

PLANNING BOARD MINUTES July 14, 2004

Chair Young 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.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

James Young, Chair
Janice Freeman, Vice Chair
Jim Crim
Virginia Cassutt
John Dewhirst
Cary Guenther
Judith Works
Don Henderson (Arrived at 7:10 p.m.)

STAFF PRESENT

Rob Chave, Planning Division Manager
Duane Bowman, Development Services Director
Jennifer Gerend, Economic Development Director

READING/APPROVAL OF MINUTES

BOARD MEMBER CRIM MOVED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF JUNE 23, 2004 AS CORRECTED. BOARD MEMBER FREEMAN SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED, WITH BOARD MEMBERS GUENTHER AND WORKS ABSTAINING. BOARD MEMBER HENDERSON WAS NOT PRESENT AT THE TIME.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF AGENDA

There were no changes made to the proposed agenda.

REQUESTS FROM THE AUDIENCE

Don Kreiman, 24006 – 95th Place West, informed the Board that he would be forwarding any correspondence he receives or writes regarding the Comprehensive Plan to the Board via the Planning Department staff so that the Board is kept abreast of what he is talking about with other people.

REVIEW OF ECONOMIC FEASIBILITY ASSESSMENT FOR HIGHWAY 99 TASK FORCE AND HOSPITAL/MEDICAL (BR) ZONING PROPOSALS

Mr. Bowman introduced John Owen from Makers, who was present to review the original Highway 99 Enhancement Report. After Mr. Owen's presentation, Mr. Bowman said he would review the Highway 99 Enhancement Project Market Assessment Report that was completed by Berk & Associates. He noted that this is a draft document that the Board recently received for their review. He explained that the contract is set up to allow only one Planning Board presentation by Berk & Associates. Therefore, it is important for the Board to voice any concerns and questions they have now so the consultant can be prepared to address their concerns. The report is intended to be an informational tool for the Board to use when reviewing the Highway 99 area in relationship to policy, changes in the Comprehensive Plan and potential development regulations.

He noted that Planning Board questions would be forwarded to the consultant, who would then come before the Board for a final presentation of the report.

John Owen, Makers, briefly reviewed some of the selling points of the original Highway 99 Enhancement Report. He emphasized that the report is far from a plan and was intended to kick start the project and generate interest amongst community members, business owners, and property owners. Mr. Owens advised that it is not completely accurate to call the report a Makers Project. It is important to acknowledge that City individuals initiated the report, which is only part of a larger effort the Board would be reviewing.

Mr. Owens advised that a focus group was formed to review issues related to Highway 99, and the comments provided by this group were compiled. They were very concerned about the character of Edmonds', particularly along Highway 99. They were also concerned about the pedestrian conditions, and they indicated that a variety of developments and functions along Highway 99 would be good. Residential members of the focus group were concerned about the residential qualities along the corridor, which is currently not a very good neighbor to the residential developments along Highway 99. The visual appearance of the corridor was also very important to the focus group. Mr. Owens advised that even though they didn't have a great number of business and property owners participate in the second focus group, those who did participate were very active, innovative and thoughtful. In addition, the residents in the area also want to see some positive changes. He said they were initially concerned that there might be a big schism between what the property and business owners want and what the residential community wants, but this was not the case.

While the consultant did not have the capability to do a highway analysis or study transportation or traffic issues, Mr. Owens advised that it is quite clear that the highway in this section is not friendly to businesses or community members. A lot needs to be done with the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) if the City's efforts related to Highway 99 are to be effective. There are large areas along the highway where it is not even possible to cross the street.

Mr. Owens advised that the report identifies four focus areas: hospital, retail, residential, and hotel. The visual survey and the discussions with focus groups were used to establish the four areas. In addition, they reviewed the various land uses that exist, as well as their own observations. He briefly reviewed each of the areas as follows:

