Planning Commission Report

To: City Council

From: Planning Commission

Staff Contacts: Carrie Hite, Parks Director 425-556-2326
Jeff Aken, Senior Planner 425-556-2328

Date: July 17, 2020

Title: Amendments to Comprehensive Plan

Project File Number LAND-2020-00147 and SEPA-2020-00148

Recommended Action: Adopt the proposed amendments to the Comprehensive Plan, and Trails Map in the PARCC Plan as shown in Attachment A.

Summary: This amendment package represents four Comprehensive Plan that were on the 2018-19 Comprehensive Plan amendment docket. The items amend existing policies and add new policies to the following Comprehensive Plan elements: Goals, Vision and Framework; Community Character; Economic Vitality; Neighborhoods; Capital Facilities; Land Use; Parks: Natural Environment; and Utilities.

Each policy amendment provides guidance for outcomes reflected from recently adopted plans:

- 2019 Parks American’s with Disabilities Act (ADA) Transition Plan
- 2019 Tree Canopy Strategic Plan Update
- 2019 Facilities Strategic Management Plan

In addition, there are proposed revisions to the trails map in the PARCC Plan.
Reasons the recommendation should be adopted:

This amendment package should be adopted for the following reasons:

- The amendments would provide policy guidance for outcomes reflected in the three recently adopted plans listed above.

- The adoption of the policies and the trails map update would ensure that Redmond’s Comprehensive Plan is not only consistent with recently adopted planning documents but will also continue to support the vision for how and where Redmond grows, recreates, invests, and protects its natural environment.

- An updated Trails Map would guide decisions regarding future infrastructure investments.

Recommended Findings of Fact

1. **Public Hearing and Notice**

   a. **Public Hearing Date**


   b. **Notice**

   The public hearings notice was published in the Eastside edition of the *Seattle Times* on June 17, 2020. Public notices were posted in City Hall. All members of the Parks and Trails Commission received notice. Notice was also provided by announcing the hearing in the Planning Commission agendas and extended agendas, as well as postings on the City’s web site.

2. **Public Comment**

   The meeting minutes for the July 8, 2020, the public hearing date, is shown in Attachment B. Two written comments were submitted into the public record and are shown in Attachment C. A summary of the oral testimony and written comments are described below under the Key Issues section.
Recommended Conclusions

1. **Key Issues Discussed by the Planning Commission**

The Planning Commission began discussion of this topic on April 8, 2020 and considered several issues regarding the proposed amendments. Key issues presented at the public hearings and discussed by the Planning Commission are summarized below. Attachment D includes the Planning Commission’s issues matrix.

**Commission Discussion**
In reviewing the proposed amendments related to the *Facilities Strategic Management Plan*, the Commissioners discussed several issues such as:

- The approach used in the Plan to prevent circumstances that could, for example, force the closure of a city facility;
- The “benchmarks” that trigger maintenance activity, and the use of life-cycle analysis for city facilities;
- The meaning and application of one of the Plan’s guiding principles to create “sustainable and efficient” buildings; and

In reviewing the proposed amendments related to the *Tree Canopy Strategic Plan*, the Commissioners inquired about whether defensible placement of trees is addressed in the Plan. Staff shared that although specific location considerations are not part of the Plan, the Plan does reference the “right tree in the right place” that requests private landowners and developers research the location and tree characteristics to ensure that utilities, structures, sight triangles and safety are addressed when choosing the right tree.

One change has been made to the recommendation. That is to retain NE-113 *Maintain no net loss of significant trees within the city over the long term.* This policy forms the basis of the tree regulation code and needs to be retained.

Several discussion topics introduced by Commissioners were more relevant to the Tree Code Update which is currently underway. These items have been referred for consideration to the Tree Code Update Project, led by Project Manager Cathy Beam, Principle Planner. These items are listed on the attached Issues Matrix.

**Public Testimony:**

Although testimony is fully captured in the July 8th Meeting Minutes, the comments are briefly summarized below:

- **Shelly Bowman, Redmond resident.** Ms. Bowman stated that she supports the proposed amendments that relate to the *Tree Canopy Strategic Plan*. Ms. Bowman requested that
the Planning Commission revise the Redmond Zoning Code tree permit provisions to ensure the City meets the 40% tree canopy goal, as stated in the Strategic Plan, in 2050. Ms. Bowman submitted written testimony as well, that includes fourteen measures to attain this goal. (Attachment C)

- **Tom Hinman, Redmond resident.** Mr. Hinman provided written comments and public testimony to inform decision makers involved in implementing the 40% tree canopy retention strategy. Mr. Hinman acknowledged some of the positive steps taken by City staff but stressed that more emphasis, evaluation, research, and ultimately tree code updates are needed in the areas of: tree definitions; regulatory exceptions generally; and the criteria used for exceptions; mitigation enforcement; replacement tree fees; and survival monitoring. In addition, Mr. Hinman recommends a stakeholder team that includes members of the public be established and perhaps modeled after the Arbor Day Foundation’s Tree Board.

- **Gary Smith, Redmond resident.** Mr. Smith applauded the City’s effort to establish a sustainable urban forest. Mr. Smith stated that Strategy D in the Tree Canopy Strategic Plan needs to be emphasized and this preserves existing canopy. Mr. Smith provided an example of the Greystone development and its impacts on tree canopy over time and urged the Commission to look at other city’s efforts including Kirkland.

- **Rose-Marie Ives, Redmond resident.** Ms. Ives provided public comment on the Tree Canopy Strategic Plan. Ms. Ives applauded the goals of the plan but believes a much stronger emphasis should be placed on retention vs. planting. In addition, Ms. Ives stresses the plan should focus on the urban centers and contiguous city limits and not include canopy from outside those limits. In conclusion Ms. Ives stated that the plan should prioritize preserving and protecting existing trees in urban centers.

- **James Terwilliger, Redmond resident.** Mr. Terwilliger stated that ways to address Tree Canopy are both simple and urgent. Mr. Terwilliger stated that the current canopy is lower than the City’s goal and decreasing. Mr. Terwilliger stated the City should consider removing the fee-in-lieu and require new trees to be planted, before existing trees can be removed. Mr. Terwilliger stated leadership was needed and he believed Redmond could be that leader.

2. **Recommended Conclusions of the Technical Committee**

The recommended conclusions contained in the Technical Committee Report (Attachment E) regarding the proposed amendments and trails map revisions are adopted in support of the Planning Commission’s recommendation with one exception which is not to delete policy NE-113 *Maintain no net loss of significant trees within the city over the long term.*
3. **Planning Commission Recommendation**

The Planning Commission voted at its July 22, 2020 meeting to recommend adoption of the Technical Committee recommended amendments to the Comprehensive Plan, and the PARCC Plan trails map with the sole exception of not deleting policy NE-113.

**List of Attachments**

Attachment A: Recommended Amendments

Attachment B: Planning Commission Meeting Summary April 8, 2020
Planning Commission Meeting Minutes, July 8, 2020

Attachment C: Written Comments from:
Shelly Bowman, Redmond resident
Tom Hinman, Redmond resident

Attachment D: Final Issues Matrix

Attachment E: [Technical Committee Report, including exhibits](#)

_________________________________________  
Carol Helland, Planning Director  Date

_________________________________________  
Roy Captain, Planning Commission Chairperson  Date

Approved for Council Agenda ______________________  

Proposed Parks-related Comprehensive Plan Amendments  
Planning Commission Report  
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EXHIBIT A – Recommended Amendments

Proposed Trail Map Amendments

The following changes are proposed to the Proposed Trail Project Map from the 2017 PARCC Plan.

