REDMOND PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

November 17, 2010

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT: Commissioners O'Hara, Biethan, Miller, Flynn, and Julinsey

COMMISSIONERS EXCUSED: Chairman Hinman, Vice-Chair Gregory

COMMISSIONERS CURRENTLY SERVING ON THE CODE REWRITE

COMMISSION: Canaan Bontadelli, Vibhas Chandorkar

STAFF PRESENT: Eric McConaghy, Sarah Stiteler, Jeff Churchill, Kim Dietz,

Redmond Planning Department; Tricia Thomson, Redmond Public

Works Department

RECORDING SECRETARY: Kathryn Kerby of Lady of Letters, Inc.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by Chairman Pro-Tem O'Hara in the Council Chambers at City Hall.

APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA:

There were no changes to the agenda. However, Ms. Stiteler reported that the City legal staff had recommended that the Commission pass a motion to make Commissioner O'Hara the Chairman Pro-Tem. Commissioner Miller made the motion; it was seconded and passed unanimously. Chairman Pro-Tem O'Hara also reported that Commissioner Flynn was delayed but was on his way.

ITEMS FROM THE AUDIENCE:

There were no questions or comments from the audience.

PUBLIC HEARING AND STUDY SESSION, Overlake Amendments Phase III, presented by Jeff Churchill, Redmond City Planner.

Mr. Churchill reviewed the proposed amendments:

- 1) Infrastructure planning for transportation, parks and stormwater.
- 2) Preferred alignment for the East Link light rail system, resulting in changes to both the City's Comprehensive Plan and the Redmond Community Development Guide (RCDG):
 - a. Changes to the Transportation element regarding the light rail alignment.
 - b. Changes to the Transportation Master Plan regarding the project description for the Overlake access ramp and 152nd Avenue NE.
 - c. Changes to the Urban Center's element regarding the light rail station location in Overlake Village.
 - d. Changes to the proposed Overlake Business and Advanced Technology zone to institute revised cross-sections for NE 40th Street.
- 3) Changes to the proposed Overlake Village zone, based on study and comments.

1

Chairman Pro-Tem O'Hara introduced Mr. Randy Bannecker speaking on behalf of Sears. He spoke to the Commission on this topic during their last meeting, at which time he had requested that the planned street and urban pathway be coordinated with redevelopment in that area. Since that meeting, Mr. Churchill had clarified that the maps were only conceptual in nature and any future construction of those elements would go through the regular planning process, thereby providing the design flexibility Mr. Bannecker and Sears had requested. Mr. Bannecker and Sears greatly appreciated that flexibility. However, he would still like that reflected on the map. The map currently only has a small footnote saying that future element development would be coordinated with parcel redevelopment.

Secondly, Mr. Bannecker wanted to voice Sears's appreciation for the vision component of the Overlake plan, and he commended the openness with which the City planners, staff and Commissioners have worked with stakeholders. Chairman Pro-Tem O'Hara thanked him for his comments, and asked if the Commissioners had any questions or comments. There were none. There were no other members of the audience who wished to speak. Chairman Pro-Tem O'Hara closed the oral testimony portion of the public hearing but left open the written portion. He then invited Commissioner Biethan to begin his discussion of the issues matrix.

Commissioner Biethan reported that there remained only two items. He mentioned that Issue #1 had been raised by Commissioner Flynn who was delayed in traffic, so he started with Issue #2. That issue asked for clarification on how the technical analysis from the 152nd Avenue corridor study supported the revised project description in the Transportation Master Plan. Mr. Churchill replied that the study still needed some refinement. As a result, the Planning staff has recommended that just the grid itself become part of the plan and zoning code at this time. Furthermore, staff has recommended that the topic of cross-sections be left open until more analysis and conversations with stakeholders has been completed.

Commissioner Miller pointed out that they had originally been presented with a two-lane cross section, but since then the design had evolved into a three-lane cross section. He was interested in both possibilities, and wanted to see a comparison of how each of those would work for a pedestrian-oriented street. Commissioner Miller was also concerned that a three-lane cross section would work very differently from a two-lane for pedestrians. He was also surprised that the three-lane design had been proposed after much of the feedback indicated a two-lane cross section would work.

