

**REDMOND PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES**

January 12, 2011

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Chairman Hinman, Commissioners O'Hara, Julinsey, Gregory, Miller and Flynn

COMMISSIONERS EXCUSED: Commissioner Biethan

STAFF PRESENT: Pete Sullivan, Colleen Kelly, Gary Lee, and Kim Dietz, Redmond Planning Department

RECORDING SECRETARY: Kathryn Kerby

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chairman Hinman in the Council Chambers at City Hall.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA AND MEETING MINUTES:

No changes to the agenda. However, Mr. Sullivan proposed that the Commission try to follow the timetable listed for each agenda item, to more adequately allow sufficient time for each issue. To that end he will monitor elapsed time for each agenda item. Whenever the Commission's discussions are about to spill over into the next time slot, he will ask them if they would like to continue the discussion or continue it during a future meeting. Mr. Sullivan also asked that for each agenda, the Commissioners review those allotted times so that they can be trimmed or expanded as needed. Chairman Hinman thanked Mr. Sullivan for his proposal, and said that the current meeting's study session on the Comprehensive Plan's Human Services Element probably did not need 30 minutes. He asked the Commissioners if anyone else had suggested changes. There were no other suggestions.

The PC meeting minutes for December 15, 2010 were approved with no changes.

ITEMS FROM THE AUDIENCE:

There were no questions or comments from the audience.

PUBLIC HEARING AND STUDY SESSION, 2010/2011 Comprehensive Plan Update, Human Services Element, presented by Colleen Kelly, Redmond City Human Services Manager.

Chairman Hinman opened the public hearing and invited Ms. Kelly to begin her presentation. Ms. Kelly began by saying that Human Services was not synonymous with Human Resources. Human Services is a division of the Planning Department, and includes two staff members - herself and a three-quarter time senior planner. The division is responsible for planning issues related to:

- 1) Individuals meeting their basic needs for survival such as food, clothing, shelter and heat.
- 2) Emergency intervention such as suicide prevention, domestic violence prevention, and intervention such as shelters.
- 3) Assistance moving from merely surviving to thriving, such as job training, English as a second language, and family support services.

The City's strategy to provide these services:

- 1) The City does not plan to be a direct service provider, but rather contract with a variety of well-qualified community based organizations.
- 2) Use a per capita funding formula:
 - a. 2011/2012 funding is targeted at \$670,000.
- 3) The City also partners with regional leadership groups to guide the City's efforts. Two current partner groups:
 - a. Eastside Human Services Forum composed of all Eastside jurisdictions.
 - b. Ten-Year Plan to End Homelessness, a countywide project.

The division's recent activities included:

- 1) Adoption of the City's first Human Services Strategic Plan in March 2009. The plan is available at: <http://www.redmond.gov/Residents/HumanServices/> and then click on "Residents", "Human Services" and scroll down page to the H.S. Strategic Plan.
- 2) The first Human Services Commission was appointed in November 2009.

Proposed changes include:

- 1) Updating and aligning of the Human Services element with the City's strategic plan and sustainability goals.
- 2) Expanding definition of City's role.
- 3) Adding focus to individual policies.

The process began in December 2010 and has progressed as follows:

- 1) December 1, 2010: Initial Planning Commission study session.
 - a. Reviewed proposed amendments.
 - b. Discussed suggestion for additional language to strengthen the link between the Strategic Plan and the Comprehensive Plan.
- 2) January 12, 2011: Public Hearing.
 - a. Seek public comments.
 - b. Resolve any outstanding issues.
- 3) January 26, 2011: Planning Commission report.
 - a. Review and finalize details.

This concluded Ms. Kelly's presentation. Commissioner Julinsey asked if any Commissioners had any questions or comments. Chairman Hinman said he felt they had a very good discussion during their December 2010 meeting. There were no other comments from the Commission, and no comments from the public. Commissioner Miller asked if public comment would be held open beyond the current meeting. Chairman Hinman said he was ready to close the comment period unless anyone had strong objections. The Commission agreed the public hearing could be closed and Chairman Hinman closed the public hearing. Vice-Chair Gregory moved that the Commission recommend the adoption of the proposed amendments. The motion was seconded with no further discussion. The motion passed unanimously.