1  100th Street Connector: Change from proposed connector trail to proposed local trail due to feasibility issues of steep grades. A narrower soft surface trail may be feasible in this location.

17  148th Ave NE: Remove the proposed trail section on 148th between Old Redmond Road to Redmond Way, as the trail would not connect to another park, trail, or bicycle facility beyond that point.

33  NE 116th Trail 1: Change the proposed trail between the Sammamish River and Redwood Road from a connector trail to a local trail due to challenges with steep slopes up to 154th, presence of critical areas, insufficient right-of-way within King County, and the potential need to take King County park land for right-of-way (6F issue).

40  PSE Trail West (N/S) – North: Change proposed trail from a regional trail to a soft surface local trail, which is 1 to 5 feet wide, due to feasibility with steep grades. This trail was recently evaluated including site visits by staff and the topography is too challenging to implement regional trail standards.

49/20  Woodbridge Neighborhood Connector Trail: Remove proposed trail as the road is not being constructed through this private property. There are bicycle lanes that cross the neighborhood east-west along NE 76th Street and the proposed Bear-Evans Creek regional trail just north of that. There are also bike lanes running north-south along 185th Ave NE. Lastly, there is a regional trail running north-south along the eastern boundary of the neighborhood.

67/68th Trail: Remove proposed trail number 20, 185th Ave NE because there will no longer be a connection across neighborhood without proposed trail 49.

63EW  Willows Creek Neighborhood Park to PSE Trail: Remove the proposed east-west route in the trail network labeled 63. The street adjacent NE 94th Street has a bike boulevard proposed in the Transportation Master Plan (TMP), which is more feasible to improve than to add the parallel un-numbered trail to the north, labeled as regional.

66  PSE Trail West (N/S) North Terminus: Remove this proposed trail because Kirkland has a Funded CIP project for a similar connection.
84  NE 95th St Trail: Reclassify this proposed regional trail to a local trail, which could be paved or soft surface. The width of a regional trail would impact the width of the bridge. Pedestrian traffic flow on NE 95th Street is very low. Beyond the bridge, there are additional right-of-way needs to create a trail and a narrower trail will reduce the amount of property needed.

85  87th Street to 88th Street Trail: This proposed connector trail is requested to be removed from the PARCC Plan as the adjacent property owner is seeking to ask the City to abandon that right-of-way and use it for a stormwater improvement project to address flooding on their property. This cannot move forward while the city shows a proposed project in the Comprehensive Plan within that right-of-way. The trail was a small connection between neighborhoods. Due to the steep grade, the proposed trail would not be ADA accessible. There are sidewalks on the local streets for alternative safe pedestrian access through the neighborhood.

96  Redmond Way Trail 2 (180th to Bear & Evans Creek Trail): Remove this proposed trail, as it is redundant to the East Lake Sammamish Trail one block away and there is not enough right of way, it has a constrained width with structural walls that would make construction extremely expense. An alternative would be to take the East Lake Sammamish Trail to trail 22 on the map to connect to Route 202.

Proposed ADA Policies

☐ CF NEW#: The City shall maintain an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Transition Plan for all regulated facilities and programs and update it at least every six years with accomplishments, new findings, updated best practices, and revised priorities for removing barriers to access.

☐ PR NEW#: At least one-third of recurring park elements, such as playgrounds, picnic tables, or sport courts; and all unique park elements, such as the beach at Idylwood Park, shall be accessible to the community.

☐ PR NEW#: The City shall use best management practices to produce and host events that are accessible to all.

Proposed Tree Canopy Policies

Delete the following policies:

☐ NE-121 Provide information to community residents and property owners to encourage them to plant trees on their properties.

☐ PR-11 Preserve and enhance natural areas within parks to help increase citywide tree canopy.

☐ PR-57 Develop a cross-departmental strategic plan to increase tree canopy across the city and provide a canopy coverage goal, proposed timeline, and methods for achieving the goal.

NR NEW# - Follow the recommendations in the 2019 Tree Canopy Strategic Plan, including:
Increase the tree canopy to 40 percent by 2049 with a focus on enhancements on public and private land within city limits;

Encourage tree canopy preservation and growth on private land by providing educational programs and discouraging the removal of trees beyond retention standards, utilizing code incentives to plant new trees and preserve existing trees, and working with community partners and developers to plant new trees and retain existing trees;

Evaluate tree regulations and determine if they are accomplishing the intended goals of the Tree Canopy Strategic Plan.

Continually invest in urban forest management programs to protect and expand the existing tree canopy; and

Prioritize acquisition of property for current tree canopy benefits or the opportunity to plant trees to enhance the canopy.

Revise FW-11 as follows to address the importance of all greenspace including shrubbery and grass, as opposed to incorporating more hard surfaces.

FW-11 Emphasize Redmond’s role as an environmental steward by conducting City business in a manner that:

• Increases community understanding of the natural environment through education and involvement programs to promote active participation in addressing environmental challenges and solutions;

• Promotes sustainable land use patterns and low-impact development practices; and

• Leads by example in the conservation of natural resources, such as energy, water, trees and greenspace, and avoidance of adverse environmental impacts.

Proposed Capital Facilities Policies
Create a new sub-section in the Capital Facilities Element and include the following policies in that section:

Capital Facilities Development and Maintenance

In 2019, the City Council approved a Facilities Strategic Management Plan that provides guidance on how to best operate, maintain, and upgrade City facilities in the short- and long-term (30 years). It includes a business model that establishes desired facility management services and service levels. In addition, it recommends optimized maintenance staffing, use of resources, and capital project priorities and phasing. The guiding principles for the plan include, developing and maintaining city facilities that are:

• Sustainable and efficient

• Welcoming, safe, and healthy

• Flexible and designed for the future

• Achievable.

Revise CC 19 and PR-64 and move to the Capital Facilities Element:
Revision of CC 19 to CF NEW# - Design and build Redmond’s public buildings for a 50-year lifespan that include building automation technology and high-quality, durable finishes and materials to serve as innovative and sustainable models to the community.

Update PR 64 to CF XX - Manage assets such as buildings, infrastructure and amenities to provide durability and functionality. Practice proactive management that results in replacement or renovation in advance of need plans for quarter-life capital investments that may include functional modernization, major maintenance, and building systems replacement. Engage stakeholders in planning and analysis for end of life reinvestment for replacement of facilities.

Revise UT 77 - Promote the development utilization of current energy management and building automation technologies as part of efficiently meeting the City’s energy and facility management goals. The following techniques should be leveraged to support energy efficiency strategies, such as: benchmarking buildings for energy performance, optimizing input energy requirements, and initiating incentive programs for net-zero energy structures.

CF NEW# - The City will develop sustainable buildings by:
- Using long-lasting materials, energy and water efficient systems, building automation systems;
- Designing flexible spaces for planned future growth; and
- Using land and building space to its maximum potential.

Revise:
Capital Planning References
Functional plans are major components of the City’s overall Capital Facilities Program. The following functional plans have been adopted by the City and may be consulted for more detailed information regarding existing and planned facilities, service standards and facility development:
- City of Redmond, ADA Transition Plan Amendment for Parks and Trails, Approved October 2019.
- King County, Final 2009 Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan.
MINUTES FOR JULY 8, 2020

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Chairperson Captain, Vice-Chairperson Nichols
Commissioners East, Knopf, Rajpathak, Shefrin, and Varadharajan

STAFF PRESENT: Jeff Aken, Judy Fani, Beckye Frey, and Beverly Mesa-Zendt, Planning Department

EXCUSED ABSENCE:

RECORDING SECRETARY: Carolyn Garza, LLC

CALL TO ORDER:

The virtual meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chairperson Captain.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

MOTION to approve the Agenda by Commissioner Knopf. MOTION seconded by Vice Chairperson Nichols. The MOTION passed unanimously.