Mr. Churchill and Ms. Thomson replied that they had apparently misunderstood Commissioner Miller's question as listed on the issues matrix. They would provide feedback on this comparison request. Mr. Churchill also offered to bring the study's final results before the Commission when they were ready later in December, Mr. Churchill emphasized that staff were not recommending that anything in the Community Development Guide be changed prior to the final analysis. Commissioner Miller asked how they could simultaneously avoid making a decision on which cross section to use, yet move forward with the amendments. Mr. Churchill clarified that they did not need to decide on which cross section to use. The existing road is four lanes. Part of the confusion came from the fact that the original redesign of the cross section for that corridor occurred when the light rail alignment still traveled along 152nd. When that alignment changed, the plans for $152^{\rm nd}$ needed to be updated as well. Staff did not need the Commission to decide on the cross section at the current time. Rather, staff knew the grid would help distribute the traffic expected in 2030, so they wanted approval of the grid system concept in general, and the details would be worked out later. Commissioner Miller replied that his concern all along was whether the City could fulfill the policy and vision for this corridor with what is in three lanes a very suburban section. Commissioner Biethan asked if the issue should be kept open. Mr. Churchill said they would not be able to answer that question until the study is done, which is several weeks away. If the Commissioners were comfortable with adding just the grid without a discussion about cross sections, they could then add the grid concept to the plan and have the cross section discussion separately.

Chairman Pro-Tem O'Hara was comfortable with that approach, and Commission Miller was comfortable with having a separate conversation about the grid and its approval, with the caveat that the cross section issue would be discussed after the traffic study was complete. Furthermore, that the cross-section discussion would focus on how each cross section design would satisfy the policy vision. Commissioner Biethan asked if this issue could be closed. Commissioner Miller indicated he was ready to close the issue given the listed caveat. Mr. Churchill agreed to document the caveat in the issues matrix.

Commissioner Biethan opened discussion on Issue #1, regarding parking in Overlake Village, particularly for transit users. Commissioner Flynn had joined the meeting, and said he appreciated the staff comments on this issue. He also understood the preference for making the SE Redmond transit center the bigger hub. However, he wondered if the public would initially have the same concerns he had. He had no further questions. Commissioner Miller added that there would also be the facility at NE 40th with parking facilities. There were no further questions or comments.

Commissioner Biethan asked if there were any additional questions or issues for discussion. Commissioner Miller asked if staff had any comment on Mr. Banneker's request to update the map. Mr. Churchill said they could update the map as requested. He will look at possibly placing the requested text directly on the map. The Commissioners agreed that placing that text directly on the map would be the preferred way to clarify the map. The Commissioners had no other questions so Chairman Pro-Tem O'Hara closed the discussion, but kept written testimony open until December 7th.

STUDY SESSION, Bear Creek Neighborhood Plan Update, presented by Jeff Churchill, Redmond City Planner.

Chairman Pro-Tem O'Hara opened the study session. Mr. Churchill reported that a piece of written testimony had come in after last week's public hearing; it was an email from Steve Thompson, which was included in the Commissioners' meeting packet. Mr. Churchill said they could discuss that email if needed. Secondly, Mr. Churchill reported that he had invited Ms. Sue Stewart, a transit safety officer from Metro Transit, to provide more information about Metro's stance on bus pullouts.

Ms. Stewart clarified that she wanted to represent herself as a citizen with expertise in transportation issues rather than being a Metro Transit spokesperson. With that caveat, she explained that she has spent almost 30 years with Metro Transit, during which she has been a major contributor at her facility for their in-house guidelines. She has also been a major player in a number of Metro Transit construction projects.

Ms. Stewart explained that bus pullouts were generally deemed necessary on high speed roads such as Highway 202. The WAC and RCW both require that any bus operating on a state highway outside the control of any municipality such as unincorporated King County, was to pull off the roadway. In most instances, such roadways have paved shoulders which allow the bus to safely pull off, stop, and then merge back into traffic. The concern at the state level is due to the speed differential between the merging bus and traffic in that lane. Even with paved shoulders there are often sight-line issues which prevent traffic from seeing a merging bus.

