

**City of Gig Harbor Planning Commission  
Minutes of Work-Study Session  
Thursday, June 3, 2004  
Gig Harbor Civic Center**

**PRESENT:** Commissioners Kathy Franklin, Carol Johnson, Bruce Gair, Dick Allen and Chairman Paul Kadzik. Commissioner Theresa Malich was absent. Commissioner Scott Wagner arrived at 6:15. Staff present: Steve Osguthorpe and Diane Gagnon.

**CALL TO ORDER:** 6:00 p.m.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

**MOTION:** Move to approve the minutes of May 6, 2004 Franklin/Johnson – unanimously approved.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**WORK-STUDY SESSION**

**City of Gig Harbor, Update of Design Manual**

Planning Manager Steve Osguthorpe gave a brief history on the design manual, explaining that it was first adopted in 1996 and was to be amended 2 years after that. He further explained that the Design Review Board had been working on the update for several years and was proposing a change to the format of the Design Manual to make it more user friendly and adding new graphics and maps. Some changes were staff suggestions to clear up inconsistencies between the Design Manual and the Zoning Code. Mr. Osguthorpe then went through the summary of proposed changes that was attached to the staff report explaining the reasons for each.

- Correct typographical errors in original manual.
- Incorporate cleaner graphics in to the manual.
- Prepare manual for incorporation into the Gig Harbor Municipal Code – This will make it easier for the customer to find the answers they need in just one document. The inclusion will not make the manual any more or less restrictive. Any inconsistencies between the Design Manual and Zoning Code will be eliminated.

Commissioner Allen noted that many of the “should” had been changed to “shall”. Planning Manager Steve Osguthorpe explained that “should” is not enforceable and some have already led to lawsuits. There is currently some prohibitive language in the manual. Mr. Osguthorpe said that an applicant needs clear direction on what they can and can’t do. Within the specific language the shoulds were changed to shalls, but within the intent statement for the Design Review Board there is still flexibility (except in the case of dimensional standards).

Discussion followed on the difference between the specific language and the intent statement. The specific language is what the staff can approve and the intent statement which the design review board can consider.

- Reformat entire document into more definitive chapters and topics –

Commissioner Wagner asked if those items which can be taken to the DRB will be indicated as such. Mr. Osguthorpe stated that any bold and underlined text that is not a dimensional standard can be taken to the DRB.

Commissioner Gair voiced his concern that language in the beginning of the manual regarding public involvement and communication had been removed and suggested that there be some requirement for the proposed project to be demarcated by netting and/or poles. Mr. Osguthorpe stated that that particular section of language was removed in order to avoid giving a false impression that there was a process whereby neighbors would be notified. He further pointed out that language had been added on page 8 item 2 (b) stating that the Design Review Board or staff may request that the proposed structures be demarcated with rods, netting and/or balloons to better review mass, scale and/or location.

- Refer to all development as either residential or non-residential through out the document.
- Adopt an expiration date for design review approval (24 months).
- Incorporate an Industrial Building Exemption that defines industrial buildings and identifies which standards are exempt for industrial buildings – The IBE acronym follows each item which industrial building are exempt.
- Rename and amend boundaries of activity centers.
- Extend boundaries of historic district to include parcels on both sides of Stinson Avenue and Rosedale Street, and the parcel on the southwest corner of Stinson and Rosedale Street.
- Eliminate requirement to cluster development around outdoor space in activity center.
- Eliminate requirement for pedestrian paths in activity centers to connect to out-lying development – This requirement was difficult to obtain and only practical where there was existing development.
- Eliminate requirement to buffer pedestrian areas from the street – This requirement is a right of way issue and all language that regulates development in the right is being removed as the public works standards regulate development of the right of way.

Chairman Kadzik mentioned that the Design Review Board would like the right-of-way standards to stay in the manual and is drafting a letter to ask City Council consider this and assure that they don't get forgotten. Planning Manager Steve Osguthorpe pointed out that these standards do not apply to parks and other city owned property, only to the right of way.

Mr. Osguthorpe then continued with the summary of proposed changes.

- Eliminate transit stop language from activity center standards.
- Identify New parkways (e.g., Borgen Blvd., Purdy Drive, North/South Connector, and eliminate portion of Rosedale Street Parkway lying west of Skansie Avenue, extend Peacock Hill Avenue parkway up to Borgen Blvd.
- Eliminate setback averaging requirement from parkway standards. This requirement just creates creeping and never achieves the desired setbacks.
- Eliminate all right-of-way design standards (with the intent of incorporating them into the Public Works Standards)
- Revise Zone Transition standards to include a more definitive description of what “substantial buffering” between districts entails, to require conformance to architectural standards if development abuts a different zone on the same side of the street, and to apply zone transition standards only if a proposed use is not an allowed use in the opposing zone.

Commissioner Allen asked for some examples as to why this was problematic and an explanation of why you would want to buffer R-2 from R-1.

Commissioner Wagner suggested that perhaps on property with an R-1 neighbor it would be more appropriate to make it a radius rather than within 200’ of the parcel.

Chairman Paul Kadzik offered that the building on Pioneer is a good example of how the standards work. They were required for modulate the building footprint and it creates more of a residential feel. He explained further that R-2 next to R-1 would have to go before the Design Review Board.

Commissioner Allen expressed further concern that something built in R-2 next to R-1 would have to be sized as single family residential or would have to go to the Design Review Board and subsequently the Hearing Examiner and that perhaps neighbors would be opposed and cause the project to be denied.

Planning Manager Steve Osguthorpe explained the Hearing Examiner is not a political body. The Hearing Examiner decisions are based upon law, not how many people oppose it.