ITEMS FROM THE AUDIENCE:

Ms. Frey stated that one comment had been forwarded via email to the Commission for the Public Hearing from Mr. Tom Hinman, and four other individuals had requested to call in and speak during the Public Hearing. There were no speakers with items outside the Public Hearing subject matter.
Public Hearing, Policy Amendments to PARCC Plan (Parks, Arts, Recreation, Culture, and Conservation), Parks and Trails ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) Transition Plan, Tree Canopy Strategic Plan and Facilities Strategic Management Plan

Mr. Aken presented a recap of the details.

Chairperson Captain asked if there were questions and there were none.

Chairperson Captain asked for clarification regarding the email comment from Mr. Hinman. The date of the offline presentation forwarded was April 2, 2013. Mr. Hinman also stated that comments submitted nearly one month ago are not in documents provided by staff.

Chairperson Captain asked for the opinion of staff regarding the April 2, 2013, PowerPoint. Mr. Aken stated not having seen the PowerPoint submitted but had seen the email from Mr. Hinman. The PowerPoint presentation in question would have been before the current Tree Canopy Strategic Plan effort was launched in 2017.

Chairperson Captain stated that the email was addressed to the Parks and Trail Commission and Planning Commission, and copied to Ms. Frey, Mr. Aken, and Mr. Gary Lee, dated July 3, 2020. Chairperson Captain asked that staff review the PowerPoint and return to the Commission.

Ms. Frey replied that the PowerPoint presentation arrived after the meeting preparation had occurred but was currently linked to the City website materials.

Commissioner Shefrin stated that the email of Mr. Hinman recommends considering fees other surrounding cities implement and states the importance of process transparency Chairperson Captain asked Mr. Aken to request clarification regarding the presentation date from Mr. Hinman.

The Public Hearing was opened by Chairperson Captain.

Ms. Rosemarie Ives, former Redmond Mayor, and Council Member asked to speak regarding the Tree Canopy Strategic Plan. Ms. Ives supports the goals of the plan, particularly regarding the conservation and retention of significant trees. Upon reviewing the Planning Commission Minutes, there is no specific mention of retention and protection of trees. The goal of the City is for 40 percent tree canopy by 2049 and existing is at 38 percent, including 900 acres of forest outside the City limits. For accuracy, the percentage should be lowered to reflect only the tree canopy within City limits where the environmental benefits accrue. The City has been overly permissive in allowing significant landmark trees to be removed over the past five years in the Tree Regulations Update. The same information should be reviewed from ten years ago. Throughout the plan, the focus is on planting new trees and an over-assumption that the City can plant out of canopy loss in order to meet the goal, but science and research do not support the theory. There is nothing in the plan which speaks specifically to retention and preservation. There is no mention of how zero net loss of significant trees will be achieved in the implementation plan. There is no accounting of the number of trees removed, retained, or the number of new plantings required. There is no plan to monitor maintenance or assess the success

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or mortality of previous plantings on public property. Newly planted trees must reach a specific size before benefits are contributed. Trees are important for aesthetics, clean air, and CO2 emissions reduction, and preserving and protecting existing trees is the best method to maximize tree benefits, especially in Urban Centers where the population per acre is very dense.

Ms. Shelly Bowman stated serving on the Parks and Trails Commission but that comments would be made as a private citizen. Ms. Bowman supports the Tree Canopy Strategic Plan amendment to the Comprehensive Plan, and with the amendment urged the Planning Commission to revise the permitting code to ensure the 40 percent tree canopy goal is reached in 2050. The planting of trees is being outpaced by removal. The Growth Management Act can be adhered to and, at the same time, the 40 percent tree canopy goal met. Ms. Bowman would submit a letter with detailed suggestions, but the highlights were:

1. To consider developing a stakeholder group of developers, private owners, City staff, arborists and interested citizens for input
2. Best Practices of both neighboring and distant cities be reviewed
3. Public information comment be provided regarding tree removal and mitigation details prior to large project final approvals
4. Provide transparent quarterly metrics and analysis
5. Update the 35 percent significant tree retention to 40 percent
6. Ensure enforcement of planting and tree survivability
7. Clearly define the replacement of tree types, sizes, and survival rates
8. Establish a tree definition and replacement ratio for trees larger than six inches and smaller than 30 inches
9. Remove dead, dying and hazardous trees as a free pass tear down
10. Increase in the in-lieu rate to $500 or more or perhaps eliminate the option
11. Be transparent regarding the in-lieu fees collected and uses
12. Increase the ratio of landmark tree replacement
13. Explore neighborhood goals
14. Rally and educate the public on united goals

Ms. Bowman expressed that there are many ways to close the tree gap and that the Planning Commission will succeed with code revisions which will ensure tree canopy goals will be met.

Mr. Captain asked for the address of Ms. Bowman, and Ms. Bowman replied 6605 - 146\textsuperscript{th} Avenue Northeast, Redmond, Grasslawn Neighborhood.

Mr. James Terwilliger, 16150 Northeast 93\textsuperscript{rd} Way, Redmond, stated serving on the Parks and Trails Commission but that comments would be made as a private citizen. Mr. Terwilliger stated that at the beginning of 2020 the continent of Australia was on fire and despite other crises this year, action is required now in every possible capacity toward climate issues. The current tree canopy percentage of 38 percent includes outlying areas such as the Watershed, and while the areas contribute in many positive ways, the contribution is not in the same way as true urban forests. The actual tree canopy in Redmond is approximately 33 percent. Regardless, the canopy coverage is lower than needed and decreasing.
1. Redmond has the lowest barrier to tree removal of any municipality in the region at $250 per tree in code
2. A fee-in-lieu of tree replacement is a reduction in canopy coverage by definition
3. Redmond is currently behind on enforcing agreed-upon replacement trees
4. A failure to plant agreed upon replacement trees for tree removal is also, by definition, a reduction in the tree canopy coverage

The suggestion is to remove the fee-in-lieu option for tree removal and require tree replacements to occur prior to allowing tree removal. Doing so will establish a tree canopy coverage floor, a statement that environmental health matters in Redmond. While neighboring cities have fee-in-lieu options, one City must remove the option first, setting a vision for climate and livability.

Mr. Gary Smith, 4805 162nd Avenue Northeast, Redmond, stated that emphasis on tree protection should occur during review of development proposals. There is an emphasis in Regulation on compliance for single-family residences regarding tree removal. In 2013, 25 net acres of trees were removed on Northeast 116th Street, and seven years later photography shows that the loss continues, and growth has not caught up. On Avondale Road, the Keller Mitigation Bank will take several years but will replace the prior 25 acres when mature. Neighboring cities such as Kirkland, which has recently completed a seven-year process to approve a Tree Canopy Strategic Plan, should be cooperated with. Mr. Smith stated speaking as a citizen, but also able to help from the Parks and Trails Commission.

Ms. Frey stated that there were no further speakers.

Chairperson Captain stated that the Public Hearing would be left open until the next Planning Commission meeting on July 22, 2020.

**Study Session, Docket Process Code Rewrite**

Ms. Fani stated that concerns expressed by the Planning Commission, staff, Council members, and applicants were being addressed. A Public Hearing will be held on July 22, 2020. The process schedule was explained. Council action is anticipated on October 20, 2020. There are three unresolved issues on the Issues Matrix and four sections of red-lined code that require review.

