

**APPROVED MAY 13<sup>th</sup>**

**CITY OF EDMONDS  
PLANNING BOARD MINUTES**

**April 22, 2009**

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Chair Bowman called the meeting of the Edmonds Planning Board to order at 7:02 p.m. in the Council Chambers, Public Safety Complex, 250 – 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue North.

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT**

Michael Bowman, Chair  
Philip Lovell, Vice Chair  
Kevin Clarke  
John Reed  
Valerie Stewart  
Jim Young  
Judith Works

**STAFF PRESENT**

Rob Chave, Planning Division Manager  
Karin Noyes, Recorder

**BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT**

Cary Guenther (excused)

**READING/APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The minutes of March 25, 2009 were approved as submitted.

**ANNOUNCEMENT OF AGENDA**

No changes were made to the agenda.

**AUDIENCE COMMENTS**

No one in the audience expressed a desire to address the Board during this portion of the meeting.

**PUBLIC HEARING ON APPLICATION TO CREATE A NEW MIXED-USE ZONING CLASSIFICATION AND DESIGN STANDARDS FOR THE FIRDALE VILLAGE NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER**

Mr. Chave advised that the proposed application is for a Development Code amendment to change the City's zoning regulations to add a new zone that would potentially apply to the Firdale Village Neighborhood Center. He noted that the applicant is not requesting a change of zoning at this time. The rezone application would be addressed as a separate issue with a separate hearing. He summarized that the intent of this public hearing is to consider zoning in general. The application is a legislative item, and at the completion of the public hearing and Board deliberations the Board would forward a recommendation to the City Council. The City Council would conduct another public hearing and make the final decision. If the proposed amendment is adopted by the City Council, it is the applicant's intent to apply for a rezone to apply the new zoning classification specifically to the Firdale Village property.

**Tony Shapiro, Applicant's Representative, Edmonds**, reminded the Board that he has met them on numerous occasions to discuss the proposed code amendment. In addition, he conducted two neighborhood meetings in 2008 to review the objectives and goals of the proposal with surrounding property owners. He reviewed that the primary objective of the

proposal is to create zoning criteria and design guidelines to assist the ultimate developer in implementing the new zone classification. Rather than developing a specific master plan for the property, his client feels it would be better to have a flexible zoning classification that allows the developer more avenues for development. He pointed out that the proposed design guidelines are more detailed than what Edmonds has used in the past, but they are not as detailed as some that are used elsewhere in the region. The guidelines are not as broad in nature because they would not be applied city-wide. They are intended to be more site specific.

Mr. Shapiro reminded the Board that the ultimate land use objectives for the subject property are laid out in the Comprehensive Plan. He described that the property is located at the west end of 205<sup>th</sup> Street where it turns into Firdale Avenue and heads into downtown Edmonds. It is located right on the King/Snohomish County line, with King County to the south, multi-family development to the east and single-family development to the north and west. Mr. Shapiro displayed a Comprehensive Plan Map for the subject property and the surrounding properties. He also provided a map to illustrate that the property is currently zoned Neighborhood Business (BN). He expressed his belief that the proposed new zone would offer a much more productive land use solution and would result in a more vibrant neighborhood with commercial and residential space. He said it is not the applicant's intent to zone the property to some type of regional use. Instead, the goal is to create a neighborhood center that would not compete with other larger developments in the area such as Aurora Village but would serve the surrounding property owners' needs.

Mr. Shapiro noted that the Comprehensive Plan language for the subject property requires that at least 25% of the developed building area be commercial space and no more than four stories would be allowed. He emphasized that the Comprehensive Plan would not limit the commercial space to just 25%. He noted that the zoning criteria laid out in the proposal bases the height calculations on the City's current method for calculating the height limit, which is the average height as measured at the four corners of a building.

Mr. Shapiro explained that the proposed language would enable a developer to bring the ground floor retail space out to the street edge, with parking located below grade. This would make it possible to draw the interest of passers by and provide a better link than the traditional retail centers that are located elsewhere on Edmonds Way. He noted that below grade parking would be a significant cost for the developer, as would the proposed 20% open space requirement. He emphasized that in order to provide the below grade parking, it would be necessary to maximize the income producing area of the property.

Mr. Shapiro provided an aerial photograph, showing the subject property and the single-family properties that surround it. He pointed out that, as proposed, the significant trees that are located along the northern boundary of the property would be retained. Construction would be set back 20 feet in order to protect the roots of the trees.

