

APPROVED NOVEMBER 4TH

**CITY OF EDMONDS
PLANNING BOARD MINUTES**

October 14, 2009

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

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

Michael Bowman, Chair
Cary Guenther
Jim Young
Judith Works
Valerie Stewart

STAFF PRESENT

Rob Chave, Planning Division Manager
Gina Coccia, Planner
Stephen Clifton, Community Services/Economic Development Director
Noel Miller, Public Works Director
Jerry Shuster, Stormwater Manager
Brian McIntosh, Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Director
Rob English, City Engineer
Karin Noyes, Recorder

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT

John Reed (excused)
Philip Lovell (excused)
Kevin Clarke (excused)

READING/APPROVAL OF MINUTES

BOARD MEMBER GUENTHER MOVED THAT THE MINUTES OF SEPTEMBER 23, 2009 BE APPROVED AS PRESENTED. BOARD MEMBER WORKS SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF AGENDA

No changes were made to the agenda.

AUDIENCE COMMENTS

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

PUBLIC HEARING ON REZONE (FILE #PLN20090019) TO CHANGE THE ZONING DESIGNATION FROM MULTIPLE RESIDENTIAL (RM-2.4) TO SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL (RS-8) ALONG A PORTION OF 215TH STREET SOUTHWEST. ALL PROPERTIES WERE SUBJECT TO A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENT THAT WAS APPROVED LAST YEAR (FILE #AMD20070014)

Ms. Coccia advised that the proposed rezone is for 19 lots along 215th Street Southwest lying east of 76th Avenue West between Highway 99 and 76th Avenue West. The parcels were the subject of a Comprehensive Plan Map amendment in 2008, when the land use designation was changed from Mixed-Use Commercial to Single-Family Urban 1. The proposed rezone was initiated by the City Council. She reminded the Board that after the public hearing, they will be asked to forward a recommendation to the City Council about whether or not the proposed rezone is appropriate. The City Council would make the final decision.

Ms. Coccia pointed out that each property is roughly .25 acres and the area as a whole is approximately 4.5 acres. Each lot is developed with one single-family home constructed in the 1950's and 1960's. The properties are located within the RM-2.4 zone. Edmonds Woodway High School is located to the west across 76th Avenue West and is zoned "Public." Stevens Hospital is to the south and is zoned "Medical Use," and multi family development is located to the north and east on properties that are zoned RM-2.4 and RM-1.5.

Ms. Coccia referred to Edmonds Community Development Code (ECDC) Section 20.40, which contains six criteria the Board must consider when reviewing rezone applications. She reviewed each of the criteria as follows:

- **Whether the proposal is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.** In 2008 the City Council approved a Comprehensive Plan Map amendment to change the land use designation for the subject parcels from Mixed-Use Commercial to Single-Family Urban 1, and the proposed new zone (RS-8) would be consistent with the new Comprehensive Plan designation. The intent of the rezone is to make the zoning consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.
- **Whether the proposal is consistent with the purposes of the Zoning Ordinance and whether the proposal is consistent with the purposes of the proposed zone district.** The RS-8 zone is the corresponding zone for the Single-Family Urban 1 Comprehensive Plan designation.
- **The relationship of the proposed zoning change to the existing land uses and zoning of surrounding or nearby property.** Uses in the subject area are single family, and the surrounding area contains a mix of uses, including multi-family, medical and commercial office uses.
- **Whether there has been sufficient change in the character of the immediate or surrounding area or in city policy to justify the rezone.** The Comprehensive Plan designation for the neighborhood was changed in 2008 in order to encourage the retention of single-family development, and the proposed zoning would be consistent with the amendment.
- **Whether the property is economically and physically suitable for the uses allowed under the existing zoning and under the proposed zoning.** The neighborhood comprising the subject application has always been developed with single-family homes, and it appears to be both economically and physically suitable for the proposed zoning.
- **The relative gain to the public health, safety and welfare compared to the potential increase or decrease in value to the property owners.** The effect on value is uncertain. Assuming the value has been set according to the long-standing single-family development of the lots, the change in zoning should have no effect on value. However, properties on the margins of the neighborhood (e.g. the two lots fronting on 76th Avenue West) could have their potential value reduced if they were hoping to increase their development intensity. The current RM-2.4 zoning would allow up to four multi-family units on a ¼ acre lot, and the proposed RS-8 zoning would only allow one single-family dwelling unit on each lot.

Ms. Coccia advised that based on the facts and analysis contained in the staff report, staff concludes that the proposal satisfies the criteria for a change in zoning. She recommended the Board forward a recommendation of approval to the City Council. She noted that members of the public have submitted letters regarding the proposed rezone, which were attached to the Staff Report or distributed to the Board prior to the meeting.

Chair Bowman briefly reviewed the rules and procedures for the hearing and opened the public comment period.

Alden Peppel, Edmonds, said he has owned property at 7528 – 215th Street Southwest for 37 years, which is longer than most of the other residents on the street. When he purchased his property, he knew that the land use designation was mixed-use commercial and that the zoning in effect was RM-2.4, and most of the other home owners had the same understanding. He expressed concern that the proposed rezone would result in a down grade of his property value, which is undesirable and unacceptable. He invited the Board Members to ask themselves what actual public interest would be served by the proposed rezone. He expressed his belief that the best use for possible expansion in any direction would be consistent with the current

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zoning. Mr. Peppel pointed out that the City's Planning Board has twice (in 2001 and 2008) recommended denial of the proposal, and it seems there are some other factors or special interests at work. Again, he asked the Board to please think about what public interest is really being served by the proposed rezone. They don't want to have to change the land use and zoning again in a few years if the current zoning represents the highest and best use for the property, which is what the Board previously recommended.

Susana Martinez, Edmonds, said she lives in the property she owns at 7527 - 215th Street Southwest, which is located in the northern corner of the intersection of 76th Avenue West and 215th Street Southwest. She purchased her home in 1986 when she moved to the area from Spain to raise her family. Many changes have occurred between 1986 and today. The high school has doubled in size and the hospital has grown to become a regional facility serving people from throughout the area. There are numerous medical clinics on 76th Avenue West, along with a variety of condominium and apartment complexes. In 1986 her backyard was forested with beautiful trees that were cut down to accommodate a condominium development, which has been very well maintained and is very quiet and updated. The houses in the neighborhood are very old (50 years), and they are inefficient regarding heating, windows, etc.

