedestrian walkways should be separated from a roadway with 40 mile per hour traffic. This information would help the Board formulate their recommendation to the City Council. Board Member Ellis suggested there are two

components related to pedestrian walkways: safety and aesthetics. Board Member Cloutier agreed, but emphasized the need to address the safety component first and then work on design standards to address the aesthetic components.

Board Member Lovell agreed with Board Member Ellis that the best way to get the type of development the City desires is to require developers to provide certain features in exchange for the extra height. This would force them to provide setbacks, modulation, higher quality materials, etc. It is clear that the Compass development was designed in the most economical way possible. While it met the letter of the code, the design is lacking in many aspects.

Board Member Tibbott asked if the sidewalk in front of the Compass development connects with other sidewalks on Edmonds Way. Board Member Cloutier answered that the sidewalk connects to an existing sidewalk that goes all the way to Westgate.

### **REVIEW OF EXTENDED AGENDA**

Chair Reed advised that the City Council has asked the Board to consider amendment to the Edmonds City Code that would allow Community Oriented and Farmers Markets in the BD and BC zones. The draft amendment will be presented to the Board for review on May 8<sup>th</sup>, and a public hearing has been scheduled for May 22<sup>nd</sup>. The Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Director will present the quarterly Parks and Recreation Report to the Board on May 8<sup>th</sup>, as well. He said he specifically asked her to provide a list of the grants the City has already received related to the Edmonds Marsh, as well as grants the City may be eligible to receive. Instead of a public hearing on the BC-EW and RM-EW code amendments May 22<sup>nd</sup>, the Board will continue their discussion in preparation for a public hearing at a later time. On May 22<sup>nd</sup>, the Board will also have a discussion about potential amendments to the Wireless Communications section of the Development Code. Mr. Clugston explained that after implementing the wireless communications code for the past year, staff has identified some small changes that need to be made to clarify the language and make it easier to understand and implement. Lastly, Chair Reed said a continued discussion related to the Westgate and Five Corners Plans has been added to the May 22<sup>nd</sup> agenda as a placeholder.

Chair Reed advised that the Board's next quarterly report to the City Council is scheduled to occur on June 25<sup>th</sup>. Vice Chair Stewart agreed to prepare and present the report.

### **PLANNING BOARD CHAIR COMMENTS**

Chair Reed referred the Board to an email from Council Member Johnson suggesting that it might be wise for the Board to move their work on the Five Corners Plan ahead of the Westgate Plan to allow time for the City to complete the traffic study for Westgate. In further discussions with Council Member Johnson, he learned that the traffic study will not be fully funded in 2013. He said he and Vice Chair Stewart discussed the request further with the City Council's Planning, Parks and Public Works Committee (Council Members Buckshnis and Johnson). Council Member Buckshnis recommended that the Board move full speed ahead on both plans and Board Member Johnson recommended that they do the Five Corners Plan first. When asked how the Board would like to proceed, Chair Reed said he informed them that the Board would likely want to put closure on the Westgate Plan and then move on to the Five Corners Plan. Mr. Chave expressed concern about staff wasting their time working on something that would get set aside by the City Council. To address this concern, he has asked the City Council to provide direction to the Board, and the issue is scheduled on the City Council's May 7<sup>th</sup> agenda. Chair Reed said he would attend the May 7<sup>th</sup> meeting and provide some comments on behalf of the Board.

Chair Reed advised that the Comprehensive Plan apparently limits development to two stories in the Five Corners area, so the Five Corners Plan will likely require a Comprehensive Plan amendment, as well. He said he also recently learned that construction of the Five Corners roundabout has been postponed until 2014 because there is not enough of the construction season left to complete the project before winter.

Chair Reed expressed his belief that the Board should put closure to the Westgate Plan to the extent possible, recognizing that they may need to flag some items that will be particularly impacted by the traffic study such as buildings with entries on the street, bicycle pathways, etc. The traffic study will have to be taken into account before some of the items in the plan can be finalized.

Chair Reed reported that he attended the April 17<sup>th</sup> Economic Development Commission (EDC) meeting on behalf of Board Member Clarke, who was unable to attend. At the meeting Commissioner Haug and Stephen Clifton made a presentation regarding the Strategic Plan. Mr. Clifton provided the EDC with a three-page list of all the items in the Strategic Plan, each ranked according to priority. The EDC did not get into specific discussions about the items they would be responsible for, but they appointed a subcommittee to begin working on the items. Chair Reed said he reviewing the list, as well, to identify items the Planning Board may be involved in.

Chair Reed advised that the EDC's Land Use/Business Incentives Subcommittee reported that they are reviewing the City's permitting and development fee structures and processes. Their goal is to identify ways to improve the permitting process. They are considering zoning incentive options such as deferrals, reductions and waivers. They have prepared a list of the incentives already available in the code.

Chair Reed reported that, based on a market study, the EDC's Tourism Subcommittee decided against pursuing gambling uses on SR 99. It was noted that it is not possible to allow the use in some areas along SR 99, but restrict the use from other areas. The subcommittee talked about bed and breakfast uses, and it was pointed out that the City just relaxed its bed and breakfast regulations a year ago. The City has received an application for a bed and breakfast, but it was noted that in order to encourage the use further, they must provide some destinations to draw people to stay.