Ms. Fani began with a redlined code. New revisions to add clarity has been added to *Who May Apply* regarding initiating Comprehensive Plan amendment applications and to a two-year limitation that does not apply to City Council. Chairperson Captain stated that the verbiage appears contradictory: C.i. contradicts 3.a. Commissioner Knopf and Vice-Chairperson Nichols replied understanding the verbiage. Commissioner Shefrin stated that both sets of language may not be necessary. Chairperson Captain replied that the verbiage in C.i. was the confusing passage. Commissioner East stated that the second and third commas are unnecessary.

Ms. Fani continued with the Final Review of Docketed Proposals. Commissioner Knopf stated that at *Council can reject, or accept, in whole or in part, the recommendation of the Planning Commission*
Commission, there was not a need for a comma at reject or. Ms. Fani noted the suggested change. Ms. Fani then continued to present new clarifying language for the threshold criteria.

Vice Chairperson Nichols asked for the experience of the City of Bellevue regarding unnecessary barriers in the application process. Ms. Fani replied that neighboring parcels affected are brought into the process to provide a voice; if a property will be affected by an action by others, more analysis occurs.

Ms. Mesa-Zendt stated that a site-specific rezone will always include notification requirements per State laws. The process prevents spot zoning actions, an extra threshold so that larger land-use patterns can be considered. Vice Chairperson Nichols stated concern regarding the verbiage, however, specifically in relation to a neighborhood veto, in example regarding affordable housing. Commissioner Knopf stated that the new amendment is difficult to understand as a layperson. Ms. Mesa-Zendt replied that items were left in the proposed code for the Commission to decide what should remain; number six is existing language. Chairperson Captain stated that number seven says more but does not explain more than what number six already does. Ms. Mesa-Zendt stated that the change could be abandoned. Ms. Fani replied that the value of number seven would be the last phrase. Commissioner East agreed with Commissioner Knopf. Commissioner Rajpathak stated that in number six, the term nearby should be clarified specifically. Ms. Mesa-Zendt reviewed code and discovered an error at vi. in a strike-through. Chairperson Captain asked if number seven is the only choice available. Vice Chairperson Nichols replied that the choices are the strike-through, number six or number seven and Ms. Mesa-Zendt replied correct, or a combination of the three; the Commission can express the desired elements and staff will adjust verbiage.

Vice Chairperson Nichols stated agreeing with Commissioner Rajpathak regarding a specific definition of the term nearby. Ms. Fani replied that there is no RZC glossary definition of near, close, or nearby. Ms. Mesa-Zendt replied that at minimum, the notification buffer, 500 feet, is implied. Chairperson Captain stated that the term adjoining would be limiting and that a specific definition of nearby or a change in terminology was needed. Chairperson Captain asked if changing the term nearby to notification buffer would be acceptable, and Ms. Fani replied at a minimum. Chairperson Captain suggested adding the phrase at a minimum. Commissioner Knopf agreed.

Commissioner Varadharajan asked for clarification regarding the intent of number six and Ms. Mesa-Zendt replied that neighbors have a right to speak which can influence decision making; number six is a threshold in evaluation criteria to cross prior to hearing from neighbors. For example, issues regarding a multifamily project adding 20 units an acre next to a single-family detached unit. Commissioner Knopf stated liking number six but asked for clarification in number seven if a precedent could be set in a change finding. Ms. Mesa-Zendt replied that there are other geographic boundaries besides rezones that might occur in an urban center expansion; number seven captures the expansion question. Chairperson Captain asked if number seven could be revisited and Ms. Mesa-Zendt replied yes, and three clean options reflecting comments can be brought back to the Commission. Commissioner Shefrin asked if the term compatible rather than shared characteristics may create ambiguity but realized number seven will be

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revisited; wording can be fine-tuned to specifics. Chairperson Captain stated that different punctuation will help the understanding of the sentence.

Commissioner Rajpathak asked how the rubric would be applied if various residential zone densities such as R4 and R20 have the shared characteristics of residences. Ms. Mesa-Zendt replied that the criterion presents a situation that is deliberately ambiguous for flexibility, meant to guide but not require and would include City assessment combined with public comment. Ms. Fani replied that location, traffic patterns, topography, and other considerations come to bear during the conversation.

Chairperson Captain stated that staff would bring number seven back, rephrased for understanding, and that the meeting should move forward.

Ms. Fani continued with number eight. Commissioner Knopf asked if number eight is necessary as the situation had been addressed previously. Vice Chairperson Nichols replied that number eight was worthwhile, specifically calling out no net loss of housing capacity. Commissioner Knopf asked if number eight could then be shortened. Ms. Fani suggested simplifying as well as renumbering so that number eight would then fall under number two for better flow. Chairperson Captain agreed. Commissioner Varadharajan asked if there are other situations that the Comprehensive Plan mandates that should be included. Commissioner Shefrin asked if one example would be the protection of the Manufacture Park zoning designation. Chairperson Captain asked about the term especially referring specifically to housing capacity. Ms. Fani stated that currently and for the foreseeable future, housing is a high-priority topic in the City and suggested that it may be prudent to keep the phrase in the criterion. Chairperson Captain suggested simplification for understanding. Commissioner Rajpathak commented that net housing capacity is not the only criteria but also the type of housing. Chairperson Captain stated believing the net housing capacity covered all and did not need to be broken into types. Vice Chairperson Nichols agreed with Chairperson Captain. Ms. Fani replied with the situation of a prior applicant who changed the type of occupants more than once within a request for a land zone change from single-family to multifamily; the type of housing is irrelevant at the Planning Commission level as Development Services comes into play later after a full development application is submitted.

Ms. Fani continued to the next criterion, addressing significantly changed conditions since the last pertinent Comprehensive Plan map or text was amended. Rewording is around the types of possible change beyond anticipated consequences of a policy such as transit-oriented developments (T.O.D.). The Commission had no questions.

Ms. Fani stated that no changes are suggested to number eleven. Chairperson Captain asked if the proposed amendments are on the website and Ms. Fani replied yes, Attachment A to the Technical Committee report.

Chairperson Captain stated that there were three items on the Issues Matrix. The first issue from Commissioner Shefrin was regarding the fee structure and refunds; Commissioner Shefrin stated that the issue could be closed.
The second issue from Commissioners East, Knopf, and Chairperson Captain was regarding a new proposed criterion regarding considerations around staff resources and budget. Commissioner Captain was satisfied with the response. Commissioner East stated continued concern that given this criteria, some applications could be chosen over others and questioned how the Planning Department would prioritize applications when the required research and analysis are equal. Ms. Frey replied that the Planning Commission applies the criteria to each application, and prioritizes them at that time. For example, as there is an important need for housing, the priority now is housing-related concerns over other matters. Each year there is flexibility, but the Planning Commission evaluates and makes a proposal. Chairperson Captain stated being satisfied that time invested and cost overall were being considered in the final decision as to prioritizing applications, in addition to the comment of Ms. Frey. Ms. Mesa-Zendt replied that a lesser priority project can be recommended for the following year. Commissioner Knopf stated being satisfied closing the issue but with one concern in verbiage, that determining should be determination. Ms. Fani acknowledged the correction.

Chairperson Captain stated being satisfied with closing issue number three. Ms. Fani stated that staff is researching what criteria would be consistent with the authority provided to the City Council by RCWs and findings will be shared at an upcoming Planning Commission meeting.

Chairperson Captain stated that there will be a Public Hearing and Study Session on July 22, 2020, and thanked all involved for hard work and patience.

Staff and Commissioner Updates

Ms. Frey had no updates.