Mr. Shapiro pointed out that the proposed zone classification would divide the property into two districts. District 1 would be the residential district and would allow a height of up to four stories, with some commercial space on the ground floor. District 2 would be limited to two and three stories and would be more commercial in nature. He explained that the purpose of having lower buildings in District 2 is to allow sunlight to get into the courtyard areas. He noted the proposed setbacks are 15 feet on the east and west property lines and 20 feet on the north property line to protect the significant trees. He provided a diagram to identify the significant trees that are located along the northern boundary and reminded the Commission that the majority of the significant trees on the site would be retained.

Mr. Shapiro observed that there are existing features on the site that will cost a future developer a significant amount of money to address. The sanitary sewer and stormwater lines traverse the site, and the Olympic View Water District has indicated they are not interested in having a lift station in this location because the load is too great. Therefore, they will have to divert the line in order to accommodate below-grade parking. He emphasized that no below grade parking would be constructed within the 20-foot northern setback in order to protect the trees. However, the proposal would allow the below-grade parking to encroach into the east and west setback areas.

Mr. Shapiro provided diagrams to show how the zoning would be structured to address concerns about the mass of potential buildings on the site. He cautioned that massing diagrams are often misinterpreted by the public, and he emphasized that the building designs would provide articulation and other elements, as per the proposed design guidelines, to break up the building facades. Mr. Shapiro provided a drawing to illustrate where the buildings would be located and how development

would be impacted by the 20% slope that exists on the site. He indicated that it would take some finesse on the part of the architect to address the significant slope as part of the future building design. Again, he explained that the intent of the proposal is to keep the commercial buildings lower to allow sunlight to enter into the site. He provided a diagram to illustrate the step back the applicant has proposed to mitigate concerns related to the single-family home that is located on the western boundary of the subject property. While the first and second story would be at the street edge or setback edge, the upper two stories would be stepped back 25 additional feet. He noted this would result in the loss of a few residential units, but it would provide relief for the single-family house currently located to the west of the subject property. Board Member Reed asked if the stepback illustration was intended to depict the language that is provided in Item D.4 on Page 6 of the zoning proposal. Mr. Shapiro answered that the drawing is consistent with the rules outlined in Item D.4.

Mr. Shapiro noted that the objective of the criteria is to be as flexible as possible. Therefore, there is a 20-foot wide area where District 1 and District 2 overlap. The intent is to allow flexibility for building modulation and to accommodate the courtyard and other required open space and surface parking. He noted that the 20% required open space would not include the setback areas.

Vice Chair Lovell pointed out that the Comprehensive Plan language allows development up to four stories in height only if certain requirements can be met. The proposed language indicates that four stories would be allowed in District 2 if the project as a whole can meet the requirements of LEED Gold or Washington 3 Star Green. Mr. Shapiro said the applicant is striving to make the project as green as possible, and this condition would accompany a future developer's ability to construct four stories.

Mr. Shapiro referred the Board to the proposed design standards and said the applicant feels this methodology is probably the most flexible and desirable for achieving a mixed-use type development without creating a specific master plan. He reviewed that the proposed guidelines include the following elements:

- Provide a unified neighborhood development form that enlivens the street edge by providing ground floor commercial space at the street edge.
- Create outdoor spaces that are desirable and useable. This type of space would help unify the neighborhood and bring people into the development from the neighborhood.
- Create facades that provide visual interest.
- Create pedestrian oriented spaces that provide both services and amenities, with strong pedestrian links to the parking areas, particularly the below-grade parking structure.
- Require building articulation on the facades of the buildings to create visual interest. This can be accomplished by using elements such as recessed entrances, canopies, and ground floor windows and doors.
- Create outdoor court yard areas that draw people to the site. Buildings in District 2 would be limited to two-stories in height in order to ensure sunlight reaches the inner courtyard areas.
- Screen the on-site service areas.
- Provide shared access drives and implement a shared parking program that addresses the needs of both the residential and commercial tenants.
- Require that signage be integrated into the building architecture.
- Provide site landscaping and screening, recognizing the need to maximize sun to the open spaces.
- Use brick patterns in the paving.
- Integrate lighting fixtures into the architecture and provide pedestrian scale lighting that increases safety.
- Implement a sustainable design that meets Built Green/LEED Standards and incorporates low-impact development techniques.