STUDY SESSION, Redmond Village Square Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Map Amendment, presented by Gary Lee, Redmond City Planner.

Mr. Lee opened the study session by introducing the amendment. It was a private application made by owners of the Village Square Shopping Center, to extend the Anderson Park (AP) zoning eastward over the property. He showed maps of the subject property, showing that zoning extension. The extension would enable the property to build up to six stories instead of the two-story limit for the current zone. The property currently includes Value Village, Kinko's and Dairy Queen at the south corner of Redmond Way and 170th Avenue.

The City's Technical Committee recommended that the AP zoning be extended beyond the subject property, east to 170th Avenue. They felt it was a more logical location for the zoning boundary. The Committee had made a similar recommendation in 2009, including that extended area and also including an adjacent area to the north. The Planning Commission rejected the earlier proposal because they believed that increasing the building height on both sides of Redmond Way would diminish the gateway effect for westbound traffic in that area. Since then, the City Council adopted the DEWCS plan for that area to convert one-way streets back to two-way streets. The plan introduced new street alignments for Avondale and 168th Avenue, so that a street will now cross through a property instead of following the western edge.

As a result of that change, the area's pedestrian map has also been updated. Both the new street and the revised pedestrian map pass directly through the proposed rezoning area. The City's goals for the area are to move away from single-story drive-through type of development, to denser, multi-story development. Therefore, the proposed rezone would be consistent with not only the City's general goals, but also with the specific street and pedestrian plans for that area.

Chairman Hinman asked Mr. Lee to summarize the City's Downtown vision statement to clarify how that meshed with the proposed changes. Mr. Lee agreed, and showed a three dimensional partial-color aerial rendering of downtown Redmond. The illustration was looking to the west, which showed a variety of shopping areas as well as River Park and Redmond Way. The illustration was what that area of the City would look like in 2020. The subject parcel is just off the map. Chairman Hinman pointed out that the subject parcel, if rezoned, would certainly be consistent with the building heights of nearby properties. He asked if any of the Commissioners had questions.

Commissioner Miller asked Mr. Lee to summarize the concerns or objections voiced by the previous Commission review of the 2009 zoning change recommendation. Mr. Lee said the main difference between the first proposal and this one, was that the zoning first would not only be extended eastward but also northward across Redmond Way. The Planning Commission was most concerned about the northern extension and building height increases in that particular area. Specifically, taller buildings would block the view to Anderson Park for westbound traffic. Chairman Hinman added that the previous Commission was concerned about creating a canyon effect with such tall buildings on both sides of the road. Commissioner Flynn asked whether the zoning change would roughly match the appearance of approaching the city from the west, with taller buildings on one side and shorter buildings on the other. Mr. Lee confirmed that would generally be the case. At one point along Redmond Way, taller buildings would be allowed on both sides. Leading up to that, only one side of the road would allow five- or six-story buildings.

Chairman Hinman quoted the application as saying that the subject parcel was already within the ring of higher density development, which apparently indicated the area around Cleveland Street and Redmond Way. Commissioner Miller clarified that someone approaching Anderson Park from the west heading east on Redmond Way, could eventually be looking down a canyon. Mr. Lee agreed that there are areas where that could occur. Commissioner O'Hara pointed out that once a driver passed Anderson Park, they would be in an area already characterized by five-story buildings. Commissioner Miller understood, but was trying to point out that the canyon the previous Commission was trying to avoid for westbound traffic would occur under this new proposal for eastbound traffic.

