

**CITY OF EDMONDS
PLANNING BOARD MINUTES
December 13, 2006**

Chair Freeman called the regular meeting of the Planning Board to order at 7:03 p.m. in the Council Chambers, Public Safety Complex, 250 – 5th Avenue North.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Janice Freeman, Chair
Cary Guenther
Jim Young
Don Henderson
John Reed

STAFF PRESENT

Rob Chave, Planning Division Manager
Karin Noyes, Recorder

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT

John Dewhirst, Vice Chair
Judith Works
Michael Bowman

READING/APPROVAL OF MINUTES

BOARD MEMBER GUENTHER MOVED THAT THE MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 8, 2006 BE APPROVED AS SUBMITTED. BOARD MEMBER YOUNG SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF AGENDA

The discussion by Mayor Haakenson on recommendations to Council (Item 5a) was placed before the Audience Comments (Item 3). The remainder of the agenda was approved as presented.

DISCUSSION BY MAYOR HAAKENSON ON RECOMMENDATIONS TO COUNCIL

Mayor Haakenson explained that over the past several months, he has taken more than a passing interest in how the Architectural Design Board and Planning Board make decisions and recommendations. He thanked the Board Members for working hard to tackle difficult issues. However, he asked that they consider the following comments to help make their recommendations to the City Council more clear and concise.

- Talk in the microphone. When discussing issues with each other, it is very easy to turn and look at others rather than facing the microphone. However, this makes it difficult for the audience to hear what is being said. It also makes it difficult to listen to the tape recordings of the meetings.
- The Board often works on issues for several weeks or months, and the Board Members voice their opinions and formulate thoughts in their head. However, when it comes to voting on an issue, many Board Members do not clearly explain their

position. People who read the minutes of the meeting will want to know each of the Board Members' thoughts. Therefore, when voting, Board Members should make sure everyone puts something in the record to indicate why they voted the way they did. It would be helpful to hear from everyone.

- When Board Members vote in opposition to a motion, it is important that they explain why as part of the record. Otherwise, the Board's decisions would be open to a lot of interpretation. They should be very clear about why they are voting for or against a motion.
- If any decisions are left open to interpretation, the issues would come back before the Board at some point in the future. It is very important to clearly explain the rationale for each decision.

AUDIENCE COMMENTS

Al Rutledge asked that the City hold public hearings and offer ample opportunity for the public to comment next time a skate park is considered. He recalled that the City considered their first skate park in 1996 and 1997, but the record that was established at that time was not considered when the new skate park was reviewed and approved. While he is in favor of park facilities for children, the City should use a better process that includes more public participation.

PUBLIC HEARING ON STREET SETBACKS AND LANDSCAPE REQUIREMENTS FOR CG AND CG2 ZONES

Mr. Chave reported that the City Council approved a revised set of standards for the CG and CG2 zones on November 6, 2006. During their hearing, representatives from two auto dealerships noted that the 15-foot landscaped setback requirement would create difficulties in redeveloping their properties. They expressed concern that a 15-foot landscape buffer would require a significant portion of their land to be removed from active use. In addition, a concern was expressed that the required landscaping would obscure their outdoor display area, which is traditionally placed adjacent to the street front of the property. The City Council agreed that the Planning Board should take another look at the setback issue.

Mr. Chave explained that the 15-foot landscaped buffer requirement is an old zoning standard. Since the current code was adopted in 1980, substantial changes have occurred on the Highway 99 corridor, most notably the substantial corridor improvements (including sidewalks) completed during the late 1990s. The new landscape provisions included in the CG/CG2 update were developed as part of the 2001 draft design guidelines and were intended to provide adequate landscape and buffer standards for development. They require more internal landscaping within large parking lots, so it makes sense to allow property owners to compensate for some of the increase in land devoted to internal landscaping by requiring less at the perimeter of the property. This would also be consistent with the idea of encouraging more landscaping coverage to be spread throughout parking areas rather than clustered at the perimeter.

Mr. Chave advised that, combined with the other City design standards, most notably the reasonably restrictive sign code, it seems that the 15-foot landscaped buffer requirement is outdated and counter productive—especially when the City's expressed goal is to encourage significant economic development along the Highway 99 Corridor. Staff is recommending changes to the table and footnotes in ECDC 16.60.020 and ECDC 16.60.030.A.2.a to indicate that a minimum 4-foot setback would be required along all street frontages.

Mr. Chave said staff has also identified other provisions of concern. ECDC 16.60.030.A.1.a would require that all parking be screened from view from public walkways with grills, fences, lattice, etc. He noted that this would be inappropriate along Highway 99, particularly for auto dealerships that must display their product near the street front. ECDC 16.60.030.A.1.f would require that Type III Landscaping must be provided between parking and the street for commercial or mixed use projects, but this provision would not allow people to see the cars that are set out on display.

Board Member Young asked if there are any other commercial zones in the City that require a 15-foot front setback. Mr. Chave answered that the Neighborhood Business (BN) zones have similar setback requirements, but the Commercial Business (BC) zones do not because the properties are developed lot-line-to-lot-line. In the BC zones, the lot lines vary

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depending on the location. Board Member Young suggested that the 15-foot front setback requirement appears to be an anomaly on Highway 99. Mr. Chave agreed and noted that Highway 99 is much different than the BN zone.

Board Member Reed referred to a letter dated November 1, 2006 from Magic Toyota asking that the City consider an exemption to allow them to display their merchandise near the street front. He asked if the current zoning code could be modified to provide an exception that would allow auto dealerships to display their merchandise. Mr. Chave agreed that the Board could consider this option, but if the City were to allow auto dealerships increased use of their property, other businesses along Highway 99 should be allowed the same thing.

Board Member Reed recalled that at the City Council hearing, one individual suggested this issue could be handled with a conditional use permit requirement. Mr. Chave agreed that is one option the Board could consider, but a conditional use permit process would be unpredictable and could take three to four months to complete. This would result in uncertainty for the businesses.

Peter Chung, General Manager, Magic Toyota, said he spoke at the City Council hearing regarding the setback issue. Although he would like the City to just grant the setback exception to just his business, he recognizes that the issue is much larger for the City. The City must create something for all auto dealerships to keep them in the area to promote economic development and provide tax revenue to the City.

Mr. Chung explained that his group has made a significant investment in Bellevue as part of the redevelopment of Sunset Village. They are also involved in the redevelopment of the existing Magic Toyota site in Edmonds. He advised that they originally purchased property in Lynnwood in order to relocate their business. However, they were later approached by Mayor Haakenson and the City's Economic Development Director, asking what the City could do to keep the business within Edmonds. They explained that there was no adjacent property that could be purchased to meet the manufacturer's requirements for redevelopment. The City's Economic Development Director worked with them to acquire an adjacent property, but the proposed 15-foot landscaped setback requirement would definitely create a problem for them.