- **Hospital Area:** In the area between 216th and 220th Streets there is a lot of parking available, as well as a lot of walking traffic.
- **Retail Area:** The area between 230th and 224th Streets is open for redevelopment. However, the difficult traffic patterns in the area create some development constraints. He noted that the intersection at 76th Avenue is difficult. At 228th Street, business owners would like the City to put in a pedestrian signal for cross traffic. This would help the businesses in the area by creating a focal point. In addition, street improvements could also help the situation. They also considered opportunities for developing gateways at 224th and 230th Streets. If the connection at 76th Avenue were closed, there could be an opportunity to beautify the street. There are good, strong anchor businesses already located in this area.
- **Residential Area:** The area between 234th and 236th has a number of vacant properties, and residential land uses get very close to the highway. Perhaps this would be an area to try the mixed-use development concept. This would likely require structured parking with apartments on top. The residents and business owners in the focus group expressed their concern that mixed-use would probably not be viable right along the highway, but they did like the concept and felt it would provide an opportunity for a higher quality of residential development.
- **Hotel Area:** The area between 240th and 238th Streets was more difficult. A few business owners complained that their customers are unable to access their businesses because there is no traffic light. In addition, the quality of the development in this area is must lower because of the long, skinny motels and apartments. There is an opportunity to take a more active approach to redevelopment and circulation in this area. He noted that the circulation pattern identified in the report would provide much better access and could spur some of the developments to change over into something that is more viable.

Mr. Owens clarified that the ideas and concepts identified in the report are certainly not recommendations, but were intended to kick start the project and give the Board something to think about.

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Mr. Bowman advised that the next step in the process after receiving the report from Makers was to run an analysis of the report to see how the concepts would pencil out. The City contracted with Berk & Associates to complete a market assessment of the suggestions that were identified in the report. He recalled that one of focuses of the City Council when looking at Highway 99 has been to find ways to generate more retail sales tax or tax revenue to help support the community as a whole. He agreed with Mr. Owen that the Makers Report should not be considered a Comprehensive Plan for Highway 99, since there was no traffic study, etc. completed.

Mr. Bowman advised that Berk & Associates was tasked to review the area around Steven's Hospital. However, the draft does not spend enough time discussing this particular issue, and the consultant will need to update the document. Because Stevens Hospital is linked to Highway 99, it is important that it be considered as part of their review.

Mr. Bowman reviewed that the Highway 99 Task Force met with the consultants on July 12th to review the report, and they raised a number of questions. He explained that the first five pages of the report summarize the findings, and the meat of the report reviews the findings after looking at the market conditions. He referred the Board to a document that was provided by the consultant to break down the key points. This document also brings up some of the issues raised by the Task Force that require further research. He noted that a colored map identifying the existing land uses was also provided as a reference.

Mr. Bowman said the overall report recognizes the challenges that Highway 99 presents to the area. It is a major arterial street that runs diagonal through the area, creating small parcels that represent challenge for development. It is clear that there are segments of Highway 99 that have under performed, and there is vacant land available. He advised that Berk & Associates agrees with the concept identified in the Makers Report to create different nodes along Highway 99 that have different characteristics. However, the City's portion of Highway 99 is in a market area with the Cities of Lynnwood and Shoreline, which have the same market uses. Therefore, they must come up with ways to create synergy and a market for the City of Edmonds. The consultant needs to provide more information regarding this concept.

Mr. Bowman said the report identifies the growing concentration of Asian businesses along Highway 99. The concept of having an International District is not a bad idea, and one of the task force members identified that a number of nationalities could capitalize on this same concept. Overall, the consultants believe there are market fundamentals that could make the concepts identified in the Makers Report happen. However, there would be some challenges. He reviewed that there is roughly 40 acres of land, with 28 acres being retail and the remainder housing. The Task Force was not overly supportive of the concept of hotels along Highway 99. He noted that the Berk & Associates Report identifies that there is an over supply of hotel rooms in the general area, and the market for hotel development is not present.

Mr. Bowman further reviewed that the land values in the area range between \$10 and \$21 per square foot, which supports the concept of low development. In the consultant's opinion, the City would not see a lot of large structured parking facilities along the corridor. The floor area ratio ranges between .15 and .30, which also supports the concept of lower density types of development. Mr. Bowman advised that if the City were to utilize the concepts identified in the Makers Report, they could expect between 565 to 636 housing units being built, potentially at six-story heights. However, this would depend upon the number of required parking spaces per unit. Based on density, most of the foreseeable units would be supportable with population growth over time. Both rental and owner occupied multi-family housing would likely succeed along Highway 99, but the consultant also indicated that there currently are issues with vacancy rates. Interest rates would also come into play.

Mr. Bowman said the consultants have also identified the ability to create retail space along Highway 99. They have identified between 181,500 and 363,000 square feet of retail property, depending upon what densities are chosen. He advised that this would more likely fall within the lower end of this range. The assessment indicates that retail development could happen in the short term, and develop more fully in the longer term of ten to twenty years under the concepts identified.