Ms. Martinez advised that she was an architect and urbanist by trade. From her experience, it is not a good thing to move backwards with zoning. She noted it is impossible to predict the future, but several property owners have sold and moved away over the past several years. While the area used to be a nice neighborhood, it is no longer the same. Houses are not only homes, they are investments, and you don't need to own a single-family house to have a home. She said she recently learned that due to the current economic crisis, a house that was originally listed for \$430,000 in 2008 is now being listed for \$261,000. The real estate agent acknowledged the problem that the house was old. This is just another example of why they need to look towards the future and not down zone the properties.

Ms. Martinez reported that Mr. Underhill previously sent letters to all the property owners, and prepared a list of people who signed a petition in support of his proposal. However, it is important to keep in mind that many of the people who signed the petition no longer own property in the neighborhood. She thanked Mr. Underhill for inviting the neighbors to his home to talk about improving schools, etc, but she acknowledged that the makeup of the neighborhood is very different now. She summarized that when she purchased her home, there was no guarantee that the area would remain a residential neighborhood forever. She encouraged the Board to allow the neighbors to move on and do their best with the investment they have. Residents on 76th Avenue West are already subject to noise from ambulances and fire trucks, and the high school with 2,000 students presents a challenge, as well. She voiced her opinion that it would be a mistake to change the zoning. The current zoning allows for expansion and the possibility to use the properties more efficiently for condominiums in the future. The future is for the community and not one individual who wants to keep the street as single-family residential.

Jim Underhill, Edmonds, said he would not entertain the comments that were just made regarding the list other than to agree that the list is old because the process started several years ago. The proposal has been vetted in the public arena before the City Council and the Planning Board on three occasions. The City Council voted 5-2 and 7-0 to support the Comprehensive Plan Map amendment. The neighborhood has gone through the appropriate process and proven their case. They presented it to those who have the authority to decide, and they stand with the City Council's direction to move ahead with the rezone change. This has been an open process from the beginning. There have been points throughout the process where the proposal could have been stopped based on objections from the property owners in the neighborhood, but this did not occur. He pointed out that many of the new property owners are also in favor of the proposal. There are other property owners with equal standing as investors who have found no fault with the proposal.

Mr. Underhill referred the Board to the record of the City Council Meeting at which the Comprehensive Plan Map amendment was approved. He noted that the Comprehensive Plan requires that the City have an adequate stock of affordable housing. The public hearings were full of people who were in support of the proposal. The City's future need for affordable housing can be met by the proposed rezone, and the neighborhood would be protected at the same time. He commented that after the City Council adopted the Comprehensive Plan Map amendment, many property owners in the neighborhood started significant upgrade projects because they now see their properties will be protected and their values will be maintained. They are moving forward with the future in mind because they intend to stay in the neighborhood with their families. This has all been positive. He asked the Board to recommend approval of the proposed rezone, recognizing the City Council's view of the matter.

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Janice Freeman, Edmonds, reminded the Board that the next item on their agenda is the Community Sustainability Element for the Comprehensive Plan. One of the City's goals is to have places where people can walk to work, school and the bus stations. Many of the people do not have a lot of money, and they need affordable places to live. She observed that Stevens Hospital is the largest employer in Edmonds, and many of their employees make low salaries and work odd hours. The City needs to provide space for affordable apartments to serve this population. She said she has studied the matter very carefully and was on the Board when the issue was first presented. She has always been opposed to the rezone and she has not changed her mind. She said she was amazed when the City Council went along with the idea of down grading the area to single-family residential, especially the two properties on the corner of 76th Avenue West. She pointed out that multi-family development in the subject area would be great for school teachers and people with small incomes and would allow more people to live in the area. She said she is not in favor of the proposed rezone.

Jim Underhill, Edmonds, emphasized that people who live in the neighborhood have seen the remodeling projects that have taken place over the past two years. For example, a house on 73rd Place on the corner closest to 216th Street is currently being repainted and new windows are being installed. Two lots to the north, a property owner has undertaken a significant remodel. Many of the existing apartment buildings have been renovated, and more condos are being built on the south side of Edmonds Woodway High School. People who work for Stevens Hospital need to walk to work, and this issue is already being addressed by the existing and planned multi-family developments in the area. The subject neighborhood also provides an opportunity for people to be able to walk to work, school and the bus stops. When the new Swift Line begins service, he will be able to walk three blocks from his house to get to the bus stop. The area needs consumers, and that is what the neighborhood will continue to provide. It is a dynamic neighborhood right now, and they see a bright future for Highway 99 and the surrounding properties. Private homes, apartments and condominiums are being remodeled and people are moving into the area.

THE PUBLIC PORTION OF THE HEARING WAS CLOSED.

Board Member Young recalled that he was the lone Board Member who supported the Comprehensive Plan Map amendment that was subsequently approved by the City Council. Not only does the proposed rezone meet the six rezone criteria, but it also addresses some of the Comprehensive Plan policies. As he stated before, there are not many neighborhoods in the City that offer affordable single-family homes. He noted that Seattle and Kirkland have paid the price for doing away with their affordable neighborhoods when planners got on the bandwagon about how density was the cure all for every social ill. People who didn't want to live in small, multi-family units were considered enemies of the environment. He recalled the City has talked for years about the need to attract more young families to Edmonds. He questioned what is wrong with preserving an affordable, single-family neighborhood that is close to transit facilities, etc. The neighborhood is just as much of a contribution to the City of Edmonds economically in its present state.

Board Member Young said he has been engaged with volunteering on various boards for the City of Edmonds for many years. He started out on the first Highway 99 Task Force. Everybody who had anything to do with commercial development between 76th Avenue West and Highway 99 had the idea that making the zoning denser would be some magical solution to the perceived problems. The subject properties have been zoned multi-family, commercial, etc. for at least 20 years, and no significant changes have occurred. This presents a case that maybe the properties are supposed to be a single-family neighborhood. The definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over again in the same way, while expecting a different result. He said he is comfortable with the idea that it is single-family neighborhood that contributes a lot to the City. It is something that will be affordable to people who don't want to buy a condominium.