Commissioner O'Hara questioned whether that was their intent. He had understood their objections as only trying to prevent that canyon while heading into the city. Once a driver was within the Downtown area, those higher buildings would exist on both sides per the City's development vision for that area. Anderson Park would be the buffer, or gateway. Mr. Lee confirmed that was the case. Vice-Chair Gregory asked whether this proposal would increase the area allowing those higher buildings by expanding the zoning eastward. Mr. Lee confirmed that was true as well, extended the allowance for five- or six-story buildings as far east as 170th. Vice-Chair Gregory asked if Anderson Park would eventually be ringed by five-story buildings. Commissioner O'Hara pointed out that no, that development could only be on one side of the street, not both.

Commissioner Miller asked for a visual representation of the view shed given the proposed amendments. He wondered if it was fair that parcel owners on one side of the road would be allowed to further develop their parcels, while owners on the other side of the road would not. Mr. Lee asked specifically what visual representation he would like. He wanted to see that area if approaching at street level from the east, showing the contrast between the current and proposed zoning. Commissioner O'Hara said they already had a good representation of that, by traveling eastbound on Redmond Way. The corridor offered five-story buildings on one side and lower buildings on the other. Chairman Hinman pointed out that the existing illustration was a product of the DEWCS plan and more rendering was not available for the parcel in question. Mr. Lee confirmed there were no drawings for the parcel of which he was aware.

Chairman Hinman summarized their current discussion as a concern about building heights in that particular view shed. He asked if the height limit would ever exceed that if TDR's were applied. Mr. Lee said planners had already capped building height at five stories without TDR's and six stories with TDR's.

Vice-Chair Gregory worried about height creep over the coming years. If the City allowed lopsided building height on different sides of the road, he could see how property owners would lobby for the ability to also go to that height on their parcels. Eventually, those taller building heights would creep eastward until the City had lost the defining entryway character. Commissioner O'Hara said if the development pressure is there, then perhaps the gateway would shift eastward, perhaps all the way to SR-520. He also pointed out that other development options could result in slightly taller buildings without the zoning change. Chairman Hinman asked if staff could prepare simpler illustrations rather than a rendering, in time for the next Commission meeting showing different heights by zone. Mr. Lee said he would try to provide that.

Vice-Chair Gregory added that another of his concerns was that this was a private application for a particular parcel. If the City wanted to review and modify vision for development along that entire

corridor, he asked if perhaps that discussion could occur as part of a Comprehensive Plan review, and not as part of a private application. He agreed that illustrations would help.

Commissioner Miller asked the question of whether DEWCS and other intersection modifications would impact gateway treatments in and around Anderson Park. Secondly, if the street connection was truly pedestrian-oriented, perhaps the Commission would consider extending the pedestrian travel to the park alongside with these other changes. Chairman Hinman asked if there were any other questions. There were none. Mr. Lee added that he may not be able to provide the illustrations in time but he would look to see what staff had and he would provide whatever he could prior to the next meeting.

PUBLIC HEARING AND STUDY SESSION, Neighborhood Commercial Development Guide Amendment – Policy and Regulatory Updates, presented by Kim Dietz, Redmond City Planner

Chairman Hinman reminded the Commission that the written comment period had already been opened and held open from a previous meeting. Depending on how the public hearing and study session progressed, they would decide whether to close the hearing after the current study session. He invited Ms. Dietz to begin her presentation.

Ms. Dietz opened with a summary of her presentation. She would first present the highlights from the January 5th stakeholder meeting, and then continue discussion of the few remaining items. She had received no additional comments other than the feedback from the stakeholder meeting. Ms. Dietz hoped that with the feedback they would be able to close those additional items. The next meeting would then be on January 26th.

