



# JOINT PLANNING AND DESIGN COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES APRIL 20, 2016

---

## **CALL TO ORDER:**

Chair Jon Friedman called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM in the Council Chambers at 9611 SE 36th Street, Mercer Island, Washington.

## **ROLL CALL:**

Planning Commission - Chair Jon Friedman, Vice Chair Richard Weinman, Commissioners Tiffin Goodman, Craig Olson, and Suzanne Skone were present. Commissioner Bryan Cairns was absent. Commissioner Jennifer Mechem arrived at 6:04 PM.

Design Commission - Chair Richard Erwin, Vice Chair Colin Brandt, Commissioners Susanne Foster, Daniel Hubbell, Lara Sanderson, Tami Szerlip were present. Commissioner Hui Tian was absent.

Staff was represented by Steve Lancaster, Interim City Manager, Kirsten Taylor, Assistant City Manager, Scott Greenberg, Development Services Group Director, Alison Van Gorp, Administrative Services Manager and Ombudsman, Shana Restall, Principal Planner, and Travis Saunders, Senior Planner.

## **DRAFT DEVELOPMENT CODE PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION:**

DSG Director Scott Greenberg and Administrative Services Manager/Ombudsman Alison VanGorp gave a presentation outlining remaining topics of discussion in the draft Development Code. The discussion and decisions made by the Joint Commission are summarized below.

**Parking:** After some discussion, the Joint Commission supported the staff recommendations on reducing required parking ratios for residential, restaurant and retail uses as shown in the draft development code. They also supported the recommendation to increase the parking stall size and aisle widths in accordance with the WSDOT standards. Finally, they agreed to put forward to City Council a set of recommendations for increasing on-street parking and shared parking to address issues with parking for retail businesses in the north end of Town Center as well as commuter parking.

**Retail:** The Joint Commission unanimously approved a reduced area for required retail as proposed by the Code Subcommittee. They also approved revised dimensional standards for retail and maintained the "60/40" rule.

**Building Height:** The Joint Commission reopened deliberation of maximum building heights. Several Commissioners expressed concerns about Alternative D, which was agreed to at the previous meeting. The Commission revisited Alternative B.

Chair Friedman adjourned the meeting for a break at 7:23 PM. The Chair reconvened the meeting at 7:43 PM.

## **DRAFT DEVELOPMENT CODE PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION (CONTINUED):**

**Building Height (continued):** 6 of the 12 Commissioners in attendance expressed support for Alternative D. A new alternative was also proposed, but failed to gain a majority of support from Commissioners. With no clear majority decision, it was determined that Alternative D would be carried forward to the final draft of the development code.

**Affordable Housing:** The Joint Commission approved a new affordability requirement of 10% of all residential units at 60% AMI.

**Upper Floor Stepbacks (Average Daylight Plane):** The Joint Commission directed staff to continue with the ADP concept as has been discussed and agreed upon at prior meetings. No special accommodations are needed for small or oddly shaped sites.

**Plazas/public open space:** The Joint Commission supported the subcommittee proposal to allow enclosed or covered plaza spaces, with Design Commission approval. They also voted to allow the public open space requirement to be fulfilled as a part of a required through block connection (the plaza area could overlap with the connection).

**Through Block Connections:** The Joint Commission approved the updated map of through block connections locations (with one correction, to add the eastern most connection between 78<sup>th</sup> and 80<sup>th</sup> that was omitted in the PowerPoint) and the concept that the Design Commission will have discretion to require a connection when a project is proposed on a parcel within the designated areas. They also agreed that the connections can be provided across parcel boundaries if an easement is recorded and the full width of the connection is built at the time of construction. Finally, the Joint Commission agreed that the connections must be provided by all development (not just buildings over 2 stories).

**Bonus Height Requirements:** The Joint Commission supported bonus height requirements and requirements for all new buildings as proposed by staff, with one caveat. Staff was directed to further research whether it makes sense to require the same standards for green building to buildings of 1 or 2 stories.

**Multi Family Subareas:** The Joint Commission directed staff to retain all of the architectural and bonus standards agreed upon in general for Town Center within the multi-family subareas, with one exception. The public open space/plaza requirement will be waived in these subareas.

**Landscaping:** The Joint Commission supported the landscaping requirements as drafted by staff.

**Streetscapes:** The Joint Commission discussed the need for wide sidewalks and asked staff to consider whether additional easements were required in any of the street standards to achieve this result, particularly for 77<sup>th</sup> Ave SE.

The Joint Commission briefly discussed green building, the comprehensive plan and the voting process for the final meeting, but had no further input or direction for staff.

### **NEXT MEETING:**

The next regular Joint Commission meeting is scheduled for April 27, 2016.

### **ADJOURNMENT:**

Chair Friedman adjourned the Joint Commission meeting at 9:18 PM.