



City of Lake Oswego Planning Commission Minutes

February 26, 2007

Approved

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Daniel Vizzini called the Planning Commission meeting of Monday, February 26, 2007 to order at 6:10 p.m. in the Council Chambers of City Hall, at 380 "A" Avenue, Lake Oswego, Oregon.

II. ROLL CALL

Members present were Chair Vizzini, Vice Chair Colin Cooper and Commissioners Mary Beth Coffey, Julia Glisson, Alison Webster and Scot Siegel. Commissioner Mark Stayer was excused.

Staff present were Dennis Egner, Long Range Planning Manager; Paige Gogonian, Associate Planner; Evan Boone, Deputy City Attorney; and Iris Treinen, Administrative Support.

III. CITIZEN COMMENT

None.

IV. MINUTES

Commissioner Glisson moved to approve the Minutes of May 22, 2006. Commissioner Siegel seconded the motion and it passed 6:0.

V. PUBLIC HEARING – DELIBERATIONS

LU 06-0025 – Lake Grove Village Center Plan and Code Amendments. A request from the City of Lake Oswego regarding the Lake Grove Village Center Plan (Proposed Ordinance 2454) and amendments to the Community Development Code needed to implement the Plan (proposed Ordinance 2455). Continued from October 9 and 23, 2006; November 13 and 27, 2006; December 11, 2006 and January 8 and 22, 2007; and February 12, 2007.

The Planning Commission had closed oral and written testimony and begun deliberations. They continued their discussion of the draft Plan by beginning with the Transportation Section of the February 12, 2007 Working Draft Plan. They also had the staff's summaries of issues raised in testimony at hand. Chair Vizzini anticipated the Planning Commission would forward the draft Plan, draft Code, a staff report with findings, and backup technical reports to the City Council.

Commissioner Glisson corrected the document to show the speed limit along Boones Ferry Road was 30 mph, except in the school zone. The Commissioners wanted to know if the crash rate reported in the draft was high. Ms. Goganian said a study in the Boones Ferry Corridor Plan reported it was not a particularly high rate compared to other roads in the state, but it was very high for the City of Lake Oswego. She confirmed the rate in the draft Plan reported 2006 data, which was during the time the freeway interchange was being constructed. The Commissioners noted the crash rate factored only “reported” crashes.

The Commissioners observed that both the Transportation and Economic Development sections of the draft Plan addressed safety and access. They discussed how to create a better connection between the sections for Plan readers. Chair Vizzini explained that the document should make it clear that safety and access were both important, and one should not be sacrificed for the other. He noted studies showed a median that controlled left turns improved safety, but he stressed it was important to show that the Plan provided access and parking to mitigate the impacts of the median. Staff and the Commissioners noted the “Boones Ferry Concept” portion of the Transportation Section explained the connection between u-turns and business access, but the Boones Ferry Corridor Plan had removed many accesses. Commissioner Glisson said the success of the plan depended on improved circulation that allowed drivers to turn the direction they wanted to go. Chair Vizzini said access was also dependent on having interconnected driveways and parking areas. He recalled testimony that businesses wanted assurance that if they lost a left turn that served their business they would gain access elsewhere. He held the median should not be built before there was sufficient access and parking, and he anticipated that could be provided by public parking facilities behind the corridor that would eliminate the need to make a u-turn.

Staff explained that the only parking study they had showed “hot spots” at lunch time between Oakridge and Bryant Roads, and they did not know how much parking should be tied to an improvement. They anticipated that spaces would be lost along the frontage, when lots were formally striped, and to make room for parking lot connections. They recalled testimony there should be “no net loss” of parking, and suggested in that case those losses should be replaced somehow. Commissioner Siegel suggested the Transportation section could call for mitigation for lost parking and the Economic Development section could address how to find additional parking capacity. Commissioner Webster suggested the language in the Boones Ferry Concept section that said “Safety for all is a paramount concern” should be changed to read, “Safety for all and well-managed access” were of paramount concern. Chair Vizzini suggested that the staff work on that section. He said access was the end result of good circulation. Ms. Goganian pointed out the “Access to Commercial Sites” section of the November 27, 2006 staff memorandum more specifically described how access to businesses was related to circulation and safety.

Staff suggested Transportation Action Measures, Street Design, and the “Access Management” section of the design section could call for “no net loss” of parking.