Board Member Guenther said he did not support the Comprehensive Plan Map amendment that was approved by the City Council in 2008. However, that is not the issue before the Board at this time. The Board is being asked to make a recommendation as to whether the proposed rezone would be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. While he is uncomfortable with the situation, he agreed with the staff's recommendation and would vote in favor of the proposal.

Board Member Works said she also voted against the Comprehensive Plan Map amendment. She said she understands that the zoning map must be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, and that it was the City Council's wish to change the Comprehensive Plan Map. However, she has a concern about including the two lots on the corner at 76th Avenue West.

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These property owners would face a significant lose in value of their properties and the new zoning would be inconsistent with all of the other uses along the street. The proposal would result in an island of single-family zoning, which would not be appropriate. However, if the Board must make the zoning map consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, the Board is in a very difficult position. She said she would not vote in favor of the proposed rezone.

Board Member Stewart said she would not vote in favor of the rezone, either. She said she visited the area and can understand why they value their neighborhood. It is a little oasis, but it has been zoned RM-2.4 for a very long time and the neighborhood is still intact. She noted that things evolve over time, and the Growth Management Act requires that the Comprehensive Plan be updated every seven years to reflect changes in growth, etc. While the RS-8 zoning would be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, RM-2.4 zoning would also be consistent. She emphasized that change would not occur overnight, but many urban areas are actually encouraging a mixture of uses (single-family and multi-family) in neighborhoods that were previously single-family. Multi-family development would be a good thing for the economy because it would bring more density to areas that are within walking distance of transit and other amenities. In addition, there would be more neighbors for the single-family property owners to get to know if a multi-family development were to be constructed within the neighborhood. She said she does not view the current zoning as a bad situation, and they would be moving in the wrong direction to change the zoning to RS-8.

Chair Bowman agreed with Board Members Stewart and Works. He said he understands that the Board must review the six rezone criteria, and he agreed with the summary of each one that was provided by staff. However, it seems that the whole process could be considered a situation of gerrymandering in order to avoid waiting until the entire Comprehensive Plan is updated in 2010-2011. The City Council made the decision to do whatever it takes to make the residents in this one area happy, and he does not believe it was the right thing to do for the City. He suggested that, long term, the City needs to review the Comprehensive Plan in terms of transportation and economic and environmental sustainability, and he felt the recent amendment was short sighted. He suggested the Board's task is to do what is right for the entire City and not just for a few. He said he would not vote in favor of changing the zoning. However, the issue could be revisited as part of the 2010-2011 Comprehensive Plan update when the Comprehensive Plan Map for the entire City would be reviewed.

Mr. Chave explained that the Board could address the issue in a number of ways. Regardless of whether the motion is for approval or denial, he suggested it is important for the maker of the motion to clearly state the reasons for the motion. If the motion is to deny the rezone application, the motion should indicate what the Board would like the City Council to do instead.

BOARD MEMBER YOUNG MOVED THE BOARD FORWARD APPLICATION NUMBER PLN20090019 TO THE CITY COUNCIL WITH A RECOMMENDATION OF APPROVAL BASED ON THE FOLLOWING:

- **COMPREHENSIVE PLAN. IT IS CONSISTENT WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN.**
- **ZONING ORDINANCE. THE PROPOSED ZONE IS CONSISTENT WITH THE PURPOSES OF THE ZONING ORDINANCE, WHICH ACCORDING TO ECDC 16.70 IS TO "RESERVE AND REGULATE AREAS PRIMARILY FOR FAMILY LIVING IN SINGLE-FAMILY DWELLINGS AND TO PROVIDE FOR ADDITIONAL NON-RESIDENTIAL USES THAT COMPLIMENT AND ARE COMPATIBLE WITH SINGLE-FAMILY DWELLING USES."**
- **SURROUNDING AREA. THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE PROPOSED ZONING CHANGE TO THE EXISTING LAND USE AND ZONING OF SURROUNDING OR NEARBY PROPERTIES IS CONSISTENT.**
- **CHANGES. THERE HAS BEEN NO CHANGE TO THIS BLOCK OF HOUSES IN APPROXIMATELY 30 YEARS, AND THEY SEEM TO HAVE SERVED QUITE WELL. THIS CRITERIA DOES NOT SAY THERE MUST BE CHANGE, BUT JUST THAT IT IS SUFFICIENT TO JUSTIFY THE REZONE APPLICATION.**
- **SUITABILITY. THIRTY-SIX YEARS OF NOT BEING CONVERTED TO WHAT THE PROPERTY IS CURRENTLY ZONED FOR MAKES THE CASE THAT THE PROPERTIES ARE CLEARLY UNSUITABLE**

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FOR THE UNDERLYING ZONING AND THEY SHOULD BE ZONED CONSISTENT WITH THE USES THAT HAVE BEEN IN EXISTENCE FOR THE PAST 30 YEARS.

- **VALUE. THE RELATIVE GAIN TO THE PUBLIC HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE IS THE PRESERVATION OF ONE OF THE LAST REMAINING AFFORDABLE SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS IN THE CITY.**

BOARD MEMBER GUENTHER SECONDED THE MOTION.

Board Member Works referred to the criteria related to the surrounding areas and pointed out that rezoning the subject properties would create an island in the middle of other kinds of zoning. She said she does not think the proposed zoning would be consistent with the surrounding uses. She also referred to the criteria related to change and pointed out that there has been no change in the subject property or surrounding properties. The only change was the City Council's decision to amend the Comprehensive Plan Map. Regarding the Value Criteria, she suggested the proposed rezone would result in a significant decrease in property value for at least the two properties on the corner of 76th Avenue West. When the hospital expands in the future, the value of other properties in the neighborhood could also decrease.

Board Member Stewart referred to the original file, which suggested that the amendment would not be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan or in the general public interest as expressed in the adopted language for the Highway 99 Activity Center. The original file states that the overall uses in the activity center are to be more intensive. While this language does not refer to the subject neighborhood, it does speak to the need to increase the vitality of the area. Changes will evolve over time, and she cautioned against the City taking action to slow the change by down zoning. She said she would vote against the motion.

