

City of Sumner

**PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES**

Special Meeting

**October 21, 2004
7:00 p.m.
Sumner City Hall 1104 Maple Street**

CALL TO ORDER

MYERS called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Members Present: Bush, Ganz, Hannus, Morrison, Myers and Walter

Members Absent: Powers (notified)

Also Present: Ryan Windish, Senior Planner Robert Holler, Associate Planner

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

There were no minutes to be approved.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There was no public comment.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

There was no unfinished business.

NEW BUSINESS

1) 2004 Comp Plan Update - Public Hearing: Draft Town Center Plan:

WINDISH noted that tonight is an exciting night for planning. This is a big plan and a turning point for Sumner. This plan will help us reach the goals in the Comprehensive Plan. WINDISH gave a brief history of the Draft Town Center Plan as follows:

The City has been developing the Town Center Plan for the last two years in order to encourage development that not only supports the Sound Transit station and alternative travel options, but also to further enhance Downtown. The Plan is the roadmap to revitalizing downtown as a vibrant gathering place, a stable commercial core, and a neighborhood providing a variety of housing options in proximity to the rail station and Downtown businesses. The Draft Town Center Plan contains proposed goals and policies that will be incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan. The Plan also contains proposed amendments to the zoning regulations.

WINDISH discussed the planning process that has taken place up to this point:

- Town Center Plan Open Space Meeting, July 29, 2003 (comments from which were incorporated into the Town Center Plan);
- Economic Development Workshop, May 4, 2004;
- Town Center Housing Charette, January 29, 2004; and
- Town Center Public Workshop, September 30, 2004 (this workshop was very successful).

MYERS asked, referring to a small area on the map, why a specific small section was left out of the plan?

WINDISH responded that the planning area is 210 acres. The small area in particular was left out, as the middle parcel of those three parcels is owned by Puget Sound Energy. The other two parcels will be put back into the final plan.

WINDISH summarized the proposed goals and policies as follows: 1) Make Downtown a vibrant activity area; 2) Encourage business activities that are relevant to everyday lives; 3) Recognize the historic significance of downtown; 4) Grow Business Success; 5) Create an enjoyable identifiable Downtown atmosphere; 6) Promote Housing in Town Center; 7) Provide services and infrastructure to support the Town Center; and 8) Expand City's role in being proactive toward development in the Town Center.

WINDISH discussed Housing Strategy and Capacity which was broken down into the following categories: Existing Zoning - Potential Housing Capacity; and Proposed Zoning - Potential Housing Capacity.

WINDISH discussed the various proposed zoning changes at the map, summarized in Table 1-1 Zoning Alternative in the handout (10/15/04 Memorandum Re: Draft Town Center Plan). This outlined changes to the following zones: Central Business District; General Commercial; M-1, west of Fryar Avenue and M-2 in Fleischmann's site and vicinity; Town Center Residential; and Low Density Residential.

WINDISH also touched on structure parking and true underground parking and noted that there are different options for how that can work. Further, with regard to the parking requirement, there is an allowance for residential development to have a reduced amount of onsite parking if it can be shown that the parking demand is less. WINDISH further discussed the parking standards downtown. In the Central Business District there is no requirement for onsite parking. This would require them, however, to be a part of developing future parking. Also, parking for the train station keeps moving away from the train station as there are 700 boardings a day, as opposed to the predicted 300 boardings. That issue will need to be addressed as we move through planning process. This will all be part of the 2004 Comprehensive Plan update, a copy of which is available online.

WINDISH advised the Commissioners that Staff is tentatively recommending approval of the Town Center Plan, however, is waiting to hear from the public. There should be further discussion on any comments before approval.

WALTER asked how the City's growth in housing units came to be a GMA requirement, and not just the City's desire?

WINDISH responded that Sumner is required to accommodate for 12,250 people per the GMA. That can be done with our current capacity and vacant land and we will still have room to spare. We are looking at reducing zoning across town and shifting it to downtown by the train station. The capacity remains 10 percent of the whole, which is not disproportionate of what we had before. We can build up instead of out, which will meet the GMA.

WALTER asked if the density would increase?

WINDISH stated that it would not increase because the area would not be getting any bigger.

HANNUS asked if development in the northeast section of town counts toward density for the purposes of this plan?

WINDISH stated that it does not.

HANNUS commented that it appears that the boundary is encroaching into the development of low density.

WINDISH stated that it would not encroach into that area. That area may slowly redevelop, but we were very sensitive to maintain community character. The line was drawn at Cherry, as there was existing housing on the west side of Traffic Avenue.

MORRISON asked Staff to elaborate on traffic.

WINDISH noted that the Transportation Plan was done in 2003. The numbers were taken from a regional study. The model was upgraded, as a comparison was done to the old plan and it was found that Sumner would have more housing developments than the original plan anticipated. It was found that the traffic increases were relatively small and were even decreased on Main Street. Traffic increased, however, on Alder and Thompson (40 car trips southbound at peak hour). There was nothing that warranted changing lights, although one signal light has been recommended on Elm and East Valley Highway.