Chair Vizzini summarized that the Commissioners recognized the median was necessary for safety, but before an access was closed along the corridor by eliminating a left turn, adequate circulation and parking mitigation were necessary. The Commissioners generally agreed to change a sentence on page 11 of the draft Plan to indicate a goal for Boones Ferry Road was “meeting the needs of ~~successful~~ businesses by providing adequate vehicle access and sufficient parking.”

The Commissioners then examined Transportation policies. They agreed to make the titles and intent statements of Goals 2 and 3 more consistent. They considered removing “transit and bicycling” from the intent statement of Goal 3, which they saw as a pedestrian-oriented goal, but they finally decided not to change it because “transit” was a pedestrian friendly mode. When they examined Transportation Action Measures, Preliminary Studies and Engineering, Commissioner Glisson recalled the first thing the Advisory Committee wanted to learn was whether the new circulation concept (featuring the green median and u-turns) would work, particularly at peak hours, and, if it did, then they wanted the City to study the cost and specific design. The Commissioners decided to prioritize studies to show how the concept could be made feasible and refined from a “traffic operations” perspective, followed by economic studies of the refined concept plan. Chair Vizzini stressed the studies were to find ways the plan could be achieved, and were not a matter of “yes,” or “no.” He said the concept refining process should study and refine circulation, access, safety, connectivity and traffic volume, so that data would be available in later stages. He suggested economic, social and environmental sustainability should be considered during the Green Street part of the process, and before the project was turned over to the engineers who would design it. He saw the economic study as a way to determine and mitigate the economic impacts of the project. Commissioner Cooper saw a possibility that that engineers would find that a narrower median than was anticipated to be necessary to serve as a swale would work from a traffic operations perspective. Commissioner Glisson recalled the Advisory Committee first saw the median as important for traffic flow, and then they saw it could also be used to treat surface water.

The Commissioners questioned how much “stakeholder” review was appropriate for a capital improvement process to build a street, but they agreed the process had to ensure there was broad representation, so they decided to create a separate Action Measure to call for an open public process. Chair Vizzini suggested removing the phrase, “including a representative group of stakeholders.” Staff advised that widening of the right-of-way would likely trigger a City Charter provision that anyone could call for a vote on the project if the right-of-way were widened by an amount specified in the Charter.

The Commissioners agreed to reorganize Transportation Action Measures into (i) Preliminary Studies and Engineering; and new Action Measure, (ii) Public Process, which was to assure there would be public involvement in all planning, design and implementation processes related to the Village Center Plan. Chair Vizzini recommended the Commissioners remove the clause related to “stakeholders.” The Preliminary Studies and Engineering section was to be divided into a section that

ensured that the concept plan would be refined so it would physically work from a Traffic Operations perspective and a section related to Economic Studies that would examine what was necessary to make the plan economically feasible. Those sections would be followed by a Street Design section and the list of Transportation projects. Chair Vizzini observed a consensus that the Street Design section would call for analysis of access, circulation and parking. He agreed with staff that it was appropriate to discuss the “gateway” feature in the section that discussed Village character. Staff clarified that cross sections in the Lake Grove Village Center draft Plan were more detailed than in the Transportation System Plan (TSP), but the TSP would refer to the Village Center plans cross sections. They also cautioned that the Estimated Costs shown for the projects were rough estimates.

Chair Vizzini announced a ten-minute break at 8:00 p.m. and then reconvened the hearing.

The Commissioners examined the maps in the Transportation section. They noted the Street and Access Improvements Map showed a connection north from Oakridge toward the elementary school that was no longer proposed. They noted the map showed an alleyway (Project #7) between Lanewood and Lake Grove Avenue that the Lake Grove Neighborhood Association opposed because it would create a cut-through problem. Staff recalled that location had been chosen because it went through a less-improved property currently used as a lumberyard. The Commissioners noted it went through land zoned R-0 and General Commercial that would likely be redeveloped with parking lot connections where the alleyway was indicated. Commissioner Glisson anticipated that if it did not look too much like a “street” drivers would not be so inclined to use it to cut-through, and she said she did not believe the Advisory Committee had taken a strong position on having a driveway connection there. The Commissioners noted that if it were an “alleyway” it would have to be developed according to the appropriate cross section, but that would not be required for a driveway or parking lot connection. They looked at the access way from Bryant Road to behind McDonald’s and asked staff to research whether it was part of a public right-of-way. Mr. Egner reported an initial portion coming off Bryant Road was a public right-of-way and the rest of the segment was parking lot connections. The Commissioners agreed to change the map legend to indicate “Parking lot connections,” rather than “Parking lot connections/Access Points.” Chair Vizzini observed that there had to be a way behind the buildings in order to achieve good circulation. Commissioner Siegel suggested shifting the mapped configuration of a parking lot connection at Quarry Road near Boones Ferry Road slightly farther north.