Chair Bowman said he is still concerned about the lack of buffer between the proposed large building on the west side of the property and the adjacent single-family home. Mr. Shapiro referred to the existing site survey, which shows that the property elevation starts going up on the west side. In addition, he pointed out that this residential property has a large backyard and the home is setback 10 feet from the property line. The proposed new building would also be set back an additional 15 feet, so there would actually be 25 feet between the two buildings. He emphasized that the proposed plans would also require the third and fourth stories of the building to be stepped back 25 feet. He said he can understand the concern about a two to

four-story building being located adjacent to a single-family home, but it is important for the developer to have the ability to maximize the development potential of the site in order to receive a favorable return on his investment. If the site is further limited on the west side, it would become very difficult for a developer to afford below grade parking, etc. Chair Bowman pointed out that the single-family resident also wants a good return on his investment. Mr. Shapiro noted the residential property is already located next to a commercially-zoned property.

Board Member Stewart said she appreciates the applicant's effort to provide better illustrations of the building massing, etc. However, she said she would like to see the placement of existing trees added to the diagram. Trees are an important issue to consider because adjacent single-family property owners would not want to look over the trees and see four-story buildings, etc. In addition to considering the height of the trees, she suggested it would be appropriate to require the applicant to hire an arborist to determine whether development close to the trees would damage them. She noted there is no guarantee that the trees would remain safe if development is allowed to encroach too close to their roots. She suggested there should be a value attached to the trees and compensation required for those that are lost. Mr. Shapiro agreed there is always more an applicant could show in their drawings, and they tried to depict the trees to the highest level that was feasible within a limited time period. He pointed out that the existing trees on the northern boundary would loom above the buildings and would be about 50 to 60 feet higher. He pointed out there are no existing significant trees along the western boundary of the property. He agreed it would be appropriate to address the viability of the significant trees at some point, but he questioned the need to include additional language in the zoning criteria. He summarized that significant effort has been made to maintain the buffer against the single-family zones.

Board Member Stewart pointed out that the proposed language would require the developer to meet the LEED or Built Green standards, which assumes the buildings would use more environmentally friendly strategies such as bio swales and rain gardens. She emphasized that trees would help lessen stormwater impacts. Mr. Shapiro said the intent is that future development must incorporate Built Green and low-impact development strategies. However, he noted that the below-grade parking would not allow water to infiltrate into the ground. Therefore, stormwater must be addressed in a different manner as part of the design process.

Board Member Works asked if it would be possible to require landscaping or some other type of buffer between the proposed development on the west side and the adjacent single-family home. Mr. Shapiro answered affirmatively. While the proposed language does not currently require Type 3 Landscaping in this location, it could easily be incorporated.

Board Member Young said he thought the City already had a Firdale Village zone, but that it did not provide any specific criteria or design guidelines. Mr. Chave said that the Firdale Village property is currently zoned with the general BN zoning designation. The applicant's proposal would add a new zone classification to the list of zones in the City's zoning code. The new zone classification would be specifically aimed at implementing the Comprehensive Plan for Firdale Village. There is no Firdale Village zone at this time.

Board Member Young suggested that the key for the code table be placed before the table rather than after. He also suggested the applicant carefully review the list of permitted uses to make sure the table accurately depicts the intent of the proposed language. For example, multi-family and housing for low-income elderly and senior housing should probably not be identified as primary uses in District 1. In addition, he questioned if the intent was to prohibit large retail stores that are more than 20,000 square feet with the exception of drug stores, grocery stores and bookstores. Mr. Shapiro said that while it is highly unlikely that a large drug store would want to locate in Firdale Village, they don't want to eliminate this possibility, particularly if one of the development options is elderly housing. Board Member Works asked if the applicant's intent is to exclude all drive-through businesses, including banks. Mr. Shapiro answered affirmatively. Board Member Works also pointed out that the table should be adjusted to indicate that multi-family uses would not be allowed on the ground floor in District 1.

Vice Chair Lovell inquired it would be necessary to add language that would force a developer to provide commercial uses in at least 25% of the total square footage. Board Member Reed pointed out that, as long as the Comprehensive Plan does not change, a developer would be required to meet the 25% commercial space requirement. Therefore, there is no need to add this additional language to the proposal. Mr. Shapiro agreed that the Comprehensive Plan would require that 25% of the heated space be designated as commercial.