Mr. Chung advised that he has been working with Mayor Haakenson and Mr. Bowman to figure out something that would work for both the City and for Magic Toyota. He provided a handout to outline Toyota's requirements for every dealership. The document also provides a design overview of the buildings that are being proposed for the Edmonds site. He noted that the development would be fairly substantial as far as facilities and land requirements. He specifically pointed out that, with the addition of the new property, they would still be about 100,000 square feet short of the manufacturer's requirements unless the 15-foot setback requirement were significantly reduced. Secondly, he pointed out that the manufacturer requires a certain percentage of landscaping within the parking area based on the total square footage of land. The Edmonds site would require about 42,000 square feet of landscaped area. Not only would they have to put landscaping in the front, but throughout the parking area, as well.

Al Rutledge cautioned that a conditional use permit does not require a public hearing. If the City were to use a conditional use permit to grant the setback exception to auto dealerships, staff would be able to make the decision without any public input. He pointed out that people would walk through the parking areas and along the sidewalk in front of the auto dealerships. Therefore, it is important that sufficient space be provided for safe parking and pedestrian access. He expressed his belief that Highway 99 is an excellent place for more intense development since the infrastructure is already in place to accommodate it.

Board Member Guenther expressed his belief that a 15-foot front setback requirement on Highway 99 would be onerous. It would require too much real estate for landscaping in an area where the City is trying to encourage retail and commercial development. The setback requirement would be a great imposition along Highway 99. Board Member Henderson agreed that there should not be a 15-foot setback requirement on Highway 99 or on any other major arterial where businesses are located on both sides. The 15-foot setback requirement would only be appropriate where commercial zones are adjacent to residential zones and not on Highway 99 or Edmonds Way.

Board Member Young recalled that the 15-foot setback requirement was originally designed to make Highway 99 more pedestrian friendly. However, this concern has been resolved by the substantial improvements that have occurred along

Highway 99 and the new landscape provisions included in the CG/CG2 update. He agreed with Board Member Henderson that the City must be sensitive to adjacent residential zones, but a 15-foot setback requirement would not be appropriate for properties along Highway 99 or any other major arterials that run perpendicular to it.

Board Member Reed agreed that the setback requirement in the CG and CG2 zones should be reduced to make it realistic for the types of businesses that are located along Highway 99. However, even if the setback requirement were reduced to four feet, there would still be parts of Highway 99 where buildings abut right up against the sidewalk. Mr. Chave explained that these buildings would be considered non-conforming. Any redevelopment on these properties would be required to provide the minimum 4-foot setback. However, the existing buildings could continue to function as non-conforming.

Chair Freeman noted that building setback requirements are a different issue than landscape setback requirements. She said she sees no reason why auto dealerships along Highway 99 should not be allowed to use all of the available land up to the front property line. She suggested the Board consider a zero front setback requirement for auto dealerships along Highway 99. Mr. Chung brought up the fact that the manufacturer would require them to install a certain amount of landscaping throughout the property, which would work out to about 42,000 square feet of landscaping on the Edmonds site. He pointed out that the manufacturer is very aware of how much landscaping would be provided on site so there is not a large area of black top.

Chair Freeman pointed out that the landscaping required on site by the manufacturer would provide variety on Highway 99, so the auto dealerships should be allowed to use their property up to the property line. She expressed her belief that there should be no front setback requirement for auto dealerships. This would make Highway 99 more varied in appearance if some businesses provide landscape along the street front and others provide it within the property. She emphasized that auto dealerships are very important to Edmonds and there is very little land available for their use. The City should allow them to utilize as much land as possible in order to keep them in Edmonds.

Board Member Young said he would be opposed to a zero setback requirement. Having at least four feet of landscaping along the property line would enhance the appearance of the product on display. It would also be appropriate to have at least some separation between the product and the sidewalk.

Chair Freeman said that she has observed that the existing auto dealerships have parked cars right up to the property. However, there is a landscaped area between the property line and the public right-of-way. Mr. Chave pointed out that any landscaping that exists along the right-of-way on Highway 99 is on private property.

Mr. Chung agreed with Board Member Young that it might not look appropriate for the cars to abut right up against the street, but when Highway 99 was improved, sidewalks were constructed between the street and the private properties. The sidewalks provide some buffer. He said Chair Freeman is suggesting that the landscaped areas within the lot would add a lot more depth to the property and make it more visually appealing. While he would like to be able to utilize 100% of the property, he understands that the City must be sensitive to how the development would look. He summarized that a 4-foot setback requirement, with a 2-foot overhang allowance as proposed by staff would also work.

Mr. Chave noted that the new landscaping requirement would be very different from the historical requirement. Ground cover would be allowed rather than higher shrubs and trees. Trees would be required, but they would have a fairly significant spacing and be limbed. This type of landscaping would allow some of the cars to overhang a few feet into the setback area. He also noted that the new landscape requirements emphasize the use of more landscaping within the property.

Mr. Chave expressed his concern about a zero setback requirement. If businesses were allowed to park vehicles right up to the property line, there is a good chance they would end up overhanging onto the sidewalk area. He suggested that a minimum 4-foot setback requirement be established. Because ground cover could be used in the setback, the auto dealerships would still be able to display their product in a manner that would be extremely visible from the sidewalk and street.

BOARD MEMBER YOUNG MOVED THAT THE BOARD FORWARD THE STAFF'S PROPOSED LANGUAGE FOR STREET SETBACKS AND LANDSCAPE REQUIREMENTS IN THE CG AND CG2 ZONES TO THE CITY

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COUNCIL WITH A RECOMMENDATION OF APPROVAL. BOARD MEMBER GUENTHER SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Mr. Chave noted that anyone who testified at the public hearing would receive a notice of the City Council hearing that would be scheduled sometime in January.

PUBLIC HEARING ON APPLICATION BY TONY SHAPIRO REGARDING CREATING NEW ZONES FOR PROPERTIES IN THE EDMONDS WAY CORRIDOR (FILE NUMBER AMD-06-2)

Mr. Chave recalled that the Planning Board reviewed the applicants' initial proposal during a public hearing on September 27, 2006. At that time, the applicants were seeking to create two new zones and concurrently rezone an area along Edmonds way northwest of 232nd Street Southwest to the new zones. He explained that because a number of concerns were raised regarding the proposal, the applicants requested that the Board's decision be delayed so they could try to refine their proposal and seek additional input from the neighborhood. The applicants are now separating the creation of the two zones from the rezone of the specific parcels. Therefore, the purpose of this hearing is only to consider the creation of the new zones. Any rezone applications would be considered at a later date.