The Commissioners examined the street design direction section and the related staff discussion in the February 7, 2007 Memorandum. They discussed how specific the draft Plan should be. They considered a suggestion that the Plan be used to convey the vision and concept of the streetscape and the Code be used to convey the specifics so that only the Code would need to be changed if studies and engineering work showed the reality was that more dimensional flexibility was necessary. They noted the Advisory Committee had specified an 82-foot right-of-way, but the Plan might simply

list components to be included within that width, such as the number of travel lanes, and sidewalks. Staff advised that all street designs were subject to approval by the City Engineer. The Commissioners wondered if the right-of-way might have to be wider than 82 feet in some places, especially at intersections. Staff suggested the Special Street Setback might be wider in order to ensure there was enough room for a developer to build a sidewalk. Commissioner Glisson cautioned that the Advisory Committee had put a lot of effort into fashioning street design, but Commissioner Siegel reasoned that dimensional specifics should be supported by adequate technical data, which was not currently available. Mr. Egnor heard a consensus to remove specific dimensional requirements from the draft Plan so it would primarily serve to convey the character and concepts of the street and cross sections, and to use the Code to convey more specific interim dimensional development standards for elements like the Special Street Setback, which would preserve area for the right-of-way, which was particularly important at corners. Chair Vizzini anticipated the Commissioners would continue to discuss issues related to the design of intersections when they discussed related parts of the draft Code.

The Commissioners wondered why the Lanewood Street intersection should be singled out in the draft Plan. They agreed that unique circumstances and site specific issues might surface at many other intersections in the corridor during design and redevelopment, and the Lanewood situation did not belong in the Comprehensive Plan. They generally liked the Streetscape section because it conveyed the desire to have a unifying theme. They questioned whether the Safe Pedestrian Crossings section should include language that described the specific number of crossings, and specified they were to be raised pedestrian crossings with embedded flashers, which they noted was only one technique that engineers might use to ensure a safe crossing. Other techniques could include curb extensions and textured pavement. Commissioner Glisson said she was worried that highlighting putting speed-bump-like raised crossings throughout the district would be a drastic measure that would slow traffic at crossings, but would have other impacts, such as encouraging more cut-through traffic through the residential neighborhood. She stressed the City needed to balance safety with good traffic flow for the majority of drivers who were just traveling through the area and not intent on stopping to shop. Commissioners Siegel and Glisson agreed that the draft Plan should simply suggest different kinds of design elements that might be considered and used to contribute to safe pedestrian crossings after they had been tested.

Commissioner Siegel questioned whether the nine-foot sidewalk width was adequate for persons walking side-by-side and around tree wells, fire hydrants, light poles and other features that would be located in the sidewalk area. He said it would feel more like a subdivision sidewalk than a town center sidewalk and he stressed it was important for pedestrians to feel protected by buffering elements like a planter strip, parking bays, and other physical barriers between them and the cars, and a tree in a well in the sidewalk would not do that. He noted that Lakeview Village had an iron railing and dense plantings between a pedestrian and cars. Staff observed that other busy streets protected pedestrians with planters that featured hedges and densely planted trees. They clarified the sidewalk at Sunset Crossing was eleven feet wide. The

Commissioners anticipated they would further discuss sidewalk dimensions when they examined the draft Code. Chair Vizzini suggested staff modify the diagrams to balance concept and details by showing types of treatment that would be appropriate on a street that featured elements such as tree wells, and fire hydrants. He anticipated the Commissioners would continue to examine the design section at their next meeting.

VI. OTHER BUSINESS – PLANNING COMMISSION

Mr. Egner announced that the Lake Oswego Neighborhood Action Coalition planned to hear representatives from Metro talk about the Metro Functional Plan and how Metro interacts with the City at an upcoming meeting. He also related that the City had received and was examining the validity of the language of an initiative petition that would call for a vote on any million-dollar property expenditure by the City and that would be retroactive and impact the SAFECO purchase. Chair Vizzini announced the Forest Highlands Neighborhood Association had a meeting scheduled for March 1, 2007.

VII. OTHER BUSINESS – COMMISSION FOR CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT

None.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Planning Commission, Chair Vizzini adjourned the meeting at 9:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Iris Treinen /s/
Iris Treinen
Administrative Support