

**CITY OF EDMONDS  
PLANNING BOARD MINUTES**

**February 10, 2016**

---

---

Chair Lovell 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**

Philip Lovell, Chair  
Carreen Rubenkönig, Vice Chair  
Matthew Cheung  
Todd Cloutier  
Nathan Monroe  
Valerie Stewart

**STAFF PRESENT**

Rob Chave, Planning Division Manager  
Karin Noyes, Recorder

**BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT**

Daniel Robles (excused)  
Samuel Kleven (Student Representative)

**READING/APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**BOARD MEMBER CHEUNG MOVED THAT THE MINUTES OF JANUARY 27, 2016 BE APPROVED AS SUBMITTED. BOARD MEMBER CLOUTIER SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**ANNOUNCEMENT OF AGENDA**

The agenda was modified to place Item 6a (Public Hearing Regarding Amendment to ECDC 20.03.002) before Item 5a (Update on Planning for Highway 99 Area). The remainder of the agenda was accepted as presented.

**AUDIENCE COMMENTS**

There was no one in the audience.

**DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DIRECTOR REPORT TO PLANNING BOARD**

The Board Members did not have any questions relative to the written Director's Report.

**PUBLIC HEARING REGARDING AMENDMENT TO ECDC 20.03.002 – NOTICE OF APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS (FILE NUMBER AMD20160001)**

Mr. Lien explained that there is a discrepancy between the Edmonds Community Development Code (ECDC) and the Revised Code of Washington (RCW). RCW 36.70.B.110(3) requires that a notice of application be issued at least 15 days prior to an open record pre-decision hearing, but ECDC 20.03.002.B.2 only requires that a notice of application be issued at least 14 days prior to an open record pre-decision hearing. The proposed amendment to ECDC 20.03.002.B.2 (Exhibit 1)

would make the ECDC consistent with State Law and require a notice of application to be issued at least 15 days prior to an open record pre-decision hearing.

Mr. Lien pointed out that the RCW actually has two versions of 36.70.B.110(3). The 1997 Legislature amended the language twice, and neither amendment referenced the other. Because they were not in conflict with each other, they were both codified. He summarized that the proposed code change is very simple, changing the requirement for notices of application, which are required for Type II and Type IIIB decisions, from 14 days to 15 days.

Chair Lovell said it appears the proposed amendment is a procedural change that is needed to align state requirements with the City's code. None of the Board Members had any questions or comments regarding the proposed amendment. Mr. Lien explained that the proposed amendment was introduced to the City Council on February 9<sup>th</sup>, and a public hearing before the City Council is scheduled for February 16<sup>th</sup>.

CHAIR LOVELL OPENED THE HEARING. THERE WAS NO ONE IN THE AUDIENCE, AND THE PUBLIC HEARING WAS CLOSED.

**VICE CHAIR RUBENKONIG MOVED THAT THE BOARD FORWARD THE PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO ECDC 20.03.002.B.2, REQUIRING NOTICE OF APPLICATION TO BE ISSUED AT LEAST 15 DAYS PRIOR TO AN OPEN RECORD PRE-DECISION HEARING, TO THE CITY COUNCIL WITH A RECOMMENDATION OF APPROVAL AS PRESENTED BY STAFF AND AS CONTAINED IN EXHIBIT 1. BOARD MEMBER CHEUNG SECONDED THE MOTION, WHICH CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

#### **UPDATE ON PLANNING FOR HIGHWAY 99 AREA**

Mr. Chave advised that Ms. Hope and the consultant team provided an update on planning for the Highway 99 Area to the City Council on February 9<sup>th</sup>. For the Board's information, he played a video recording of the presentation. The following is a summary of the presentation:

*Alex Joyce, Senior Project Manager, Fregonese Associates, explained that the intent is to build on past planning efforts, and the team is currently reviewing past plans and talking with staff and regional stakeholders to get their views on what has worked well, what needs to be changed, and what their vision is for this stretch of Highway 99. This process will continue in the weeks ahead, and he anticipates the consulting team will provide periodic updates as progress is made.*

*Mr. Joyce announced that a public workshop is scheduled for March 24<sup>th</sup>, and will provide an opportunity for members of the community to experiment with different options via a process called scenario planning. The process is rooted in tapping into the vision that the community already has rather than preformed views of what ought to happen. At the workshop, participants will be divided into groups of 8 to 10 for a hands-on exercise where they can sketch out their vision for both land use and transportation for this stretch of Highway 99. Instant polling technology will also be used at the workshop so that everyone in the room can instantly know what others are thinking about a particularly idea or proposal. Following the workshop, the team will hold one-on-one meetings with key stakeholders. In addition, the project will be branded and a project website will be created and linked to the City's website. This will allow people, through an on-line survey, social media and other avenues, to stay plugged in and engaged.*