Mr. Chave advised that the applicant's intent is to create to new zones [Multiple Residential – Edmonds Way (EW-RM) and Community Business – Edmonds Way (EW-BC)] that could potentially be applied to other properties along the Edmonds Way Corridor. However, before any rezone application could be approved, public hearings would be conducted by both the Planning Board and the City Council. He emphasized that even if the Planning Board and City Council elected to create the two new zones, none of the existing zoning along Edmonds Way would be changed unless a rezone application were submitted and approved by the City Council.

Mr. Chave explained that, as the Board reviews the proposal to create two new zones, they must consider whether or not they would implement the Comprehensive Plan goals as well or better than the zones that are currently available. Secondly, the Board should consider the details of the proposed zones. Because the proposal is a legislative action, the Board has the ability to modify the proposal and adopt something that is different.

Mr. Chave advised that staff is supportive of having two new zones available for the Edmonds Way Corridor, since there are a variety of circumstances present on the properties. He explained that one of the reasons for having the additional zones is to address the significant topographical changes that occur on some parcels. Given the topography on some sites, it is possible the traditional 25 plus 5 height requirement and other zoning regulations for the Edmonds Way Corridor might not be the best choice. Staff generally believes there are opportunities, particularly on properties closer to the Westgate area, where development could very easily be buffered from the residential properties behind. The proposed new zones would require more buffering than what would otherwise occur with the existing zones.

Mr. Chave announced that, although not required, notice of the hearing was sent to property owners within 300 feet of the original rezone request and to everyone who testified previously regarding the application. Since the applicant would likely pursue a rezone at some point in time, staff felt it was important to make sure interested citizens were notified about the process. He concluded that the notification requirements were exceeded for a legislative code amendment.

Tony Shapiro, applicant, said the primary reason for proposing the new zones was to address the geographical constraints on the properties along the Edmonds Way Corridor. The applicants believe the proposed zoning criteria would lend itself to this part of the City. They also feel that the growth in the overall metropolitan area of Seattle is putting pressure on housing prices and property taxes are going up. There is an opportunity for additional, more modest housing options in Edmonds, particularly along the Edmonds Way Corridor. The proposed new zones would also dovetail with the neighborhood business district planning efforts the City has done in the Five Corners and Firdale Village areas. He suggested that this part of Edmonds is conducive to multi-family residential development because there is more separation between the residential properties.

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Mr. Shapiro briefly described how the proposed EW-RM zone language would meet the Comprehensive Plan goals for the Edmonds Way Corridor as follows:

- **Permit uses in planned multiple family or small scale business developments that are designed to minimize contributing significantly to traffic congestion.** Mr. Shapiro explained that the developments would focus on Edmonds Way to utilize the 20,000 cars that travel down the busy corridor on a daily basis. He noted that the infrastructure is already available to provide adequate access to the properties along the corridor.
- **Provide for transit and pedestrian access to development.** Mr. Shapiro said the proposed new zone language would address the objective of pedestrian friendly development. It would also be open to the concept of transit-oriented densities.
- **Use design review to encourage the shared or joint use of driveways and access points by development onto SR-104 in order to support the movement of traffic in a safe and efficient manner. Site access should not be provided from residential streets unless there is no available alternative.** Accessing the properties from Edmonds Way would be consistent with this objective. It would also allow density to increase where the infrastructure is available to support it.
- **Use design review to ensure that development provides a transition to adjacent residential neighborhoods. For uses in transitional areas adjacent to single-family neighborhoods, use design techniques such as the modulation of facades, pitched roofs, stepped-down building heights, multiple buildings, and landscaping to provide designs compatible with single-family development. Make use of natural topography to buffer incompatible development whenever possible.** Mr. Shapiro pointed out that because of the geographical changes on Edmonds Way, the properties lend themselves to natural separation between adjacent single-family residential uses and provide a significant grade separation.

Next, Mr. Shapiro reviewed how the proposed EW-BC zone language would meet the Comprehensive Plan goals for the Edmonds Way Corridor as follows:

- **Permit uses in planned multiple family or small scale business developments that are designed to minimize contributing significantly to traffic congestion.** Mr. Shapiro noted that the proposed zone language would enable a property owner to increase densities or raise the height of buildings if low-impact development concepts are utilized. He noted that Edmonds Way lends itself to these environmentally friendly concepts because of its natural drainage. In addition, much of Edmonds Way is comprised of soil that makes percolation into the ground water easy to achieve.
- **Provide for transit and pedestrian access to development.** Mr. Shapiro pointed out that incorporating pedestrian friendly activities such as mixed-use buildings would encourage pedestrian activities on Edmonds Way.
- **Use design review to encourage the shared or joint use of driveways and access points by development onto SR-104 in order to support the movement of traffic in a safe and efficient manner. Site access should not be provided from residential streets unless there is no available alternative.** Mr. Shapiro pointed out that the proposed zone language would require that the housing of a mixed-use development be separated from the traffic. In addition, the proposed zone language would encourage the housing component of a mixed-use development to be raised above Edmonds Way by setting a garage below the building.
- **Use design review to ensure that development provides a transition to adjacent residential neighborhoods. For uses in transitional areas adjacent to single-family neighborhoods, use design techniques such as the modulation of facades, pitched roofs, stepped-down building heights, multiple buildings, and landscaping to provide designs compatible with single-family development. Make use of natural topography to buffer incompatible development whenever possible.** Mr. Shapiro advised that the proposed language also encourages separation to help address privacy issues for the single-family residential properties above.

Mr. Shapiro provided a map to indicate the location of the Edmonds Way Corridor. He also provided photographs to emphasize the grade changes, particularly in the Westgate area where the road goes through a fairly deep valley. He noted there are significantly larger buildings on Edmonds Way, and some existing housing, as well. He said the applicants believe the proposed zone language would encourage a more tasteful solution than the type of townhouse development that has occurred along the corridor in the past. He emphasized that Edmonds Way is a unique area that warrants consideration of different zoning criteria beyond what is currently available within the City.