THE MOTION FAILED 2-3, WITH BOARD MEMBERS YOUNG AND GUENTHER VOTING IN FAVOR AND CHAIR BOWMAN AND BOARD MEMBERS STEWART AND WORKS VOTING IN OPPOSITION.

Once again, Chair Bowman voiced his concern about the process that was used to get the proposal to this point. The proposed change should have been considered as part of the overall Comprehensive Plan update in 2010-2011. This would allow the Board and the City Council to consider what is best for the entire City before a decision is made. He said he is opposed to making a land use decision based on what is best for just a small group of people.

Board Member Young cautioned that the process is not on trial at this time. The City Council made a decision about the Comprehensive Plan Map amendment, and a new designation has been attached to the subject properties. If the Board does not think the proposed rezone meets the rezone criteria, they need to provide reasons to support their position. If they don't like the way the Comprehensive Plan was amended, they should address this concern with the City Council as a separate issue. He emphasized that the Board must deal with this application based on the facts before them.

Mr. Chave suggested that in order to provide clarity to the City Council, the Board should explain how the proposed rezone is inconsistent with the rezone criteria. He recalled that those who voted against the previous motion indicated some of the reasons they would not vote in favor of the rezone proposal. If they are going to recommend denial of the application, they should explain to the City Council what they want them to do instead.

BOARD MEMBER WORKS MOVED THE BOARD FORWARD FILE NUMBER PLN20090019 TO THE CITY COUNCIL WITH A RECOMMENDATION OF DENIAL FOR THE REASON THAT THE BOARD WISHES TO TAKE THE MATTER UP AGAIN AS PART OF THE OVERALL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE IN 2010-2011 RATHER THAN SINGLING OUT THIS ONE SMALL AREA FOR CHANGE. CHAIR BOWMAN SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED 4-1, WITH BOARD MEMBER YOUNG VOTING IN OPPOSITION.

Mr. Chave reported that the Board's recommendation would be forwarded to the City Council, and they would make a final decision. All those who testified at the hearing would receive a notice of when the City Council would consider the matter.

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PUBLIC HEARING ON SUSTAINABILITY ELEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE PLAN (FILE #AMD20080009)

Mr. Chave advised that the draft Community Sustainability Element (CSE) is being proposed as a new addition to the Edmonds Comprehensive Plan. While it is not required by the Growth Management Act, cities have the ability to include whatever subjects they feel are appropriate in their local plans. The subject of sustainability has been a priority of the Board and City Council. The proposed element is intended to establish a framework for linking long-range City goals to mid-range strategic planning and short-term decision making (including City budgets and programs). The element will address broad sustainability issues while emphasizing the importance of addressing climate change, community health and environmental quality. He explained that sustainability is defined as the ability to “meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” He noted that sustainability is a key component of state and regional plans, as well, including the Puget Sound Regional Council’s newly adopted Vision 2040 document. He reminded the Commission that the City Council has adopted a number of resolutions emphasizing various aspects of sustainability and the potential impacts from climate change, and the CSE is intended to be the next step in integrating the efforts into local plans and decision making. He briefly reviewed each of the sections of the proposed document as follows:

- **Climate Change.** There is a lot of concern about the subject of climate change, not just locally, but at the State and National levels. This is also made clear in recent State and Regional actions. In addition, sustainability and climate change are themes that have permeated much of the Legislature’s recent discussion, and it is clear these topics will be front and center in the next round of Comprehensive Plan updates. The regional plan, Vision 2040, mandates that local communities start working on these issues, and the proposed new element is the first step for the City to address climate change within the Comprehensive Plan realm.
- **Community Health.** This section talks not only about traditional health care and public health, but all aspects of the community that relate to the well being of the citizens and their ability to thrive and prosper. The intent is to include pointers in the plan and outline some of the concepts and objectives that could help the City sketch out programs to increase community health and sustainability going into the future.
- **Environmental Quality.** Environmental quality is touched on in various parts of the Comprehensive Plan, and the intent of this section is to relate all of these parts to each other. It is very important to have this in the Comprehensive Plan, as it can serve as a control center to help measure various plan updates the City undertakes as they move forward. The Board is in the habit of seeing individual plan updates to various elements such as transportation, parks, land use, etc. The goal of the new element is to look at each one and have some understanding of how they relate to the other elements of the Comprehensive Plan. His hope is that the City can use the CSE to do a detailed sign off. Every time one of the elements of the Comprehensive Plan is updated or amended, the changes would be reviewed within the context of the sustainability element to make sure the individual changes make sense from an overall view of sustainability.
- **Implementation.** This section talks about implementation of the new element, which is a key aspect of the program. It contains a commitment that the City Council and Planning Board would follow up on the goals and objectives outlined in the element. It also sets forth a work program for implementation. It talks about long-term goals, programs, planning and strategic decisions. He specifically referred to the process chart, which was intended to point out that future decisions need to be tied to the long-term planning framework and goals for the City. He would hope that each entity (Planning Board, City Council, etc.) will take the new element to heart and work to include the concepts in their every day and annual work programs.

Board Member Young asked if the Board is being asked to decide whether or not the CSE should be incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan or has this already been decided by the City Council. Mr. Chave answered that the City Council has already made a commitment to the CSE by forwarding the issue to the Board for review and a recommendation. Board Member Young summarized that the question before the Board is whether or not the proposed document is the form the element should take for the time being. Mr. Chave emphasized that this is not the final word on the matter, but just the beginning step. The Board would have opportunities to discuss the document again in the future and make whatever changes are appropriate.

Board Member Guenther advised that he compared the proposed CSE to the LEED Program for Neighborhood Development as directed by the Board. He distributed a handout showing how the two documents compare. He noted that the LEED Program includes two sections that are applicable to the new element: Smart Linkage and Location and Neighborhood Pattern and Design. The handout identifies various sections of the CSE that are comparable with LEED requirements. He noted that CSE is more global in nature, and the LEED Program is more project oriented and intended to be a type of checklist. Therefore, it was difficult to compare the two. It was interesting, however, that they both touch on the same types of issues.