Significant topics and findings from the stakeholders meeting included the following:

- 1) Eleven of the 12 respondents supported having a Neighborhood Commercial zone within a few blocks or a quarter mile from home, depending on business type.
- 2) All 12 respondents favored some kind of community gathering places within that zone; most also favored either general parking or specific bike parking for that gathering area. This element was the highest single priority amongst respondents.
- 3) Eight of the 12 respondents favored locating the zone along an arterial, but to also provide pedestrian access.
- 4) Nine of the 12 favored locations in any or all neighborhoods, as long as the location was along an arterial and within walking and biking distance of home and work.
- 5) Ten of the 12 wanted to keep the parcels within those zones small and less intensely used, as compared to parcels in either Downtown or Overlake. They did not want the parcels to compete for business along primary routes to the Urban Centers. The respondents also wanted to offer neighborhoods alternatives to getting in the car.
- 6) Eight of the 12 respondents wanted to keep signage small, and located on the structure rather than on posts or banners nearby.

Chairman Hinman asked if anyone had questions about the stakeholders' meeting. He added that Commissioner Biethan, Commissioner Miller and he had all attended that same stakeholder meeting. Commissioner Miller stated that he was impressed with the comments from, and receptiveness of, the attendees. One of the comments was that the biggest single expense for a business is the rent or lease. Being able to locate a micro business in a neighborhood could make a

real difference to small businesses. He felt that the stakeholders really understood what a micro business in a neighborhood could be.

Chairman Hinman added that he was concerned about the small group size. On the other hand, he suspected that they would have heard basically the same comments from larger groups. He relayed to Commissioner Flynn that he had asked the stakeholders about having a single tenant versus several tenants. Commissioner Flynn had wondered about that in previous discussion. The stakeholder consensus was that multiple tenants would be preferable. Commissioner Flynn replied that he felt the comments were promising, and confirmed many of the conversations they had already had.

Chairman Hinman suggested they go over the remaining open items. Issue #1 addressed the access to the Neighborhood Commercial sites which included both walking and biking, as well as the distance to nearby amenities such as parks. He asked Ms. Dietz to point out where in the documentation the Commissioners could see the revised text. Ms. Dietz directed them to page 3, beginning with LU-40, which covered the general intent of the new land use. The other major text change was at the bottom where staff had removed reference to the number of vehicle trips. Additionally, staff had refined text related to creating an integrated neighborhood place, and removed the proximity to parks requirement for NC-2. Those text changes were all highlighted in gray. Chairman Hinman asked the Commission to review the changes and asked if anyone had any additional comments.

Commissioner Miller pointed out that the stakeholders had indicated a desire for proximity, but it was not considered essential. He wondered if the text should reflect that. Chairman Hinman said at the top of page 5, the text said that proximity was encouraged, which he believed captured that desire without making it a priority. Ms. Dietz added that stakeholders had included being able to visit the NC businesses when they are already at area parks, which indicated to her they needed to preserve that proximity. Commissioner Miller was satisfied with the existing text.

Commissioner Flynn asked Ms. Dietz to explain in more depth the changes made to LU-40. Ms. Dietz explained that the first change was the bullet item at the bottom of page 3, carrying over onto page 4, which refined the relationship that the site had with the neighborhood. Previously the language had specified *be within a mixed use neighborhood and provide a variety of uses including retail and office*. The text changed to *be within a mixed use neighborhood that includes residential and business concentrations*. Chairman Hinman added that the business concentration was not highlighted in previous versions. Ms. Dietz displayed a map showing all the City's parks, collector arterials and highways, buffers around the urban centers, and shading to indicate all the areas which were within the quarter-mile radius of a park. The map was not intended to show all the potential locations for the NC land use as it did not include all recommended criteria. Commissioners Flynn and O'Hara both thanked her for the map because it helped clarify the issue for them. Issue #1 was closed.

Issue #2 related to the triggers for each type of Neighborhood Commercial category and the possibility of a very small category, loosely defined as NC-.5, for micro-businesses. Ms. Dietz said that policy language was on page 3, in LU-39.5. Chairman Hinman asked Ms. Dietz to clarify the statement *amendment process re-evaluating*. Ms. Dietz said that was a reference to the staff's internal process for code amendments, and was intended merely as an indication for how frequently staff could potentially amend the code if needed.