Mr. Shapiro explained that the proposed new EW-BC zone would increase the standard height limit from 25 feet to 35 feet and add two new height bonuses. An applicant may be allowed to increase the height of a building by 5 feet if all portions of the building within the 5 foot bonus integrate distinctive architectural features such as articulation, changes of materials, offsets, angles or curves in the façade, or distinctive roof types. Also an applicant may be allowed to increase the height of a building by 5 feet if:

- a. The first two stories of the building are set back an additional 4 feet from any abutting streets to enable additional landscaping and the third and fourth stories are setback an additional six feet to reduce the mass of the building,
- b. The sides of the building facing residentially zoned and developed properties are modulated,
- c. The proposed development integrates low-impact development techniques as site conditions allow,
- d. The setback area between the proposed development and any abutting residentially zoned and developed properties is significantly landscaped, and
- e. The wall of the building on Edmonds Way does not exceed 45 feet in height.

Mr. Shapiro advised that the proposed new EW-RM zone would allow an applicant to increase the height of a building by 5 feet if all portions of the roof within the 5-foot bonus provide a minimum 15% slope or pitch. An application would also be allowed to increase the height of a building by 5 feet if:

- a. At least 50 percent of the parking for the building is enclosed in a building.
- b. There is at least a 5-foot elevation change between the subject property and abutting residentially zoned properties, and
- c. The proposed development integrates low-impact development techniques as site conditions allow.

In addition, Mr. Shapiro pointed out that the proposed EW-RM zone would add a tree retention or replacement requirement for existing significant trees located within the side or rear setbacks. It would also add a provision allowing the use of a greater percentage of the front yard setback along Edmonds Way for porches, steps, patios and decks.

Mr. Shapiro said the Staff Report raises questions about the applicant's intent with regard to building height adjacent to single-family residential zones. To address this concern, he proposed the following modifications:

- Modify the proposed EW-RM language by adding an additional footnote to the table in ECDC 16.30.030 to read as follows: "The height bonuses provided in Footnotes 6 and 7 are subject to the following limitation: Where the proposed building immediately abuts a single-family residential zone, such building shall not exceed a height of 25 feet as measured at the high point of the adjoining property line. Where the subject EW-RM property is improved with more than one building, this restriction shall apply only to that building or those buildings that directly abut the single-family residential zone and shall not apply to other buildings on the property that are separated from the single-family residential zones by another building or buildings."
- Modify the proposed EW-BC language by adding a new footnote in Section 16.50.020 to read: "The height bonuses provided in Footnotes 3 and 4 are subject to the following limitations: Where the proposed building immediately abuts a single-family residential zone, the exterior wall(s) of such building that face(s) the single-family residential zone shall not exceed a height of 25 feet as measured at the high point of the adjoining property line; provided that the roof of such building may slope upwards at an angle up to 45 degrees from such exterior wall up to the maximum height authorized by this section, including any bonuses."

In addition, Mr. Shapiro said the Staff Report request further clarification and commitment to using distinctive architectural features in order to qualify for an additional height bonus in the EW-BC zone. To address staff's recommendation, he suggested that Footnote 4 in the table in ECDC 16.50.020 be modified to read as follows: "In addition to any height bonus

under Note 3, the building may extend up to an additional five feet if all portions of the building above the height limit (after adding the height bonus under Note 3), integrate distinctive architectural features. For purposes of this section, a project shall be found to integrate distinctive architectural features if it includes use of at least three of the following five features: articulation, changes of materials, offsets, angels or curves of facades, or by the use of distinctive roof forms.”

Mr. Shapiro summarized that the proposed new zone language complies with the goals of the Comprehensive Plan for the Edmonds Way Corridor.

Board Member Guenther said he would be in favor of using low-impact development techniques as a trade off for additional height in the proposed new zones. However, low-impact techniques have not been defined anywhere in the City’s current code. Mr. Shapiro said the proposed language talks about a number of different low-impact development techniques, and one of the most significant would be drainage and the ability to use pervious pavement. However, he agreed there are no definitive techniques called out in the proposed language. Board Member Guenther cautioned that it would be important to indicate exactly what low-impact development techniques must be used in order to obtain the extra height.

Board Member Guenther explained that LEEDS is a nationally recognized program that stipulates what environmental criteria must be achieved for a development to be classified at a particular level of environmentally sustainable design. Mr. Shapiro agreed that the proposed language does not specifically address the exact criteria that must be incorporated into a design in order to be recognized as a low-impact development. Mr. Guenther stated that the United States Green Building Council has adopted the LEEDS standard and there are other programs that utilize this same concept. Right now, the programs are voluntary, but the State of Washington requires that their buildings must follow the LEEDS requirements.

Board Member Reed asked if the proposed new zones could be applied all along the corridor between 100th Avenue West and Highway 99. Mr. Shapiro provided a map showing the Edmonds Way portion of the Comprehensive Plan and advised that the new zone could be applied not quite as far as 100th Avenue West, but would extend all the way to Highway 99.

Mike Nicefaro referred the Board to a letter he submitted just prior to their meeting, which describes some of his concerns. He recalled that about a month ago, the applicants presented a proposed “spot zone” for the areas abutting the intersection of 232nd and Edmonds Way. They initially asked that the Board allow a 35-foot maximum height limit for the multi-family residential zone as opposed to the current height limit of 30 feet. They also proposed a 45-foot maximum height limit in the proposed mixed-use zone as opposed to the current height limit of 25 feet. Tonight’s proposal is basically the same, but rather than “spot zoning” the property, the applicants want to allow this type of zoning and development to occur on the entire corridor. He said he lives about 1,000 feet from the applicant’s property, but his concerns relative to development would apply to all of the adjacent property owners situated along the corridor.

Mr. Nicefaro expressed his belief that the proposal would be inconsistent with the Comprehensive Plan and zoning ordinance, which requires the City to protect the character and social and economic stability of residential, commercial, industrial and other uses in the City, to assure the steady and beneficial development of services by retaining appropriate areas for each type of use, and to prevent encroachment by incompatible uses. He pointed out that the proposal would contravene all of these objectives. He referred to the diagram on Page 10 of the Staff Report. He explained that Edmonds Way, at the location of 232nd Street, is about 20 feet below the grade of what he calls the residential bench where he and his neighbors’ homes are located. Under the current zoning, a commercial community business use would be allowed. With the 20-foot elevation difference, the peak of the roof would be visible to about five feet over the level of the adjoining bench. However, a 45-foot high building would intrude into the bench area by 25 feet and result in residences looking into and being looked into by the abutting improvement. This would substantially change the character of their properties and have an impact on the people using Edmonds Way.

Mr. Nicefaro pointed out that it is common to construct skyscraper buildings in Seattle to increase density, and now the applicants are asking to build small skyscrapers on Edmonds Way to increase density. He said he is all in favor of allowing developers a reasonable use of their investment, but the Comprehensive Plan and City Code requires the City to consider compatibility of all uses when reviewing zoning changes.