Bus pullouts in an urban setting have been done, but only infrequently. A proper urban bus pullout would include the following:

- 1) Anywhere from 20 feet to 40 feet for a deceleration taper.
- 2) A straight curb that is at least two times the length of the bus.

3) 20 feet to 40 feet and sometimes more, for an acceleration taper.

Those three stipulations generally result in a minimal length of 200 feet of straight roadway shoulder. Two pullouts within Redmond fall far short of that minimum length, and furthermore are located just after an intersection. A widely permitted action throughout the area is for motorists to turn right on a red traffic signal. So the issue for the bus operator in those pullouts is to avoid cars turning right at the light, and thus entering the lane that the bus is trying to merge into. If the bus begins to merge and suddenly sees a car in that lane, the operator must use aggressive braking which can throw passengers to the ground, and the bus must still merge into traffic with even less merge distance than it started with.

Bus pullouts are not efficient alternatives. Instead of having the acceleration taper to merge into existing traffic, the operator must wait for a break in traffic. A bus stopping directly in the lane to let out or pick up passengers is a very minor delay, only 15 seconds on the average. A school bus creates a much longer delay. This is particularly true along Avondale where school buses run with almost the same frequency as Metro Transit buses, but with larger passenger loads. Ms. Stewart noted that traffic on Avondale had improved markedly in the recent week with the completion of road construction projects. Nevertheless, roads like Avondale carry a significant traffic load, and a single red light will cause a traffic backup for several blocks. That meant a traffic backup could go well past a bus pullout, which was already a problem for the pullout at NE 80th. Human behavior often resulted in an unfortunate pattern with bus pullouts – drivers do not want to let the bus in, and bus operators make risky choices due to increasing delays. In that sense, bus pullouts are the opposite of what both drivers and bus operators want, namely a minimum of delay. On the other hand, a bus which stopped directly in the lane ironically resulted in the fastest overall elapsed time both for the bus and drivers following behind. The only improvement would be a physically separate HOV or VAT lane such as on NE 85th.

Another argument against bus pullouts is that the construction of a bus pullout requires a greatly increased amount of impervious surface, which would be an important issue for some roads such as Avondale given the significant amount of surrounding wetlands. Building costs are also higher.

Finally, bus pullouts have been most effective at specific stops with excessive dwell times and/or safety problems. Portland's public transit system has found that bus pullout usage actually reduced the transit system efficiency. That agency only used bus pullouts under very specific conditions:

- 1) Bus stops with significant layover times of two minutes or more.
- 2) Roadways that presented at least two of the following features:
 - a. Posted speed limit above 40mph.
 - b. At least 35 daily riders.
 - c. More than 6 daily lift boardings.
 - d. Significant safety issues.

This concluded Ms. Stewart's presentation.

Chairman Pro-Tem asked the Commissioners if they had any questions. Commissioner Miller thanked Ms. Stewart for her testimony, particularly the details. He was more concerned about school buses picking up and dropping off passengers, rather than transit buses. Ms. Stewart replied that she suspected the school district had some of the same challenges faced by the transit agency. Specifically, drivers unwilling to let the school buses merge back into traffic thus creating schedule delays. Ms. Stewart pointed out that school buses have a unique advantage because the red safety paddle is deployed as soon as they stop, so traffic in both directions must also stop. Commissioner Miller then asked about the new

so-called bus bulb-out. Ms. Stewart replied that transit bulbs can be effective. Ballard had a pair of bulb-outs for 30 years. The reason they are so effective is because they are long enough to serve passengers at both doors, resulting in faster passenger load and unload. Commissioner Miller simply wanted to point out the differences between Redmond's approach and other cities' approaches. He hoped that Redmond would look to other agencies to see what worked and what did not. Ms. Stewart replied that bulb-outs typically worked in commercial zones, because they allowed the bus to stay in the traffic lane and they functionally created a transit lane in front of and behind the bus. The Landing in Renton has bulb-outs also, but those are not long enough for Metro Transit's usage.