Mr. Bowman said the consultants identified the issue of pedestrian circulation being difficult along the corridor. He pointed out that there is a segment of Highway 99 that cannot be crossed by pedestrians (from about 228th to 238th Streets). The traffic along this stretch of the corridor goes from 45 to 50 miles per hour, and the posted speed limit is 45 miles per hour. The residents who participated in the focus group discussions also identified this concern, and the City really must deal with

the issue. He noted that the City has made an investment to improve the basic corridor. The road structure, along with sidewalks, is in place, but they don't have the necessary cross connections.

Mr. Bowman said the assessment indicates that population growth, alone, would not support the scale that is described in the enhancement report. The assessment estimates that about \$500 million is flowing out of the Edmonds/Mountlake Terrace area to other areas, and this opens a window of opportunity for the City to recapture some of this amount. The Task Force members requested ideas for how this could be done.

Mr. Bowman said there is an obvious void along Highway 99 of restaurants. The City's new Economic Development Director is working to recruit these types of businesses. The assessment indicates that family-owned restaurants would attract people of a higher income who live elsewhere in Edmonds. However, these types of restaurants need quality retail settings and good traffic access. Although fast food restaurants are typical uses along corridors such as Highway 99, the City only has one along their portion of the corridor. Traffic access is an issue, and it is difficult to turn across traffic during the peak hour flows.

Mr. Bowman said the assessment indicates that hospital growth would continue to drive the demand for office space around the hospital. The consultant noted that there is not a lot of office space shown in the Enhancement Report, although office space is succeeding very well in the hospital community. Mr. Bowman noted that the Planning Board has recommended mixed uses for this area, and the consultant has been asked to provide feedback regarding the feasibility of this type of use. He noted that the assessment states that planning for additional office space near the hospital makes great sense, and integrating circulation connections to the nearest retailers would help the businesses. There would be a market for all of the office uses if there were good pedestrian connections to the retail businesses. Even the residents who participated in the focus groups expressed a need for the residents to also have the ability to use the businesses along the Highway. The concerns were more related to the lack of connectivity such as sidewalks than to the types of businesses that are there.

Board Member Dewhirst commended the Task Force and the consultants for their work on both the Highway 99 Enhancement Report and the Market Assessment. He said a lot of people have difficulty reaching a starting point when reviewing Highway 99 and both documents were excellent in helping to open this door. However, he said he was particularly surprised that there was no discussion about automobile dealerships, even though some of the initial discussions indicated that automobile dealerships provide significant tax revenue for the City. If the City is looking at Highway 99 as an area to improve its tax base, he questioned if more automobile dealerships would be a good way to go.

Board Member Dewhirst reminded Mr. Bowman that the area along Highway 99 is the area within the City's where is allowed. He questioned what kind of impact this designation would have on the future potential of Highway 99. He said he has heard discussions that if any development of this nature were to take place in the area of the Campbell Nelson Business, they would go elsewhere.

Board Member Dewhirst referred to the major redevelopment that is being done on the section of Highway 99 that is located in Shoreline. He questioned how this competition would impact any plans Edmonds might have for their section of the Highway.

Board Member Dewhirst said the assessment didn't really identify any barriers that would prevent the land from being utilized to its full potential. He noted that there is an incredible amount of cars going through, which is significant factor for real estate agents and potential businesses, but there have been vacant properties for a long time. The report indicates that there is a significant amount of leakage to surrounding areas, yet the report also does not indicate what types of businesses would be the best targets for the City to recapture some of the leakage. He said the assessment should also identify the best combination of uses that would bring the most revenues to the City.

Board Member Dewhirst inquired if there is a preferred development kind or structure that would work the best. For instance, does the City want more individual big boxes scattered along the corridor and somehow joined or a higher-class strip mall. Board Member Dewhirst noted that there are some very unusual shaped parcels, and it will be necessary to aggregate them. He questioned if there is a certain type of development pattern that might work best in the area.

Mr. Bowman explained that it is important that the City not lose any of the car dealerships that they currently have. The hotel area that is identified in the Makers Report is a natural area for a car dealership since they typically like to be located near other car dealerships. Mr. Chave referred to Page 3 of the Market Assessment, which makes the assumptions that the area is well served by grocery stores and auto dealerships, so both uses were excluded from consideration as new development.

City Council Member Marin advised that when the Task Force was in the exploratory stage, he collected sales tax data and plotted it out on a map. He said he was amazed at how little money the City receives from large pieces of property and how much they receive from some of the dealerships. He said it is clear that that property taxes will continue to rise. The City Council is aware of the fact that, while there are a lot of projects that need to be done, there are not sufficient resources. It is hard for them to continue to ask the citizens to pay more taxes. He said he is excited about the possibility of maximizing some potential along the Highway 99 Corridor.