Board Member Guenther pointed out that the LEED Program does not touch on the issue of compact development for new neighborhoods. Instead, it encourages diverse neighborhood development with mixed uses. He commented that there is nothing in the CSE that addresses the issue of affordability. The CSE mentions walkable streets and connectivity, but it seems more outward reaching than between neighborhoods. Mr. Chave pointed out that affordable housing is addressed in Community Health Goals D.2 and D.3. Goal D.2 doesn't use the term "affordable housing" but it talks about the citizens' housing needs. Goal D.3 talks specifically about affordable housing. Board Member Works noted that affordable housing is also addressed in Sustainability Goal G. Mr. Chave also pointed out that the issue of local food production is specifically discussed in Community Health Goal F.3.

Board Member Guenther summarized that, for the most part, the CSE would support many of the items in the LEED Program for Neighborhood Development. He suggested that when the new element is incorporated into the ECDC, many of the finer points would be addressed. He noted that the United States Green Building Council has a website that provides information about how to incorporate the LEED Program into development codes as a policy tool. He expressed his belief that the City is ahead of the curve in their effort to address sustainability.

Board Member Works referred to the introductory statement in the Community Health Section, which states that whenever possible, government should provide opportunities for people so they can be as self sustaining as possible, thereby reducing the potential need for intervention from community-based or privately-derived services that are becoming increasingly costly and difficult to provide. She expressed concern that this statement could lead a person to think the government would provide these services, when that is clearly not the case. She suggested that perhaps the language is meant to imply that the City expects community-based, non-profit organizations to take a lead role. Mr. Chave explained that the key word in the language is "opportunities," which does not mean intervention. It means making sure regulations do not stand in the way. Government would not take the place of other entities. He reminded the Board that the Comprehensive Plan is a community vision, but it is also a blue print for what the government is supposed to do. Board Member Works suggested that the current language may send an incorrect message about the role of the City and community providers. She noted there is a lot of controversy about more or less government. Mr. Chave agreed to rework the language to make the intent more clear.

Board Member Works noted a typographical error in Climate Change Goal E. The note should reference Item D, not Item E. Mr. Chave said this note should actually be removed from the language.

Chair Bowman thanked Board Member Stewart for all of the important changes she recommended for the proposed language. He noted that environmental sustainability is a volatile subject that is changing all the time. The important thing is to get a sustainability element in place, and changes could be made in the future as appropriate.

Chair Bowman opened the public hearing.

Joan Bloom, Edmonds, referred to Sustainability Goal E and suggested that language similar to that found in Sustainability Goal D.2 could be added to this section, as well. Perhaps a new goal could be added to read, "Strategically design transportation options, including bike trails, etc., to support and anticipate land use and economic development priorities. She also referred to Sustainability Goal E and said that, statistically, the City has a very old population, which is an overall problem that is not just about affordable housing. What the City currently has to offer does not draw the younger population. There is nothing progressive, and the City is not culturally diverse. She suggested that language be included in Sustainability Goal E to address the need to attract and keep young people to make the City more viable.

Ms. Bloom referred to Climate Change Goal C.2 and said it is very important to be more specific about what is meant by “climate change risk assessment and impact analysis.” One of the things that must be considered when addressing the issue of climate change is the rising tide. They currently have flooding at the waterfront, and are also having to shore up the shoreline to prevent property damage. This issue is something that should be specifically addressed in the new element. The City must have a plan that projects what is going to happen into the future and what this means to development along the shoreline.

Ms. Bloom referenced Community Health Goal B.4 and agreed that many citizens of Edmonds have a strong history of environmental protection and awareness. However, the City does not. Therefore, the last sentence in this section is untrue and should be removed. She explained that in 2007 a wetland near her home was filled. This was over two years after the critical areas ordinance was put in place to protect wetlands of 500 square feet or larger. The wetland in question was 10,000 square feet in size at one point, but was miraculously shrunk to 2,500 square feet. After a long challenge, the Hearing Examiner decided in favor of the nearby property owners and required the property owner to reevaluate the assessment of the wetland. However, the City never followed through with this requirement. The wetland was filled in 2007, and the battle still continues. The wetland hosted 10 to 12 ducks every winter and there was a huge pond that helped deal with drainage issues. The City did nothing to stop this, and from her perspective, they supported the filling of the wetland. Again, she said the last sentence of Community Health Goal B.4 should be deleted because the City does not have a history of environmental protection and awareness.

Next, Ms. Bloom suggested that the Department of Ecology should be added as a resource reference in Community Health Goal C.2. A statement related to the concept of promoting and attracting young people to Edmonds could be added to Community Health Goal D.2. She noted that Snohomish County has completed a study that found that South Edmonds would be an ideal location for a year-round farmer’s market. They have the farmers and population to support a program of this type, and she suggested that language be added to Community Health Goal F.3 to recommend the City explore a location in South Edmonds for a public market. She further recommended that “wetlands” be added to Environmental Quality Goal A.1. In addition, this goal should require that any wetland that has been damaged must be restored. The same language could be added to Environmental Quality Goals B.1 and C.1.

Lastly, Ms. Bloom referred to the section titled, “Engage and Educate” on Page 15 of the draft document. She pointed out that the City’s website needs to be updated so it is more assessable. She also recommended that when considering opportunities for implementing a holistic approach, they should consider including various community groups. For example, Edmonds in Bloom would be an excellent resource for helping address issues such as edible gardening, water conservation techniques, composting, etc. While they now focus on flower gardens, they could do more. The Floretum Garden Club and Friends of the Library could also be utilized in this same way.

Ms. Bloom observed that if the developer she talked about earlier had been required to obtain clearance from the Department of Ecology, the wetlands near her home would never have been filled. However, the City did not require this approval, and the Department of Ecology was never allowed on the property. She suggested something needs to be added to the guidelines to require a developer to obtain clearance from the Department of Ecology before a development can be approved by the City.