Commissioner Flynn asked if Metro Transit had specific written policy about the bus pull-outs. Ms. Stewart confirmed that they did. Commissioner Flynn asked for a copy of that policy. Ms. Stewart said the written policy would basically cover the same information she provided earlier. Commissioner Biethan asked if Sound Transit had similar policies. Ms. Stewart was not sure but she suspected their policy would be similar. Chairman Pro-Tem O'Hara asked if anyone had any questions about the written testimony from Mr. Thompson, and the three issues he raised:

- 1) What about the future traffic for outlying areas.
- 2) U-turn access.
- 3) Avondale is a difficult street to cross given the posted 40 mph speed limit.

Commissioner Biethan stated that he was puzzled by the apparent discrepancy between u-turns causing traffic to move too slowly, and the comment about traffic moving too fast for safe pedestrian crossing. Commissioner Miller pointed out that the discrepancies may come from the multiple roles that Avondale must serve. Until the grid is created and those separate tasks are distributed a little more across the grid, those discrepancies may continue. In particular he suspected that subdivisions along Avondale which did not provide cross-links between them, sometimes resulted in heavier use and lack of smooth flow. Commissioner Miller asked if the neighborhood plan had addressed collector and cross street continuity. Mr. Churchill replied yes, subdivisions were often built without much connectivity, and yes the neighborhood plan discussed that. However, there is only limited room for improvement. New developments east of Avondale must connect to the arterial via signals. Another issue is the neighborhood geography. The hilly terrain and the local wetlands both restrict the amount of connectivity. Commissioner Miller added that while he was sympathetic to the issue of u-turns, he was not sure they could be avoided without that secondary infrastructure. Mr. Churchill believed that Mr. Thompson was advocating bidirectional access from Avondale to any new development, via a signal, which is consistent with other comments made at public hearings.

Chairman Pro-Tem O'Hara opened the issues matrix. Issue #1 related to transportation issues which they had already been discussing. He asked if any Commissioners had additional comments on the transportation issue. No one did so he closed the issue. Commissioner Biethan indicated Issues #2 and #3 were closed, and #4 was closed pending review of amended language. Mr. Churchill read the revised language. Commissioner Miller was satisfied with the revised text.

Chairman Pro-Tem O'Hara opened issue #5, regarding bus pullouts. Mr. Churchill recapped the issue that no decision needed to be made for or against bus pullouts at present. Rather, the neighborhood wanted any future traffic study to include analysis of bus pullouts, particularly regarding school bus disruption of Avondale traffic. Commissioner Miller suggested that they modify the wording, such that future development would consider a number of school bus loading and unloading methods, which either improve traffic flow and/or improve safety along Avondale, which might include bus pullouts as well as improved pedestrian infrastructure. He felt this was a bigger issue than pullouts, particularly for school

transit. Commissioner Biethan asked why safety and efficiency would need to be mentioned specifically in this plan, when those two goals would presumably be a part of any plan. Mr. Churchill replied that while those were features of any plan, this particular neighborhood group felt safety was a priority. Commissioner Biethan asked if it was typical to highlight such issues in neighborhood plans when they are already featured in City-wide plans. Mr. Churchill replied when an issue impacted a neighborhood in a particular way, it was appropriate for that neighborhood to discuss and create options for that particular issue as part of their plan. Chairman Pro-Tem O'Hara asked if Mr. Churchill wanted to revise the language for this issue. Mr. Churchill confirmed he would. The issue was left open pending the revised language.

Commissioner Biethan was satisfied with the staff reply to Issue #6, so that was closed. Issue #7 was already closed, which concluded the issues matrix. Chairman Pro-Tem O'Hara asked if there were any additional issues or questions, and there were none. Mr. Churchill said that he would provide revised language for their December 1st meeting.

STUDY SESSION, 2030 Growth Targets Update, presented by Eric McConaghy, Redmond City Planner.

Before going over the 2030 growth targets, Mr. McConaghy asked the Commission to keep in mind two questions during his presentation:

- 1) Were the targets consistent with Redmond's long range vision.
- 2) Were the targets appropriate for use in transportation modeling.