Mr. Nicefaro recalled that the applicants previously indicated their plans to leave some trees to buffer their proposed development. However, one only has to look at the I-5 Corridor and the concrete and wood sound walls to appreciate the fact that vegetation and trees do not buffer sound. He emphasized that he is not in favor of a 45-foot building and solid sound barriers along Edmonds Way, but the Board should realize that the existing vegetation would not provide an adequate sound buffer. In fact, the vegetation would not even address the visual impacts associated with a new 45-foot building.

Mr. Nicefaro suggested that the existing infrastructure would also be significantly impacted by the proposed change. He explained that 232nd Street has rolling hills, and residents must be very careful about oncoming traffic because cars can be hidden in the rolling hills. In conversations with the neighbors, the applicants indicated their traffic engineer's estimate that the proposed development would increase traffic on 232nd Street by 25%. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that development on Edmonds Way, with this greater density, would result in similar burdens to residential streets in other locations. There are no sidewalks and streetlights on 232nd Street right now, and a 25% increase in traffic would place an undue risk on the existing neighborhood. He concluded that the infrastructure is not in place to support the proposed change. He asked the Board to carefully review the letter he submitted and listen to his neighbors' concerns, as well.

Scott Hopper expressed his belief that the City of Edmonds is going to experience a population increase, and Edmonds Way is a good place for this type of proposal. He said he and his wife are in support of the proposed application.

Gary Gibson said he moved to Edmonds 15 years ago because he and his wife were very impressed with the City's character, especially as they came into town on Edmonds Way. It was apparent that the City had gone to a lot of trouble to create a quaint character. He said he is opposed to any additional zones that would allow more density. Additional building height would detract from the character of Edmonds Way and ruin its potential. The proposal would result in increased traffic on neighborhood streets.

Mr. Gibson referred to the goals outlined in the Comprehensive Plan for the Edmonds Way Corridor, which clearly indicate that any growth or development should strive to preserve for itself and the neighbors views, open space, etc. He said he is at a loss to understand how the proposed change would protect the residential neighbors who purchased their homes thinking the existing zoning requirements would protect their view and quality of life. Additional building height would threaten the privacy the residential property owners currently enjoy. And a height limit of greater than 30 feet would impact the existing views.

Mr. Gibson said another goal of the Comprehensive Plan is to minimize traffic congestion and avoid the overloading of density. In the Staff Report, staff indicates a concern that the more intensive development that occurs along the corridor should not interfere with the flow of through traffic or intrude into adjoining established communities. Yet another Comprehensive Plan goal is to permit uses in planned multiple-family or small-scale business developments that are designed to minimize contributing significantly to traffic congestion. He reviewed that, at a neighborhood meeting, the applicants' traffic engineer indicated the capacity is available for the one development, but it should be recognized that the proposed zone could be applied anywhere on Edmonds Way. The estimated 25% increase of traffic on 232nd Street doesn't take into account the new subdivision that is currently being constructed. Neither does it consider the changes that were approved for Firdale Village nor the possible change in use of the Old Edmonds High School. He emphasized that 232nd Street is currently the only cut through street between Edmonds Way and Firdale Village.

Mr. Gibson referred to the analysis provided in the Staff Report, which states that by allowing the added height, the applicant does appear to be trying to increase density in the EW-BC zone, and this could be expected to increase the number of trips generated compared to the standard BC zone. Mr. Gibson expressed his opinion that the last thing the City needs is to allow a new zone that is even denser than what is already allowed in the Comprehensive Plan. The residential property owners would like to see measured, responsible, incremental development on Edmonds Way. Based on the staff's statement that the density and traffic impacts would be significantly increased on the applicant's property alone, the new zone language should be denied. He said he counted over 18 parcels of property on Edmonds Way between 232nd Street and Highway 99. Because so many of these properties could be converted, it is vital that the density of individual developments be considered.

Al Rutledge said he drives along this area of Edmonds Way almost everyday. He reminded the Board that the City just recently limited the height of buildings in the downtown to 25 feet. Now it appears they are picking one area in the City to

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allow additional building height. He suggested they come up with other areas in the City to increase the height limit, as well. He said he supports the proposed language that would allow greater density along the corridor, since this would result in more revenue for the City.

Tony Shapiro reminded the Board that the application is not site-specific, so bringing up specific streets or properties would be inappropriate. While the proposed language would allow a building to be constructed 25 feet above the adjacent grade, it should be noted that 25 feet is the height of an average home in the existing single-family residential zone. Therefore, the impact of a 4-story building on Edmonds Way adjacent to a house would be no difference than a single-family residential property on the top of the slope.

Mr. Shapiro also pointed out that the acoustical separation between Edmonds Way and the single-family residential neighborhoods would be enhanced by buildings on Edmonds Way. He said he is not certain where the neighbors heard there would be a 25% increase in traffic. The applicants would get more specific about the traffic impacts when and if a rezone application is submitted. The applicants propose that environmental issues be left up to the staff and Architectural Design Board to implement and incorporate sustainable design. He noted that each site along Edmonds Way is different and unique.

Mike Nicefaro said his concerns related to noise were not about the traffic on Edmonds Way, but about the noise created by the proposed buildings. Development would not buffer this noise, and in fact, it would create an additional acoustical impact. He recalled that all but one of the Board Members were present when Mr. Shapiro told them that the peak of his proposed building at the corner of 232nd Street and Edmonds Way would be equal to the elevation of the utility pole that is located near the boundary of the property at the top of the hill. He noted that this utility pole dwarfs even the 2-story homes on the bench. Mr. Nicefaro agreed that the single-family residential properties abut each other, but Mr. Shapiro is proposing multi-family residential development that would look directly onto the single-family properties, and this should not be allowed.

THE PUBLIC PORTION OF THE HEARING WAS CLOSED.

THE BOARD TOOK A BREAK AT 8:45 P.M. THEY RECONVENED THE MEETING AT 8:55 P.M.

Chair Freeman reminded the Board that the proposal is for the creation of a new zone and is not site specific. Board Member Henderson said he likes the idea of giving a little height bonus in exchange for developers constructing much of the parking within the building. He said he also likes the concept of allowing a building to be 25 feet higher than the single-family residential zone. However, he said he is not convinced that two new zones need to be created for Edmonds Way. Most of the geographical features are on Edmonds Way, and these properties would be allowed a greater height limit under the existing zoning just by averaging the four corners.

