



SUMNER DESIGN COMMISSION

MINUTES

REGULAR MEETING

Thursday, April 8, 2004

6:00 p.m.

Sumner City Hall
1104 Maple Street

CALL TO ORDER

BISOM called the meeting to order at 6:12 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Members Present: Bennett, Bisom, Abbott and Wolch

Members Absent: Tobias, McMahan and Hansen

Also Present: Ron Buckholt, Associate Planner
James Carleton and Wayne Carlson, AHBL, Special Projects
Managers & Dan Morrison, Terrigon (PLN2004-19/20)
Bo Norbjerg, Applicant (PLN2003-60)

APPROVAL OF MINUTE

BENNETT motioned to approve the March 11, 2004 regular meeting minutes as written. **ABBOTT** seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

A) PLN2004 –19/20 Revised (Cowlitz & Nisqually)

BUCKHOLT reviewed for Commissioners the amended staff report and amended site plan as follows:

The site is located on the east side of 142nd Avenue East. The project is located on undeveloped land. Proposed is construction of two industrial warehouse/manufacturing buildings associated with parking, storm water and

landscaping. The Cowlitz Building (369,200 SF) will be phase I and the Nisqually Building (227,800 SF) will be phase II. The 30 +/- acre site is vacant and undeveloped. The site will require fill and grade work in association with this proposal. The proposed buildings will be developed around an existing single family residence that will remain. At the March meeting, the subject residence was going to be purchased and incorporated (land only) into the proposal. However, the proponent was not able to obtain the property, thus the development will be modified to develop around the existing parcel and associated residence. The general vicinity is industrial zoned and contains industrial uses.

STAFF recommended that proposal (PLN2004-19 and PLN2004-20) should be *APPROVED* subject to the following *CONDITIONS* (these conditions incorporate changes from the last meeting, giving clarification to conditions 3 and 5. Condition 6 is a new condition):

- 1. The Applicant shall install bicycle racks and/or pedestrian amenities such as benches or tables at the front entrances. The Design Guidelines require that bike racks be placed in a convenient location, typically near the entranceways at a ratio of one bicycle parking space for each ten spaces of auto parking. The bicycle racks may be located inside of the building.*
- 2. The Applicant shall locate refuse containers to the rear or side of the buildings out of sight from any public street. Adequate screening shall include masonry wall, with a gate made of metal or steel with wood or metal slates. The plant material shall be a minimum of 4 feet tall, 3 feet on center and of an evergreen variety.*
- 3. The Applicant shall install a total of four pedestrian links between the sidewalks along 142nd Avenue East and the main entrances to the buildings. These pathways should run parallel to the proposed driveways and be paved with an alternative surface or striped to distinguish this pedestrian area from the parking lot and vehicular activity. The pathways shall be a minimum of 5 feet in width.*
- 4. The north elevation of the Nisqually Building and the east elevation of the Cowlitz Building shall incorporate wall modulation or a landscaping element to improve the aesthetic value of said elevations. If the landscaping option is preferred, that a hierarchy of plantings is required. First, suitable trees, such as columnar forms, shall be planted at a minimum of 15 feet on center within a minimum 6 foot wide planting bed at the structures foundation. Second, a planting ranging from one to six feet in height at maturity shall be planted at a minimum of six feet on center within the planting bed. Third, ground cover, or non-living material shall be installed to reduce the possibility of wind and water erosion.*

5. *The applicant may be required to contribute to a general trail fund in lieu of constructing the Class I trail adjacent to the White River per the Sumner – Pacific Master Trail Plan. More detailed information on the trail fund will be made available to the applicant during the SEPA review process.*
6. *In addition to the 20 foot wide landscaping around the perimeter of the existing residence, the proponent shall construct a solid board fence along the north, east and south property lines of said residence to provide maximum noise and visual buffering from the warehouse project.*

BISOM noted that the recommendations from the last meeting had been met, and asked the Applicant to elaborate on the proposed screening around the residential property.

WAYNE CARLSON, AHBL, appeared for the Applicant. He noted that the revised site plan adds screening for the residential property. They are proposing a 10-foot solid screen landscape of vegetation along with a fence.

BISOM asked the Applicant to clarify the location of the proposed vegetation.

CARLSON addressed the question at the sight plan, indicating the location of the landscaping proposed.