The Commission members had nothing further to share.

ADJOURNMENT:

MOTION to adjourn by Vice Chairperson Nichols. MOTION seconded by Commissioner Knopf. The MOTION passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 9:01 p.m.

Minutes Approved On: Planning Commission Chair

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Redmond Planning Commission
July 8, 2020
MEETING SUMMARY
REDMOND PLANNING COMMISSION
Virtual Meeting
Wednesday, April 8, 2020 – 7:00 p.m.

Planning Commissioners in Attendance: Chair Roy Captain; Vice-Chair Sherri Nichols; Judy East; Aaron Knopf, Vidyanand Rajpathak, Aparna Varadharajan, and Denni Shefrin.

Staff in Attendance: Beverly Mesa-Zendt, Planning Manager; Judy Fani, Principal Planner; Beckye Frey, Senior Planner; Jeff Aken, Senior Park Planner

1. Call to Order & Roll Call – 7:06 PM

2. Suspension of the Rules and Adoption of Virtual Meeting Protocols
Per the Governor’s Stay at Home Order and the Proclamation waiving the requirements for public meetings to have an in-person aspect (Proclamations 20-05 & 20-28), the Planning Commission meetings for the month of April shall be conducted online instead of in-person. (This will continue after April if the Stay at Home order is extended further.)
In order to implement this virtual-only format, the Commissioners must suspend Robert’s Rules of Order to authorize virtual meetings and adopt Virtual Meeting Protocols.

Memo, Virtual Meeting Protocols
Beckye Frey, Senior Planner 425-556-2750
Approved by unanimous vote [Motion, Vice-Chair Nichols; Second, Commissioner East]

3. Approval of the Agenda
Approved by unanimous vote [Motion, Vice-Chair Nichols; Second, Commissioner Varadharajan]

4. Approval of Meeting Summary and Minutes
Meeting Summary, March 4, 2020
Minutes, March 11, 2020
Approved by unanimous vote [Motion, Vice-Chair Nichols; Second, Commissioner Shefrin]
5. Items from the Audience

No items from the public at this meeting. The Chair reminds the public that Planning Commission meetings are open to public comment and the Commission welcomes comments.

6. Continue the public hearing for written comments and consider a recommendation to approve the 2019-2020 Comprehensive Plan Annual Docket. Close public hearing (continued from March 11th) and continue discussion and resolution of issues; possibly complete recommendation. See instructions at top of agenda on how to arrange to speak at this virtual meeting on this agenda topic.

Memo, Issue Matrix

Judy A. Fani, Principal Planner 425-556-2406

Ms. Fani entered four written comments into the public record:

1. Mr. Hossein Khorram, Milano Townhomes of Bear Creek. Related to a request for a rezone and land use designation change to an undeveloped parcel along Avondale.

2. Courtney Spears of McCoullough Hill Leary, attorneys for owners of the Onyx and Eaves multi-family properties in Overlake. Related to a carryover docket item requesting a comprehensive plan amendment for an expansion of the Overlake mixed-use land use designation and the Overlake Urban Center boundary.

3. The 3rd and 4th written comments are related – both comments are from co-owners Jenny Carbon and Shauna Mindt of the Grass is Always Greener. Related to a request for an expansion of retail marijuana into additional zones.

Ms. Fani stated that all written comments submitted to date can be found on the Planning Commission’s web page under Topics Under Review.

The Chair closed the public hearing for written comments.

Ms. Fani reviewed the last remaining issue on the Issues Matrix. Issue 2B included additional information from staff describing options, at the request of the Commission, for the Milano Townhomes of Bear Creek application in the event the application does not get approved for the 2019-20 docket.

1. The Housing Action Plan (HAP) must be completed no later than June 2021 and includes an evaluation of policy LU-36. The Comprehensive Plan’s Housing Element update along with the HAP outcomes including recommendation regarding the LU-36 policy are in Phase 1 of the Redmond Comprehensive Plan Update – with a tentative projected completion date of 4Q 2022 – 1Q 2023. Should the Planning Commission choose not to recommend placement of this item on the docket, and if the HAP recommendations includes policy changes that would support proposals like the Applicant’s, the rezoning may be able to proceed as early as the beginning of 2023.

2. Alternatively, the Applicant could submit an application for a Comprehensive Plan amendment for Policy LU-36 and the related land use designation change in 2021 when the HAP is completed. Recommendations in the HAP may support this change and this particular
The amendment could track ahead of other Comprehensive Plan amendments. Under this option, rezoning for the Applicant’s project may be able to proceed in 2022, potentially shaving off about 6 months for the Applicant. Just as a reminder, staff anticipates updates to the docketing process that may include fees for comprehensive plan amendments proposed in future docket cycles.

The Commissioners were satisfied with the staff response and closed issue 2B. There being no further conversation on the Milano Townhomes at Bear Creek application, Ms. Fani moved on to discuss the expansion of retail marijuana into additional zones.

Chair Captain acknowledged the April 8, 2020 letters received from the co-owners of Grass is Always Greener, Jenny Carbon and Shauna Mindt. Chair Captain expressed that the retail store as a designated essential service during the Covid-19 event was not a compelling reason to expand retail marijuana into additional zones. Chair Captain invited discussion. Vice-Chair agreed that the status of being an essential business is not relevant. She reminded the Commissioners that an evaluation of the merits of the application is not what is being decided at this time, rather it is whether the applicants’ assertions support the Redmond Zoning Code threshold criteria used to decide whether an application should be given further consideration as a docketed item. Commissioner Varadharajan stated her agreement with Vice-Chair Nichols and stated that points made in the letters that speak to the merits of the application are appropriate for discussion if and when the proposal is on the docket.

Vice-Chair Nichols made a motion to recommend approval of the Technical Committee Report on the 2019-20 Docket Scope. Seconded by Commissioner Rajpathak.

7. Study Session, Policy amendments to the:
   - Parks, Arts, Recreation, Culture and Conservation (PARCC) Plan (for a Trails Map update),
   - Parks and Trails American’s with Disabilities Act (ADA) Transition Plan,
   - Tree Canopy Strategic Plan, and
   - Facilities Strategic Management Plan.

Introduce topics, overview of Technical Committee recommendations, Commissioner identification of issues. See instructions at top of agenda on how to arrange to speak at this virtual meeting on this agenda topic.

Memo, Technical Committee Report with Exhibits

Jeff Aken, Senior Park Planner 425-556-2328

Mr. Aken reviewed the Technical Committee Report which consisted of four Comprehensive Plan docket items that would amend existing policies and add new policies to the following Comprehensive Plan elements: Goals, Vision and Framework, Community Character, Economic Vitality, Neighborhoods, Capital Facilities, Land Use, Parks, Natural Environment, and Utilities. He explained that the policy amendments provide guidance for outcomes reflected from recently adopted plans:
   - 2019 Parks American’s with Disabilities Act (ADA) Transition Plan
   - 2019 Tree Canopy Strategic Plan Update
   - 2019 Facilities Strategic Management Plan
In addition, there are proposed revisions to the trails map in the PARCC Plan. The Commissioners were satisfied with the descriptions of each of the proposed amended trails within the Technical Committee Report and found it unnecessary for Mr. Aken to address proposed revision. Mr. Aken described the types of outreach done for each of the above plans. Commission discussion was very lively and included the following:

- City facilities: maintenance, life cycle analysis, capital reserves
- Distribution of ADA accessible features among city parks
- Tree canopy goal: practicality, time frame
- Defensible space in terms of tree placement; Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CEPTED) and police involvement with park staff regarding safety around picnic shelters, playgrounds and the ability to have clear sightlines.
- Tree preservation: how is it defined and efforts made by the Green Redmond Partnership

Several items that required staff follow-up were noted on the Issues Matrix to be reviewed at the April 22nd meeting.