Commissioner Miller stated he wished the policy would just directly address the question of small uses. The existing text is phrased such that the point is lost. He had no objection to reviewing and monitoring, and bringing up the question, but it does not specify what they are monitoring. Commissioner Miller is also concerned that the bulleted points tended to flavor or prejudge the options. Chairman Hinman added that he thought there was a better way to list the possibilities without that flavoring, which they had worked out previously. He suggested that they resend that text to staff and possibly have that incorporated into the language instead of the bullet points currently listed. Commissioner Miller agreed that would be a good option, but repeated that he felt the NC-.5 option was only indirectly referenced instead of directly addressed.

Ms. Dietz asked what needed to change. Staff had specifically created the text to allow for any discussion of neighborhood commercial, so she was not sure what the Commissioners wanted to remedy. She added that the language tried to allow for all possibilities, rather than call out just a few specific scenarios. Commissioner Miller replied that text like *periodically monitor key elements* might have specific meaning to staff, but outsiders would find that phrase vague. Either list the key elements, or be more specific about what kinds of variety and what kinds of location are being monitored. The language could apply to either NC-1 or NC-2 as well as to NC-.5, despite NC-.5 being the focus. Chairman Hinman asked if the rest of the Commission would be comfortable with Commissioner Miller, Ms. Dietz, and he having an off-line conversation about how to refine that text.

Vice-Chair Gregory asked how LU-39.5 related to LU-40, where the text said *provide for attractively designed, small and medium scale neighborhood businesses*. He had previously thought that line covered the possibility of the NC-.5 but now he was not sure. Chairman Hinman replied that he felt LU-40 was the more general statement, and LU-39.5 was the more specific statement. Ms. Dietz added that LU-39.5 was introducing a process, while LU-40 established the land use and zoning designations. LU-39.5 also laid the groundwork for any future updating of the element. Chairman Hinman asked if that answered the question.

Vice-Chair Gregory said that answered his question. He added that perhaps an answer to Commissioner Miller's concerns would be to list key elements for Neighborhood Commercial uses, rather than simply listing how NC properties would mesh with surrounding areas. Chairman Hinman again asked if they could take this conversation offline and come up with acceptable text, then bring that language back for the next meeting. Ms. Dietz clarified that they would have to meet within the next 24 hours. The rest of the Commission was comfortable with that. Issue #2 was deferred.

Issue #5 permitted uses in proximity to urban centers. Chairman Hinman started by saying that stakeholders seemed to agree that NC-1 land use should not be permitted along arterials running between the City's two urban centers, due to the potential competition. He asked the Commission their opinion on that exclusion. Vice-Chair asked if the radius exclusion criteria still existed. Ms. Dietz confirmed that the current language still excluded NC land use within one-half mile. Vice-Chair Gregory felt that perhaps the arterial exclusion made more sense than the simple radius exclusion, because it addressed the modality more accurately. Ms. Dietz replied that the stakeholders did not provide a clear preference for one or the other exclusion. Staff was concerned with urban center businesses creeping out towards the residential neighborhoods.

Chairman Hinman asked if any of the other Commissioners had concerns. Commission O'Hara said that his time in Great Britain saw that crisp demarcation between urban centers, residential areas, and Neighborhood Commercial areas. He felt the radius exclusions were a good idea. Commissioner Julinsey related that she saw similar setups in Germany, and agreed with the radius exclusion. Commissioner Flynn agreed. Vice-Chair Gregory was comfortable with keeping the radius exclusion, but wanted to specifically either list it, or exclude it in the language.

Commissioner Miller pointed out that while everyone's experiences in other areas brought back wonderful examples of what they would like to see in Redmond, the text as it currently stood, would not allow those types of micro businesses. His concern with the radius is not so much about NC-2 or NC-1 per se. There are so many tenants possible with the NC-2 that they start to resemble strip malls. Given that, he could certainly understand the need for radius buffers and the desire to minimize creep. However, he felt it unnecessary to protect the micro businesses either from each other or from businesses in Downtown, because by their very nature they will only pull in customers from a very small area.