ABBOTT asked Staff what the buffering requirement would be.

BUCKHOLT responded that there is none.

BISOM opened the meeting for public comment.

GLEN WHITWORTH, 3625 142nd Avenue East, appeared. He also attended the March meeting. He is the owner of residential property in question. He has many concerns about this project being built around their property. This is their home. They have a family that goes to the Sumner School District. They would like to stay or be compensated at a fair market price. He drives a dump truck for a living and does not really know what his property is worth. They have listed it at fair market value. They have never received a written offer from the Applicant, just verbal offers. Their final offer was two-thirds the fair market value. With their offers have come threats, such as “take our deal now or your property will be worth nothing”. He is concerned about the impact on the property itself. He does not want to be low-balled and snowed over, however, he does not want to live in the middle of a warehouse either. They do not want to just give their property away. They would just like it to be purchased for a fair price. In referring to the Minutes of the last meeting, the Applicant stated that they were planning to acquire the property to make their plan work. They have not really attempted to do this. He feels like he is nobody to them. He has a family with four kids and does not want to just give up their property. He his further concerned about potential hazards, not understanding all of the negatives that may go along with this. He has a tremendous

amount of concern for his family. They just want fair market value. They are concerned citizens of Sumner.

BISOM stated that, as the Design Commission, they could make suggestions for additional screening. Although it is zoned M1/ commercial, they can suggest 20-feet of screening due to the residential property in question, as the existing use is contrary to residential. The Applicant needs to elaborate on the plantings in the buffer.

BISOM asked Staff if a berm is required.

BUCKHOLT responded that there is no berm required.

BENNETT asked Staff what the setback was?

BUCKHOLT responded that it is 20 feet.

BISOM noted that it appears that Staff was suggesting 20 feet, and the Applicant was requesting that it be 10 feet.

CARLSON proceeded to elaborate on the plantings. They are proposing 6-foot tall Douglas Fir trees planted in the buffer area along with a ground cover. In portions there will be deciduous trees of a 2-inch caliper. Further, they feel that the fence will provide a screen in terms of landscaping.

ABBOTT asked what the height is in relation to the existing ground, and if the fence is on the existing grade?

JAMES CARLETON, AHBL, appeared for Applicant. He explained that the height in relation to the ground is 2 feet and that it is on the existing grade.

BISOM inquired as to the height of the building?

CARLSON responded that it is 35-feet.

BISOM noted that in looking at planting legend, it appears that it will take a while for the trees to grow. He believes that a 25-foot landscape buffer should be required, as the existing homeowner still owns the property. He suggested that they increase the buffer to 20-feet per Staff's recommendation, and that the density of planting be increased significantly in that area.

ABBOTT suggested that they could possibly obtain that density in 10-feet?

BISOM stated that the spread of the trees would get quite wide. He suggested doubling the amount of trees and offsetting them in a triangular pattern. In this pattern it would take less time for it to be screened. He would like to see more depth and further suggested another layer of evergreen trees.

CARLSON noted that with regard to a visual buffer that the hedge will be blocked by the 6-foot high fence. They feel that the fence will really screen it from the residential property. They are trying to deal with zoning requirements also, in that the physical structure not be any closer.

BISOM asked if the loading dock would be facing the residential property?

CARLETON stated that that section is an office portion of the building and that there will be no trucks in that area. To the east there will be a ramp that is infrequently used and further east of the ramp there will be truck doors. He noted that the trucks will have difficulty moving to the south portion of the property as it is now.

CARLSON added that cars will be parking in that area and that really no noise should be produced in that area.

BISOM stated that his concern is the height of building to the residential. Can parking be removed to allow for landscaping?

CARLETON responded that, per the City code, the required parking is more than the building can use.

WOLCH commented that he would support the suggested 20-foot requirement 100 percent. The uses are incompatible. It does not seem right.

BISOM noted that overall the changes to the site plan work well. His only concern is the residential area. He further noted that Staff Recommendation No. 1 seemed reasonable. One thing in particular that stands out is No. 4. Was additional screening added?

CARLETON stated that their intent was to meet that requirement per the last meeting. He directed the Commissions to the colored sketches of the east and the west elevations.