8. Staff & Commissioner Updates

Updates and discussion only. No action will be taken at this time.

Staff updates & scheduling:

- Ms. Frey announced that April 22nd is the next scheduled meeting with two agenda items: Report Approval for the 2019-20 docket scope followed by a public hearing and study session for the proposed park-related amendments.

Commissioner requests:

- No requests were made.

Commissioner news & resources:

- There were no items shared by Commissioners.

9. Adjourn – 8:18 PM
WA 98073-9710. For more information on agenda items, please contact the staff person(s) listed for each topic or the Planning Commission Liaison Beckye Frey, at (425) 556-2750 or bfrey@redmond.gov.
Planning Commissioners and staff....

Please accept this email I provided on June 12th as public testimony for the July 8th public hearing regarding Redmond's Tree Canopy. Although submitted nearly a month ago, I do not find a copy of these comments in documents provided by staff for consideration of this agenda item.

Please confirm inclusion of these comments in the materials for July 8th.

Thank you,
Tom Hinman

On Friday, June 12, 2020, 4:32:48 PM PDT, Tom Hinman <tom@thinmanassoc.com> wrote:

Date: June 12, 2020

To: Redmond Planning Commission
    Redmond Parks & Trails Commission

From: Tom Hinman, Redmond Citizen

Subject: Comments re: Tree Regulations Update Briefing

Purpose

These comments are provided to amplify and enhance portions of the May 27, 2020 memo regarding tree regulations as provided by staff. They are intended to inform decision makers as Redmond seeks to implement a 40% tree canopy retention strategy for the community.
As a Redmond citizen concerned about preserving our natural environment and our tree canopy in particular, I have provided public comment on my own behalf and as a member of Sustainable Redmond in numerous contexts since 2011. While all of these are a matter of public record, the most relevant information on the subject was presented to the Redmond City Council on April 2, 2013 by Sustainable Redmond in the form of an intern-driven study of Redmond tree protection data and practices between 2010 and 2013. This pre-dates the 2015-2020 scope of the referenced May, 2020 staff memo. (Please see the archival email string from 2015 with attached Powerpoint presentation.)

Tree Definitions

As noted in the staff memo, Redmond regulations treat both significant trees and landmark trees. Landmark trees hold “special status” so 100% of the healthy trees in a parcel are to be retained unless an exception is granted. (Neighboring jurisdictions also use the term “heritage” or “specimen” to classify trees of particular value to the community.) In contrast, 65% of Redmond’s “significant trees” can be removed, preserving the 35% regulatory minimum tree retention requirement.

Use of the term “significant” throughout Redmond code language leads to semantic confusion and the comingling of the two classifications of trees when determining the number of trees to be retained. While 35% of the (smaller) significant trees could be viewed as a minimum, lumping of the (larger) landmark trees mandated at 100% retention within that 35% results in major losses of the trees most valuable to the environment. The retention of landmark trees should be addressed separately, perhaps at a number more realistic than 100% but certainly greater than the 35% in practice. Recommendation: Establish a separate tree retention target for landmark trees.

Tree Data Analysis

Existing sites/SFR tree removal numbers are modest in comparison to proposed developments of larger “green” parcels that affect many more trees. (The Sustainable Redmond study only considered new developments due to their greater environmental impact.) Enforcement and survival monitoring of replacement trees planted in mitigation for removals is also an area where improvement could be needed. (NOTE: Commingling of “significant” and “landmark” trees occurs in Figures 2 & 4 and elsewhere in staff analysis as noted above.)

Take-aways by City staff suggesting opportunities for improvement are acknowledged. They are generally consistent with findings by Sustainable Redmond. Closer attention by intake planners and intended implementation of metrics for “dashboard” reporting are other positive developments.

Development proposals analyzed by Sustainable Redmond for selected projects prior to 2015 will add context to tree loss totals in Figure 5. Figure 4 shows a dismal record of those projects that failed to meet the 35% tree retention requirement. Replacing landmark trees even at a 3:1 ratio does not begin to provide the environmental benefits of mature trees, even if that mitigation was enforced.

Regulatory Exceptions

A key consideration that merits additional research is the routine approval of exceptions to tree protection regulations. Taken in combination with the comingling of significant and landmark trees when calculating the 35% minimum tree retention standard, this results in higher loss of landmark trees than would be the
case if the 100% standard was applied to the larger trees. Figure 6 should be revised to specify the total number of lost trees by classification as contained in the exemption requests, not just the percentage of requests approved. **Recommendation:** As part of the current regulatory update, prescribe broader public knowledge of exception criteria and enhanced transparency of the exception approval process.

Replacement Tree Fees

The staff memo notes that Redmond charges the lowest in-lieu fee of any surrounding jurisdiction at $250. This tree fund contribution is a bargain for developers and defers meaningful mitigation for lost trees. **Recommendation:** Review mitigation enforcement, survival monitoring and in-lieu fee levels for trees removed in Redmond.

Next Steps

A stakeholder team that includes public members should be formed to assist in moving Redmond to the 40% tree canopy goal. A “Tree Board,” one of the components recommended by the Arbor Day Foundation, could serve as a model.

Thank you for your consideration,

Tom Hinman

----- Forwarded Message -----  
**From:** Tom Hinman <tom@thinmanassoc.com>  
**To:** "mayorcouncil@redmond.gov" <mayorcouncil@redmond.gov>; "cityclerk@redmond.gov" <cityclerk@redmond.gov>  
**Cc:** "cbeam@redmond.gov" <cbeam@redmond.gov>; "cjhope@redmond.gov" <cjhope@redmond.gov>; "tkluver@redmond.gov" <tkluver@redmond.gov>  
**Sent:** Tue Apr 21 2015 16:07:16 GMT-0700 (Pacific Daylight Time)  
**Subject:** Redmond Tree Canopy Presentations

Dear Mayor & Councilmembers -

On April 14, 2015 you received a very informative report on the extent of Redmond’s tree canopy, ways that it can be measured, tree protection regs and the role of Green Redmond in restoring and preserving our natural resources. On April 2, 2013, Sustainable Redmond delivered to the Council a very detailed examination of tree retention data that suggested City staff waivers of tree protection provisions contained in planning documents and code provisions were granted routinely.* This intern-based research project supported our futile recommendations to amend and strengthen those documents and strongly advocated use of tree canopy metrics as a critical indicator tracking natural resource trends and the environmental services trees provide to our community.

On the occasion of Earth and Arbor Days, it is gratifying to see the City's
use of new LIDAR technology to quantify Redmond's touted green reputation and standing as a Tree City. Although we may have some quibbles with specific pieces of the tree canopy data, such as lumping the Watershed Preserve and Farell-McWirt Park into "urban forest" calculations with attendant skewing of figures, we welcome the new visibility brought to this issue and hope that tree canopy will finally be incorporated into Redmond's Community Indicators as relevant "dashboard" information.

Further, as the Parks, Arts, Recreation, Culture and Conservation (PARCC) Plan is updated through community open houses this May, we hope that it will be an opportunity to emphasize natural resource values in general and tree retention strategies in particular. Citizen surveys, budget polling and the possible levy all place a high priority on our urban forests and parks; a cause that Sustainable Redmond has advocated since its inception. We believe that our residents and employees will reinforce tree protection priorities whenever opportunities are presented as we work together to keep Redmond green.