It was decided to make the zone transition an item for discussion at the next work session.

- Adopt additional regulations on the clearing of the underdeveloped portion of a developed site.
- Provide better definition of what it means to maintain natural topography.
- Revise standards for protective barricades that protect areas of natural vegetation to provide a sturdier barricade that will not be easily removed or buried during the construction phase.
- Provide additional tree-replacement options for trees otherwise required to be retained.
- Provide phase landscape options for sites not fully developed.
- Provide maintenance and thinning provisions for overcrowded buffer areas.
- Define the required width of primary walkways.

- Define seating requirements along primary walkways.
- Revise secondary walkway requirements to state that walkways should provide the shortest route between building entrances.
- Include in the list of common area options an “outdoor employee space”, which would be applicable to professional office and industrial buildings only.
- Provide alternative parking lot landscaping standards that allows trees to be placed in regularly spaced islands as opposed to continuous landscaped strips.

Commissioner Wagner suggested that this item be annotated for an IBE (Industrial Building Exemption) due to large truck traffic.

- Redefine driveway location requirements to minimize their impacts on perimeter landscape areas or buffers.
- Establish setbacks for parking lots located near street corners.
- Revise lighting standards to allow security lighting that is not downward directional, provided it is intermittent lighting on motion detectors.
- Define height allowance for parking lot or pole lights.

Commissioner Wagner asked about lighting of industrial buildings for swing and graveyard shifts.

Chairman Kadzik explained that the Design Review Board felt that light pollution was a consideration and only considered Industrial Building Exemptions for items that served no practical purpose.

Planning Manager Steve Osguthorpe gave a further explanation of the International Dark Sky Society and clarified that buildings and parking lots can still be illuminated as long as the lighting is downward directional.

- Include provisions that avoid false-front appearance on buildings.
- Include provisions that allow primary structures to be single-story structures if the architecture provides the lofty appearance of two-story structures.
- Provide more descriptive definition of acceptable siding materials.
- Include a “masonry façade option” that, if applied, allows some other design standards to be relaxed.

Mr. Osguthorpe explained that this option was for buildings whose use (such as a theatre) made the solid/void ratio requirement impractical.

- Provide better definition of acceptable roofing colors.
- Eliminate under the specific language of the Design Manual faux windows, false-fronts and architectural details that do not reflect the overall building design.
- Provide more options for acceptable field (wall) colors. (3.9.01(1))
- Redefine how parking car garage entrances must be recessed beyond front façade (3.11.01(1)).
- Provide additional options for de-emphasizing garages on single family houses (3.13.01(1)).

- Redefine the point within allowable building area where building height must be measured (3.13.01(3)).
- Redefine the maximum height of a wall on single family homes before a step-back in the wall plane is required. (3.13.01(4)).
- Eliminate requirement for DRB review of basic structure units in historic district.
- Eliminate maximum height option in the historic district for commercial structures.
- Extend the boundaries of the historic district.

Planning Manager Steve Osguthorpe explained that the boundaries were being adjusted because at the present time a street is the historic district boundary and typically you would not want differing standards facing each other on the same street.

Commissioner Allen expressed concern with the addition of the parcel at the corner of Rosedale and Stinson being added. Mr. Osguthorpe explained that it had been added because it is the intersection where you enter the historic district and provides a sense of arrival and also if not included it would be the only parcel at that intersection not within the historic district.

- Amend construction barricade fencing standards to require a more substantial fence (2.1.01(6)).
- Provide standards for the use of slider windows in the historic district (3.14.01(4)).
- Provide allowances for use of horizontal cable for deck railing in the waterfront portion of the historic district.
- Redefine colors for roofing material in the historic district (3.14.07(2)).

Mr. Osguthorpe noted that the Design Review Board is also recommending the removal of the provision where those parcels within the R-1 portion of the Historic District may choose to abide by the zoning code regulations or the design manual. He explained that it is extremely difficult to track what a particular person has chosen and then to hold subsequent property owners to that standard.

- Include a new standard that requires natural or factory finishes on brick and stone to be retained (not painted).
- Eliminate reference to vinyl siding as an appropriate material in the historic district.
- Create a new definition of “dense vegetative buffer” that provides both the dimension of the buffer and the type and spacing of vegetation within the buffer.
- Revise definition of “gable” (see “porch” in glossary).
- Revise definition of “prominent façade” to make sure it includes any façade visible from any public right-of-way (see “prominent façade” in glossary).
- Redefine definition of “significant vegetation” to exclude maple and alder. (See “significant vegetation” in glossary)

Commissioner Wagner suggested that the definition of “significant vegetation” rely on the size of the vegetation rather than the type of vegetation. It was decided that this item would be continued for discussion at the next work session.

- Define alley requirements in residential plats (1.5.01(2)).
- Require that all structures on a site be located at front setback line unless they are directly located behind other buildings.
- Change from 7 feet to 8 feet the allowed reduction of parking stall that may be used to retain significant vegetation.

Chairman Kadzik identified the issues which still needed discussion at the next work session:

Recommendation to the City Council regarding right of way issues  
 Zone Transition  
 Industrial Building Exemption for parking lot landscaping  
 Expansion of the Historic District  
 Alders and Maples as significant vegetation.

**NEXT REGULAR MEETING:**

June 17th, 2004  
 July 1, 2004

Work Session  
 Public Hearing

**ADJOURN:**

**MOTION:** Move to adjourn at 8:50 p.m.  
 Johnson/Franklin – unanimously approved

CD recorder utilized:  
 Disc #1 Track 1 and 2  
 Disc #2 Track 1  
 Disc #3 Track 1