BENNETT motioned to approve Item No. 1 as written. ABBOTT seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

BISOM motioned to approve Item No. 2 as written. BENNETT seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

ABBOTT motioned as noted in Item No. 3 to install 3 pedestrian links, and that No. 3 be approved as written. BENNETT seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

With regard to Item No. 4, WOLCH asked the Applicant if the plan would be modified to show compliance with that?

CARLETON stated that it would.

BISOM suggested that the planting in the north portion should be similar, thereby carrying the planting around.

CARLETON noted that it is up against the building to provide modulation.

CARLSON added that due to the northern exposure they wanted to plant dense in the buffer area.

WOLCH asked if there was a landscape plan for around residence?

CARLETON directed the Commissioners to sheet "L".

BISOM motioned to approve Item No. 4 as written. ABBOTT seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

BISOM noted that an additional sentence had been added to Item No. 5.

ABBOTT motioned to approve Item No. 5 as written. BISOM seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

BISOM approached the site plan to clarify what is being specifically dealt with as to Item No. 6.

ABBOTT asked how tall the Douglas Firs would be when planted?

CARLSON responded that they would be 10 feet.

WOLCH stated that the advantage to a 20-foot buffer would be that it would buffer the substantial truck loading on the north side of the Cowlitz building. There will be a fair amount of truck traffic there and adding 10 feet more would improve that situation.

BISOM suggested in addition, possibly adding a 4-foot landscaped berm with landscaping on top. It may be the only way to obtain minimum mitigation in this case. For immediate screening a fence is reasonable, however, planting on top of the berm would increase that screening.

BENNETT suggested that the fence be in middle, with planting behind and in front of it. He would rather see trees in front of fence, as opposed to just the fence facing the residence.

BENNETT asked the Applicant what would be lost with the additional 10 feet of landscaping?

CARLETON stated that potentially 10 feet of building to north and south would be lost with the additional landscaping. There is a 24-foot drive lane minimum.

WOLCH asked Staff if the City would be willing to trade off parking for landscaping, if there is more parking than can be used?

BUCKHOLT stated that the only way to do that would be to go through a hearing before the hearings examiner. It would require a variance.

CARLETON stated that they have a strategy for more parking if necessary for which they can provide examples.

ABBOTT suggested taller plantings for screening and so that the residence will have a view of the fence and the tops of a few more trees.

BISOM added that the additional planting would help with sound. A four-foot berm, double layer of trees of a 10 foot tall / 6 foot tall mix for variation in growth would help. As it is a real conflict in use, 20 feet seems necessary.

WOLCH added that he is in favor of 20-foot additional landscaping in respect to there being a residence in that area. It is also what will be seen when driving down that street and is a better environment and will provide visual screening for the homeowner.

BUCKHOLT suggested a half-berm, as the backside of the berm does not have a function, maintaining a 10-foot wide buffer.

BENNETT added the suggestion of further adding decorative block.

BISOM noted that he would like to see some height in that area. He suggested either 20 feet of landscaping with a berm, or 10-feet of landscaping with a half berm and a wall.

WOLCH asked the Applicant about how they felt about the 20-foot berm.

DAN MORRISON appeared for the Applicant. He noted that they are doing a fill in the berm area, which will create a slope to the residence. That is a concern.

BISOM noted that they are looking at immediate planting and screening. In other projects with adjacent residential use, berming and taller planting is suggested. The recommendations here are similar.

MORRISON noted that there would be a 6-foot, solid board fence with a 10-foot buffer. Why would that not suffice?

CARLETON added that it is his understanding that the existing road elevation is fairly close to them.

BENNETT asked the Applicant if it is 4 feet above their elevation?

MORRISON noted that it is a 4-foot berm. He asked if there was a code for this type of situation?

BISOM stated that, because it is a unique situation, they can require additional landscaping. The suggested options are a 10-foot buffer with a fence and a half berm, or 20-foot buffer.

BISOM motion to concur with Staff recommendation for a 20-foot buffer, but to add a 4-foot berm, and further add evergreen trees that are 8-foot tall in the same quantity as the 6-foot tall trees, and with the alternate of a 10-foot buffer with a half berm and wood fence and wall.

DISCUSSION was had with regard to trees being on top of the berm and the fence not being on top of the berm.

