

PLANNING BOARD MINUTES

June 13, 2001

Chair John Dewhirst called the regular meeting of the Planning Board to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers, Public Safety Complex, 250 – 5th Avenue North.

PRESENT

John Dewhirst, Chair
Beverly Lindh, Vice Chair
Stan Monlux
Jim Crim
Joanne Langendorfer
Cary Guenther

ABSENT

Virginia Cassutt
Bruce Witenberg

STAFF PRESENT

Rob Chave, Planning Division Manager
Steve Bullock, Associate Planner
Karin Noyes, Recorder

Mr. Witenberg and Ms. Cassutt were excused from the meeting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION BY MR. CRIM, SECONDED BY MS. LINDH, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF MAY 23, 2001 WITH THE FOLLOWING CORRECTIONS:

1. PAGE 1, NOTE THAT MR. MONLUX WAS ABSENT.
2. PAGE 2, INSERT THE FOLLOWING LANGUAGE AFTER THIRD PARAGRAPH FROM THE TOP: "THE PUBLIC PORTION OF THE HEARING WAS OPENED. NO ONE IN THE AUDIENCE INDICATED A DESIRE TO ADDRESS THE BOARD REGARDING THIS ISSUE, AND THE PUBLIC HEARING WAS CLOSED."
3. PAGE SIX, LAST PARAGRAPH, FIRST LINE, CHANGE "COUNCIL" TO "BOARD."

MOTION CARRIED.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF AGENDA

There were no changes made to the proposed agenda.

REQUESTS FROM THE AUDIENCE

There was no one present in the audience to address the Board during this portion of the meeting.

PUBLIC HEARING ON FINAL DRAFT OF THE PLANNED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT (PRD) REGULATIONS (FILE NO. CDC-2000-132)

Mr. Bullock explained that no significant changes have been made to the draft document since the Board reviewed it last. He particularly noted that the last page of the document articulates the proposed definition for “zero lot line development.” He advised that this definition would be added to the definition section of the Development Code.

Next, Mr. Bullock referred the Board to the last two pages of the document, which includes an e-mail correspondence between staff and the City Attorney regarding staff’s ability to administratively grant final approval of a PRD application. The City Attorney recommends that the PRD approvals be broken into three separate categories: short plat and PRD, multi-family development and PRD, and formal plat and PRD. The City Attorney advised that if an applicant is applying for a PRD along with a short plat application, the final approve of both the short plat and the PRD could be done administratively. The same is true for multi-family development, which currently goes through an ADB review for approval and then staff does a final approval with the building permit to make sure that the development is consistent with the ADB’s approval. However, if an applicant is applying for both a PRD and a formal plat, both could be decided by the City Council since the final plat approval is under their purview.

Mr. Bullock advised that this concept was not incorporated into the draft document because staff wanted to obtain the Board’s feedback first. However, inclusion of this concept could be done very easily before the document is considered for a public hearing.

THE PUBLIC PORTION OF THE HEARING WAS OPENED. THERE WAS NO ONE IN THE AUDIENCE TO ADDRESS THE BOARD REGARDING THE ISSUE, AND THE PUBLIC HEARING WAS CLOSED.

Ms. Lindh referred to Page 8, Item 9. She suggested that this statement could be interpreted as a requirement for the City to cut down trees to enhance views. Mr. Bullock said this section was added by the City Attorney. He explained that the intent is to allow greater building height in one area in exchange for a lower height in another to protect and enhance a view corridor. Mr. Chave noted that at this time there are no regulations in the code to establish view corridors. This section would provide another opportunity for a developer to address the public’s needs in that regard. However, it would not be a requirement, since the applicant is required to meet only two of the nine items on the list.

Mr. Dewhirst said he is concerned that there is no definition for view corridors. He suggested that this term be defined, or Item 9 should be deleted from the document. Mr. Chave explained that applicants would be required to demonstrate view corridors at the time of application. Mr. Dewhirst said there could still be a problem if the term is not defined. Mr. Chave said that if the Board is concerned that the term “view corridor” is not defined, it would be better to leave this item out of the document because it would be difficult to address the issue quickly. The Board continued to express their concerns and agreed that while Item 9 is a worthwhile concept, it should be deleted until the term “view corridors” is defined. Mr. Bullock pointed out that if the Board decides to delete Item 9, they should also modify Item J on Page 2, which also references the preservation and enhancement of view corridors. The Board agreed.