Mr. McConaghy explained that the growth targets needed to be updated because:

- 1) The 2010-2011 Comprehensive Plan and Transportation Master Plan update will extend the horizon year for these plans from 2022 to 2030.
- 2) Growth targets and the Transportation Facilities Plan needed a corresponding update.
- 3) Transportation modeling with the new 2030 information would in turn allow updates to the Transportation Master Plan.

Mr. McConaghy laid out some of the growth targets do's and don'ts:

- 1) They do not change zoning.
- 2) They do not represent a complete build-out.
- 3) They are not a market forecast.
- 4) They do represent growth for which Redmond is willing to plan.
- 5) They do carry out Redmond's Vision.

Existing Growth Targets based on the 2022 numbers:

- 1) Expect 72,000 people.
- 2) Expect 118,000 jobs.

Proposed 2030 growth targets:

- 1) Expect 78,000 people, representing an 8.3% increase from 2022.
- 2) Expect 126,600 jobs, which is a 7.3% increase from 2022.

The Jobs/Population balance shifts:

1) 2022 is expected to be 1.64 jobs per person.

- 2) 2030 is expected to be 1.62 jobs per person.
- 3) For perspective, the current ratio is approximately 1.7 jobs per person.

Trends in Urban Centers: Overlake and Downtown

- 1) In 2022, just over 2/3 of new housing and 60% of new commercial is expected to occur in these urban centers.
- 2) In 2030, those ratios increase to 3/4 of new dwellings and 2/3 of new commercial is expected to occur in those urban centers.
- 3) The urban centers are a priority location for residential development:
 - a. Day and evening neighborhoods.
 - b. Housing near jobs and transit.
- 4) Most mixed-use will be residential with retail/office rather than industrial/office.
- 5) Urban centers support a more sustainable community.
 - a. Efficient land use.
 - b. More trips by transit, walking or bicycling.

Trends outside of Urban Centers included:

- 1) Most additional employment capacity is in southeast Redmond.
- 2) Most residential development capacity is in North Redmond and Willows/Rose Hill.
- 3) Infill development and redevelopment of residential neighborhoods will decrease towards 2030.

Mr. McConaghy showed a graph displaying dwellings, population and employment from 1980 through current and into 2030. All three categories featured a nearly constant increase over the last 30 years. That same slow, steady increase is forecast for all three categories into 2030.

Mr. McConaghy concluded by explaining the schedule for this update:

- 1) November 2010: staff completes technical work.
- 2) November 17, 2010: staff reports to Planning Commission.
- 3) December 7, 2010: staff reports to City Council.
- 4) Early 2011: Planning Commission reviews Goals, Vision and Framework and Land Use Elements for update to Comprehensive Plan.
- 5) Late 2011: Council approval of 2030 growth targets as part of 2010-2011 Comprehensive Plan Update.

Commissioner Miller pointed out that most of Redmond's remarkable development was at least partially due to transportation improvements, such as the removal of tolls on the SR-520 Bridge. He asked whether a reintroduction of bridge tolls specifically, and large-scale transit changes in general, were factored into the employment projections.

Mr. McConaghy replied that a variety of transportation patterns and infrastructure were figured into those calculations. The projections also match up with indirect indicators such as recent trends towards live/work preferences. Chairman Pro-Tem O'Hara added that the market would not allow developers to build housing beyond the public's interest and ability to use that additional residential capacity. Mr. McConaghy added that these projections did not reflect the maximum development possible, but rather the likely development. If employment jumped, they have the residential capacity to meet that. Commissioner Miller was mostly interested in knowing how that capacity would be provided since single-family residential neighborhoods are the least likely to change. He asked whether these estimates would be considered conservative. Commissioner Biethan added that he also wondered whether the staff

had come up with numbers similar to independent real estate and employment analysis. Mr. McConaghy said there were two other sets of numbers which can serve as a point of reference:

- 1) Redmond's numbers are higher than these of the countywide planning policies' growth targets.
- 2) Puget Sound Regional Council also produced its own forecast and Redmond's numbers were comparable to slightly higher.