Commissioner Miller also pointed out that there were currently 18 coffee shop-type businesses in downtown Redmond and they seemed to be doing just fine even with such close-range competition from each other. That is why he wanted to be very specific in terms of defining small commercial. The existing language provided for these larger multi-tenant commercial areas but did not specifically allow for or encourage the smaller businesses that could also potentially exist. Commissioner Miller wanted to see more language about what they can do, rather than what they cannot do. The very small neighborhood businesses would never compete with much larger retail centers like Sears, so protecting Sears from them is missing the point.

Chairman Hinman asked Commissioner Miller if he had suggestions for how to change the language to articulate that vision. He suggested they review LU 39.5 as a place to add such language. Commissioner Miller said he had no problem with what was currently in LU-39.5. He simply wanted them to also articulate what can be, and the language was not there yet. Chairman Hinman encouraged him to consider how the text could be modified to include that vision, and they could include that in their off-line conversation over the next few days. In the meantime, he closed Issue #5.

Issue #9 regarded having carts and kiosks on compact sites. Chairman Hinman explained that he raised this issue for two reasons. First, kiosks and carts allow for very compact businesses on a multi-use, multi-tenant site. However, the downside would be how it impacted traffic circulation. He felt it could fit comfortably on NC-2 properties but he wondered if it might not be a good fit for NC-1 parcels due to size constraints. He asked Ms. Dietz to elaborate on staff findings.

Ms. Dietz showed an existing site on Redmond-Woodinville Road. The parcel was three acres, but only one acre was developed. Within that one acre stood not only two buildings and associated parking, but also a separate drive-through coffee kiosk. That kiosk had two designated parking spaces allocated within the larger parking lot, as well as two outdoor tables with umbrellas for patrons. That site could yet be more developed even within the one-acre subarea. Commissioner Miller asked if it truly qualified as a kiosk, since it was apparently a permanent building. There also were no sidewalks in view so nearby foot traffic was minimal. Commissioner O'Hara said it was frequented by bicyclists even if it was not frequented by pedestrians. Chairman Hinman asked if kiosks have size limits. Ms. Dietz confirmed that they do, with two classifications:

- 1) The cart designation implies temporary, wheeled stands.
- 2) A kiosk is just one type of permanent drive-up stands.

No Commissioners had other questions or comments. Chairman Hinman closed Issue #9. He asked the Commissioners if anyone had additional concerns with the regulatory aspect of the amendments. He reminded them that they were already planning to revisit LU-39.5 per earlier discussions, but he asked if there were any additional issues. There were none. He asked Ms. Dietz if she had any remaining questions or clarifications. She said no, but reminded the Commission that they were starting to run up against scheduling complications with the outstanding issues, relative to other scheduled Comprehensive Plan revisions. Ms. Dietz suggested she work directly with Chairman Hinman and Commissioner Miller to develop additional language for LU-39.5, then draft the report in time for the January 19th meeting. At the following meeting on January 26th, they would then have all the materials they need to sign off.

Mr. Sullivan added that they had time on the January 19th agenda to finish up the few outstanding issues, but that they really needed to finish during that meeting and be prepared for signatures during the January 26th meeting. If further extensions were needed for this element, that would bump the schedule for other Comprehensive Plan elements. Chairman Hinman asked Commissioner Miller for his schedule. Commissioner Miller replied that he would be back in town on Monday but would be available via email. Chairman Hinman agreed to continue the off-line discussions via email, and closed the discussion.

REPORTS

Chairman Hinman reminded everyone of the upcoming open house meeting on January 27, 2011, regarding the Redmond Central Connector, formerly known as the BNSF corridor. This will be the public's chance to come in and review draft designs for that corridor. The meeting is 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., in City Hall. The Planning Commission will review the design during their January 26th meeting.

SCHEDULING/TOPICS FOR NEXT MEETING(S)

ADJOURN

Chairman Hinman adjourned the meeting at approximately 9:00 p.m.

Minutes Approved On:

Planning Commission Chair