Mr. Dewhirst suggested that Item b on Page 3 seems to be in direct conflict with Item b on Page 4. Mr. Bullock agreed that the language should be clarified to better identify the intent. The Board agreed to change Item b on Page 4 to read: “Detached single-family housing and subdivision types that are not normally permitted under the City’s current subdivision code.”

MOTION BY MR. CRIM, SECONDED BY MS. LINDH, TO FORWARD A RECOMMENDATION OF APPROVAL TO THE CITY COUNCIL REGARDING FILE NO. CDC-2000-132 (PLANNED RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS) WITH THE FOLLOWING CORRECTIONS:

1. PAGE 2, ITEM J, ELIMINATE THE UNDERLINED PORTION.
2. PAGE 4, ITEM B, CHANGE TO READ: “DETACHED SINGLE-FAMILY HOUSING AND SUBDIVISION TYPES THAT ARE NOT NORMALLY PERMITTED UNDER THE CITY’S CURRENT SUBDIVISION CODE.”
3. PAGE 12, INCORPORATE THE STAFF’S RECOMMENDATION FOR ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVAL AS FOLLOWS:
 - A SHORT-PLAT AND PRD—ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVAL
 - A MULTI-FAMILY DEVELOPMENT AND PRD—ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVAL

APPROVED

MOTION CARRIED.

CONTINUED REVIEW OF DESIGN GUIDELINES AND POTENTIAL CODE AMENDMENTS TO IMPLEMENT THE DESIGN GUIDELINES

First, Mr. Chave referred the Board to the memorandum from Paul Mar, which outlines the position of the stakeholders, staff and Board on issues related to the Design Guidelines. He noted that on June 27, the Board anticipates holding a public hearing on the draft Design Guidelines. He further explained that the intent of tonight's meeting is to allow the Board the opportunity to discuss issues that are still undecided and make last minute changes to the document before the public hearing. He referred the Board to the document provided by staff, which lists all of the issues that have been discussed and highlights those where no consensus has been reached. He also referenced the alternate language proposed by staff for roof design options.

The Board reviewed each of the items on the list as follows:

Reference 1 (Page 4)

Mr. Dewhirst said this would be a more complicated issue, and he suggested that the Board take care of the other items first.

Reference 2 (Page 2)

Mr. Dewhirst recalled that the Board previously agreed that for ADB review, which requires only preliminary plans, a stamp by a licensed architect should not be required.

Reference 3 (Page 2)

Mr. Dewhirst recalled that the Board had previously discussed a requirement that all major physical structures within 150 feet be identified on the elevation drawings, instead of all physical structures. Mr. Crim said he remembered the discussion, but could not recall the exact distance the Board decided upon. The Board agreed that this section should be changed as follows: "All significant structures, including, but not limited to, building outlines, streets, driveways, etc. for up to 200 feet."

Reference 4 (Page 7)

Mr. Dewhirst recalled that the Board previously agreed on issues related to tree retention.

Reference 5 (Pages 8-10)

Mr. Dewhirst advised that the Board previously agreed that the current language related to buffers is appropriate. However, Mr. Guenther pointed out that Item 3 on Page 8 would basically limit new tree plantings to exotic species instead of native because of the height limits proposed. Mr. Bullock answered that he initially had the same concerns, but he pointed out that this requirement only applies to plantings within the buffer areas. Large sites can also have the native trees that grow to greater heights, as long as they are not located in the buffer areas.

Mr. Dewhirst suggested that Item 3 is more related to view than to buffers. Mr. Chave said the stakeholders expressed concern regarding the buffer landscaping requirements because the code already requires setbacks in which there are general references to landscaping. However, there are no specific guidelines regarding what should be planted in the buffer areas. The proposed language would give more predictability and specificity to ensure that landscaping provides an adequate buffer between the commercial and residential uses.

The Board discussed whether or not this entire section would become invalid if Item 3 were eliminated. Mr. Bullock agreed that Item 3 could be eliminated, if that is the Board's desire. Mr. Monlux suggested that limiting the types of trees depending upon how fast they grow is just as important as limiting the trees to those of a specific height. The Board agreed to change the section by deleting Item 3.

APPROVED

Reference 6 (Page 11)

The Board concurred with the staff's recommendation to replace the second sentence of Item 2.a with the following: "Where feasible, the exit route should use the alley." It was noted that this is consistent with current code requirements.