Chair Reed said Board Member Clarke informed him that because the EDC meetings start at 6:00 p.m. and because he is often out of town on the meeting nights, it is difficult for him to fulfill his commitment to serve as the Planning Board liaison. He asked that another Board Member be appointed to serve in his place. Chair Reed invited interested Board Members to notify him as soon as possible. He pointed out that the Planning Board liaison is not an active member of the EDC. The liaison's role is to listen to the EDC's discussions and report back to the Planning Board. If the Planning Board has insight into an item the EDC is discussing, the liaison could share information with the EDC to avoid potential duplication.

Chair Reed advised that the EDC has scheduled a meeting with property owners in the BD zones to discuss the proposed amendment that would restrict ground floor uses in the BD zone to retail only. Actual code language has been drafted, which will ultimately come to the Planning Board for review, a public hearing, and a recommendation to the City Council.

Chair Reed reported that he met with Mayor Earling and Council President Petso to review the Board's agenda. Mayor Earling indicated that he would prefer the Board to complete their work on the Westgate Plan before moving to the Five Corners Plan. He also mentioned that the proposed amendment related to farmers markets has been discussed with the Edmonds Museum, the sponsor of the Saturday summer markets.

Chair Reed advised that the EDC is required to provide a year-end report to the City Council in conjunction with the Planning Board. However, the Planning Board does not have a similar requirement. He said he informed the EDC that the Board provides quarterly reports to the City Council, and they would not be participating in the EDC's year-end report.

### **PLANNING BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS**

Board Member Tibbott recalled that at their recent retreat, the Board discussed the Growth Management Act (GMA) and its mandate that the City provide between 200 and 250 additional residential units per year to accommodate projected growth. He expressed his belief that this number does not seem significant and could be met by just one large development such as the Behar Company's Edmonds Green project. While there is some community concern that large residential developments will take place all over the City, development could occur at a slower pace and still meet the GMA requirements. He said he would like staff to identify areas of the City where this type of residential development could occur such as vacant lots on SR 99, Westgate and Five Corners. It would be helpful to have an idea of the number of residential units that could be accommodated in each of these locations so they have a clear picture of how much growth could happen in the City over the next 20 to 25 years. He recalled that Mr. Chave stated that even with a modest growth rate of 200 to 300 people per year, the City is still not keeping up with the GMA requirements. However, some of the projects the Board has discussed tonight could allow the City to easily exceed the GMA requirement.

Board Member Cloutier said that, aside from the GMA requirements, it is important for the City to understand how well they are accomplishing their growth target goals. It would be helpful for the Board to work with staff to identify some meaningful

metrics to measure and track this information. The Board and City Council could review the metrics periodically and revise the Planning Board's tasks accordingly.

Vice Chair Stewart reported on her attendance at the April 23<sup>rd</sup> City Council Meeting at which they approved (4-3 vote) an ordinance amending the Edmonds Community Development Code to apply design guidelines to the BD2, BD3 and BD4 zones to replace the requirement for building setbacks. They also approved an amendment that exempts blade signs from the total sign area calculation. The City Council discussed the proposed amendment to increase the time frame for validity of preliminary and short plat approval, but no action was taken. In addition, Mr. Lien provided a brief presentation on the Shoreline Master Program update. The City Council asked a series of questions about whether or not the footprint of the existing development at Harbor Square would be grandfathered in if future development were to take place on the site. The answers were confusing, and she encouraged the Board Members to listen to this piece of the video recording. She said she was surprised that there was no mention of the proposed new Urban Mixed Use III Designation, especially given the Port's withdrawal of their Comprehensive Plan amendment related to the Harbor Square Master Plan. She reminded the Board that the Shoreline Master Program must be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. Because the Port has withdrawn their application, a Comprehensive Plan amendment may be necessary to include the new Urban Mixed Use III designation. She said she is hopeful that the City will publicize the Shoreline Master Program update in the media to incentivize the public to at least read the information and learn more about the update. She noted that the update is behind schedule, and staff is trying to get it adopted as quickly as possible.

Vice Chair Stewart announced that there is an Urban Forest Symposium on Trees and Views on May 13<sup>th</sup> from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. She said she has attended similar events in past years, and they are very good. They have knowledgeable attorneys, horticulture experts and landscape architects who know how to get to the meat of various city issues. She said she passed the information on to the Tree Board, as well.

Vice Chair Stewart reported on her attendance at the Urban Land Institute's Breakfast a few weeks ago. The title of the event was "What is Next? Getting Ahead of Change." At the breakfast, they discussed trends for cities throughout the country. It was noted that there is an increasing number of Generation Y and Baby Boomers who want small units and rental units. As Generation Y begins to raise families, many will want yards and move out of urban environments. There is a desire on the part of urban developers to retain the Generation Y population in the cities by providing opportunities for them to live close to where they work and to the services they need. It is also desirable to provide green spaces and amenities. While some Baby Boomer desire smaller units, there is a sector of this population that is actually looking to move out of the City and have bigger homes so their families can live with them. She said she will periodically provide quotes and interesting information to the Board related to these trends. She also said she requested slides of the presentation that was made at the breakfast, and she will share them with the Board and City Council Members. She summarized that it would be well worth their time to review the trends and get ahead of change.

Board Member Ellis said that, as he has watched the news in recent weeks, he has been struck by the amount of time and effort the City of Seattle is putting into deciding how and where to deal with the legalization of marijuana. He asked if the City of Edmonds has considered this issue, as well. Mr. Clugston answered that the Police Department and City Attorney have been talking about the implications of the new law. The result of these discussions could lead to potential land-use regulations, business licenses, etc.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

The Board meeting was adjourned at 9:40 p.m.

**APPROVED**