Chair Freeman asked Mr. Chave to advise the Board about the purpose of the two new zones. Mr. Chave said that, in most cities, the more intense development tends to be located along corridors such as Edmonds Way and Highway 99. In these corridors, the general rule should be to have a variety of zones that could be applied. He noted that in some locations along the Edmonds Way Corridor there are small differences in topography and in other areas the topographical changes are more dramatic. Where the topographical change is significant, it could be possible to allow additional height so long as it does not march up the hillside into the single-family residential neighborhoods. The proposed language would allow a developer to construct a building between the slope and Edmonds Way if it could be buffered adequately. Staff's interest was trying to see if there was a way to configure the zones to focus the additional density along Edmonds Way in exchange for additional buffering that would not otherwise occur between the single-family residential and commercial and multi-family developments.

Mr. Chave said staff does not believe it is entirely clear that what the applicants want to accomplish is born out in the proposed zone language. He referred to Page 10 of the Staff Report and said it is staff's understanding that the applicants intend to do something in the multi-family zone along the lines of Diagram A. The 35-foot portion of the building would be against Edmonds Way, but the development should not be 35 feet as measured from the after grade near the slope. He noted that the diagram does not show the additional landscape requirement, either. The current multi-family residential zone would allow a height up to 35 feet with a pitched roof, and there would be no provision to make sure trees were preserved. The

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proposed multi-family residential zone would increase the height limit by 5 feet, but in exchange it would limit how high a building could go up the slope and require the retention of trees to provide more protection for the neighborhood.

Mr. Chave reviewed that the proposed mixed-use zone would have a substantially greater height limit, and he is less clear that Diagram A is what would be applied in this zone. The properties along Edmonds Way are currently zoned BC, which has a height limit of 25 plus 5 feet. If a developer were to push the buildings back towards the slope, the current BC zone would probably allow additional height because of the way height is calculated in the City. The question is whether the proposal to add height in 5-foot increments in exchange for various things would be enough to justify the new zone. He encouraged the Board to carefully review the additional height proposed for the new mixed-use zone and what would be offered in exchange and then decide if this concept is something that would be appropriate for the Edmonds Way Corridor.

Board Member Young agreed with Board Member Henderson that he does not see why the City needs two new zones. He cautioned that the Board could end up in a situation of having a private proponent come before the Board asking for a new zone to be created for just one piece of property. The existing zones were part of the Comprehensive Plan review, and if a new zone is going to be created, it should have city-wide application. While he understands that developing the properties on Edmonds Way can be difficult, the same is true for many other properties in the City. Because the Board does not have any policy direction nor any bench marks to measure the proposal against, he would be opposed to considering the proposed new zoning language at this time. In his mind, it is not clear that the proposed new zones would be better than the zones that already exist. He summarized that there must be some direction in the Comprehensive Plan to guide the Board's decision.

Board Member Reed agreed with Board Member Henderson that there is really no need to create the new zones. While the proposed new EW-RM zone would only increase the height limit by 5 feet, the height increase would be substantially greater in the proposed new EW-BC zone, and he doesn't see a need for this significant change. Board Member Reed also expressed concern about parking in the proposed new zones. Mr. Chave explained that the City's current parking regulations would require the applicant to provide sufficient parking depending on the type of use proposed for a site. .

Board Member Guenther said he was excited about several aspects of the proposal, particularly the bonus to give additional height and how it could be achieved. However, there are still some things that need to be worked out in that regard. He said he also likes the concept of trying to save trees, but he agreed with Board Member Young that they don't have any guidance in the Code for creating new zones. He said he would have a hard time supporting the proposal because it seems there should be a different mechanism, such as a master plan, for developing these properties.

Chair Freeman said she found the proposed new zones interesting and could see benefits not only within the confines of the Edmonds Way Corridor, but for the residential benches, as well. The proposed zones would allow for innovative development that would protect the people living on the residential benches and address the unique situations that exist along the corridor. She noted that Edmonds Way is already a busy and noisy corridor, and innovative multi-family residential development in this location could provide much needed affordable housing for the City. She explained that if and when the applicants submit a site-specific rezone application to the City, the issue would come before the Board for a public hearing and recommendation. Because there are steep slopes on some properties along the corridor, she expressed her belief that it would be appropriate to allow development at the back of the properties to a maximum height that would not intrude on the residential homes. The view from residential areas would be protected, as well. Again, she emphasized that the City needs innovative housing, and she favors the staff recommendation to generally approve the proposed language. However, she emphasized that more work would be needed to iron out all of the details.

Mr. Chave pointed out that, although the City Council has not specifically said they want to create new zones throughout the City, they did create specific zones for the downtown area that are different from other zones in the City. The City Council also indicated they wanted to develop different zones to apply to specific neighborhood business areas like Firdale Village and Five Corners. At this time, the Board the Board is being asked to consider if Edmonds Way is ready to have its own zone to recognize the unique characteristics.

Board Member Henderson agreed there is some merit in having specific regulations in areas where there is high slope change. But rather than creating a new zone, it would be better to alter the existing zoning language to provide for these characteristics. For example, specific regulations could allow additional height in exchange for certain things. Board

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Member Young agreed. He reminded the Board that the Comprehensive Plan review process included totally objective consideration of all of the rules regarding the zones that have already been created. Again, he said he does not have any basis for approving the language because he has nothing to measure it against.

Board Member Guenther recalled Mr. Chave's earlier explanation that the City has created specific zones for certain areas in the City, such as the downtown. Board Member Young clarified that the downtown zones were created as part of the Comprehensive Plan review. After significant public input, the Board recommended that the downtown area should be treated differently. He expressed his belief that it is not the City's responsibility to create new zones to meet the needs of individual property owners. Instead, the property owners must follow the requirements of the existing zones. Chair Freeman disagreed. She expressed her belief that the Board is responsible for helping people find ways to develop their properties.

BOARD MEMBER YOUNG MOVED THAT THE BOARD RECOMMEND THE CITY COUNCIL DENY FILE NUMBER AMD-06-2 BECAUSE THERE ARE IS NO CRITERIA OR PROCESS BY WHICH TO REVIEW AND APPROVE THE NEW ZONES.

Mr. Chave explained that the City does have a process for creating new zones, so the Board must address whether or not the zone is consistent with or would implement the Comprehensive Plan goals. He further explained that all zoning in the City is intended to implement the Comprehensive Plan. Whether the Board is dealing with existing zoning or considering a new zone, they must consider whether the proposal does or does not implement the Comprehensive Plan better than the existing zoning would.

BOARD MEMBER YOUNG WITHDREW HIS MOTION.