Reference 7 (Page 11)

Mr. Dewhirst recalled that the Planning Board concluded that the "shared access" concept should be a guideline, clarifying that it should be done only if site conditions don't preclude shared access.

Reference 8 (Page 17)

Mr. Chave reviewed that the Board's consensus was to make the standards for garage entries and screening a guidelines, with emphasis placed on maintaining sight triangles and safety and deferring to engineering standards. He said staff is still working with the Engineering Department to come up with alternate language for site triangles, but staff clearly understands the Board's intent.

Reference 9 (Page 18)

Mr. Chave explained that Item 7 on Page 18 limits residential buildings with one to four units to a maximum of only one, single-wide garage entry on the frontage street for each unit. He said the stakeholders feel this is too restrictive and have expressed their desire that this be a guideline and not a requirement. The Board could accomplish this request by changing the word "shall" to "should." The Board discussed some of the concerns related to this issue. Mr. Bullock explained that the intent of this section is to encourage developers to put the garages on the side of the structures instead of placing driveways along the entire width of the property, which can cause pedestrian safety concerns. The Board decided to leave the language as it currently exists in the draft document for public hearing purposes.

Reference 10 (Page 20)

The Board decided to leave the section related to trash and utility storage as currently written for public hearing purposes.

Reference 11 (Page 21)

Mr. Chave reminded the Board of their previous consensus that the 2-foot setback should not be a requirement. Instead, it could be an incentive.

Reference 12 (Pages 22-23)

Mr. Chave explained that staff is recommending that Section 3.a.iii on Page 23 be changed by deleting the words "balcony maximum of 50 percent." Staff also recommends adding language indicating that where feasible, a mixture of open space types should be provided. He also noted the proposed change to Item 2.b on Page 22.

Mr. Chave said that in reviewing existing projects within the City, staff has found that some could have met this requirement, while others could not. However, staff has concluded that it would be possible for an applicant to meet this requirement.

The Board agreed to accept the staff's recommendation for public hearing purposes.

Reference 13 (Page 25)

The Board concurred that Item 2 in the middle of Page 25 should be deleted. This item is related to ceiling heights.

Reference 14 (Pages 26 and 27)

Mr. Chave said the stakeholders have taken particular exception to Item 3, which would require north-facing facades with weather protection to have glass or Plexiglas surface to allow natural light into the City sidewalk. Mr. Dewhirst agreed that it would be great to have clear weather protection, but he agrees with the stakeholders that this would cost a tremendous amount of money for installation and maintenance.

Mr. Dewhirst suggested that they offer this concept as an incentive. Mr. Chave agreed that the Board could eliminate Item 3 and place it as an incentive, instead. Perhaps if a developer were to provide clear weather protection, they could be offered some type of tradeoff in the massing or façade wall modulation requirements. The Board agreed that the public benefit

would be served if clear weather protection were provided on the façade of a building. The Board also agreed that if an applicant provides 100 percent weather protection along the façade of the building, he should also be able to reduce the wall massing or modulation requirements by one factor. The Board concurred that the word “Plexiglas” should be changed to “acrylic or similar transparent surface.”

Reference 15 (Page 31)

The Board agreed with the staff’s assessment that the 20-foot requirement for mechanical equipment should be dropped.

References 16, 17 and 18 (Pages 33 and 34)

The Board agreed that issues surrounding building height are policy issues that should not be changed at this time.

Mr. Chave referred to the document that was provided to the Commission regarding roof design. The document outlines the staff’s proposed changes related to flat, sloped, terraced and vaulted roof designs.

THE BOARD TOOK A 15-MINUTE BREAK AT 8:15 TO REVIEW THE DOCUMENT THAT WAS JUST PROVIDED. THEY RECONVENED AT 8:30 P.M.

The Board continued to discuss the staff’s proposed language related to roof height. They particularly discussed whether or not terraced and flat roofs should be allowed in multi-family zones—especially when adjacent to single-family zones. Mr. Chave said that sloped roofs in multi-family zones tend to be more in character with the adjacent single-family developments that generally have pitched roofs. He noted that if the staff’s recommended language were adopted, flat roofs would still be allowed in multi-family zones as long as they do not exceed the 25-foot height limit.

The Board agreed that flat and terraced roofs should be prohibited in multi-family zones unless the roof is less than 25 feet in height. Only roofs that are vaulted or sloped would be able to exceed the 25-foot height limit for a total of up to 30 feet.