Mr. McConaghy added that each 7 year update of the Comprehensive Plan would give the City the chance to revise and re-calibrate the targets. Commissioner Miller was primarily concerned with transportation infrastructure since that component takes the longest and costs the most to provide, yet is a requirement for the other two.

Commissioner Julinsey asked how accurate past forecasts had been. Mr. McConaghy replied that the biggest forecasting mistake made to date was underestimating the number of jobs created in Redmond versus the population growth. She asked if the current policies were a result of adjustments along the way. Mr. McConaghy confirmed that the targets were periodically adjusted to account for changes that had occurred, such as renewed interest in mass transit, which is a continual process. Commissioner Flynn asked how the growing work-from-home movement had been incorporated into the numbers. Mr. McConaghy replied that these numbers reflected not only simplistic job commute numbers but also modern trends such as working at home.

Mr. McConaghy asked if the Commissioners had any additional questions. There were none. The Planning Commission confirmed that the proposed growth targets were consistent with Redmond's vision and appropriate for transportation modeling. Their next session on this topic before the Planning Commission would be early next year when they would discuss Goals, Vision and Framework, and Land Use elements.

STUDY SESSION, Neighborhood Commercial Development Guide Amendment – Policy and Regulatory Updates, presented by Kim Dietz, Redmond City Planner.

Ms. Dietz handed out a packet of slides to go with her presentation. She wanted to introduce the proposed amendments to policies and regulations for Neighborhood Commercial zones. She reviewed the proposed schedule for Planning Commission discussion of the amendments, which included six meetings between November 2010 and January 2011 to cover both policies and regulations. A public hearing is scheduled for December 15, 2010 and can carry over to January 12, 2011. Adoption of these amendments is planned to coincide with adoption of the Code Rewrite Commission's work. Some of the amendments Ms. Dietz will bring to the Planning Commission will reflect that new format.

The current study session will focus on:

- 1) Purpose of the Neighborhood Commercial zone amendments:
 - a. Proposal would amend the existing neighborhood commercial zone.
 - i. Criteria.
 - ii. Design.
 - iii. Not a rezoning.
 - b. Provide consistency between policies and regulations.
 - c. Provide timely update to policies.
- 2) Process.
- 3) Definition of Neighborhood Commercial zone.
- 4) Function of that zone:

- a. Within Redmond.
- b. Near homes and businesses.
- 5) Siting.
- 6) Design.
- 7) Commissioners' topics, concerns and interests.

The inspiration for these changes dated back several years, with a repeated desire from citizens for zoning which would provide for goods and services within walking distance of residential neighborhoods. These goods and services would be daily needs and could be considered as those items an average resident would use twice a month. Ms. Dietz has met with a variety of stakeholders about this topic, including those for and against the presence of NC. Her main question was what those stakeholders would want that NC zone to be; what they would want to regulate; what features they would want or not want; and benefits or concerns. Regional experts included those who have worked in this type of business, and those who build or buy and manage such properties. Finally, Ms. Dietz discussed these amendments with business owners who already work in that type of zone to hear what they liked and disliked about it.

Ms. Dietz then showed a slide which provided in-depth information about how the Neighborhood Commercial zone is defined and characterized:

- 1) Commercial zones in Redmond generally:
 - a. Maintain a strong and diverse economy.
 - b. Promote a variety of community gathering places.
 - c. Meet daily shopping or service needs.
 - d. Maintain and enhance a well-distributed system of commercial uses that serve the City's various needs.
 - e. Commercial land uses include:
 - i. General Commercial.
 - ii. Gateway Design Districts.
 - iii. Neighborhood Commercial:
 - 1. Outside of Downtown and Overlake commercial centers.
 - 2. Serve daily goods and services for neighborhoods, including both residential and employment neighborhoods.
 - f. One strongly desired feature of a Commercial district is an area within walking or biking distance of residential and/or employment areas.
- 2) Proposed Neighborhood Commercial types:
 - a. NC-1
 - i. Smaller scale.
 - ii. Everyday goods and services:
 - 1. Café, restaurant, grocery, retail, salon, spa.
 - 2. Professional services.
 - 3. Culture, recreation and government.
 - b. NC-2
 - i. Medium scale.
 - ii. Additional goods and services:
 - 1. Dental and medical.
 - 2. Fuel.
 - 3. Auto/marine parts and service.

