

1 City of Lake Forest Park - Planning Commission
2 Meeting Minutes: July 9, 2019
3 17425 Ballinger Way NE—Forest Room
4

5 **Planning Commissioners present:** Chair Joel Paisner, Vice Chair Maddy Larson, Jon Lebo, Richard
6 Saunders, Rachael Katz, Steve Morris

7 **Staff and others present:** Steve Bennett, Planning Director; Lauren Hoerr, Assistant Planner; Tom
8 French, Councilmember

9 **Members of the Public:** Mike Dee; Lori Bodi; Barton Shilvock

10 **Planning Commissioners absent:** Mark Withers, TJ Fudge, Ira Gross
11

12 **Call to order:** 7:02 PM
13

14 **Approval of Agenda:**

15 Cmr. Saunders moved to approve the agenda as presented. Cmr. Lebo seconded and it was unanimously
16 approved.
17

18 **Public Comments:**

19 Lori Bodi: Ms. Bodi thanked Commissioners for trying to provide clarity and asking for a clear process
20 and schedule. She noted that a July 18th public workshop seems to be putting the cart before the horse,
21 and it would be efficient to publish the FEIS and then consider public comment. The Commission may
22 want to take public comment on the drafts, separate from the Council seeking public comment.
23

24 Mike Dee: Mr. Dee thanked the Commission for cancelling the June 25th meeting. The agenda was not
25 posted 24 hours ahead of time, violating the Open Public Meeting Act.
26

27 Chair Paisner commented on the Open Public Meeting Act, noting that we have to post agendas 24
28 hours in advance. Cmr. Saunders asked if Commissioners can help support staff with this task. Mr.
29 Bennett said the problem occurred in part because of the holiday weekend and not being sure if there
30 would be a quorum for the meeting. Mr. Bennett explained that, with the agenda for next meeting being
31 discussed at the end of each meeting, a draft agenda can be posted right after the meeting and it can still
32 be change prior to the next meeting.
33

34 **Approval of Minutes:**

35 June 11th

36 Cmr. Larson moved to approve the minutes as presented. Cmr. Saunders seconded and it was approved
37 unanimously.
38

39 **Meeting Dates:** The next meeting is scheduled for August 13th. Chair Paisner said that he would not be
40 able to attend.
41

42 **Old Business:**

43 Implementation of Town Center Vision

44 *Discussion of July 8 City Council Committee of the Whole Meeting*

45 *Schedule for future Town Center Vision meetings and public engagement*
46

47 Mr. Bennett stated that, at the July 8th Committee of the Whole meeting (COW), the Council was
48 working on a Town Center Vision Goals document which is less detailed than the current draft of the

1 Vision document but not quite ready to distribute. Ideally, the FEIS will be published by August 8th or
2 9th with a section on Alternative 1 that notes there is interest from the property owner in redeveloping
3 the upper portion of the shopping center. He noted, however, there does not seem to be collaboration
4 yet between the property owner and Sound Transit for the building of the parking structure. Alternative
5 4 will reflect recent discussion about setting a density cap of 700 units and Alternatives 2 and 3 will be
6 moved to the Appendices of the of the FEIS and have no further consideration.

7
8 He said Council will continue working on their Goals and is currently planning to take action in them in
9 September. The Commission's work would pick back up once Council has developed their goals. At that
10 time, it should be clearer as to whether the Commission would move forward the sub-area plan, code
11 amendments and the design guidelines.

12
13 Councilmember French said the COW meeting included a lively discussion on the process of scheduling
14 the open house and the FEIS publication. The discussion will continue at Thursday night's Council. A
15 new version of the Vision could be reviewed at the possible July 18th open house. He noted the Council
16 continues to be committed to finding ways to involve the public and have outreach opportunities.
17 Councilmember French said he wants to make sure that both the Vision document and the FEIS are
18 robust and able to be commented on, but noted the FEIS does not have a formal public comment
19 period. Whether there will be a July 18th open house to discuss the Vision document will be decided on
20 the Thursday meeting, but Councilmember French noted that there may be technical issues in terms of
21 finding an appropriately sized venue and having enough time to ensure it will function well. He said
22 that the Vision document could be possibly be published this Thursday. Cmr. Katz responded that one
23 week to review it seems too rushed and that ideally it would be 3-4 weeks.

24
25 Cmr. Saunders asked if Alternative 1 was changing substantially in the FEIS. Mr. Bennett said that the
26 discussion in the FEIS will have more details on how the 700 units was calculated and how it might be
27 phased. Cmr. Saunders asked about Alternative 4. Mr. Bennett said it would reflect some of the
28 concepts and priorities that Council agreed upon through the public engagement process and
29 discussions with the Commission. The FEIS is essentially a study outlining ways to mitigate the impacts
30 of each alternative.