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Board Member Clarke asked if there are any other zoning classifications that only apply to a single piece of property other than medical use on the Stevens Hospital Campus. Mr. Chave said there are contract rezone situations that apply to properties that are under single ownership. However, Stevens Hospital is probably the only area in the City that has a specific zoning classification for property that is under single ownership. Board Member Young pointed out that a new Multi-Family-Edmonds Way zoning classification was created for property on SR-104 to the north of the subject property. Mr. Chave agreed and noted that the proposed zoning classification would be applied to an area that has been identified in the Comprehensive Plan as a neighborhood commercial center. He cautioned that the Comprehensive Plan does not distinguish areas based on ownership. Firdale Village is unusual in that the entire site is owned by a single owner, but ownership is really immaterial. The point is that the Comprehensive Plan designates the area as a neighborhood center regardless of ownership. He encouraged the Board to think about the concept in terms of location rather than ownership. Chair Bowman noted that Five Corners is another example of a neighborhood center, but it is not under single ownership. Mr. Chave said that, ultimately, the City would create a zoning classification for Five Corners, as well. In the Firdale Village situation, the property owner did not want to wait for the City to create the new zoning classification.

Board Member Clarke observed that Mr. Shapiro's presentation focused specifically on just one parcel and its particular physical characteristics. The proposal has nothing to do with the other properties in the Firdale Village area and would ultimately create a zoning classification for just this particular site. If the site were not flat or didn't have single-family homes to west, the proposal would likely be different. Mr. Shapiro reminded the Board that once the zoning language has been adopted, a rezone application would be submitted to apply the new zone to the subject property.

Board Member Clarke asked if there is a way to design more flexibility into the proposal based on the physical characteristics of the site that would allow some variance in height where the tallest screening already exists. For example, would it be possible to allow buildings up to five stories high along the northern property line in exchange for lower buildings on the west side. Mr. Shapiro pointed out that while this would be a good trade off, the current Comprehensive Plan only allows buildings up to four feet in height. Mr. Chave emphasized that a variance of this type would require an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan.

Board Member Clarke recalled the applicant has suggested that one possible use for the subject property would be elderly care housing, with commercial space on the ground floor. He asked if the proposed language would allow a developer to create an elderly housing facility similar to the Ida Culver House. Mr. Chave answered that any development on the property would be required to provide at least 25% commercial space. The idea is that mixed-use developments are supposed to be neighborhood commercial centers that provide services to the surrounding area.

Board Member Clarke observed that the proposed language appears rigid as far as where the buildings can be located. He questioned if there is a way to create language that would be more flexible and allow a developer to move the commercial and residential spaces around on the site. Mr. Shapiro said that perhaps the proposal is presumptuous in saying that it is in the City's best interest to force daylight into the site by limiting the height of buildings along the street edge, but it is important to keep in mind that open space would be located behind these buildings, and limiting the amount of sunlight that reaches the courtyards would make them less desirable as gathering places.

Board Member Clarke expressed concern that a 1.5 space per unit parking requirement for the residential component might be too much if the site is developed as some type of elderly housing. He suggested the parking requirement be more flexible and based on the type of uses that are developed on the site. Mr. Shapiro agreed it that 1.5 spaces per unit would probably be too much parking for an elderly housing scenario, but it is typical to provide at least one space per unit for elderly care developments. Mr. Chave reviewed that the City's traditional way of dealing with the parking requirement is to apply the various parking standards based on use. In more recent years, however, the City has moved away from the individual list of parking standards because it required that projects be reevaluated every time a use is changed. He suggested, however, that it might be appropriate to include an exception for elderly housing in this situation. He noted the code includes a section that gives additional density and reduced parking for senior housing, but this language is not addressed in the proposal.

Board Member Reed recalled the Board has talked about the concept of shared parking on previous occasions. He asked if there are other situations in Edmonds where shared parking arrangements are used to accommodate the residential and

commercial parking requirements. Mr. Chave answered that shared parking is a common practice, particularly in the downtown area where the requirements for the residential uses overlap with the requirements of the commercial uses. He noted that shared parking is addressed in a separate chapter of the Development Code.