The function for both NC-1 and NC-2 should be:

- 1) Walkable and bikeable from where people live and/or work.
- 2) Connected via mass transit to other locations.
- 3) Compatible with mixed-use types of neighborhoods.
- 4) Community gathering, whether that be dining, socializing, or enjoying the arts.

Compatibility has turned out to be the prime consideration for the NC zone, because mixed-use will result in diverse opinions about what is attractive versus unattractive. An example of potentially unattractive would be the smell of fried foods, which some people might not consider compatible with existing land uses.

Siting is also a crucial issue:

- 1) NC-1
 - a. Up to one acre.
 - b. Mixed use.
 - c. Collector arterial +
 - d. Near non-motorized connections.
 - e. Near parks.
 - f. Less than half a mile from urban centers.
- 2) NC-2
 - a. Up to three acres.
 - b. Mixed use.
 - c. Multimodal corridor.
 - d. Intersection of collector arterial +
 - e. Multi-family.
 - f. Near non-motorized connections.
 - g. Near parks.
 - h. Less than one mile from urban centers.

Commissioner Biethan asked whether adjacent parcels could be developed together. Ms. Dietz replied that those rules are under review, but in general it would be possible. The priority would be to work not only with adjacent landowners but also with the neighborhood in general.

Commissioner Biethan asked whether the NC zone would need to be next to or near a mixed-use area, or provide a mixed-use area. Ms. Dietz replied that locating in a mixed-use neighborhood would be required and the site would also need incentives to develop as mixed use.

Commissioner Miller asked if there were some possibility of an NC-type zone which was even smaller than the listed NC-1. He would love to have businesses like stand alone mom-and-pop grocery stores or miniature retail or cafés which serve just that neighborhood. Those businesses would be in the heart of a neighborhood rather than on the periphery arterials around a neighborhood. Ms. Dietz replied that initial conversations did discuss those extremely small types of businesses, including home-based businesses. One business occupies only a few hundred square feet. In her analysis, Ms. Dietz realized that a site needed to support a variety of uses to facilitate carrying a lease on the land. In NC-1, multiple tenants and professional services allow for those micro-businesses.

Additionally, the Seattle climate called for a realistic need for walking, biking or driving in inclement weather. The businesses that are embedded in a neighborhood would allow walking or biking but not the

easy driving and parking issue. Ms. Dietz showed a map of the City's residential and commercial areas. Most businesses need a certain density within walking or biking distance to have a fair amount of traffic from those modes of transit. From that perspective, Education Hill is the only existing neighborhood that could supply that. Other neighborhoods would have to combine their populations to meet that minimum. Ms. Dietz added arterials, parks, and other land-use criteria to show how all those features affected the possible viable locations for NC-1 or NC-2. As a result, the City as a whole had only a few locations where all the necessary viability factors are available:

- 1) Along the Willows corridor.
- 2) Along the Avondale corridor.
- 3) SE Redmond.

All three of these neighborhoods already have elements in their neighborhood plans for supporting a neighborhood commercial zone.

Design is a key component, as described earlier under compatibility:

- 1) Lighting using residential-type fixtures like gooseneck fixtures.
- 2) Signage is non-self illuminated.
- 3) Articulation and modulation of building layout, which softens bulk.
- 4) Glazing similar to single-family or multi-family housing.
- 5) Outdoor storage and seasonal displays, including fresh food.
- 6) Parking would discourage flat lots, and include landscaping to soften appearance.

Ms. Dietz wanted to get Planning Commission feedback on these concepts, which she can then incorporate into the NC concept. Commissioner Miller asked if the presence of one NC-1 parcel would preclude the development of another NC-1 parcel in the same area. In other words, was there a saturation point for how many NC-1 sites are possible in the City. Ms. Dietz replied that if the parcel met the criteria, the City would in general not bar that development. Commissioner Biethan was concerned that the first-in development pressure could result in a rush of activity that would overwhelm development options. The concepts sound good but more detail would be needed to help actual property owners determine what they could or could not do with their property.