Regards,
Tom Hinman
Sustainable Redmond

* A video of that 2013 presentation can be found at http://redmond.granicus.com/MediaPlayer.php?view_id=2&clip_id=218
  It appears as a 20-minute Item from the Audience beginning 15 minutes into the meeting video. The Powerpoint slides are attached for your convenience.
Tree Protection Practices in Redmond, Washington:
Research to support proposed amendments to the Redmond Comprehensive Plan

April 2, 2013

A Natural Resources Management Research Project sponsored by:

Promoting Sustainability by Education, Advocacy and Community Events
Planning Commission Report Recommendations:

- Incomplete and did not consider full public record

- Should be remanded for additional review

  Notice Boards – some revisions
  Neighborhood Meetings - minimized
  Mitigation Plan Benefits – not explained
  Technical Committee – underlying questions remain

- Perfunctory consideration of written comments

- Issue Matrix closed summarily without resolving issues

Additional Information to Quantify Tree Loss Magnitude
PROJECT SELECTION CRITERIA:

- 2010 to date from:
  -- Current Land Use Action Notices
  -- Hearing Examiner Archives
  -- City Ordinances

  -- Reviewed Private, public and utility projects

  -- New Residential or Mixed Use Developments

  -- Few Short Plats
  -- No Single Family Tree Removal Permits
North Redmond Projects Reviewed
PRELIMINARY FINDINGS BASED ON PROJECT DISTRIBUTION

-- Urban centers are largely built out but tree losses in:
   Redmond Central Connector
   Former Group Health Campus

-- Natural settings in urban centers are disappearing

-- Majority of tree loss in North Redmond as it develops

-- Some loss of trees in Education Hill, Grass Lawn

-- Analysis of tree canopy loss over time is recommended as a new Community Indicator of environmental quality
SCOPE OF TREE PROTECTION RESEARCH:

-- Data was drawn from projects just identified

-- Findings will understate extent of actual tree loss
  Assessed a sub-set of Redmond developments
  Inability to access some arborist reports
  Does not account for loss of understory, small trees

TREE REGULATIONS SUMMARY

-- Save 35% of “Significant” trees – over 6 inches dbh
-- Save 100% of “Landmark” trees – over 30 inches dbh
  Unhealthy or hazardous trees don’t count in tree retention percentages
-- Mitigation by replacement at 1:1 or 3:1 ratio respectively
-- Exception process if retention standards cannot be met
PRELIMINARY TREE PRESERVATION FINDINGS (2010 – 2013)
PRELIMINARY FINDINGS BASED ON TREE PRESERVATION STATISTICS

-- Private developments tend to be closer to 35% standard than public sector projects, which raise the average retained percentage

-- Only one project saved 100% of landmark trees

-- Request and approval of “exceptions” is routine in practice

-- Inconsistencies exist among developers/arborists in calculating tree percentages by co-mingling of significant and landmark trees

-- Total trees, healthy vs significant trees, on-site vs arborist evaluated trees, Native Growth Protection Area allocations add complexity to analysis by inconsistency

-- “Impacted” tree status, dripline criteria add ambiguity
ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES RESEARCH:

-- Data is based on previous statistical information

-- Findings are calculated by accessing a national tree benefits data base endorsed by the Arbor Day Foundation with inputs specifying tree species, dbh, and number on a project site

-- Environmental services output is estimate of annual:

  Stormwater retained & treated ($ value and gal/year)
  Carbon sequestered ($ value and pounds/year)
  Air quality improved ($ value)

-- Data is sub-totaled and displayed as either Significant or Landmark trees lost at a given development project
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<th>Total Trees</th>
<th>Removed By Size</th>
<th>Value By Size ($)</th>
<th>Stormwater (gal)</th>
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PRELIMINARY FINDINGS BASED ON
ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES RESEARCH

-- Significant economic contribution of lost trees could have reduced future stormwater infrastructure needs like vaults

-- Carbon sequestration (green house gas reduction) and air quality losses are also significant to broader community

-- Near-term mitigation plantings are no match for environmental services lost, even if no net tree loss

-- In-lieu tree fund contribution of $250/tree is a bargain for developers

-- Loss of community character cannot be quantified
OVERALL COMMENTS ON REDMOND TREE PRESERVATION PRACTICES

-- Findings above are not directed at any individual developer or project; a look across the community

-- Sometimes the developer is more innovative than City staff

-- Precedent of past exception approvals means less stringent reviews over time...become “routine”

-- Extent of tree preservation can be blurred in applications due to inconsistent presentations in the past

-- Public notice and engagement is generally minimal and not enthusiastic unless appeals or legal action is involved
OVERALL COMMENTS ON REDMOND
REDMOND TREE & DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

-- Who determines if a project meets the Neighborhood Vision?

-- How does the value of mitigation benefit the impacted neighborhood or get articulated to seek community inputs?

-- A corridor or neighborhood-based approval process is preferable to ad hoc, project-by-project permitting...what is a “conservation overlay” and how is it applied in North Redmond?

-- Process improvements proposed by these Comprehensive Plan amendments deserve serious reconsideration
QUESTIONS?

Sustainable Redmond Natural Resources Management Research Team:

RESEARCH INTERNS:
  Mark Biehl: BA in Economics & Environmental Studies
              Western Washington University, Huxley College
  Blake Garland: BA in Environmental Studies with Geography minor
                 San Jose State University
  Margaret Yale: BS in Biology & Environmental Studies
                 University of Wisconsin, Madison

ADVISORS
  Ella Elman: Environmental Services
  Susan Wilkins Public Records Research

PROJECT MANAGER
  Tom Hinman for Sustainable Redmond
Dear Planning Commissioners,

My name is Shelly Bowman. While I serve on the Redmond Parks and Trails Commission, my comments tonight are as a private citizen.

I do support the Tree Canopy Strategic Plan amendment to the Comprehensive Plan.

With the amendment, I would like to urge you to revise the Permitting Code to ensure we meet the 40% Tree Canopy Goal in 2050.

Redmond currently has a 38% Tree Canopy includes the Watershed, which offers many benefits to our community that I will not review tonight.

During a recent Planning Commission meeting, as Sr PARK Planner Jeff Akens presented the Tree Canopy Strategy Plan, you learned that under that current Permitting Code, the planting of trees is being outpaced by the removal of trees. Thus, we will fail to meet 40% Tree Canopy goal.

(We are planting 220 acres of trees, but at current rate, we are projected to lose 330 acres by 2050.)

So, I am calling for Revisions to the Permitting Code, so we can avert this Tree Canopy Failure.

I strongly believe that the Growth Management Act can be adhered to and at the same time the Tree Canopy 40% goal can be achieved.

As you move forward and begin to focus on potential revisions to the Permitting Process, I would like to offer some suggestions for consideration, please. I am only going to read the highlights and submit my letter to provide further detail:

1. **Consider developing a Stakeholder group of Developers, Private Owners, City Staff, Arborists and interested citizens to gain their input.** Collaboration is key to create an objective, clearly defined code. Kirkland did this, and while it is still a work in progress, I believe they have ideas to share. Tree Canopy can be a complex decision.
3. **Provide Public Information/Comment regarding Tree Removal and Mitigation Details prior to “large projects” final approval.** Many complain that by the time they learn and weigh in, it is too late to make changes. I have suggested that the new Public Information Boards: Requested Tree Type removal numbers, exceptions requested, location of replanting, In lieu of fees that the Permitting Staff has put as Pending giving the public time for comment and potential for adjustments.
4. **Provide Transparent Quarterly Metrics and Analysis.** As Tree removal and replacement must be entered into a database, this information should be readily available to the public.
5. **Update the 35% retention of Significant Trees to 40%**. Align with our Tree Canopy and the need to keep the Canopy spread throughout of Redmond boundaries.
6. **Ensure Enforcement of replantings and Tree Survivability.** Enforce includes private owners must replant on their property or contribute to a Tree Canopy Fund. As a community, we must pay now to regulate or pay more later in crisis.