MYERS asked if Kincade and/or Cherry had been taken into consideration for parking. Both streets have a wide parking strip (10 to 15 feet on each side) that is just wasted land.

WINDISH stated that angle parking has been discussed.

BUSH asked what the ratio of owner to renter occupied was in the Town Center Area?

WINDISH noted that the census showed it to be a 50/50 split of owner to renter occupation in that area.

HANNUS asked if there was a flood plain on West Main Street?

WINDISH responded that part of it is in the river buffer, and the other part is in the flood plain. It is a good opportunity site for cottage housing.

MYERS opened the meeting to public comment.

RANDY HYNEK, 1640 Washington Street, Sumner, appeared. He was on the Planning Commission 10 years ago. When he was on the Planning Commission the Staff pretty much handed them a list of things that the City wanted to do and they were told to make it work. He does not think they have changed that much in ten years. The Planning Commission has been given an impossible condition as far as what others outside the City are expecting them to do as far as accommodating our growth. If you look at other cities around Sumner, Sumner has the highest number of apartments of any city in the south Puget Sound region by far. Sumner has 4 or 5 times more apartments than Puyallup, and maybe 10 times more apartments than Orting. Bonney Lake also has very few apartments. He does not care what the Growth Management Act says we have to do. What is the penalty if we do not do it? If we do not go to 12,000 what are they going to do to us?

MYERS stated that he believes it would affect funding.

WINDISH added the City needs to accommodate the growth. If we do a plan that does not accommodate the growth that we have been assigned to, the City would lose State funding for different projects.

HYNEK asked how much funding would be lost?

WINDISH stated that he did not know the exact figure off hand.

HYNEK further asked how a comparison could be made if we do not know the figure? Why should we follow the plan if we do not know what it will cost us if we do not. Major corporations are fined all the time, and they pay the fines everyday rather than comply because it is cheaper to pay the fine. Is it cheaper for us to pay the fine if we do not comply? Sumner did not get to where we are today because we rolled over and said okay we will do it. We fought - we said no. That is why Sumner is cute. We should look at what the cost is if we do not play ball. Who says you have to play ball. The population problem is never going to go away. For 300 years, immigration to the United States was 50,000 people per year, historically. Since 1970, immigration to the United States legally has been 1,500,000 per year, and illegal, conservatively, has been 1,000,000 a year. Current population trends indicate that with current levels of immigration, legal and illegal, population in the United States is going to double within 40 years. We are never going to be able to keep everybody happy. Redmond was mentioned in relation to this. We are not Redmond. The plan looked like it is in Redmond. We do not have the income of Redmond. \$38,000 is the average income of people living in Sumner. What is the average income for people living in Redmond? The income difference is probably five to one. That does not make sense. Further, Mr. HYNEK noted that he was on the Planning Commission when the train was brought in. It sounded like a good deal at that time. Since the train has been here, the number of vagrants and bums in Sumner has skyrocketed. They take the train from Seattle. There have been three murders by vagrants within two miles of the City of Sumner over the last four years. Finally, why do we have to pay for parking for the train? If we are going to provide parking, why do we not charge for it and make some money from it? People pay to park in Seattle. The State is not going to pay for this, and if we are paying for it why do we not charge people to park? If we have to go through the inconvenience of people parked all over our streets, then we should charge these people to park here. It is costing us and nothing is free.

MIKE PASQUIRE, appeared. He has lived in this town for more than 50 years. He thinks this plan is really beautiful. Are we developing an alternate plan though? This is beautiful, but he does not think this plan can hold together. If you take a little grander view of this area, with all the people that are moving up on the hills around here, and with the conflicts of railroads, freeways and everything else here, this has got to be a city with high-rises. The highways are jammed packed and will have to be widened pretty soon. Traffic and Fryer should be a 5-lane road that runs as an alternate to 167. Shaw Road is going to be another Meridian in a couple of years and it is going to dump right down here. The Town Center Plan is a great idea, but we should consider some alternate plan. He stated that he is sorry to see this town becoming a center of a big metropolitan area, but we have no alternative but to deal with it. If we go with this plan, somebody is going to look back here in 10 years and say who are these people that did this. People are paying approximately \$50.00 a foot for the road in front of Fred Meyer. They are paying \$20.00 a foot for real estate over by his house. This is just the beginning. We cannot put residential homes on property of that value. We need to start putting high-rises in and start allowing for it. People are going to come here and want to put in 5 to 10 story buildings. This plan is grand, but there should be some kind of alternate.