*Mr. Joyce advised that Fregonese Associates uses scenario planning software, which allows them to sketch out future alternatives for Highway 99 based on the public workshop process and direction from City Council. This helps to better understand how future improvements, both public and private, can influence housing production and affordability, housing and employment capacity, fiscal impacts etc. Using computer modeling, future improvements can be measured across a variety of indicators that are important to the community. The design team is also using computer technology to create a hot-spot analysis that identifies opportunities along the corridor for infill and redevelopment, as well as opportunities to connect to adjacent neighborhood and community amenities. A lot of informative maps will be produced over the next several weeks to provide information that will be highlighted on the website to get the public engaged. This is a great way to distill otherwise complicated information and allows the team to zero in on places that have multiple opportunities as they start to build an investment strategy. The City must be strategic about where the dollars are invested, and this approach allows the dollars to be focused in key areas.*

**APPROVED**

*Mr. Joyce reported that the consulting team has engaged the services of real estate economists from Echelon Northwest, who are very familiar with the region. They are helping the team understand both the current and future real estate trends. The goal is to look to the future to give Edmonds a competitive advantage compared to other cities. For example, the International District has been identified as a differentiating market potential. The strengths of Edmonds will be carried and supported throughout the planning process.*

*Mr. Joyce noted that housing needs across America are changing, and it is important to understand the local trends and how they are reflected in the City's housing needs. The plan will identify how much of the City's housing need can be accommodate on the corridor, as well as the different range of building types that will be financially feasible. It is important to first understand what is achievable and then set policy to get the desired outcome.*

*Mr. Joyce explained that there is a relationship between the investments made along the corridor and how the real estate market responds to the investments. The plan will send a cue to the real estate market that Edmonds is taking the corridor seriously and it is a priority. He summarized that it is important to understand how future investments can change what is possible in the real estate market.*

*Mr. Joyce advised that the consulting team is also preparing a zoning audit to better understand how the City's current policies impact the financial viability of what is possible along the corridor. Once they understand what is possible, zoning codes and other development regulations can be adjusted to get the desired results.*

*Mr. Joyce explained that after the workshop, they will come up with themes for the corridor and use planning software to model several transportation and land use patterns in the area to better understand the implication of each scenario. Key to this part of planning will be working with transportation consultant, Jim Daisa, DKS Associates, who is a pioneer in complete streets thinking, to identify strategic transportation improvements that serve not only automobiles, but adjacent residents and business owners.*

*Mr. Joyce said it is important to understand the unique submarkets in the area, and the team has had great discussions with property owners and stakeholders, who have helped them refine their thinking about the key branding and market cluster potential in different parts of the corridor. Not any one solution will fit perfectly.*

*Mr. Joyce summarized that all of the plan elements will be integrated into concrete, implementable strategies. The plan will give the City something to point to when seeking grant funding from the State and Federal government. The key is to have an implemental plan in place at the end of the process. The process will also include a Planned Action Environmental Impact Statement, which will allow the City to clear environmental hurdles and make it easier to execute larger-scale projects along the corridor. The end goal is to have a graphically-rich, easy-to-understand, and quickly-implementable plan for the corridor.*

The following is a summary of the City Council questions and comments pertaining to the presentation:

- *Council Member Nelson said he appreciates the range of visual alternatives. He asked how many public workshops have been planned, and Mr. Joyce answered that the intent of the March 24<sup>th</sup> workshop is to solicit ideas from as many people as possible. The ideas will then be distilled into themes and presented at a public open house. In addition, there will be an on-line survey, as well as periodic updates at City Council and Planning Board meetings.*
- *Council Member Buckshnis requested a copy of the PowerPoint presentation. She asked if affordable housing would be addressed as part of the plan. She noted that Highway 99 is one of the better locations for affordable housing because of its proximity to transit opportunities. Mr. Joyce answered that the consulting team will be connecting with land owners and organizations who specialize in affordable housing in the region. Council Member Buckshnis commented that Ms. Hope is also a great resource in terms of affordable housing.*
- *Council Member Fraley-Monillas said she had an opportunity to meet with the design team earlier in the day, and she loved their presentation. The process they have outlined will give a lot of hope to people along the corridor.*

