

**City of Gig Harbor Planning Commission
Work Study Session
Planning and Building Conference Room
September 6, 2012
5:00 pm**

PRESENT: Harris Atkins, Reid Ekberg, Craig Baldwin, Jim Pasin, and Bill Coughlin. Rick Gagliano and Michael Fisher were absent.

STAFF PRESENT: Staff: Tom Dolan and Jennifer Kester

CALL TO ORDER: at 5:00 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Move to approve the minutes of June 21, 2012 as written. Pasin/Baldwin – Motion carried

Mr. Baldwin noted that on the minutes of July 5, 2012 he was listed as absent when he was present. Move to approve the minutes of July 5, 2012 as corrected. Pasin/Coughlin – Motion carried.

Ms. Kester noted that the minutes of August 16, 2012 had just been distributed tonight. Mr. Coughlin noted that Mr. Gagliano had intended to add some thoughts from the walking tour of August 16th. Ms. Kester agreed but said that she hadn't received those yet. It was decided that they would wait until the next meeting to adopt the minutes of August 16th and it would be noted at the bottom of the minutes the portions that were observations of a Planning Commission member.

WORK STUDY SESSION:

2012 Annual Comprehensive Plan Amendments

PL-COMP-12-0002: Transportation Element. A city sponsored Comprehensive Plan text amendment to update the Transportation Element to include additional policies that encourage and enhance pedestrian and vehicular connections in the downtown area.

Ms. Kester noted that these policies begin to implement some of the business strategies that were part of the Rod Stevens report. She noted that there needed to be supporting policies along capital projects on the books in order to partner with private developers to complete these projects.

Mr. Pasin asked why do the policies need to be so specific as to the streets. Ms. Kester stated that in sub-policies it does get a little more specific in order to identify the area. Mr. Pasin asked what a "shared vehicular pedestrian alley" meant. Ms. Kester said that it could mean many different things; it could have different materials to differentiate between the vehicular and pedestrian areas, but that the idea was to make sure that it

was an alley that could accommodate both. Discussion followed on what was meant by encourage. Ms. Kester went over the public and private streets in the area.

Senior Engineer Emily Appleton joined the meeting and gave a brief explanation of what the Engineering Department had intended in regard to the alleys vs. public roads in the area. She then discussed what shared vehicular and pedestrian areas meant. Mr. Dolan suggested more general language, stating something like “provide for a pedestrian connection between Harborview Dr and Judson St., due to the narrow existing rights of way for shared pedestrian/vehicular rights of way” so that it states that we want some kind of connection but it’s exact type and location can be figured as needed. Ms. Appleton stated that would be fine and meet the intent.

Mr. Atkins asked if this would be an appropriate time to add some policies regarding public parking. Mr. Dolan stated that he felt that there were already policies in the comprehensive plan that would allow the Planning Commission to explore those options.

Discussion followed on the importance of these policies in order to receive grants, update the public works standards and to accomplish capital projects.

Mr. Dolan stated that staff would rework the language and bring that back for the Public Hearing. Ms. Kester noted that the meeting would be held in the Community Rooms rather than the Council Chambers on September 20th at 5:00 for a work-study session and 6:00 for the public hearing. She asked if they wanted her to draft some initial findings or wait for the October meeting. The commission requested draft findings be developed for the September meeting.

OTHER BUSINESS

Appointment of an alternate DRB member

Mr. Dolan explained that currently Mr. Gagliano and Mr. Fisher are members of the DRB and recently we have had an issue when we didn’t have a quorum. He further explained that while Mr. Fisher is recuperating we should have an alternate and they could either attend all the meetings or only attend when necessary. Mr. Coughlin asked if this was temporary and Mr. Atkins explained that it would be a position that would always be filled. Mr. Atkins emphasized that if an alternate had attended a meeting on a certain project they should follow that project through. Mr. Pasin noted that it is a good learning experience to serve on the Design Review Board. Ms. Kester went over the makeup of the Design Review Board. It was decided to defer this issue until the next meeting so that everyone could check his or her schedules.

Work Study Session:

Downtown Zoning Code Amendments – Planning Commission review and identification of codes that inhibit the preservation of character-defining historic buildings

in the downtown. Follow-up discussion on downtown walking tour. Discussion of potential amendments and review schedule.

Ms. Kester stated that at the end of their walking tour she had suggested that the next step would be to take the previous discussion and select the items that warrant the development of code amendments. She went over the timeframes required for code amendment adoption. She added that their October 18th meeting has already been slated for an open house for the draft visioning statement. Mr. Dolan noted that staff can advise the City Council if more time is needed. Mr. Pasin felt that items 2, 4 and 6 could be worked on now (see below of list of items being referred to). Mr. Atkins wondered why #1 had been left out. It was decided to conduct a poll. Mr. Coughlin said 1 was a no brainer and that 6 was very critical. He agreed with Mr. Pasin that 2, 4 and 6 would make a big difference for the downtown. Mr. Baldwin said he liked 1, 2, 4 and 6. Mr. Atkins said he agreed with what had been said, start with 1, and then go to 6 then 2 and 4. Mr. Ekberg stated that he thought 1 and 2 were the easiest, he liked 4 and he liked 6 but didn't see how we would get there. Ms. Kester talked about what would be required to bring the proposals forward from here. Discussion followed on different ways to approach each of the proposals and different scenarios if the proposals were adopted. It was decided that 2 and 6 would be phase 1 and then they would think about 1 and 4 next. Ms. Kester said she would bring back language for 2 and 6 at the next meeting.

- 1. Grandfather existing building sizes (sq footage) in the DB Zone. Allow existing non-historic buildings to be torn down and re-built within the existing building envelope. (DRB approval required.)*
- 2. Allow increased floor area within an existing building's envelope (mezzanines, etc).*
- 3. Provide building size allowances to eligible or listed historic buildings in the View Basin if the front façade is preserved.*
- 4. Consider height increase allowances for buildings in the View Basin (up to 2 stories).*
- 5. Consider incentives for first floor retail/restaurant.*
- 6. Consider increasing the cost of remodel threshold for nonconforming buildings (currently 50% of replacement value).*

Mr. Atkins noted that he will not be at the first meeting in October. Mr. Ekberg said he won't be at the next meeting.

Ms. Kester noted that the city website now has the Town Hall meeting data posted. Discussion followed on some of the data gathered. Ms. Kester talked about what will happen at the open house on October 18th and how things will go forward after that for the visioning process.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Move to adjourn at 6:41p.m. Baldwin/Coughlin – Motion carried.