7. **Clearly define Replacement Tree Types, Sizes and Survival rates.** Include a list what trees cannot be, such as monoculture or Arborvitae. Suggested survival rate of 5 years at which point, owner get a rebate.

8. **Establish a Tree Definition and Replacement Ratio for Trees large than 6 inches and smaller than 30 inches.** “Heritage Tree” is sometimes the given name.

9. **Remove Dead, Dying or Hazardous Trees as a Free Pass Teardown.** These trees have habitat value standing and as they decompose and should be considered a Significant or Heritage Tree.

10. **Increase the In-lieu rate to $500 or more, or perhaps Eliminating this Option.** $250 dollars per tree, Redmond has the lowest barrier to tree removal of any municipality in the region (the next lowest is $500). Clearly define by each type of tree.

11. **Be Transparent about In-Lieu Fees Collected and Uses.** The community should clearly know why exceptions are granted, how much was pulled, exactly how the money was spent and proof that the Trees are there and survived.

12. **Increase the Ratio of Landmark Tree Replacement.** Perhaps it is 5:1 and the Trees must be in a cluster, and a certain tree type that has both longevity and more adequately addresses their habitat loss. A Landmark is priceless in terms of its value to the environmental health, wildlife habitat, beauty and grace of longevity and wisdom. Killing it by exception instead of enforcing 100% retention must be changed.

13. **Explore neighborhood goals.** Different parts of the city have their own vibe and ownership creates pride.

14. **And lastly, Rally and educate the public on our united goals.** Provide affordable PNW tree plants at events. We all need a feel-good united community project. Tell us how many Trees we planted. Telling us acres is not easily understandable. Use fees to cover costs.

**I am excited for you to Take advantage of the strong support you have through the City Council’s Environmental Sustainability Strategic goal, the Staff’s current Sustainability and Tree Surveys, and Cathy Beam’s Tree Canopy Metric Analysis that will help guide you in updating the City’s Tree Regulations.**

**There are so many positive ways to close the Tree Canopy gap.** I know that the Planning Commission will succeed with Code Revisions that ensure the 40% Tree Canopy goal will be met in 2050.

I hope I in some way contributed to your work ahead.

**Thank you for your time and consideration.**

Shelly Bowman
6605 146th Ave NE
Redmond, WA 98052

425-463-8565
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<th>Issue</th>
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<td>1. Does the Facility Plan consider circumstances surrounding unforeseen structural issues that, for instance, forced the closure of the Sr. Center? (S. Nichols)</td>
<td><strong>Staff Response/Recommendation</strong>&lt;br&gt; The Facilities Strategic Management Plan addresses this in multiple ways including adequate staffing to perform preventative maintenance, mid-life investments, use of high-quality and sustainable (long-lasting) materials. It also recommends an internal service fund to help address maintenance issues and criteria to rank and prioritize projects. 7/8 – Commissioners were satisfied with the staff response.</td>
<td>Opened 4/8/20 Closed 7/8/20</td>
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<td>2. Does the FP have benchmarks for city facilities in terms of maintenance? Related question – Does the FP plan address life cycle analysis for city facilities? (Nichols and Varadharajan)</td>
<td><strong>Staff Response/Recommendation</strong>&lt;br&gt; Maintenance is addressed in Chapter 4 of the plan provides staffing recommendations, level of service agreements, maintenance strategy and a standard protocol and schedule for maintenance tasks.&lt;br&gt;&lt;br&gt;The plan does address life cycle analysis which ranges from 30-55 years depending on building type, with pools at the shorter end (30-years) and most facilities expected to last 55 years. A well-built facility may be renovated at the end of life to provide additional service.&lt;br&gt;&lt;br&gt;7/8 No further questions regarding staff response.</td>
<td>Opened 4/8/20 Closed 7/8/20</td>
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<td>3. Does the Facilities Strategic Plan address building materials for long term sustainability? How does Redmond compare to neighboring cities? (Rajpathak)</td>
<td><strong>Staff Response/Recommendation</strong>&lt;br&gt; Yes, one of the guiding principles of the plan is creating “sustainable and efficient” buildings. This is defined as, “optimizing resources through strategic investment decisions in durable and sustainable facilities and efficient building management.” It also includes looking at the life cycle of the building and choosing potentially more expensive materials if that results in longer life or reduced need for maintenance.&lt;br&gt;&lt;br&gt;The FSMP did evaluate peer organizations and found Redmond’s facilities team employs fewer maintenance technicians and</td>
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| 4. Is defensible placement of trees addressed? (Shefrin)              | **Staff Response/Recommendation**  
The Tree Canopy Strategic Plan did not get into specific location considerations. The plan does reference the “right tree in the right place” that requests private landowners and developers research the location and tree characteristics to ensure that utilities, structures, sight triangles and safety are addressed when choosing the right tree.  
No further questions to staff response.                                                                                           | Opened 4/8/20                   |
| 5. Are there more current numbers on Development impacts than the 2013 numbers shared by Mr. Hinman. (Captain) | **Staff Response/Recommendation**  
The Tree Canopy Strategic Plan assessed current canopy and canopy change over time using aerial photography and LIDAR. The effort did not involve reviewing past developments and tree retention loss.  
This question is more relevant to the upcoming Tree Code review and the memo the Planning Commission received on 5/27/2020 from Cathy Beam                                                                 | Opened 7/8/20                   |
| 6. How many actual acres of tree canopy are we looking to conserve, preserve, and re-plant over 30 years? (Varadharajan) | In the creation of the Tree Canopy Strategic Plan (TCSP), the 40% canopy coverage was the chosen metric. With the current city acreage at of approximately 10,600 acres, the goal would be to have 4,240 acres of canopy. Given the unknown nature of rate of loss/planting in the future, a percentage goal better ensures the community benefits desired. Page 24 of the TCSP highlights a range from 200-500 acres that were the best estimates of future acres to be planted to reach the goal. Over time the estimates would improve as more data became available. | Opened 7/8/20                   |
| 7. Commissioner Aparna had questions regarding the tree memo provided on 5/27/2020.  
- If dead/dying trees in existing sites don't require permits and replacements, how will we maintain and encourage current | **Staff Response/Recommendation**  
The Tree Canopy Strategic Plan assessed current canopy and canopy change over time using aerial photography and LIDAR. The effort did not involve reviewing past developments and tree retention loss. | Opened 7/8/20                   |
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<td>tree cover? Can this be revisited and reviewed?</td>
<td>These questions are more relevant to the current Tree Code Update and have been referred to Cathy Beam, Project Manager of the Tree Code Update project.</td>
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<td>• Do we have data for the number of trees removed for new construction vs. existing development?</td>
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<td>• How do we enforce/inspect that replacement trees have been planted after permits have been issued for existing development? Right now this seems to be the weak link as we are not following up to see that residents are in fact doing what they are supposed to do after permits have been received?</td>
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<td>• How do we enforce/inspect new construction replanting? Is there a way to understand what types of trees have been planted in large new developments?</td>
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<td>• If our tree removal permit fees are lower than our neighbors, and dead, dying or hazardous trees don't require a permit, can we consider increasing these fees to encourage residents to keep their trees?</td>
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(Varadharajan)