



PLANNING COMMISSION

MEETING SUMMARY

Thursday, June 21, 2007

Sammamish Commons, 801 228th Ave NE, Sammamish, WA 98075

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Scot Jarvis, Ron Brown, Bob Keller, Erica Tiliacos, Bob Conger, Scott Hamilton, Karen Moran (will be late)

STAFF PRESENT: Kamuron Gurol, Susan Cezar, Eric LaFrance, Evan Maxim

CALL TO ORDER: 6:30pm

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: May 24th Minutes: Motion was made to approve as corrected June 7th Minutes: Comment regarding schedule update - modify the word "initial" to mean "complete their recommendation for LID." There was another comment on the SMP. It should say that the SMP will be moved forward; we didn't actually agree or take a vote to move it forward. Clarification by Kamuron: no decisions were made, no formal recommendations. The commission was asked only to be kind of a sounding board. We are then going out to our standard public input process starting probably in the fall and then it will come back to you for your formal review and recommendation. Erica suggested adding that phase one is going to proceed the way it has to proceed and then go to review by the Dept of Ecology and on the second part, the word "distinctions" should not be all capitalized. Motion was made to accept the June 7th minutes as corrected. All in favor

Planning Commissioner Terms: Changing or staggering terms was discussed. It was suggested that staff would first get clarification as to what the RCW actually allows and then get this on the agenda.

LOW IMPACT DEVELOPMENT (LID)

Introduction & Overview: Kamuron gave a brief overview, introduced Eric LaFrance, Drainage Engineer and Evan Maxim, Sr. Planner. He stated there would be public testimony next week.

Review Draft LID Code Amendment: Evan discussed that the purpose of LID is to reduce storm water impact. This was a multi process to identify both LID techniques, scope out projects and hear testimony from the development community. The presentation covered the LID techniques, the differences between the techniques, the incentives, the idea behind the point system which is to provide a relative evaluation of technique versus incentive. One of the features of the point system is that it does require you have at least two LID techniques on a site to qualify for the incentive that the city would offer. The review process does allow for some flexibility. The intent for the non residential use in section 3 is to provide a placeholder for the LID techniques coming out of the town center plan. Eric discussed density incentives, calculations and redemption credits. One clarification is that when they select a technique it is going to be

evaluated in terms of whether it is the right technique for that site. Evan discussed our general review authority. When we are looking at a LID technique that is not going to function on a site we are not going to grant a LID incentive to correspond. We want to evaluate the LID techniques proposed on a site as early on as we can. If we're seeing a LID technique that might function on the site but will cause a health or safety issue, we will not support that.

Review of LID Examples: Questions were asked about right of way reductions giving developers more building space. Kamuron suggested having a developer come up with some examples and with our examples tonight and additional pictures we can illustrate the scenarios more effectively. Commissioner Conger suggested asking two developers do this; one who has done LID developments and one who has not. Evan handed out the examples and also had them on power point.

Discussion of Issues: Commissioner Tiliacos commented on a presentation she attended on the permeability of porous concrete and how they are very much tied to bio soils. She doesn't see how our LID actually ties technique and incentive together. It was stated that what we are doing is trying to give the developer the maximum amount of flexibility in order to entice him to do something. It was discussed that we need more specific goals and benchmarks on what these goals are intended to accomplish. Discussed combination of techniques that are complimentary and of better value. It was stated that we should tell the developer what we want them to do rather than putting them in the driver's seat. Also discussed was what percentage is typically retained as vegetation area in a development. We should get a real good solid purpose statement as that's the basis we are going to look at for the review. What is the point of what we're trying to do? She said she sees a lack of consistency – no annual review. On the point system, the city is in control of the playbook. It is our incentives that we want them to be using. This is voluntary which is why we are trying to give them incentives. Evan stated that the city has made a fair amount of effort in contacting other agencies and stakeholders. We will probably be revising our second draft to include incentives as proposed. There was discussion on the incentive selection. Three main categories: 1) Storm water facility sizing. This is already reflected in the KC Storm water design manual so not something we need to take any further action on as part of this code. The next two are expedited permit review and reduced impact fees – these are not in the draft ordinance right now because this is not something the city felt it could commit to on an administrative level. They have implications beyond the actual development itself. Kamuron commented that we would rather do better by everybody. We are trying to streamline our process right now and deal with the incentives that are more directly related to individual applications.