Reference 19 (Page 34)

Mr. Dewhirst noted that the Board concluded that flat sections of roofs should be allowed, but more vertical and wall modulation should be required. The Board also accepted the language proposed by the stakeholders for Item 1.b.i on Page 34.

Reference 20 (Page 35)

Mr. Chave recalled that when the Board last discussed this issue, staff noted concerns that downtown buildings could have difficulty meeting the massing requirements, and that it might be more appropriate to focus downtown building design on façade and wall modulation instead. While the Board has not made a final decision on this issue, they did discuss that perhaps relief from the massing requirements could be offered as an incentive to encourage developers to place weather protection along the façade of their building. If these types of incentives were allowed, then the massing requirements for the downtown zones would not be so difficult to achieve.

The Board agreed that no changes should be made to the massing requirement section at this time. After the public hearing, the Board felt they would have a better idea of the public’s concerns.

Mr. Chave also referred to the table found on Page 35, and recalled a previous Board consensus that the table be changed to identify small buildings as those with a building footprint of less than 10,000 square feet. Medium buildings would be identified as those with a building footprint greater than 10,000 square feet and less than 20,000 square feet. Large buildings would be identified as those with a building footprint of 20,000 square feet or greater. He noted that this change would be made before the document is released for the public hearing.

Reference 21 and 22 (Pages 40 and 43-48)

Mr. Dewhirst recalled that the Board agreed to support both the guideline and the accompanying code change related to wall modulation on Page 40. They also agreed with the staff’s recommendation for façade requirements on Page 43, stating that small buildings should be required to comply with two (instead of one) façade element.

Reference 23 (Page 44)

Mr. Chave recalled that the issue of window types was discussed when the Board reviewed the two multi-family developments. He said staff has also surveyed mixed-use developments and had a difficult time finding existing situations where this requirement would be a problem. He specifically pointed out that the different window types could include not only different varieties of windows, but also different combinations of the same variety. He suggested that this clarification might address the stakeholders' concerns. The Board agreed that this section should be changed to clearly identify that both variety and combination of windows could satisfy this requirement.

Requirement 24 (Pages 45-46)

Mr. Chave recalled that at the last meeting, the Board agreed to eliminate the list of restricted materials, but the stakeholders have requested that the six items listed as allowable façade materials also be eliminated. However, they have not really indicated any specific concerns that would support the elimination of these items. He concluded that staff does not feel that developers would have a difficult time meeting the requirements, as proposed.

Mr. Guenther referred to the list of restricted materials, and suggested that with proper applications, all of the listed materials could be appropriate. He suggested that perhaps the list of restricted materials was prepared based on the consultant's preference rather than on any factual basis. He concluded that the City should have some basis to support their decision to limit a particular material.

The Board reaffirmed that the list of restricted materials should be eliminated from the draft document. They noted that the caption under the bottom photograph on Page 45 should also be eliminated.

Mr. Dewhirst suggested that the terms "minimal level of quality allowable" and "higher quality, more durable materials" should be defined or deleted. He suggested that more pictures be provided in this section to better illustrate that the intent is to break up the façade of the building using a variety of materials. While he agrees with Items 4 and 6, he suggested that the remaining items be deleted.

Mr. Bullock explained that the purpose of Item 5 on Page 46 is to ensure that more massive and durable materials are used on the portion of the builder closer to the ground. This tends to give the impression of stability. It is also important that the entryway be constructed of the more durable materials. Different types of materials could be used for the middle and top of the building façade.

The Board agreed to change the heading of this section to "Preferred Façade Materials" instead of "Allowable Façade Materials." They also changed Item 3 to read, "Roof materials do not count as façade elements." Item 5 was deleted from the draft document, and the staff was directed to provide more photographs to illustrate the intent of the requirements.

Staff Recommendation (Page 8)

The Board concurred with the staff's recommendation for Item 3 changing the deciduous tree height to 40 feet and evergreen tree height to 30-35 feet.

Staff Recommendation (Page 10)

The Board agreed with the staff recommendation to change "uses of the same type" to "uses in the same zone."

Staff Recommendation (Page 11)

The Board agreed to accept the staff's recommendation to correct the reference to "Public Works."