**Sue Heiges, Edmonds**, pointed out that her backyard is located to the west of the subject property. She expressed concern that if a four-story building were allowed on the western boundary of the site, her privacy would be impacted. The residential units would look directly down onto her backyard. She pointed out that the single-family property owners on the northern boundary are protected by the significant trees, but that is not the case for the properties on the western boundary. She questioned if the property line provided on the aerial map was correct since it appears that her neighbor's single-family home is located on the applicant's property, which is not the case. Mr. Shapiro agreed that the property line on the aerial photograph was inaccurate, but the property line identified on the survey is accurate. He noted that there are currently two single-family homes located on the subject property, and they are being used as a daycare and a barber shop. He noted there would be two houses between the subject property and Ms. Heiges' backyard, so the proposed development would be located at least 120 feet from her property line.

**The public portion of the hearing was closed.**

Board Member Young requested clarification as to whether or not there are currently multi-family uses on the subject property. Mr. Shapiro answered there are none, but there is a multi-family development of approximately 380 units to the east of the subject property.

Board Member Young asked Mr. Shapiro to explain why he is proposing a separate set of design guidelines for the Firdale Village property instead of just using the City's existing generic design guidelines. Mr. Shapiro said the existing guidelines do not address blank walls against residential properties and breaking up the residential units that face the single-family properties. The generic guidelines are not really germane for courtyard type settings. Board Member Young expressed his belief that this question would likely be raised by the City Council, and it would behoove Mr. Shapiro to be prepared to describe what how the proposed design guidelines would be better than the existing guidelines.

Board Member Young asked Mr. Shapiro to explain what Edmonds would get from the proposed zoning and guidelines that the current zoning and guidelines would not provide. Mr. Shapiro said the current NP zoning does not allow four-story development and courtyards, and it does not stipulate conditions on how the site would be best developed in the context of the zoning conditions that were discussed earlier. Board Member Young asked if the subject property has maxed out its potential based on the current NB zoning. Mr. Shapiro said the NB zoning would only allow eight residential units on the site. He summarized his belief that the NB zoning is outdated and is no longer appropriate for the subject property. Mr. Chave added that the NB zoning classification fits strip mall type development to a tee, but it is not consistent with the mixed-use zoning concept. Board Member Young suggested this point needs to be made when the proposal is presented to the City Council. If the new zoning designation is created, the property owner would have to apply for a rezone and this would require him/her to show why the existing zoning designation would not work. He said he likes the proposal because this large piece of property has not achieved its full development potential under the existing zoning. It is important to verbalize to the City Council how much better the propose zoning would be and why.

Vice Chair Lovell asked if creating design guidelines for this specific zone would be a step in the direction of implementing the form-based zoning concept. Mr. Chave said it is a step forward, but would still be considered traditional zoning. Vice Chair Lovell said Board Member Young's point is well taken that the applicant should better articulate how the proposed zoning language and design guidelines would be a good thing for the City, the surrounding property owners and the developer.

Mr. Chave said the City has adopted district-based design guidelines for the downtown and Highway 99 areas, but the generic design standards are applied citywide. Adoption of the proposed design standards would establish the Firdale Village property as a special zone district. The design review process would still involve ADB review, but the standards that apply would be those in the new zoning classification. Ultimately, the design review process would be district based and tailored to this particular situation, and the standards would be made part of the code.

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The Board discussed that the proposed zoning classification language and design guidelines would enhance the prospect of a mixed-use development and would implement the Comprehensive Plan better than any existing zone. They felt it would result in a neighborhood center development that would be appealing and accessible to people in the neighborhood. They also discussed that the proposal would result in enhanced economic development opportunities to benefit the City. In addition, more housing units would result in more clientele for businesses.

Board Member Stewart said she would like the Board to consider adding a condition that would increase the setback requirement on the northern property line to protect trees and require an arborist review or statistics to indicate the number and size of trees that would have to be removed. She said she is disappointed that the Redwood tree would have to be removed. Mr. Chave pointed out that zoning classifications do not typically get to the detail of identifying tree locations. However, the Board could identify tree retention areas and require tree retention to the maximum extent possible or that the buffer be of a certain type, which is what the applicant tried to do on most of the perimeter except the southwest corner.

Chair Bowman said he likes the proposal, but he is still concerned that there would be no buffer between the residential and commercial uses on the western boundary. He said allowing a four-story building on the western side would be too abrupt and screening or some other alternative should be considered to soften the impact. Mr. Shapiro agreed he could introduce a Type III Landscaping buffer on the west property line.