Janice Freeman, Edmonds, said she would focus her comments on the Climate Change section of the draft document. She complimented the Board and staff for preparing the draft document; it is a wonderful start that offers a tool to address all aspects of sustainability. However, she noted that the climate control section is very general in nature, while the other sections provide more detail. For instance, there are no examples provided in the climate control section. She suggested that if the language is not detailed enough, many of the important concepts would be lost and/or left out. She expressed her belief that rising sea levels is an important topic, particularly since developers are currently planning for buildings on the waterfront that are intended to last well into the next century. If the rising tide issue is not specifically mentioned in the document, it could get lost or forgotten. As an example, she referred to Community Health Goal B.5, which provides specific examples of types of volunteer opportunities the City could encourage to promote community health. She said she would like the Climate Control Goals to be more specific in nature to illustrate their importance. She summarized that they should either use a broad brush approach for all sections, or they should provide more details in the Climate Control section.

Ms. Freeman referred to Climate Change Goal E and noted that the three goals in this section address new development and redevelopment, but they do not discuss the option of retrofitting existing buildings. The City of Edmonds is nearly built out, and not a lot of new development will take place in the future. However, the existing commercial and residential structures could be retrofitted to become more useable and efficient. Ms. Freeman pointed out that the Climate Control Section does not provide examples for how to reduce the carbon footprint. She pointed out that the City would get their biggest bang for their buck by retrofitting the existing buildings, but she doesn't see where this concept is even addressed in the long-term plan. She noted that Sustainable Edmonds has just embarked on a program to reduce business energy, and she questioned where this concept would be fit into the CSE.

Ms. Freeman reported that the Post Carbon Institute has said the best way an individual can lower their carbon footprint and reduce their dependency on fossil fuels is to grow their own foods. This concept should be given a much higher emphasis than just slipping it into Community Health Goal F.3. This is one of the most important things that individual citizens can do, yet the document does not talk about the conditions that are needed to grow foods in residential yards. Sunlight is necessary, and the right to have sunlight is not addressed, either.

Next, Ms. Freeman referred to Environmental Quality Goal A.2, which provides very specific examples for how to support and require sustainable land uses and development practices. However, it does not indicate which trees should be retained. She noted that some trees are a lot more valuable than others. She sees a relationship between native vegetation and the wildlife that are dependent on it. But not every tree should be saved, especially if it does not have much value to the environment. It may be more important to have solar panels and sunlight for gardens.

Again, Ms. Freeman expressed concern that some issues are addressed with specific language, but other issues are just glossed over. She encourage the Board to make sure there is a fair balance and all points of view are taken into account. In addition, she said it is important that the City's sustainability effort does not end at the boundary of the City. If they can encourage more people to save energy by retrofitting their homes or installing energy production systems such as solar panels where electricity could be put into the grid, perhaps they could eventually generate enough electricity to shut down other fuel sources. They need to think about this issue from a larger perspective than just the City. She concluded by stating that she is very interested in the sustainability program, and reviewing later drafts of the element. She suggested it would be best to adopt the element into the Comprehensive Plan as soon as possible rather than waiting to get the document perfect.

Robert Freeman, Edmonds, said he has been following the evolution of the proposed CSE for some time, and he congratulated everyone involved on the improvements that have taken place recently. He pointed out that while the Planning Board is working on the new element, the Mayor's Climate Protection Committee has sprung to life and is now actively writing a Climate Action Plan (CAP) for Edmonds. He suggested there would be quite a bit of overlap between the two documents. He recognized that the CSE is made for planning under the Growth Management Act, and the CAP is not, but many of the goals are similar. He expressed concern that some goals in the CSE could be inconsistent with the goals in the CAP.

Mr. Freeman said it is easy to be cynical and say it doesn't really matter whether the City tries to reduce green house gas emissions by 70% or 80% by 2030, but they should not be cynical. They should adopt language that reflects a commitment by the City to do something. If the City finds they need to make changes, the document could be updated in the future. However, the first document should at least include a statement of commitment to go ahead with climate action. He concluded by recommending that the document not be forwarded to the City Council for adoption just at this point. Instead, the Board should try to work on bringing the climate plan that is expressed in the document into line with the plan that is being developed by the Mayor's Climate Protection Committee. He observed that sustainability is such a broad and important concept, and it just recently occurred to him that the entire Comprehensive Plan should actually be about sustainability. At some point in the future, the Comprehensive Plan could be rewritten using a new approach using a community vision of sustainability that relates all parts of the plan together.

THE PUBLIC PORTION OF THE HEARING WAS CLOSED.

Mr. Chave said that, in his view, the CAP would be an important compliment to the proposed CSE. The intent of the new element is not to duplicate what the CAP is trying to accomplish, but give a broader framework that the CAP could fit into.

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The CAP will have specific goals that would compliment the CSE. While specific targets could be included in the CSE, these targets would be specifically enunciated in the CAP, which is a strategic plan for accomplishing specific items within a certain timeframe. Regarding Ms. Freeman's comments about specificity, he explained that the CSE was written with the understanding that there are other elements that will get into the final details. It was not staff's intent to reiterate or include the details, but give a framework for measuring the specific actions identified in the transportation plan, the park plan, etc. He agreed with Ms. Bloom's recommendation that wetlands be specifically mentioned in the Environmental Quality section. However, he also noted that the words "marsh" and "wetland" are actually synonymous.

Should the City Council adopt the CSE, Board Member Works asked if the CAP would become a more specific aspect that would comply with the broad, overall goals of the CSE. Mr. Chave answered affirmatively. He cautioned against holding up the CSE to bring it forward to the City Council in tandem with the CAP. He would like the City to adopt something as soon as possible that provides a general framework for discussion that could be reviewed during the future update. When the CAP is considered in detail, the Board could take another look at the CSE to make sure it is consistent and forms a good tandem. At that point, it might be appropriate to make some changes to the CSE, but they should not hold up the document until the CAP is ready to forward to the City Council. If held up, it would not be considered by the City Council for approval until the end of next year as part of the 2010 Comprehensive Plan amendments.

Board Member Stewart thanked the citizens for their thoughtful comments. She agreed that they need to add language to help the City figure out how to encourage and attract young people to Edmonds and broaden the cultural diversity. However, it is important to note that the CSE is a step in the right direction. Mr. Chave agreed that staff could work additional language into the document to address this issue.

Board Member Stewart said she likes the idea of providing examples of the impacts the rising tide would have on the shoreline. She said she also likes the idea of Edmonds in Bloom becoming a vehicle for promoting sustainable practices the community should take on. The Department of Ecology (DOE) is an important partner that needs to be included in the language, as well. Mr. Chave pointed out that the DOE would be considered a "state agency." He said he would hesitate to specifically call out the DOE since a number of other relevant state agencies are also involved. Board Member Stewart suggested the DOE is particularly important.