City Council Member Marin said that because the City has experienced the loss of some serious opportunities in the past, it is important to identify the impediments that prevent people from looking at the area seriously. One of the major findings identified in the Makers Report was the serious accessibility problems associated with getting to the spaces that might be built. The City really needs to make sure this problem is verified and addressed.

City Council Member Marin said it is important that the City ensure they get the right businesses along the corridor. The Task Force conducted some valid focus group research with people who live within two or three blocks of the area to make sure they were on board with the idea and to get a sense of the type of development they would like to see. The next step was to prepare a paper outlining the four new zoning configurations that would be proposed, each requiring a retail component on the ground floor on properties that front along Highway 99. The consultant is in the processing of reviewing the outline paper. The Planning Board will be asked to provide feedback to the City Council regarding whether the new zoning configurations and the requirement of retail space on the ground floor would make sense.

City Council Member Marin advised that the preliminary report from Berk & Associates does a good job in gathering analysis, but they have now been directed to study additional areas and come back with firm recommendations that are very specific and positive. The Task Force expects to have a good solid recommendation, based on economic analysis, for the Board to review. The Board should look very seriously at the outline document that was prepared by the Task Force, since it identifies the nuts and bolts of what is being proposed. Most of the questions raised by Board Member Dewhirst were also raised in the outline, as well. He advised that the Market Assessment Report is the final capstone that will verify or throw out the ideas that have been presented.

Board Member Crim questioned what it would take to put pedestrian overpasses across Highway 99 and what potential impact they could have. City Council Member Marin responded that this option has been explored, but there are ADA problems associated with these structures, and they are not built very much any more.

Chair Young suggested that the Task Force not give up on the option of providing overpasses just because there are some difficulties associated with them. He noted that an overpass across Highway 99 was just completed in Seattle, and it is ADA compliant. The State of Washington paid for all but \$100,000 of this cost, and the structure has been turned over to the City of Seattle for maintenance. He said that if there is an economic value to be gained by tying both sides of Highway 99 together with pedestrian overpasses, the City should not shy away from the option because of the expense or because it is difficult. City Council Member Marin said that if Chair Young has information to indicate that an overpass would be favorable, the City Council would like him to pass on this information. They have talked to citizens, business owners, designers, economists, and task force. They are now working to obtain input from the Board.

Chair Young said the Board is not in a position to do research on how well a pedestrian overpass would work. He can only offer anecdotal information from his own experience with the City of Seattle. City Council Member Marin asked that Chair Young provide information that can be passed on to the consultant for consideration. Chair Young concluded that if the consultant indicates that an overpass would be a good idea, there are ways for the City to obtain the necessary funds to pay for the project. Chair Young said that before the Board holds a public hearing on the Market Assessment and the Highway

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99 Enhancement Project Report, he would like the consultant to provide feedback as to whether or not a pedestrian overpass would have a positive impact.

Board Member Crim said he drives under the overpass that was recently constructed in the City of Seattle, and it seems this option facilitates the type of movement that would be beneficial to the City. However, he doesn't have any data to support the concept.

Board Member Freeman questioned the rationale for proposing 600 housing units if they would not bring any significant tax benefit to the City. Mr. Bowman clarified that the Makers Report is not a plan. Makers collected information from residents and business owners and reviewed the land use patterns that exist to come up with ways of addressing some of the issues and potential redevelopment. One of the concepts identified by Makers is mixed use. He said a property owner who is located behind one of the retail centers has contacted the City, and he is very enthusiastic about doing a potential mixed-use development on his property. He said he believes there is a market for this type of development, but not for housing right along the highway. However, the consultant interviewed the owner of the apartment that is located on the east side of the highway, and he indicated that he really likes the location. They have been able to keep their occupancy up because of the bus line that runs by and their easy access to the highway. However, the Task Force doesn't want to push this type of use as a primary use for properties that front along Highway 99. Over time, there may be more of a demand for housing along corridors that provide rapid transit opportunities, and Highway 99 is being explored by Sound Transit as a rapid transit corridor.