Board Member Reed pointed out that, as proposed, District 2 would wrap around the entire site except for the area facing Firdale Avenue. He suggested perhaps the District 1 boundary could extend clear to the western property line. Mr. Shapiro expressed concern that this would be a radical approach and would significantly cut down the area of District 2. It would likely require the elimination of 10 to 12 units, which is a substantial change of more than 10% of the total number of units that could be developed on the site. He said that while his client may not be involved in actual development of the property, it would be in his best interest to maximize the built area. It would also be in the City's best interest to maximize the property's development potential. Otherwise, the developer would not likely be able to pay to redevelop the site to the high level stipulated in the proposed zoning classification. The proposal calls out a fairly high-class development that would provide below grade parking, which is an expensive and somewhat unusual element in projects of this type. The proposed courtyards would also provide desirable amenities to the public. For an investor to be interested in the property, there must be as much potential as possible. He would be reluctant to shave back District 2 as recommended by Board Member Reed.

Board Member Clarke said the proposed plan really excites him, and he has lived in the district since before the area was annexed into the City. The property was zoned BN to match with the closest zoning classification that existed at the time of annexation. The City's existing zoning map shows this parcel as BN and the apartment project to the east and the properties on the north side of 244<sup>th</sup> were annexed into the City as RM 1.5. He said he would prefer that the proposed new zoning classification be applied to the entire area that is surrounded by single-family development. In order to do this, the language must be as flexible as possible while being sensitive to impacts to adjacent single-family property owners. He also felt the language should be more flexible to encourage mixed-use development in varying configurations instead of the more limiting concept of creating Districts 1 and 2. Chair Bowman agreed the proposed language could limit a future developer instead of allowing for maximum creativity. There are so many advances in sustainable buildings and the environmental aspects of development would continue change. He does not want the proposed language to limit future development opportunities.

Board Member Young summarized that the Board has provided helpful insight to the applicant and offered their general support. However, he said he does not believe the proposal is ready to move forward to the City Council. He suggested the Board continue their deliberations until a future meeting.

Mr. Shapiro said he considered this project primarily from an architect's point of view. The notion of putting a four-story element on Firdale Avenue and blocking sunlight to the back of the site would be inappropriate. He suggested it is not likely that the parking requirements would allow for more intense development than what has been described in the drawings. He noted there are other constraints on the site that further limit the building configuration such as the topography and existing significant trees. While the applicant desires to retain as much flexibility as possible, they believe the proposal would place realistic limits on future development of the site that would not be unreasonable for developers. He said they also had to consider the political component of the proposal. The applicant felt the Board and City Council would be more reluctant to

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grant approval if there were no restrictions. The applicant believes the proposal represents a good compromise. While he appreciates that the Board would like the zoning classification to remain as flexible as possible, the applicant believes that successful development would require that sunlight be drawn into the middle of the site. He noted the site is deep, which necessitates keeping the buildings low enough to get sunlight to the back.

Board Member Young said he plans to support the proposal, but he does not believe it is quite ready to forward to the City Council because the applicant still needs to identify why it is such a good approach for achieving what the Comprehensive Plan says for Firdale Village. Mr. Shapiro explained that certain elements are necessary in order for his client to sell the property for future mixed-use development, and there are not a lot of ways to accomplish this task. Pushing the residential units against the back perimeter and closer to adjacent single-family residential properties seemed to be the most reasonable approach. Bringing the commercial space closer to the street edge where the noise and action is would also be an appropriate approach. He summarized that creating special zones for areas such as Firdale Village, Five Corners, etc. would be a more responsive approach and a better solution than blanket zoning that has uniformity but does not respond to specific aspects of a particular site. The proposal strives to incorporate the positive components identified in the Comprehensive Plan.

Board Member Young once again said he likes the concept of creating neighborhood zoning districts, but he suggested the concept might be more difficult to sell to the City Council. There must be some discussion about why neighborhood zoning is an appropriate way to implement the Comprehensive Plan in unique areas. He said he wants the proposal to succeed, but he is not sure he is prepared to make a motion that would gain the support of the City Council. Mr. Shapiro said he is not so apprehensive about obtaining the City Council's support. Given the current economic climate, the City Council is interested in making the City as competitive as possible. He said he believes the attributes of the proposal are strong. However, he agreed it would be helpful to point out to the City Council the shortfalls of the current NB zoning and why the proposed new zoning classification would be a better approach.