Next Steps: Draft the code and get initial feedback. There will be a public hearing on June 28th with an option to continue to the 12th. We will draft a second draft of the code amendment with the goal of looking to get recommendation to council before the August break.

PLANNING COMMISSION Q&A:

Kamuron introduced Asea Sandine who took over for Darci Donovan who is now the Permit Center Manager.

It was asked to explain how they came up with the value of points for certain things. Eric explained that he and Evan went through the list and all the feedback they heard. We did not

punch a calculator to come up with a value. Kamuron restated that the techniques with the highest value get the most points. The natural system is what we are trying to emulate. They discussed the “menu” analogy. Maybe see who orders what, what techniques are more popular and effective and make adjustments to the ordinance. This is an opportunity for us to learn how these go. We are rewarding the technique that most retains the natural ground. Our goal of keeping as much natural surface as we can should be in our statement.

There was a question as to why would we even want to allow a developer to eliminate recreational space since we already have a lack? Answer was that the demand and need is for sports fields and public parks, not homeowner owned private parks and tot lots. These spaces are often not even big enough for a half basketball court. Statement was made that this seems to be directly against the park plan. Kamuron will check on that.

Another question on narrower streets: Eric answered that the developers want narrower streets because they cost less to build. The city called in the fire commissioner to find out minimum widths they need; talked to staff. Talked about doing streets with no parking or on one side only.

There was discussion on bio retention and general LID techniques. It was stated there was no mention of rain gardens or swails. Erica stated that bio filtration swails is one of the main techniques of trying to handle storm water and we don't seem to be giving it the importance it deserves. Wondered if this was an oversight.

Commission Conger thanked everyone for coming, presenting and answering questions. This is the first step in the right direction. We can always do more. There was a comment on voluntary vs. mandatory and he suggested having this discussion before handing it off to council.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Gail Twelves, 19727 S 10th Street, Sammamish

Stated she was excited and extremely encouraged and thanked Eric, Evan & Kamuron. Reiterated considering the idea of mandatory. She stated that she does not see the developers as our “customers” but as our key audience that we need to be in partnership with and cooperatively build our communities. She mentioned the concept of parking “pockets” where not the whole street has to be narrow or wide. She had real concerns about the point system. There seems to be too much focus on these techniques. While looking at the points the goal is lost in translation. What's missing is the actual goal and that's maximum retention of storm water on site. All the techniques are there for the developer to pull together the correct one to meet the goal. I don't think we should be rewarding anything until we actually verify and measure that the water is staying on site. We can pat ourselves on the back for doing LID but if the people down slope are still getting flooded because someone just cherry picked two techniques that didn't really add up to anything but they got credit. That's the danger in this “menu” of techniques. A note on impervious concrete – I know it seems new but actually it's been tested for years and years and there should be a high level of confidence in using it. While she was on the Town Center task force she was absolutely for LID in the town center because there is so much at stake down hill. It can truly be a shining example for other cities because of where it sits and what's at stake.

Eileen Stahl, 21553 SE 28th Lane, Sammamish

She stated her gut feeling was that the only people left out of this process was the public. The process is developer driven when really the public has paid the price so far. We've seen a degraded environment, water quality, landslides, flooding, repercussions that are a cost to the public and now we are trying to incentivize the developers. She states she thinks the customer has been wrong and the public has paid the price and now we want to pay them to do the right thing. She thinks it should be mandatory to do LID because it's the right thing and serves the public good. She included a document with her comments which details the public cost of storm water run off. We need to do this for the right reason. "I'm hoping you will take a look at this as public servants instead of developer servants".

Stan Bump, 23010 SE 8th Street, Sammamish

Spoke of changing the RCW for the commissioner terms. His concern is that at the end of the year four commissioners would be turning over. Members are appointed not elected. He thinks we should go to a 2/2/1/ cycle and in a four year cycle we can turn them all over.

Karen Moran

Stated that she would like to see a copy of the RCW on this. Kamuron said they would find it and email it out and put it on the June 28th agenda.

ADJOURN

Motion was made to adjourn 9:30pm.