
PLANNING COMMISSION

MEETING MINUTES



Wednesday, October 16, 2019

CALL TO ORDER

The Planning Commission was called to order by Chair Goodman at 6:05 pm in the City Hall Council Chambers at 9611 SE 36th Street, Mercer Island, Washington.

ROLL CALL

Chair Tiffin Goodman, Vice Chair Craig Reynolds, Commissioners, Carolyn Boatsman, Daniel Hubbell, Jennifer Mechem (arrived at 6:10pm), Lucia Pirzio-Biroli and Ted Weinberg were present.

STAFF PRESENT

Evan Maxim, CPD Director, Andrea Larson, Senior Administrative Assistant, and Mona Davis, Planning Manager.

MINUTES

It was moved by Weinberg, seconded by Hubble to:
Approve the October 2, 2019 minutes as amended.
Passed 5-0

APPEARANCES

Cheryl D'Amboisio 3712 E mercer Way. Has lived in this home for 40 year. She spoke to the impacts to her home from traffic and the safety issues it has presented from the facilities on East Mercer Way. She spoke to people driving down her street that shouldn't be that cannot find the facilities they are looking for. She spoke regarding the noise from leaf blowers in the fall and the disruption it causes to the neighborhoods. She asked about flood lights that are on all night long in parking lots that are not shielded. She spoke to decreasing property values as well. She spoke to her concerns on 37th St.

Peter Struck, 9130 SE 54th St. He spoke to his concerns regarding Community Facilities. He spoke to how other community facilities have successfully used CUPs for year. He spoke to undesirable concerns that could come from continuation of the community facilities discussions rezone. He spoke to the three options presented in the staff report. He spoke regarding the joint study session with the City Council and to how the halt option could be the best option.

Amy Lavin 7835 SE 22nd Pl, CEO of SJCC. She spoke to her interest in working with the City and neighbors in a welcoming and inclusive manner on this issue and coming to a solution that will let them be able to make updates to their facilities.

Matt Goldbach, 9840 SE 40th St. He spoke to his concerns regarding the problem statement that was listed in the staff report. He spoke that the problem statement doesn't define what the problem is currently in front of the Planning Commission. He spoke to how other facilities on the Island are successfully functioning under a

CUP. He spoke to the problem of most of the people using these facilities do not live on Mercer Island. He spoke to his concerns about traffic and the intensity of use. He spoke about parking, lighting, trees and that they need to be addressed. He stated that his preferred option is the halt option.

Dave Cutler, Partner at Northwest studios, 2206 E Crescent Drive, Seattle. He thanked the Commission for their commitment to this process. He spoke to the uncertainty that this process has caused for the students at FASPS. He spoke to how they cannot plan for a future with the current zoning and how the CUP process will be difficult under this process. He also spoke to the cost of this process. He spoke regarding aging facilities and how to make critical upgrades to them. He spoke to the City recommending they apply for the Comprehensive Plan amendment and rezone.

Ryan Rahlfs, 9703 SE 40th St. He spoke to how members of the Planning Commission have stated in the past that the CFZ was to protect the neighbors. He asked the Planning Commission to consider if this is still the case. He asked if these properties are in compliance. He spoke how other facilities you don't hear complaints about the zoning and how these are specific complaints specific to these facilities. He spoke to bus parking issues on a side street.

John Hall, 9970 SE 40th St. He spoke to how he has written to the PC many times over the last 18 months providing history. He spoke to how there was not supposed to be access to the facilities from SE 40th St. He spoke to how residential lots have been purchased by the applicants in anticipation to the regulations changing

Ira Appleman, Shorewood. He spoke to his involvement in city government for the last 22 years. He spoke to the problem of facilities being a regional facility on Mercer Island and how it becomes a political problem. He spoke to the MICEC bond in 1997-1998. He spoke to how the government wanted to make a regional facility, and how the bond failed due to this. He spoke to how Mercer Island does not want to become crowded with regional facilities. He asked the PC to keep this in mind that the community doesn't want regional facilities

Daniel Thompson, 7265 N Mercer Way. He spoke to land use is politics and how it will cause bonds to fail. He spoke to the community being sensitized to community facilities. He spoke to how a master plan is what is wanted by the applicants. He stated the community facility zone is now toxic. He spoke to how there are only 6 people on the island who understand what a master plan is. He spoke to the only regulatory limit. He spoke to the complaints of the neighbors. He spoke to the concern of intensity of use.

REGULAR BUSINESS

Agenda Item #1: Community Facility Regulations

Evan Maxim, CPD Director, gave a presentation on Community Facility Regulations for discussion following the August 20, 2019 City Council and Planning Commission joint study session.

The Commission took a break until 7:05pm.

The Commission discussed the problem statement.

The Commission requested more information on how the CUP process works, including typical costs, length of the process, how much discretion does staff have when approving a CUP, and what is the level of discretion regarding record keeping. They also requested more information on how the master plan process would be better and on how a CUP could be used to make exceptions to the development code. They requested to see specific examples of a CUP.

The Commission discussed that the problem statement should include "additional growth to neighborhoods and that these neighborhoods do not want more development."

The Commission discussed residential properties being bought by organizations that then want to combine these with their existing property.

The Commission discussed that there should be a way for the community to weigh in on potential changes to their neighborhoods, and that a clearly defined public engagement process needs to be included so that all stakeholders can be involved.

The Commission spoke to how the current problem statement does not address site aggregation or how current regulations don't allow for tradeoffs for site optimization.

The Commission requested that staff provide more explanation to which option provides more protection to neighbors.

The Commission discussed enforcement.

The Commission discussed the three options.

The Commission discussed the timeline for continuing the discussion. The Commission also requests more public outreach.

The Commission took a break until 8:35pm.

Agenda Item #2: 2020 Comprehensive Plan Amendment Preliminary Docket

Evan Maxim, CPD Director, provided a brief presentation and introduction to the 2020 Comprehensive Plan amendments preliminary docket.

The Commission reviewed the proposed docket.

The Commission recommended that an Economic Development Comprehensive Plan amendment should be added to the 2020 docket to establish economic development policies and goals that involve establishing building direction around priorities, values and strategies.

The Commission recommended that the Residential Development Standards review, should be pushed to the 2021 workplan to allow time for the discussion of the 2020 Comprehensive Plan docket.

The Commission recommended that an additional Comprehensive Plan amendment should be added to the docket regarding trees in the Right- of-Way.

The Commission discussed a vacancy tax.

OTHER BUSINESS

Evan Maxim, CPD Director, updated the Commission on City Councils first review of the 2019 Comprehensive Plan amendments.

PLANNED ABSENCES FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

Commissioners Pirzio-Biroli and Craig Reynolds will be absent on October 30, 2019

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND COMMUNICATIONS

The next Planning Commission meeting is on October 30, 2019 at 6:00PM.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 9:43pm.