Board Member Stewart suggested that when presenting the proposal to the City Council, it would be helpful to review the checklist items of the LEED Standards. She reminded the Board that in early 2009 the City Council adopted a resolution of environmental policies and principles. One principle calls for low-impact development elements, and fostering LEED and other Built Green standards for development is also a goal of the City Council. The City Council wants to set an example for other small communities to follow, and the proposal provides an opportunity for the City to move in that direction. District zoning makes sense given the topography of the site, etc. However, she agreed the applicant needs to clarify the arguments before presenting the proposal to the City Council.

Chair Bowman said that while he believes the proposal is a good idea, he is concerned that the City Council would not offer their support.

Vice Chair Lovell summarized that the applicant has reviewed the Comprehensive Plan language that pertains to the subject property and then created a zoning classification that would maximize the program for the site within the parameters of the Comprehensive Plan. Again, Mr. Shapiro pointed out that the parking requirement would drive the layout of the project and the amount of developable area. In addition, the 20% open space requirement is aggressive. He summarized that the proposed design guidelines set a fairly high standard and includes courtyards, sunlight and retail space that is viable and desirable from the street edge. The goal is to create an end product that is good for Edmonds, the adjoining property owners, and the developer. Striking this balance is complicated, and it is difficult to foresee all of the problems that might come up. He summarized that the Planning Board and City Council created a Comprehensive Plan that stipulates at least 25% of the developed space must be for commercial uses, and it limits the development to a maximum of four stories. In addition to this criteria, the proposal attempts to respond to environmental and economic issues.

Board Member Works summarized that all of the Board Members have indicated they like the proposal, and it is Mr. Shapiro's responsibility to argue its merits before the City Council. She said she would be in favor of moving forward with a recommendation to the City Council rather than postponing the recommendation to a future meeting.

Board Member Clarke pointed out that if the new zoning classification is approved, the property owner would have to apply to have the property rezoned. He asked what would happen if the property to the east wants to apply for the new zoning classification, as well. Mr. Chave explained that the property owner to the east would have to request a Comprehensive Plan

amendment, since only the subject property is identified as part of the neighborhood center. Board Member Clarke asked if the new zoning classification could be applied to the property to the east if the Comprehensive Plan is amended to allow the rezone to occur. Mr. Chave agreed that is a possibility. Board Member Clarke questioned if the language should be broader to allow this to happen. Mr. Chave agreed the language could be made broader now in anticipation of applying the classification to the east, as well. However, there is no basis in the current Comprehensive Plan to support this direction. A better approach would be to consider the Comprehensive Plan change first and then modify the design standards and zoning classification to meet the needs of this additional area.

**BOARD MEMBER YOUNG MOVED THE BOARD FORWARD FILE NUMBER AMD-09-10 TO THE CITY COUNCIL WITH THE RECOMMENDATION THAT THEY CREATE A NEW ZONING CLASSIFICATION FOR FIRDALE VILLAGE UTILIZING THE CRITERIA AND DESIGN GUIDELINES AND PERMITTED USES AS PRESENTED BY THE APPLICANT ON THE BASIS THAT THE PROPOSAL IS A BETTER WAY TO IMPLEMENT THE GOALS OF THE FIRDALE VILAGE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN POLICIES THAN THE CURRENT UNDERLYING ZONING. BOARD MEMBER WORKS SECONDED THE MOTION. THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

**The Board took a break at 9:20 p.m. The meeting resumed at 9:28.**

### **RETREAT FOLLOW UP DISCUSSION**

Chair Bowman reported on his attendance at the April 21<sup>st</sup> City Council Meeting at which they passed a resolution to form a Citizens' Economic Development Commission for the City of Edmonds. The resolution also directed the Planning Board to review and consider strategies for economic development in conjunction with the Citizens' Economic Development Commission that will improve commercial viability, tourism development, and activity in the City of Edmonds. Both groups are to report back to the City Council on or about their first meeting in December. Chair Bowman explained that as the City Council voted on the resolution, Mayor Haakenson urged them not to waste the Planning Board's time by out of hand rejecting their ideas. He said he is very excited about the City Council's decision.