BOARD MEMBER YOUNG MOVED THAT BOARD FORWARD A RECOMMENDATION TO THE CITY COUNCIL THAT FILE NUMBER AMD-06-2 BE DENIED BECAUSE THE PROPOSED NEW ZONES WOULD NOT IMPLEMENT THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN PROVISIONS FOR THE EDMONDS WAY CORRIDOR ANY MORE EFFECTIVELY OR ANY BETTER THAN THE EXISTING ZONING. BOARD MEMBER HENDERSON SECONDED THE MOTION.

Again, Board Member Henderson expressed his belief that it would be better to add provision in the existing BC and RM zones to allow the developer to address topographical issues on properties in Edmonds. These specific provisions could be applied to give something to benefit the developer in exchange for additional buffer for the adjacent single-family residential properties. He said he would support the motion to deny the proposal.

Board Member Guenther said that after hearing Mr. Chave's comments about the new zones that have been created in the City recently, it is clear that the City Council has not given any indication that this would be inappropriate. He said he would support the concept of creating two new zones because they appear to be consistent with the goals of the Comprehensive Plan for the Edmonds Way Corridor. He said he would vote against the motion to deny the proposal.

Board Member Reed referred to Page 11 of the Staff Report, which describes how the proposal would or would not be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. The Staff Report points out staff's concern that the more intensive development that occurs along the corridor should not interfere with the flow of through traffic or intrude into adjoining established communities. He said he heard testimony that the proposed new zones could have an impact on traffic all along the corridor. He noted that one Comprehensive Plan goal for the Edmonds Way Corridor is to permit uses in planned multiple family or small-scale business developments that are designed to minimize contributing significantly to traffic congestion. He said he is concerned about traffic impacts, as well.

Board Member Reed agreed with Board Member Henderson that what is trying to be accomplished by creating the new zones could also be accomplished in other ways. There are other tools in the City procedures that would possibly allow the City to accomplish the same concepts outlined in the proposal. He summarized that he does not like the idea of creating new zones, and he would vote in favor of the motion to deny.

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Chair Freeman said she would not vote in favor of the motion to deny the proposal. She agreed with the staff recommendation that they approve the creation of two new zones, but she admitted there are many things that need to be ironed out still.

THE MOTION CARRIED 3-2, WITH BOARD MEMBERS HENDERSON, REED, AND YOUNG VOTING IN FAVOR AND CHAIR FREEMAN AND BOARD MEMBER GUENTHER VOTING IN OPPOSITION.

Mr. Chave advised that this item would go before the City Council for a public hearing sometime in January. Everyone who signed up on the list at the door would be sent a notice.

PUBLIC HEARING ON CODE UPDATES REQUIRED TO INTEGRATE DESIGN GUIDELINES AND REVISED DESIGN REVIEW PROCESS INTO THE DEVELOPMENT CODE

Mr. Chave referred the Board to the current draft of the revised design review process and the draft design guidelines. He specifically noted the flow chart, which summarizes and compares the proposed “new” or “Up-Front” design review process with the current one employed by the City. Under the proposal, there would be two options for design review: general design review subject to the provisions of Chapter 20.11 and district-based design review subject to the provisions of Chapter 20.12. He explained that “general design review” would essentially be design review as it has been done for many years now. The “district-based design review” is a new process that would be applied to more and more areas of the City, eventually entirely replacing the current system as more specific design standards are incorporated into the City’s codes and neighborhood-based plans. He summarized that District-based design review would push the Architectural Design Board review of a project to earlier in the design stage before designs are more final in nature. It would be applicable when an area or district has adopted design guidelines or design standards that apply specifically within the area or district. General design review would apply to areas or properties that do not have specifically adopted design guidelines or standards.

Board Member Reed noted that with the existing general design review process, public hearings do not occur at the beginning of the process. Mr. Chave explained that public hearings are required under the existing code for any project that exceeds the SEPA threshold. In order to gain ADB approval under the current review process, an applicant must provide a tremendous amount of design details. Therefore, the public hearing is not conducted until closer to the end of the design process when applicants are typically well along in their design phase. The new process in Chapter 20.12 would place the ADB review before the detailed designs are done. This would allow applicants to talk to the ADB about general issues such as massing before they get too far into the design process.

Mr. Chave further explained that the new process outlined in Chapter 20.12 would include preliminary review of simple drawings. The second review would be done when more of the conceptual drawings were available. Board Member Guenther said that, using the new process, a developer would likely come to the ADB with a schematic design to address issues such as massing, access, etc. Mr. Chave added that the applicant could even present multiple options at the preliminary review.

Mr. Chave referred the Board to the design guidelines that were created by the Architectural Design Board. He explained that although the document has been ready for Board review and a public hearing since March of 2006, staff has been waiting for direction from the City Council about what the new design review process should be.

Al Rutledge said he supports the proposed design review process and the proposed design guidelines. However, he cautioned that the Board should be careful about allowing the City staff to make too many of the decisions without holding public hearings.

Rick Utt, Chairman Pro Tem of the Architectural Design Board, referred to the flow chart provided in the Staff Report to illustrate the current and proposed new design review processes. He explained that the new design review process would require applicants to present their plans to the staff and ADB for review early in the design phase when the plans are preliminary. With the current design review process, applicants are typically very far along in the design phase before projects are ever presented to the ADB for review. Oftentimes, they have already hired architects, engineers, landscape

architects, etc. and have invested a significant amount of time and money. There is always a significant risk that the Board will not approve the project as presented. As an architect, he said he supports the proposed new design review process, which would be much more efficient.

Mr. Utt reviewed that with the proposed new design review process, an applicant would present conceptual drawings to the ADB for review to identify the building concept and establish the setbacks, bulk, etc. The ADB would conduct a public hearing at which the public would be invited to express their concerns. The ADB would consider these concerns and review the checklist to identify any issues and priorities that must be addressed by the applicant before a final design would be approved by the City. The applicant would be responsible for making the necessary changes to address the issues raised at the first hearing. Another public hearing would be conducted on the more detailed design proposal, and the public would have one more opportunity to provide input. The SEPA Review could then be conducted and the applicants could bring on board their engineers, architects, etc. to complete the final design elements that are required for a building permit. Again, he expressed his belief that the proposed new design review process would be much more efficient.

Mr. Utt said he would like a checklist to be added to either the proposed code language or to the design guidelines to standardize the list of materials an applicant must submit for preliminary and final design review. At this time, there is a considerable amount of inconsistency in what is presented to the ADB because there is no criterion to identify what the ADB expects to see with each application. Mr. Chave referred to Chapter 20.11 which states that staff would develop a list of uniform submission requirements. He explained that the City Attorney has said he would prefer this list be included in the code, but the list has not been developed at this point in time.