KANDI LOVGREN, 1210 Sumner Avenue, Sumner, appeared. She read through the plan, although did not get to read through all of it as she downloaded it off the Internet. She read what the consultants had to say about how Sumner is like Mayberry. It is something Norman Rockwell would paint. It is now, but will it be? She heard a lot about not wanting more multifamily, but it has been a common theme absolutely all the way through the kind of planning that has been going on. Nobody wants more multifamily. Now we are saying that we want it if it is by the train station. Did somebody actually write that in the survey, because she did not remember reading it? Dave Enslow and his family will be the only ones to gain from it financially. Is there anybody else that said they would like multifamily? She does not think so. The other thing she would like to have the Planning Commission think about is that when you open up a plan like

this you have to be very careful about how it is worded. Developers can do anything within the boundary set. There may be this grand idea of mixed use, with commercial on the bottom and housing up above, and there have been some nice plans and some nice buildings, but all of those commercial buildings are empty. There was also a really nice plan that came through for a mixed-use development over by our gateway on the corner of Elm and East Valley. That was supposed to be an incredible project. What do we have now as our gateway in Sumner? We have the backside of a big, huge apartment complex. That is what we opened our doors to. They are allowed to do that because what we wanted mixed use. We wanted that. What we have now is not wonderful. They are allowed to do it because we allowed them to do it. We wrote it so that they could do that. That is the kind of thing you have to look forward to once you open the door for that kind of multifamily development. You have all these grandiose ideas, but a developer will come in and will say that it is grand, but that they do not have the money to do that and they will do what they want to do, and they can. That is the bottom line, they can and they will. The other thing that concerns her about the plan is that they talked about Sumner not wanting any big box retail, however, they would not mind it if it looks and acts like what we already have. As long as they look friendly then it is fine. That is not what the people of Sumner want. We do not want a Borders downtown; we want a good book. We want little stores that are unique and have character. That is what people come to Sumner for now, our uniqueness. They can go to a Borders anywhere. What are we going to do to keep Sumner unique? Bring in big box retail that presents to be a small guy. She does not think so.

KELLY WHITMAN, 908 Ryan Avenue, Sumner, appeared. He has lived here 48 years and has always lived down toward the park. He use to walk to downtown. The Red Apple has been great. Now the City wants to put multifamily in there. The only other store in town is Fred Meyer. He attended several meetings on the building of City Hall, and the Mayor at that time promised the public that the Red Apple store would not disappear. He also asked at that time about parking, and was told that the City's employees would park at the Red Apple. He comes home now at 3:00 in the afternoon and cannot find a place to park. He has to park across the street at the bar until the employees move. There is no reason to change Sumner. It is a great old town.

CRAIG BURNHAM, 724 Alder Avenue, Sumner, appeared. He has lived here for 4 years. They moved here specifically because the neighborhoods here are like Mayberry. This is a great place to raise kids. When you bring in a bunch of houses like the City is proposing now, you will bring in traffic and crime. Now, with the Fred Meyer, Valley Avenue is a mess. Think twice about what you are doing, it is a great place to live, a niche community.

MYERS closed the pubic hearing.

WINDISH asked to respond to the grocery store comment. The city owns the Red Apple, and they want to keep the grocery store. The plan is to keep a grocery store in this neighborhood.

HYNEK asked Staff if they would get the cost breakdown of not complying with GMA?

WINDISH stated he would get that.

MYERS asked Staff if they wanted a study session on this plan?

WINDISH indicated that they did.

MYERS noted that there is a regular meeting on November 4th and asked when Staff would be proposing to schedule a study session?

WINDISH suggested November 18th as a good date for a study session for this issue and the Comprehensive Plan issue.

HANNUS motioned to table this agenda item until the study session on November 18, 2004. BUSH seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

MYERS noted that the study session will be open to the public, but are not open to public comment.

CORRESPONDENCE

There was no correspondence.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

BUSH commented that she appreciated hearing the public's comments this evening.

WALTER stated that she is delighted to see the Beach House come down. She asked about whether the owner of the Beach House still owned the land?

WINDISH indicated that he did.

WALTER asked if the owner wanted to sell it?

WINDISH stated that the City has tried to buy it.

WALTER also commented that she is a Sound Transit rider, and that she has yet to witness vagrants. Further, the fare is four dollars each way, so they do not get many vagrants. The homeless population in Sumner has been a problem for years, however, it is not necessarily related to train station.

BUSH noted that there has been a change, however, she is not sure what it is related to.

DISCUSSION was had about growth and whether it can be stopped.

HANNUS thought that Randy HYNEK had some interesting comments.

MYERS stated that if they want to do away with GMA, it would have to be put to a vote.

GANZ noted that the citizens' concerns were mostly with traffic. GANZ asked Staff if there was any news on what is going on with the Daffodil Bowl?

WINDISH stated that there is no news yet, however, he thinks it will be apartments.

GANZ asked if the information from this meeting and the meeting on the 30th would be ready for the next meeting?

WINDISH stated that he will compile those things by the 18th or sooner. The meeting on November 4th will be a summary of the changes to the Comprehensive Plan. He noted that it would be more about the rezoning requests than anything else.

STAFF COMMENTS

WINDISH had the following Staff comments:

- 1) The bus trip will be on Saturday. WINDISH asked that the Commissioners notify Staff if they will not be able to make it. Further, they will need an attendance count for the meeting on the 4th of November; and
- 2) The big news is that the Beach House is coming down.

HANNUS asked if anything could be done about trucking traffic on Traffic Avenue?

WINDISH stated that Public Works has discussed with the trucking companies not taking that route.

MYERS noted that truck traffic has cut down on Valley Avenue.

ADJOURNMENT

GANZ motioned to adjourn at 8:11 p.m. HANNUS seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Ryan Windish, AICP
Senior Planner