Commissioner Miller added that the half-mile criteria for NC-1 seemed too big. It would be a long distance to walk for most of the items that would fall into that category. Furthermore, that requirement prohibits development in areas that would otherwise welcome such development of mom-and-pop businesses. For instance, his neighborhood would not meet that criteria and thus he would not be able to enjoy any business in this NC-1 category. If walking is really the goal, they might want to reduce the distance to one-quarter or one-eighth of a mile. That would increase the number of parcels that could be developed under this zone.

Commissioner Biethan asked if a parcel were developed with three related uses, such as three small retail outlets, if that would meet the criteria. It would be multi-use but not mixed-use. Ms. Dietz replied that would be permitted. The multi-use is a requirement but the mixed use is only encouraged. Commissioner Miller wanted to clarify that his favorite small business, a mom-and-pop grocery store located in his old California neighborhood, would not be permitted under this zone because it was a single-use. Commissioner Flynn agreed that single-use small businesses would be a good addition. A walkable grocery or restaurant is a common request. Chairman Pro-Tem O'Hara pointed out that Redmond's terrain prohibits where these businesses would work, because a business at the top of a hill would not be visited by people living at the bottom. Commissioner Miller said that only reinforced his suggestion for smaller

circles. The smaller the circle, the less likely a major topography change. He understood that the City wanted to protect commercial centers like Downtown and Overlake. However, he felt it was critical to look at these smaller walking distances.

Commissioner Biethan asked if there were minimum areas, either parcel size or building size. Ms. Dietz replied that one acre was a maximum parcel size for NC-1, and there was no minimum. However, staff had been considering a typical building or occupancy size of roughly 7,000 square feet. Commissioner Julinsey asked whether staff intended to encourage more of one or the other. Ms. Dietz said NC-1 would have greater opportunities than NC-2. Commissioner Julinsey said she really liked the general feel of this concept. It reminded her of when she lived in Ballard, and could walk everywhere for almost all her shopping and services. Commissioner Miller liked that it would bring in smaller businesses, which he would really like to see.

Commissioner Biethan asked if a smaller business footprint could be considered. Ms. Dietz replied that the planners wanted to move into this concept slowly, and wanted to use Redmond's real estate as carefully as possible. The planners wanted to create a middle-of-the-road zone, from which they could step up or step down over time after they had more experience with this type of zone. They did consider starting at the extremely small end of the scale. In her research, that model was much harder to maintain as a viable business than their proposed model. Commissioner Miller replied that any and all business is risky by nature, and he felt it was inappropriate to design City policy according to some decision about whether a business would be viable. He felt that decision should be up to the business owner. Even if they did not flesh out the smaller scale zone right away, he wanted the policy to reflect that possible future micro-zone. Chairman Pro-Tem O'Hara suggested they put that intent in the vision statement. Commissioner Flynn agreed that he wanted to see that smaller scale considered or added in some way. He felt that smaller scale was consistent with the City's sustainability goals. Commissioner Flynn felt the City should enable that opportunity, and the individual business owner should decide the risk and viability.

Chairman Pro-Tem O'Hara thanked Ms. Dietz for her presentation and closed the session.

REPORTS

Ms. Stiteler reported that the City Council meeting included discussion about the two proposed amendments to the MP zone for religious institutions and breweries/wineries. Council also discussed the Gateway Design District amendment. The Council approved a HEAL grant of over \$71,000 for City-wide bike and pedestrian master planning, as well as increasing access to healthy foods. Commissioner Miller attended that meeting as a citizen, to encourage the Council to support the grant's support for better access to healthy foods.

SCHEDULING/TOPICS FOR NEXT MEETING(S)

ADJOURN

Chairman Pro-Tem O'Hara adjourned the meeting at approximately 9:30 p.m.

Minutes Approved On: Planning Commission Chair