- *Council Member Johnson said she also met with the design team. She said she is both a local and transportation planner, and is very engaged in the visual and overlay system outlined by the consultant. She asked the consultant to provide additional information about how the team plans to engage the international district, as well as people who live in and/or own property in the area. Mr. Joyce said they are committed and excited about the opportunity to further establish the identity of the international district. From a strategic point of view, it is important to leverage this unique position in the market. The consulting team is fortunate to have Irene Kim on board. Ms. Kim is Korean and will work to make sure that materials are translated and available to everyone. She will also engage directly with the business owners in the International District.*
- *Council Member Teitzel loves the ‘try it on idea.’ He asked if it would be appropriate to place a moratorium on zoning changes in the Highway 99 area until the study has been completed or if there are interim zoning changes that could be made between now and completion of the study to attract businesses to the area. Mr. Joyce said he is not prepared to recommend zoning changes at this time, but the consulting team will conduct a zoning audit early in the process. Once the audit is finished, staff may choose to recommend interim zoning changes. Council Member Teitzel pointed out that a small portion of Esperance borders Highway 99, and he asked if the consulting team would coordinate with the county to make sure that zoning is consistent. Ms. Hope answered that the County has already been contacted, and the City plans to do a mailing to every address in the area, whether in Esperance or Edmonds.*

Mr. Chave advised that a copy of the PowerPoint presentation was sent to Board Members earlier in the day. He summarized that the project is underway and will move forward with public meetings, on-line surveys, and reports to the Planning Board and City Council. He commented on the quality of the design team. Although Fregonese Associates is a National Company located in Portland, Oregon, they consider Seattle part of their neighborhood. In addition, the economist is from the area and has a good understanding of the region.

Chair Lovell requested more information about the consultant selection process. Mr. Chave answered that Ms. Hope obtained authorization from the City Council to put out a proposal, and the City followed the standard competitive bid and selection process. Chair Lovell asked how much funding the City Council allocated to the project. Mr. Chave said he believes the total budget is \$150,000, but he would confirm the amount and get back to the Board.

Mr. Chave noted that Fregonese Associates brings a lot of expertise to the project, as well as some fun analytical tools that will be a huge benefit to help people visualize the opportunities that are available. They will actually analyze and produce different scenarios and methods for measuring potential outcomes.

Chair Lovell asked at what point the plan would be presented to the Planning Board for review and a recommendation to the City Council. Mr. Chave explained that the consulting team will be producing various elements of the plan in stages, and it is likely that the Development Services Director will present the individual elements to the Planning Board as they are produced. The Development Services Director will want to meet with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Board to schedule the various elements on the agenda. One of the early topics will be the zoning audit, which identifies barriers in the zoning code that do not produce the desired outcome. There will be periodic steps where different information and reports will be presented to the Board.

Chair Lovell inquired about the best method for Board Members to submit comments and questions throughout the process. Mr. Chave said that, in addition to discussions at future meetings, Board Members can submit comments and questions to staff, who will forward them to the consultant. As private citizens, Board Members should also take advantage of the on-line opportunities to participate in the process.

Chair Lovell commented that a lot of “out-of-the-box” software will be involved in the process, and he hopes it will be tailored for the area and economy and lead to meaningful development along the Highway 99 Corridor that is transportation and residential oriented and appropriate for various income levels. However, it is important to keep in mind that the property owners will be “driving the train.” If he were the owner of a substantial property on Highway 99, he questioned whether or not he would support hiring Fregonese Associates to study his property and come up with a bottom-line, profit-oriented plan for redevelopment. Mr. Chave clarified that the consulting team was not hired to do specific proformas for individual property owners. Fregonese Associates’ process is exactly the opposite of something that is “canned or out of the box.” It is very much tailored to the local situation, and that’s why they have economists and transportation planners on board. They

have substantial experience with the tools, but they will also look at a lot of data and interview and talk to people to understand exactly how things operate in Edmonds. Chair Lovell said the consultant sounds very competent and capable and committed to creating a plan that is achievable. Mr. Chave said the economists they hired have worked with the Puget Sound Regional Council and are very familiar with the regional data, projections, models and surveys that have already been done. In addition, they will talk to individuals in the community to get a better understanding of what the local situation is.

Board Member Stewart recalled that she previously participated on a consultant selection committee, when Fregonese Associates was one of the candidates. She was impressed with the technology they use to help people visualize what can be. The approach makes a lot of sense for this type of project, and she believes the consultant is capable of approaching the plan holistically.

Mr. Chave emphasized that the Planned Action Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is a key component of the project. The Planned Action EIS deals in scenarios and impacts and how it all fits together. The plan and the Planned Action EIS will go hand in hand to examine different scenarios and identify potential impacts. It is likely the end product will be a hybrid of a number of different scenarios.

Vice Chair Rubenkönig noted that Mr. Joyce emphasized how essential it is to look at transportation data in tandem with land use. She asked that the consultant team to provide a list of their various sources for transportation data. This list would help her consider whether or not the transportation data matches her understanding of available resources.