Board Member Stewart said that while community gardens and education are important, the CSE needs to have a balance with respect to supporting community agriculture such as the PCC. Education about creating community gardens and composting and other practices that encourage this activity is very important. She also suggested the language be changed to recognize the desire for a public market in South Edmonds.

With respect to tree retention, Board Member Stewart said she is more concerned about the trees ability to hold water, thus reducing the impact to the stormwater system. The evaluation of tree removal associated with development would be addressed by the Development Code and does not necessarily need to be included in the CSE.

While she recognized the document is a work in progress, Board Member Stewart felt the Board should forward it to the City Council as soon as possible. It is a good document at this point. Chair Bowman agreed he does not want to delay the Board's recommendation to the City Council. The concept of sustainability is mutating all the time with new discoveries and findings. The faster they can get the City's elected officials to support the concept, the better. While many of the City Council Members talk about the need for greater density, they are also opposed to higher buildings. They say they support sustainability, but they run on platforms that call for no change. Implementing the CSE will be need to include an education process, and the concept will have to be presented to them a bit at a time. Some citizens in the City are adamantly against change. He recalled that in his former business he recruited young people to Edmonds, but they left after just a few short months because the City did not have anything to offer them. He said it is important to get the younger generation involved, as well. He summarized that as soon as the CSE is adopted as part of the Comprehensive Plan, they can start educating the City Council and citizens.

CHAIR BOWMAN MOVED THE COMMISSION FORWARD THE DRAFT COMMUNITY SUSTAINABILITY ELEMENT (CSE) (FILE NUMBER AMD20080009) TO THE CITY COUNCIL WITH A RECOMMENDATION

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OF APPROVAL, INCLUDING THE CHANGES NOTED IN THE BOARD'S DISCUSSION. BOARD MEMBER YOUNG SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

THE BOARD TOOK A BREAK AT 8:52 P.M. THE RECONVENED THE MEETING AT 9:00 P.M.

BRIEFING ON A PROPOSED UPDATE TO THE CAPITAL FACILITIES ELEMENT OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Mr. Miller referred the Board to the draft 2010-2105 Capital Facilities Plan (CFP) and introduced the following staff members who were present to answer questions of the Board regarding projects in the proposed plan: Rob English, City Engineer, Jerry Shuster, Stormwater Manager, Stephen Clifton, Community Services/Economic Development Director, and Brian McIntosh, Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Director.

Mr. Miller explained that the City's CFP is updated annually and identifies capital projects for the next six year. He referred to a chart outlining a potential annual plan coordination schedule, which was developed by Mr. Chave as part of his work on the Community Sustainability Element. The chart is intended to show how the City's various annual planning programs relate to each other, including the CFP. He advised that the CFP was changed this year to focus on capital improvement projects that support the City's Comprehensive Plan and projects that have planning and implementation horizons of more than six years. He explained that capital preservation and maintenance projects would remain in the six-year Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) but would not be part of the CFP. Lastly, he noted that the adoption schedule would correspond to the City's budget process.

Mr. Miller advised that the CFP identifies projects that are part of other Comprehensive Plan elements such as:

- The Transportation Plan that will be adopted by the City Council later this year.
- The Stormwater Plan, which is currently being revised to comply with the NPDES Phase II Clean Water Act Regulations. Staff is currently working with a consultant and the plan should be adopted by the first half of 2010.
- The Drinking Water Plan, which is currently being revised to comply with the most current Department of Health Regulations.
- The Sanitary Sewer Plan, which was updated three years ago. There is currently a study underway to address excessive inflow and infiltration concerns.
- The Parks and Recreation Plan, which was updated and adopted in December of 2008.

Mr. Miller announced that according to Page 93 of the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) Ferry Division's Final Long-Range Plan (June 30, 2009), the Edmonds terminal would remain in its current location at least through 2030. Only one improvement project is scheduled to be completed at the Edmonds terminal in the 2029-2031 biennium, which would total \$26 million. That means WSDOT has not identified any additional funding for the Edmonds Crossing Project. Washington State Ferries (WSF) indicated it can sometimes take decades to implement and plan large capital projects. The City's current CFP identifies \$12.3 million, and the CFP lays out a six-year plan for how much the City anticipates spending annually. So far, the funding has come from grants, and the only money spent by the City on the project equates to staff time. There are currently discussions about the possibility of a private/public partnership for redevelopment of property near the Edmonds Ferry Terminal, and the Legislature has designated \$200,000 for this purpose. The City is waiting to hear from WSF as to when they want to get the group together. It might also be possible that part of that endeavor could include a discussion about minimum build alternatives to the Edmonds Crossing Project.

Chair Bowman reminded the Board that as a result of BNSF's double tracking project, the number of trains through Edmonds is expected to increase from 40 to 104 per day by the year 2030. He suggested that providing safe access over the railroad tracks should be a high priority for the City. He asked if the right-of-way acquisition and mitigation project identified in the CFP is intended to address this issue. Mr. Clifton answered that funding is identified for right-of-way acquisition associated with the lower Unocal yard east of BNSF. This money would not be dispersed until the property has been certified clean by the Department of Ecology.

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Chair Bowman summarized that it appears nothing will happen with the Edmonds Crossing Project for a very long time. Mr. Clifton agreed that nothing physically would take place for a while, but planning and discussions would continue. Chair Bowman questioned if WSF is considering the possibility of adding a third boat to the Edmonds/Kingston run. Mr. Clifton answered that WSF is considering a third boat as part of their long-range plan. The intent is to spread out the traffic on SR-104. Chair Bowman requested an update on the reservation program study that is currently taking place on the Edmonds/Kingston run. Mr. Clifton reported that the committee met recently and would continue to meet to discuss the study. Once their report has been finalized, WSF would present it to the Legislature. They are using the Edmonds/Kingston run for the trial study because of its diverse ridership and they have the highest number of vehicles and second highest amount of passengers. If the reservation pre-design study contains favorable information for the Legislature, they may decide to fund a pilot project that would look at implementing the program on the Edmonds/Kingston run first.