Board Member Freeman inquired about the reasoning behind Makers' recommendation that construction along Highway 99 be wood frame, with a six-story height limit. Mr. Owens replied that the reason for targeting five stories of frame construction over one story of concrete or masonry is that is a very effective and efficient type of construction. He noted that one of the reasons for the evolution of development in Bell Town in Seattle is the change in the building code that allowed this type of development. Mr. Owens explained that mixed-use development is a good way to get property owners to do something in areas where it can be viable. Instead of having a poor performing piece of property with a marginal retail business on it, the City can encourage property owners to gain more income by developing the site further. It is also a way of getting a better quality of development. They also find that the local residents really help support the businesses, particularly those that are not space intensive. He referred to Lake City Way between 123rd to 127th Streets, where this type of concept is being utilized. It took a long time to happen because they first had to improve the street, provide good transit and get the zoning in place. Another case where this concept is being utilized is Greenwood Avenue and 85th in Seattle. This area was blighted until recently, but mixed-use development is spurring on new retail development in the area. If mixed-use can pencil out economically, Mr. Owen concluded that it would be a good way for the City to go. Mr. Chave added that this same type of concept can be found between Green Lake and Interstate 5.

Board Member Works noted that the market assessment downplays office uses, except in the area around Stevens Hospital. She questioned if any thought was given to putting in an office park if any of the properties are large enough. Mr. Bowman said he would pose this question to the consultant. However, he said that these uses typically like to locate fairly close to good freeway access, but freeway access from the corridor is not convenient. He recalled that when the City conducted the original Highway 99 assessment and made some zoning changes by creating the CG and CG2 zones, everyone thought there would be a lot of new development. However, this did not happen. One of the main issues has been access to the freeways. In addition, if properties along Highway 99 were to develop as an office park, there would be property tax revenue but not retail sales tax revenue. However, this type of development would bring in employees to shop at the retail businesses along the corridor. Mr. Chave noted that in the back of the market assessment, the consultant indicated that the office market is fairly depressed at this time.

Board Member Works said she has trouble interpreting the maps. Sometimes they go from right to left, and other times they go from left to right. In addition, the cross streets are not always marked. Mr. Chave said street names could be added to the maps, but changing the orientation would probably not be possible. Board Member Freeman inquired if the maps would be produced in color. Mr. Bowman answered that the final version would be done in color.

Board Member Works noted that Page 23 of the market assessment states that over the past year rents declined five percent, which is a smaller decrease than the Snohomish County overall rate of three percent. Mr. Bowman said he would clarify this statement with the consultant.

Board Member Dewhirst noted that Community Transit is in the process of doing their own study of a rapid bus transit system. They would like to work with the cities along the line, particularly regarding the potential for stations, etc. He advised that Route 610, which runs up and down Highway 99, is the best functioning route in their whole system. With nodes starting to develop along Highway 99, this would be good information for them to know up front. He said Community Transit is really spearheading the concept right now. Mr. Bowman said the City could pass information on to Community Transit. Once the final report is available, it will be accessible on the City's website. Until that time, a copy can be obtained from the City Office.

Board Member Dewhirst advised that the City of Mountlake Terrace has money to improve their section of 220th from Highway 99 to Interstate 5, and they plan to add turning lanes, synchronize the lines, put in more medians, and minimize the randomness of the turning, etc. If it turns out that access between Highway 99 and Interstate 5 is a big issue, perhaps this might come into play. Mr. Bowman agreed that this would be a key issue because the 220th Street access is the closest freeway access from Highway 99. However, this corridor is really poorly designed and the traffic backs up significantly during peak hours.

Mr. Bowman advised that he would forward the Board's comments and questions to the consultant, who would identify where the issues fall within the scope of the market feasibility assessment. He agreed that a pedestrian overpass should not be ruled out as an option, and he said staff would likely visit the overpass that was recently constructed in Seattle to see how it was designed to accommodate ADA requirements.

Chair Young said he would still like the consultant to identify whether or not there is some type of major public development that the City could pursue in conjunction with other public partners. He noted that the City of Everett built an events center, yet it is located further away from Interstate 5 than the Edmonds portion of Highway 99. He said the freeway access on 220th and SR-104 is not all that bad, and there is a lot of blighted property between those two streets. He said he does not want this possibility to be lost unless someone can tell him why this type of development would not work on Highway 99. He said he would like the economic analysts to provide ideas for types of public development that could occur. He noted that in cities that have developed these types of public facilities, they end up having an economic benefit for the businesses located in the area. Rather than competing for the same type of uses that are located all along Highway 99, he suggested that the consultant explore options for some type of public amenity that could catalyze other investments.

Board Member Dewhirst suggested that perhaps the hospital could become the main driver along the north end of the Highway 99 corridor, yet it has not really be capitalized on. He noted the two new centers that have been developed southeast of the hospital. They are all linked together. Perhaps there is something that a public entity could do to supplement the hospital uses. He noted that the City's hands have been tied by all of the recent initiatives, and perhaps it is time for someone else to respond since the public sector is running short on cash. Mr. Bowman agreed this would be a valid issue to raise. He said major capital improvements would have to be done even to implement some of the suggestions in the report. The traffic signals are expensive, and the City will have to lobby for funding. He summarized that Chair Young and Board Member Dewhirst are interested in finding out if there is a market for doing a large public facility in this area and what impact this would have to the surrounding area.