Mr. Chave said he recently provided a presentation to the Mayor's Climate Control Committee, which focused on what the City has done to address climate changes. He explained that sustainability is still the City Council's Number 1 priority, and the newest resolution would be consistent with that goal. He recalled that at the Board's retreat, they asked staff to invite Stephen Clifton to provide an update on the multi-modal project and transit-oriented development. He agreed that this would be a great place for the Board to start.

Board Member Young said he would like Mr. Clifton to provide feedback on what he thinks the Board can do, what the problems are and why the City is not more diversified. Mr. Chave said the report could also identify where Sound Transit, the Ferry System, and the Sounder are in their plans for the future. He reported that staff was recently contacted by an entity that targets development near rail lines. They have targeted Edmond as a place for this potential. Because there are a number of public entities with similar interests, there might be some good opportunities for the City to consider.

Board Member Clarke announced that the Port of Edmonds Commission voted on March 8<sup>th</sup> to move forward with a master plan update. Mr. Chave explained that the Port updates their master plan periodically, and this is a great time to go through the process again. Board Member Clarke said the Port is talking about a potential master plan that would recommend taller building heights at Harbor Square, and they have expressed a desire to put the project on a fast track.

Mr. Chave summarized that he and Mr. Clifton would provide an update to the Board about what is going on now and what opportunities are available. Chair Bowman said he would like to hear from the business community throughout the City rather than just focusing on the downtown area.

Board Member Reed questioned how the Board would coordinate their efforts with the Citizens' Economic Development Commission to ensure they are both moving in the same direction. Chair Bowman said he raised that issue to the City Council because he was concerned about duplicating efforts. It was suggested that the Board and Commission meet together periodically, with the goal of preparing a unified message for the City Council.

**APPROVED**

Board Member Clarke inquired if it would be possible for at least two Board Members to participate on the committee. Chair Bowman said he made that suggestion to the City Council. He also suggested that members of the retail community, the Historic Preservation Commission, the Architectural Design Board, and the Mayor's Climate Control Committee also be appointed to serve on the new Commission. Mr. Chave reminded the Board that the resolution states that the Planning Board and the Citizens' Economic Development Commission should work together, and this allows the opportunity for the two groups to meet periodically. Therefore, he is not sure it is necessary for a Planning Board Member to participate on the Commission.

Board Member Clarke asked if there is a hierarchy between the Commission and the Board. Chair Bowman said he also argued that if the two groups come out with completely different messages, nothing would happen. On the other hand, if the Commission's message was passed through the Board to the City Council, they might end up with one single recommendation. Board Member Reed questioned who the Commission would be beholden to and who would set their agenda. Chair Bowman said his understanding is that the Commission would be self directed. He said he tried to place the Planning Board in a position where they could move the issue forward. However, because this is an election year, the City Council wanted to make sure both groups are as apolitical as possible. He noted that no formal recommendation would be presented to the City Council until after the elections have been completed. However, the Board and Commission would be invited to provide updates to the City Council at regular intervals.

The Board agreed that Mr. Clifton should be invited to attend the next available Planning Board Meeting. After this meeting, the Board could prioritize their efforts and start moving forward. The Board also agreed it would be helpful to invite Mayor Haakenson to a future meeting to provide additional feedback and direction to the Board.

Chair Bowman said that he left the Planning Board Retreat more energized than ever. The Board was energized and had great ideas to actually accomplish important tasks to make sure the City is sustainable in the future.

Board Member Reed said it is important for the Board to have a clear understanding of all of the different forces that are at work. For example, there is a lot of financial scrambling going on right now. He referred to a recently published report from Washington State Ferries which analyzes opportunities for public/private development at the existing ferry location in Edmonds. He also reminded the Board of their retreat discussion about how to help sustain and improve the City's parks.

#### **REVIEW OF EXTENDED AGENDA**

There was no additional discussion related to the extended agenda.

#### **PLANNING BOARD CHAIR COMMENTS**

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

#### **PLANNING BOARD MEMBER COMMENTS**

Vice Chair Lovell reported that the Aquatics Center Feasibility Study has nearly been completed. The team would conduct a final meeting on May 6<sup>th</sup>, and the final public meeting has been scheduled for later that same evening. After the public meeting, the report would be finalized and presented to the Planning Board and City Council.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

The Commission meeting was adjourned at 9:55 p.m.

**APPROVED**