Board Member Works referred to Chair Bowman's earlier comment that 104 trains would pass through Edmonds each day by the year 2030. She asked if the City has discussed options for keeping downtown Edmonds connected to the waterfront. Mr. Clifton pointed out that the Comprehensive Plan identifies connectivity between the downtown and waterfront as a high priority. Development of the Edmonds Crossing Project would provide a solution to help this situation and traffic in downtown Edmonds would be reduced. In addition, the City has discussed the possibility of an overpass somewhere between the Dayton Street and Main Street intersections.

Board Member Stewart asked if there has been any discussion about having a passenger ferry between Edmonds and Seattle. With traffic getting worse on I-5, it seems this would be a viable and sought after option to get people to the Seattle downtown waterfront. Mr. Clifton answered that there has been no discussion about a connection between the Edmonds and downtown Seattle waterfront areas.

Mr. Miller referred to the attachments that were included in the Board's packet to identify the primary transportation and stormwater projects, as well as other significant capital improvement projects. He advised that staff is in the process of updating the project descriptions, and they should be finalized by the end of next week and posted on the City's website. In addition, the Board's packet also included spread sheets to show how the CIP and CFP relate to each other. He noted that all of the projects identified in the CFP are also identified in the CIP.

Chair Bowman asked regarding the timing for the 4th Avenue Cultural Corridor Project. Mr. McIntosh answered that the funding package has not been completed. The next step would be to take the plan to about 30% stage, and the estimate for this work is \$150,000 to \$200,000. The 125 and 323 funds both identify funding for the project. He noted that \$75,000 has been identified for improvements on the street to make it more attractive, and staff anticipates one of the first items would be street lighting. An additional \$75,000 has been identified for planning work, and staff is hoping to obtain grant funding to match this amount.

Board Member Young referred to a statement from Mr. Miller's cover letter, which indicates the CFP would focus only on capital improvement projects and would not include projects that involve the preservation and replacement of existing City infrastructure. While he understands the purpose of the change, the way it is stated in the memorandum might raise some concerns at the public hearing. He suggested this statement be rephrased to more accurately reflect the intent. For example, it would be helpful to provide more information about where funding for preservation and replacement of existing City infrastructure would be identified. He said he found it helpful to know which buildings would be painted, where windows would be replaced, etc. If funding for these projects is going to be identified in the Operations and Maintenance Budget, much of this detail could be lost. Mr. Miller referred back to the Annual Plan Coordination Schedule that was presented earlier and includes an annual review of the CIP. He acknowledged that rather than requiring Planning Board review, the CIP would be reviewed only by the City Council as part of their budget process. The project list would be updated to identify projects that would take place over the next six years. It would also identify the financing needs for implementation of each of the projects. Board Member Young said he does not want to lose the ability to help the public and City Council understand how much it costs to maintain the City's existing facilities as part of the budget process. Mr. Miller explained that when the CIP is updated, there must be a financial plan associated with each of the projects. For example, if citizens are not willing to have their utility rates raised, the City would have to scale back projects with the proviso that they would not be able to sustain the capital infrastructure.

Board Member Stewart asked if retrofitting City buildings would be considered a CFP project. Mr. Miller said that if the buildings are totally replaced, such as the senior center or the parks maintenance building, they would be part of the CFP. This work would be considered beyond general preservation and maintenance. Board Member Stewart referred to the City's recently adopted Sustainable Building Policy (Resolution 1168), which applies to all new City owned buildings as well as the renovation of existing structures that exceed 50% of the assessed value. Mr. Miller agreed to work with Mr. Chave to incorporate the policy into future building plans.

Board Member Stewart referred to the City of Seattle's Street Edge Alternative (SEA) Program and asked if the City of Edmonds has considered this as a possible option. She noted that over a three-year period, they were able to show that 99% of the run off during rainy months was captured on site and not allowed into the stormwater management system. Mr. Shuster said he is a resident of North Seattle and has seen the SEA Program. At this point, the City of Edmonds does not have a program of this type. However, their new Stormwater Plan that is currently being developed would incorporate low-impact techniques for redevelopment and repaving projects.

Mr. Chave noted that the draft Capital Facilities Plan is scheduled for a public hearing before the Board on November 4th.

REVIEW OF EXTENDED AGENDA

Chair Bowman announced that a joint Planning Board/Citizens Economic Development Commission meeting has been scheduled for October 28th. He reported that while the two groups were originally scheduled to report to the City Council in December, Council President Wilson has pushed this out to the third meeting in January to give them more time to prepare. At the joint meeting, the two groups would be allowed an opportunity to provide a quick outline of the things they have learned thus far. He encouraged the Board Members to email amongst themselves to pinpoint all of the items they have discussed to date. The goal is to make sure the two groups present a cohesive report to the City Council. He noted the meeting would start with dinner at 6:00 p.m. He cautioned that the two groups must keep in mind that reports of this type have been offered to the City Council on previous occasions, but they were never implemented. Their goal should be to present a broad report that identifies the issues and possible solutions. The City Council would provide direction to each group, and the reports would be finalized by the end of 2010. At that point, the two groups would present a final report to the City Council that includes a clear implementation strategy.

Chair Bowman announced that a special Planning Board Meeting has been scheduled for November 4th at 7:00 p.m. The November 11th and November 25th regular meetings have been cancelled.

PLANNING BOARD CHAIR COMMENTS

Chair Bowman did not provide any comments during this portion of the meeting.

PLANNING BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS

Board Member Guenther said he recently visited Oakland, California, which has a BNSF track between their waterfront and their downtown areas. The railroad tracks did not appear to be as much of a barrier as they are in Edmonds, and there were frequent trains. He suggested the City consider this model when addressing their issues related to access to the waterfront.

In the spirit of being more sustainable, Board Member Stewart encouraged the Board Members to use their computers for storing documents that are part of their meeting packets instead of printing them on paper. Documents that are downloaded to the desktop are easy to access. She said she appreciates that staff copies on both sides of the paper, but she noted that it takes an entire fir tree to make 17 reams of paper.

ADJOURNMENT

The Commission meeting was adjourned at 9:40 p.m.

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