Chair Young noted that the assessment indicates that there is an over saturation of hotel rooms in the area. He pointed out that youth sport facilities draw families from around the region, who could end up utilizing the hotels and businesses that are also located along Highway 99. City Council Member Marin suggested that if the Board feels there is some validity to this concept, it could be added as a use in any of the zones. The City's Economic Development Director could then pursue these types of uses. He said it is important that the City start taking some action to close up the zoning in the area. Mr. Bowman said the Task Force clearly identified some uses they felt should not be allowed along Highway 99, such as self-storage businesses. The Planning Board will be reviewing the types of uses that should and should not be encouraged.

Board Member Henderson inquired if the City staff is familiar with the convention center that is being constructed in Lynnwood near 36th Street. Mr. Bowman said he is aware of this public facility. Board Member Henderson inquired if staff has any exposure to the economic study that was done to justify the project. Mr. Bowman said he has not worked on this specifically, but he knows they did complete an economic analysis to determine the viability of the project. This particular facility would be located close to the hotel rooms that are currently available and is one of the key features the City of Lynnwood's plan for creating a downtown. From the City of Edmonds' perspective, they are looking at their performing arts center at the old Puget Sound Christian College, which will be a huge economic generator for the community.

Board Member Henderson asked that the consultant consider the possibility of a convention center type concept, along with the option discussed by Chair Young. City Council Member Marin said the practicalities of this option are very slim, since the ability to get money to develop this type of facility would be difficult. With the development of the Edmonds Performing Arts Center, which includes a second phase that would create a 550-seat meeting area, the market for convention type facilities would have been saturated. On the other hand, a major aquatic center could have a more significant impact. The Board recalled that, at one time, there was some discussion by the school district regarding the possibility of constructing an aquatic center near the current Edmonds/Woodway High School. City Council Member Marin advised that the City's previous Parks and Recreation Director had been researching options for an aquatic center, and one of the locations she had considered was the Edmonds/Woodway High School site.

Mr. Chave noted that both the Lynnwood Convention Center and the Edmonds Performing Arts Center are being developed using a special purpose economic funding mechanism through a public facilities district. But this funding opportunity has been tapped out for the time being. Rather than doing a convention center, the City of Edmonds chose to construct an arts center that include some meeting potential but was geared towards the Edmonds market.

Board Member Works inquired if Edmonds Community College had been approached regarding potential development along the Highway 99 Corridor. City Council Member Marin said they have not approached the college specifically. Their campus is located north of this area and off of Highway 99. He questioned whether they would want to locate a satellite facility to the south of their existing campus. Board Member Dewhirst noted that Edmonds Community College has a satellite program located at 220th and Interstate 5 in the old elementary school. They are continually looking for more space, but they are also looking for opportunities to establish a relationship with the City at the new Performing Arts Center.

Board Member Dewhirst noted that while reviewing the Downtown/Waterfront Plan, the Board identified that there is not sufficient hotel/motel space. He questioned if any synergy could be used from the developing arts center for visitor space along Highway 99. Ms. Gerend said she gets the sense that the Board is sort of "fishing for uses" along Highway 99. She suggested that Highway 99 is really precious as potential retail space in the City, which they don't have a lot of. In the downtown area they are dealing with very small storefronts. People are interested in coming to Edmonds, and as the new Economic Development Director, she finds the City's demographics a dream. They have a great reputation. As she speaks with restaurant and large retail business owners, they indicate that they are interested. However, the City has been allowing Highway 99 to be a junkyard. The studies are intended to help the City think about what Highway 99 really can be and get rid of the uses they don't want there any more. She cautioned that the City must be really smart about this valuable asset.

THE BOARD TOOK A TEN-MINUTE BREAK AT 8:40 P.M. THEY RECONVENED AT 8:50 P.M.