Staff Recommendation (Page 14)

Mr. Chave recalled that the Board agreed that there should be a bonus offered for below grade parking. However, they did not specify a number. He said staff recommends that the upper limit be 65 percent. He suggested that in addition to underground parking, placing the utilities underground could also be encouraged by offering a bonus for lot coverage. Instead of allowing up to 65 percent lot coverage just for putting in underground parking, Mr. Chave suggested that underground parking could increase the lot coverage allowed by ten percent. Placing the utilities underground could increase the lot coverage allowed an additional ten- percent. The total of the two would allow lot coverage up to 65 percent.

APPROVED

Another option would be to reduce the drive isle width standards as an incentive for developers to provide underground parking. Mr. Chave explained that allowing a greater percentage for lot coverage would grant sufficient space for developers to construct the drive isles and ramps necessary for the underground parking. It was noted that this concept could be applied to the mixed-use zones as well as the multi-family zones.

Mr. Chave suggested that the incentives could be related to the specific uses. If below ground parking is provided, the drive isle width and ramp slope requirements could be modified. Another option would be to increase the number of compact car parking spaces allowed. If the utilities are placed underground, then the lot coverage requirements could be increased.

The Board agreed with the concept of offering incentives to encourage developers to place the parking and utilities underground. They directed the staff to make the changes as per the discussion prior to the public hearing at the next meeting.

Staff Recommendation (Page 18)

The Board agreed that staff should clarify this section further prior to the public hearing.

Staff Recommendation (Page 31)

The Board agreed that all references to “Community Services” should be changed to “Development Services.”

Reference 1 (Page 4)

Mr. Chave recalled that the Board previously agreed, in concept, that flexibility is important. They asked that a matrix be prepared which identifies the required standards and options, showing which may be granted a “departure” and whether the appropriate departure should be granted by staff or a higher authority (such as the ADB).

The Board discussed that for those standards where “departures” could be granted, the word “should” will be used. For those standards that are not flexible, the word “shall” will be used. They agreed that departures from site design standards should go to the staff for review. Standards that are related to building form or façade elements should be reviewed by another body such as the ADB. It was noted that any variation to the standards that are required must obtain a variance approval.

The Board discussed what type of criteria would be used by the staff and the ADB to determine whether a “departure” is appropriate or not. The Board agreed that developers would be interested to find out how their projects will be judged when the staff and ADB review departure requests. The Board directed staff to include this concept in the draft document for the public hearing, and that Item A on Page 4 be deleted.

Mr. Bullock advised that in reviewing each of the standards where flexibility would be allowed, he found that those related to site design could have a greater impact on what the project will look like. He noted that a lot of big decisions are made at the site design stage of the development process. He said that when he reviewed the six existing projects he found that he spent the most time going through the site design issues. He suggested that perhaps the ADB should make the decision on issues related to some of the site design standards which would have a much greater impact on the overall design of the project. It might be better off for staff to consider those issues that are related to building façade and form.

Mr. Chave said staff would review the site design issues to see how much impact they would have on the final project design. They could then break down the issues into two categories: those that should be decided by the staff and those that should be decided by the ADB.

Mr. Chave advised that staff would make all of the changes identified by the Board by next Friday, with the exception of the criteria related to flexibility. Also, the additional pictures requested by the Board may not be available by Friday. He suggested that the Board forward their recommendation related to the design guidelines to the Council at the same time as their recommendation related to the code amendments that will implement the design guidelines. The process issue will be discussed after the design guidelines and code amendments have been approved.

REVIEW OF EXTENDED AGENDA

The Board reviewed that at the next meeting there will be a public hearing on the design guidelines. Hopefully, after that public hearing, the Board will be able to finish crafting the guidelines and formulate a recommendation to the City Council. Staff indicated that they would continue to work on the code amendments to implement the design guidelines and present them to the Board at the first meeting in July. Also at the July 11 meeting the Board will discuss the issues that were raised at the public hearing on the design guidelines.

PLANNING BOARD CHAIR COMMENTS

Mr. Dewhirst reported that he would be meeting with Mayor Haakenson and the Council President on Monday, June 18, 2001. If the Board members have any issues they would like him to bring up at that time, they should let him know as soon as possible.

Mr. Dewhirst requested that staff provide the Board with a revised Board member list.

PLANNING BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

There were no Board member comments during this portion of the meeting.

MOTION BY MS LINDH, SECONDED BY MR. CRIM, TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 9:30 P.M. MOTION CARRIED.

APPROVED