BENNETT seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

WOLCH commented that in the last revision there was no residence. Now there is a major driveway next to a residence. He stated that he is not comfortable with that.

BISOM asked Staff if this still has to go through the rest of the review process?

BUCKHOLT responded that this is just the first step. It still has to go through the SEPA process.

WOLCH recommended that the driveway be shifted away from the property line.

BISOM noted that they would have to shift it to add the buffer.

BENNETT asked where it was proposed that they shift it?

WOLCH suggested shifting it further south. The recommendation is based on incompatible uses. There will be a substantial amount of truck traffic next to the neighboring property. It is double loaded, 680 feet of warehouse off of that spine.

WOLCH motioned to consider shifting the drive further to the south, offsetting the square footage.

MORRISON commented that it would cause hardship to the property.

BISOM responded that it is a recommendation to consider, not a requirement.

No second to the motion was made.

BISOM declared project PLN2004-19/20 approved.

B) PLN2004-31 Utility Trailer Industrial Bldg.

This agenda item was not addressed.

OLD BUSINESS

A) PLN2003-60 Norbjerg 4-Plex

This agenda items was discussed in a “study session” format, around a table with the public included.

BISOM asked the Applicant to explain modifications made per the last study session.

NORBJERG expressed his frustrating with the process, as this plan was previously approved.

BISOM advised that the Design Commission is an advisory board and that they were asked to reconsider the project to take into consideration the residential in the area.

NORBJERG commented that John Doan can just send it back again.

BISOM explained that it has been his experience that only two projects out of the last 100 have been sent back. There are concerned neighbors.

NORBJERG asked what would make the City happy, as he feels he cannot make the neighbors happy?

BISOM directed the Applicant explain his changes.

NORBJERG discussed the recessed porch (over the plan and out of the view of the Minutes Taker).

BISOM noted that the plan looks much more compatible facing the street.

BUCKHOLT added that the parking requirement has been met.

NORBJERG continued that it would be a single-story building, with the other being a story and a half.

BISOM stated that the Applicant appeared to have made the suggested changes.

NORBJERG further went on to explain the middle structure.

BISOM stated that in looking at north / northwest angle, there is a break between the two buildings. He suggested a landscape screening to soften that area, and noted that it appears to be broken up as much it as possibly can.

WOLCH noted that he likes the relationship of this project to the street.

BENNETT commented that he left the last meeting liking the changes made and felt that there was possibly a misunderstandings with neighbors that these would become rental units.

BISOM commented that he liked the modulation, however, he would like to see additional landscape planting to soften the edges and landscape screening as well. The project is heading in the direction they were going for.

BISOM asked for further clarification as to the detailing of unit "D".

NORBJERG indicated that he intended to have a bellyband separating the upper and lower level. Additionally he would have shutters on the windows. He intends to provide more detail in his final plan. At this time he is just looking for something to proceed with.

BISOM noted that it was rather tight on the sides of the structure. He suggested that there might possibly be room to plant deciduous trees in that area.

DISCUSSION was had with several neighbors in the area about concerns of the double story unit looking into one of the back yards. Further that it would be preferred that the Applicant not remove the 3 tall pine trees on the sight; two of them being on the property line.

BISOM encouraged the Applicant to incorporate the neighbors' suggestions into him plan and felt there should be enough room on the site to accommodate those changes.

NORBJERG suggested possibly adding a chain link fence with some sort of climbing plants growing up it.

DISCUSSION was had with regard to this suggestion. The neighbors present strongly disagreed with the suggestion and it was decided that a chain link fence would not be added. Further, addressed by one of the neighbors was the concern that one of the units would look into her back yard, where she has family gatherings and where her grandkids would be playing. She is a long time resident.

BISOM suggested that maybe taller trees could mitigate that.

BISOM motioned to approve the revised site plan with additional landscaping on all elevations as discussed, and that the Applicant provide a more detailed landscape

plan for next meeting, and further that the Applicant retain the 3 existing pine trees. BENNETT seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

STAFF COMMENTS

- A) **Discuss & Review Possible Amendments to the Mixed Use (Commercial / Residential) Chapter of the Design Guidelines**

This agenda item was not addressed.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

There were no Commissioner comments

ADJOURNMENT

BISOM adjourned the meeting at 7:39 p.m.

Sarah M. Heckman
Minutes Taker