CONTINUED REVIEW OF COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND CRITICAL AREAS UPDATES (FOCUS: REVIEW OF DRAFT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENTS ON LAND USE ISSUES, IDENTIFYING PLANNING BOARD PROPOSALS AND PREPARING FOR PUBLIC MEETINGS IN AUGUST)

Mr. Chave referred the Board to their draft of the existing Comprehensive Plan, with margin notations for all the different areas that need to be updated. Many of these changes relate to census information or information pertaining to land use and environmental issues. Mr. Chave said notations were made to identify where some of the information in the Downtown/Waterfront Plan or Highway 99 Plan is liable to fit in. He specifically referred to Pages 44 and 45, which provide a good example of indicating where the Historic Preservation Commission has been created and how some of its goals and activities can be fit into the Comprehensive Plan. Since the 1995 plan was done, there is also more information in

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the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Plan that supersedes much of the information that is on Page 45. A lot of the changes are intended to provide consistency between the various plan elements.

Mr. Chave said that if any of the Board members would like the Board to review a specific area, they should indicate this either now or at the next meeting.

Board Member Freeman referred to Item B on Page 1 and voiced her objection to the use of the word “morals.” Mr. Chave said this was part of the old language. Board Member Freeman suggested that it should be removed, and the remainder of the Board agreed. In addition, Board Member Freeman referred to Page 3 and noted that the box on the left appears to be a repeat of the box on Page 2. She specifically referred to Item B.3. While she agreed with the statement, she felt that more emphasis should be put on developing the tax base. Mr. Chave said he intended to note this section, but he neglected to change the note. Lastly, Board Member Freeman referred to the last sentence on Page 9, and asked that the requirement for a viable economic base be strengthened.

Board Member Dewhirst said opportunities for economic development seems to be missing from the Comprehensive Plan. It seems like the wording throughout just beats around the bush, but does not get down to what needs to be addressed. They just spent a few hours addressing economic issues related to Highway 99, and these same concepts should be applicable to other parts of the community, particularly from a goals, objectives and policy standpoint. Perhaps economic development should have its own section in the Comprehensive Plan.

Board Member Freeman referred to Pages 33 and 34. She noted that Item F.2 states that site access shall not be provided from residential streets unless there is no feasible alternative. Item G.3 provides a similar statement. She said it seems there are a number of problems concerning SR-104 and traffic, and there are a couple of policies in place that appear to fight one another. One that the City won't touch a residential streets and another that the City will try to control the number of access points on SR-104. Neither of these policies is working, and she suggested that they be reconsidered. Perhaps they will have to think about using some of the residential streets, and safety should always be the overriding factor. Mr. Chave said the intent was to create a hierarchy that the first choice would be to have shared access. If it is not feasible to do access along SR-104, access from the residential streets could be considered as a last resort. Board Member Freeman said that since it is the Board's policy to rezone some of the areas along SR-104 for multi-family housing there could be a lot more traffic. Mr. Chave said these policies relate to the Westgate Corridor where the lots are very shallow and there is not a lot of opportunity to get back onto residential streets. The idea was to try and minimize or combine access points, but not get people back into the residential areas because there is not enough room. The situation is a little different further down SR-104 towards Highway 99. Some of these parcels are deep and it might make more sense there.

Board Member Works referred to Page 6, which states that higher density residential development is primarily located south and north of the downtown. She noted this has changed with so many condominiums being built in the downtown area. She suggested that perhaps this section should be updated. She also noted that the name, “The Great North Railroad” should be changed. In addition, she noted that the new Edmonds Performing Arts Center should be identified in the various appropriate places.

Board Member Works referred to Item A.6 on Page 24, which states that existing height limits are an important part of the quality of life and remain in effect. She noted that there have been discussions about the possibility of changing the height limits. Therefore, she questioned whether they want to have this hard and fast policy. Mr. Chave said the entire section predates the Downtown/Waterfront Plan, and that is why the notation was provided in the margin rather than going through each one. Board Member Works said the same concern applies to Page 49.

Board Member Works referred to Item C.2.c on Page 51 that references the in-lieu parking program, which no longer exists in the City. She commented that there is a lot of reference in the Comprehensive Plan about lower income housing, yet the Board has not discussed this concept much. She questioned if this option should be highlighted more as they review Highway 99, etc. Mr. Chave said he has spent time in meetings with Snohomish County in reviewing recent housing reports. One is a housing evaluation report that talks about housing goals and how various jurisdictions are doing. There is also a fair housing allocation discussion paper that talks about lower income housing needs throughout the County and what various jurisdictions should try to do about it. This is partially where the concept of reasonable measures came from to identify

things jurisdictions need to do to reduce housing costs. He said this topic is a very high priority now. The Federal Government has talked about getting out of the housing program and they have been the mainstay for helping with low cost housing for years. The quandary is what local jurisdictions can and should do to address the issue. More information will be provided to the Board to illustrate the magnitude of the problem, and it would be worthwhile for the City to review their list of measures. He noted that there was some information in the Highway 99 Market Assessment regarding the option of lowering the parking ratio to spur multi-family development. This would particularly make sense in an area where decent transit service is provided. This same option could also be used to provide more affordable housing. Mr. Chave said that when talking about low-cost housing, it is also important to consider housing for the special needs population, which the City has been fairly successful with.