Board Member Cloutier commented that there was a lot of mention about how at the end of each scenario there would be an output of metrics, showing how it meets various things. He voiced concern that seeing metrics at the right side of the equation without knowing what the metrics are supposed to be meeting on the left side could result in a lot of disagreement about where they are trying to go. He asked if it would be possible to establish a definition for a “good plan” early in the process so the City can see that at least the minimums are met for affordable housing, transportation goals, etc. Mr. Chave responded that it is difficult to start off with expectations at that level of detail. As the plan moves forward, the different scenarios will start to inform the goals. They have to do a lot of learning about the local situation and it will be the City Council and Planning Board’s job to review the scenarios and provide input along the way to inform the consulting team on their potential choices. The process will be iterative, and the preferred alternative will likely be a collection of elements from many of the scenarios. Board Member Cloutier said he is not suggesting that the City establish metrics at the beginning of the process, but they should at least agree on the most important factors to consider when reviewing the scenarios. Mr. Chave agreed and said the process is intended to identify the most important factors that should inform what the ultimate outcome should be.

### **REVIEW OF EXTENDED AGENDA**

Chair Lovell reviewed that the February 24<sup>th</sup> agenda will include a progress report on the Development Code Update by the Development Services Director. Mr. Chave suggested that the Chair and Vice Chair of the Board meet with Ms. Hope to schedule Development Code Updates on the extended agenda. Chair Lovell asked what items will likely come to the Board first. Mr. Chave answered that amendments to incorporate low-impact development will be a priority, as will signs, subdivisions, and definitions. He noted that Ms. Hope is scheduled to give an update to the City Council on February 23<sup>rd</sup>, and a similar presentation will be made to the Board on February 24<sup>th</sup>.

### **PLANNING BOARD CHAIR COMMENTS**

Chair Lovell suggested it would behoove the Board to stay abreast of what is going on at the City Council level. Several items the Board previously reviewed are currently before the City Council for consideration, such as the Critical Areas Ordinance and Economic Development Commission (EDC). He reported that the City Council approved an ordinance that reestablished the EDC with nine members, seven appointed by City Council Members and two by the Mayor. The original ordinance would have required that all members be residents, as well as have a background and/or training in economics or business. The latter requirement was eliminated before the ordinance was approved because of concern that it was too restrictive. The residency requirement remained intact.

Chair Lovell advised that the City Council is currently seeking indication from interested citizens to serve on the EDC and encouraged interested individuals to contact the Economic Development Manager. The goal is to have the EDC rolling again by mid-march. Once the EDC is active again, the Board will need to appoint a liaison to attend the meetings as a non-voting participant and provide regular reports to the Board. He invited interested Board Members to notify him of their interest.

Board Member Stewart recalled that, previously, the Planning Board was supposed to interface with the EDC and both groups were charged with meeting jointly and doing a dual report to the City Council. She recalled there was some difficulty early on with these efforts, and she is hoping they can figure out a better way to make sure that EDC's Land Use Planning Committee understands the Board's role in land use issues. Chair Lovell said Council Member Mesaros suggested that the previous concern was a management problem rather than a structural problem.

Chair Lovell reminded the Board that their retreat is scheduled for March 9<sup>th</sup> from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. They agreed to have a potluck dinner and to email the Chair with what they planned to bring. Board Members were invited to email ideas for potential agenda topics to the Chair and/or Vice Chair.

Chair Lovell encouraged Board Members to consider attending the Short Course in Public Planning that is scheduled for March 2<sup>nd</sup> in Bellevue. Details of the event were forwarded to Board Members by Ms. Cunningham. He reminded them that State Law requires Board Members to attend this training on a periodic basis.

### **PLANNING BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS**

Board Member Stewart recalled that, at their last meeting, Board Member Cloutier brought up the idea of considering alternative locations for the Senior/Community Center project in light of anticipated sea level rise. She said that she, too, questions whether it is wise to only consider the beach location, particularly given the City's recent acquisition of Civic Field, which could be an alternative location. She understands that the project will likely go forward as planned, and she has confidence that the committee has been planning the project in a very sustainable and progressive fashion. She hopes the Critical Areas Ordinance amendment that relates to rising sea levels will be acceptable to the Council in order to incorporate the plan. However, she recalled that while some respondents of the Strategic Action Plan Survey indicated a desire for the senior center to stay in its current location, a number of others voiced support for moving it to a different location. She understands that the building footprint would retreat a distance from the shoreline. While she recognized that it is an unpopular thought, she hoped they could have the conversation nonetheless.

Vice Chair Rubenkönig reminded Board Members to notify the Chair and Vice Chair when they will be absent from a meeting. They should also send notification to Ms. Cunningham.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

The Board meeting was adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

**APPROVED**