Mr. Utt referred to ECDC 20.13.020.E, which would require irrigation for all ADB-approved landscaped areas for all projects that have more than 4 dwelling units, 4,000 square feet of building area, or more than 20 parking spaces. He proposed that this section be changed to state that irrigation would be required for all ADB-approved landscaped areas for all projects that exceed the SEPA threshold requirement. The Board concurred with this recommendation.

Mr. Utt referred to Page 7 of the design guidelines and noted that a section called "Treating Blank Walls" is referenced twice. However, there is no section in the proposed design guidelines called "Treating Blank Walls." He also referred to Item D-2 on Page 17 of the design guidelines which references Pages 8 and 9 for guidelines for blank walls. He suggested that these two sections be changed to clearly indicate where information regarding "Treating Blank Walls" could be found in the document.

Next, Mr. Utt referred to ECDC 20.11.030.A.4 which states that long, massive, unbroken or monotonous buildings shall be avoided. In addition, he noted that the design guidelines speak about monotonous or blank walls, etc. However, nothing specific was provided in either the code language or the design guidelines to indicate what would constitute a long, massive, monotonous building. There is nothing to indicate what the setback requirement should be in order to break up blank walls, either. He suggested that a minimum setback requirement should be identified in either the code or the design guidelines. In addition, criteria to establish what is considered massive or monotonous should also be provided.

Board Member Young recalled that he participated on the ADB for six or seven years. During that time, there were no exact numbers to identify what is massive. He suggested that Mr. Utt is looking for a very prescriptive formula that would eliminate the need for an ADB review. Mr. Utt agreed that the code and design guidelines must allow some flexibility, but there must also be some guidance for applying the standards. Board Member Young suggested that Mr. Utt provide some recommended language for the Board to consider. Mr. Utt suggested that verbiage and additional illustrations would be helpful to address the issue.

Mr. Chave reminded the Board that the City Council is anxiously awaiting a recommendation from them regarding the design guidelines and the design review process. He suggested the Board could give staff some guidance to tweak the language and then forward it to the City Council for a public hearing. Another option would be to hold off on their recommendation until the Board has had an opportunity to review the updated documents.

To address the issue of long, monotonous buildings, Mr. Chave suggested the Board could review the original draft design guidelines that were created in 2001 to see if exact numbers were provided for setbacks, etc. Board Member Guenther

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referred to the August 2001 draft of the design guidelines, which actually addressed the issue of massing by dividing projects into two different categories, large projects and small projects.

Board Member Reed pointed out that the code language places quite an emphasis on the using the term “shall” instead of “should.” However, the design guidelines use more “shoulds” than “shalls.” He said he suspects this was done because it is important to provide as much flexibility as possible in the design guidelines. Mr. Utt agreed and explained that the ADB reviewed the document and very specifically considered all of the “shalls” and “shoulds.” Where the term “shall” is used, the ADB felt it was important enough to make the provision a definite requirement.

Tony Shapiro said he welcomes the notion of design review taking place earlier in the process. This would be a more conducive and cost effective way of evaluation and getting City input. Placing ADB review at the end of the sequence consumes a lot of extra time on the part of the applicant. He concluded that he supports the proposed new design review process.

THE PUBLIC PORTION OF THE HEARING WAS CLOSED.

Board Member Young left the meeting at 10:10 p.m.

The Board directed staff to make the changes that were discussed and bring the document back to the Board for final review and action at the January 10, 2007 meeting. Mr. Chave indicated that he would attempt to get the updated draft documents to each Board member in early January. He asked that Board Members provide their final comments to staff as soon as possible so that changes could be made to the documents before the January 10th meeting.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

The Board agreed to defer the election of officers until the first meeting in January.

REVIEW OF EXTENDED AGENDA

Chair Freeman advised that final review of the draft design guidelines and design review process documents was scheduled for January 10, 2007. The January 10th meeting agenda would also include an update on the Shoreline Master Program Project, a review and discussion on the process to develop neighborhood business district zoning to implement neighborhood plans, and a review of the non-conforming regulations. The Board would also elect new officers on January 10th.

Board Member Reed asked that staff provide a schedule to outline their plans for reviewing the Edmonds Community Development Code in 2007. Mr. Chave indicated he would ask Mr. Bowman to provide this information to the Board. Board Member Reed asked if it would be appropriate for Board Members to request feedback from City Council Members regarding their position on code rewrite items. Mr. Chave indicated that when Mr. Bowman presents the non-conforming regulations to the Board, he would also provide information regarding the City Council’s direction on the matter. However, because the code rewrite is a legislative item, Board Members could solicit comments from City Council Members.

PLANNING BOARD CHAIR COMMENTS

Chair Freeman referred the Board to an article that was published in the *American Planning Association Magazine* in December 2006. The article was written by Mark Hinshaw and titled “*Re-Forming Regulations: What It Takes to Encourage Downtown Housing.*” In the article, Mr. Hinshaw made reference to his work with the City of Edmonds when he stated, “*Nothing agitates neighborhood groups more than the prospect of a “tall” building in their vicinity. But height is relative. I once worked with a community where a controversy raged over whether to allow downtown building height to be increased from 30 feet to 33 feet—a difference of **three** feet! Many vocal citizens feared that the increased height would allow “high rises.” Entire public meetings were devoted to this issue. That city is still locked in verbal warfare today.*”

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In response to this article, Chair Freeman prepared and read the following statement into the record:

“It’s no joke to have our town held up to ridicule in a national planning magazine. The Planning Board did its best. We all know that. But we’re an advisory board. We have every reason to be proud of the advice we’ve given Council.

But remember, there’s always tomorrow.

Edmonds has several new projects in the works. As outgoing chair of this Board, my wish for the New Year is that one day in the not-too-distant future we will see articles in the planning magazines featuring well-conceived, forward-thinking, financially feasible, and eminently livable developments here in our beloved Edmonds.

I, for one, am fed up with having Edmonds the butt of jokes of the planning community.”

PLANNING BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Board Member Guenther referred to the memorandum from staff regarding the issue of shared driveways. Mr. Chave explained the information was provided to inform the Board of staff’s recent code interpretation.

Board Member Reed said he is excited to be a member of the Planning Board. It is a good opportunity for him and would certainly broaden his horizons in areas to understand. He said he looks forward to working with each of the Board Members over the next few years.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10:35 p.m.

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