Mr. Chave advised that staff would work to provide more of the data updates in the document before the Board's next meeting.

Board Member Dewhirst referred to Item B.4 on Page 3. He said this section does not address the need for balanced transportation with any new development. The same is true on Page 9, where there is little reference to transit, bikes or pedestrians. Mr. Chave noted that this section is more of a discussion as opposed to policy.

Board Member Dewhirst referred to Page 35 and noted that light industrial uses are allowed in two main areas: the Port of Edmonds and in the general commercial zone along Highway 99. He said this seems to be contrary to what the Board previously discussed. He said it seems like the whole industrial land use section needs to be reworked. In reality, with the exception of the Port and a few service commercial areas north of the hospital, the City does not have any industrial uses. Perhaps this fact should be recognized. While this is a tough issue to deal with, the City would not do themselves any good by trying to fool people into thinking they have industrial areas unless required by the Growth Management Act. Mr. Chave said the intent of the note that was provided in the left margin was to make this section more specific. The Port is one area where industrial uses would be allowed, and the uses in this area could change in the foreseeable future. The Board has also discussed the possibility of changing the general commercial area in the vicinity of the hospital to a zone that would welcome light industrial uses. Including a policy of this nature in this section would make sense, and the policy could be referenced in the Highway 99 section, as well.

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORTS

Mr. Chave noted that staff would be meeting with the critical areas ordinance consultant, EDAW. They have transmitted their initial shot at a best available science background report, which is about 70 pages long. At the meeting, they will be reviewing this document, as well as a more detailed outline of the code revisions they are proposing. The project is progressing, and he is hopeful the Board can take up this issue again on July 28th.

Mr. Chave said staff is doing more research to find out if there is available funding to do some economic analysis for the Downtown/Waterfront Plan. They are also trying to come up with more background on urban design components such as streetscape, pedestrian scale, etc. They are looking for more objective information on the issues of two versus three story buildings and height limits.

Mr. Chave reported that the City Council just approved the concept of a traffic mitigation program for the City. Up to this point in time, SEPA had been used for traffic mitigation. If a project did not require SEPA, the City had no ability to require traffic mitigation. In addition, the mitigation fees the City was charging were significantly less than what they should have been. The new program would be a Citywide impact fee system. Because the City has a developed infrastructure, their impact fees do not have to be as high as in some other locations.

Board Member Crim said his understanding is that the City Council would be discussing building heights, first floor heights, etc. at their next meeting. Mr. Chave urged the Board Members to attend the June 20th City Council Meeting, at which experts will be discussing factors that impact the downtown and downtown development. This has to do with economics and how buildings are designed, built and funded. Don Kreiman said his understanding is that this meeting is intended to

provide information for the Board since this issue would be remanded to them for review. He urged the Board members to at least watch the meeting on the public access channel.

REVIEW OF EXTENDED AGENDA

Mr. Chave reminded the Board of the continued public hearing on the rezone request that is scheduled for July 28th. In addition, a public open house is scheduled for August 11th. However, this depends upon the Board's review on July 28th and what additional information is available on the Downtown/Waterfront Plan. He said the staff would discuss the August 11th public workshop date with EDAW to make sure it is still a viable schedule.

PLANNING BOARD CHAIR COMMENTS

Chair Young provided no additional comments.

PLANNING BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Board Member Guenther observed that unless the City finds a way to connect the east side of Highway 99 to the west side, they will essentially be looking at two, long and narrow strips. However, all the nodes they reviewed incorporated both sides. Board Member Cassutt agreed. She said it wouldn't matter to some people whether there is a good stop light or not, they would still not cross this wide street. Board Member Guenther said that because the street is so wide, a person has to almost sprint to get to the other side before the signal changes. Board Member Cassutt suggested that they consider the option of having a small village on each side of Highway 99. Housing could be provided with supporting businesses developed around them on each side. She noted that the only really large piece of property along Highway 99 is the Burlington Coat Factory. Mr. Chave the Sure Guard property is also a fairly large piece of property.

Board Member Henderson suggested that if the Board wants to consider the option of creating an international district, they should also provide public art and signage, etc. to identify it as such.

THE MEETING WAS ADJOURNED AT 9:35.