31
32 Cmr. Larson asked for clarity on the Goals document discussed at the COW meeting and on how it
33 differs from the Vision document. There was discussion about how the May 2018 Task Force Vision
34 document may be confused with this Council Vision document. She noted that the Task Force
35 recommended the Vision document but it was never adopted and it is unclear to the public how the
36 process will unfold. Councilmember French said that his understanding was that the Task Force Vision
37 document was deliberately not adopted prior to the forthcoming EIS and public outreach process so the
38 Council could continue to modify the Vision document after getting public feedback. The Council's
39 Vision document from last night is only 4 pages and is very different from the Task Force's Vision and
40 serves different purposes.

41
42 Cmr. Larson said it would be useful to have a public outreach event to proactively tell them what to
43 expect with the FEIS publication and how to interact with it and move forward. Chair Paisner stated
44 that it was his opinion that, if the open house is on July 18th or the next week, that it may open the
45 Council up to more complaints about it being a rushed process. Discussion commenced on the
46 feasibility and effectiveness of having a public meeting, its purpose, and organization.

1 Chair Paisner asked if anyone else had comments. Cmr. Morris expressed his frustration about the
2 process and wondered if all the work they've done will be used in a meaningful way. Cmr. Lebo said he
3 would be happy to work on things when there is a clear direction on how to move forward.
4 Cmr. Lebo said there is a dichotomy because everyone wants the amenities but no one wants the
5 development. Cmr. Larson said that the public has misunderstandings due to the lack of a clear process
6 and an inability to learn things effectively online.

7
8 Cmr. Saunders expressed his concern that publishing the FEIS now may lead to more confusion. Last
9 night's meeting had an important message that, now that Sound Transit has slowed down, there is no
10 longer such a big rush to take action. Others made the point that it make sense to publish the FEIS and
11 then have public engagement framed as 'here is how we are refreshing the Vision.'

12
13 Chair Paisner said it seemed that—with putting the component of community outreach to the side for
14 the moment—most people were in favor of getting the FEIS published and then giving folks a chance
15 to review it before the Vision document is finalized by the Council. Mr. Bennett clarified that the FEIS
16 is going to be published August 8th or 9th and that there will be opportunities to get feedback on it prior
17 to adopting the Vision document. It was suggested that discussion of the FEIS should be on the August
18 13th meeting agenda so that the information in the FEIS can be used to inform the code, the sub-area
19 plan, and the Vision.

20
21 Mr. Bennett said it is important to craft the code amendments and design guidelines in an informed
22 manner so that redevelopment projects are done in a way that aligns with our overarching goals and the
23 development agreement process is both effective and practical. Chair Paisner said they will want to see
24 whether the code is consistent with the Vision and the FEIS. He asked that City staff and leadership
25 work on solidifying the process/schedule for code adoption while people reflect on the FEIS.
26 Discussion commenced on the process, schedule and public outreach.

27
28 Cmr. Larson asked Mr. Bennett what could happen with a parking garage right now. Mr. Bennett said
29 that it would be allowed under current code but there wouldn't be clear guidelines on how to fit the
30 garage into the site. It will be important to develop regulations to guide the parking garage's
31 implementation. We know that Sound Transit has a 1% design at this point and that plan to be the 10%
32 level when their SEPA addendum gets published around the end of the year. He added that his
33 understanding is that the earliest they would apply to build the garage would be in late 2020. In some
34 ways, having the Council's Vision allows us to gives Sound Transit guidance for their early design phase.

35
36 Cmr. Larson asked Cmr. Saunders his opinion on the Commission's role to review documents such as
37 the Vision and things like Developers' Agreements. Cmr. Saunders said that the biggest project he was
38 involved in was the Southern Gateway, and everything was at the direction of the Council as to what the
39 Commission did. The big differences he sees is that the Commission worked with the consultant from
40 the beginning to the presentation of the final draft of documents for the Southern Gateway. This time
41 the biggest differences are that it is more of a collaborative process and that there is a lot more interest
42 in the Town Center than there was in the Southern Gateway. Chair Paisner noted that the Southern
43 Gateway was also different in that there was an applicant with a more specific goal in mind.

44
45 Chair Paisner asked if commissioner had any thoughts about making a motion for the Council receive
46 prior to Thursday's Council meeting. Cmr. Saunders suggested making a recommendation similar to
47 what he said earlier. Cmr. Katz said it seems like Council wants to follow Cmr. Saunders' process, but a
48 detailed schedule has not been created. She thought the Commission should have one meeting to

1 understand the full implications of the FEIS, one to two meetings to review an updated Vision
2 document, and a series of meetings to go through the iterative code revision process. Council’s input
3 would be helpful in establishing goals and deadlines such as “this amount of code to be updated by such
4 date.” Cmr. Katz said it is hard to make a recommendation to Council without this timeline in place. Mr.
5 Bennett agreed that, if the Commission and Council followed Cmr. Katz’s timeline, the Commission
6 would likely be making a recommendation in early 2020. Discussion commenced on whether or not to
7 make a motion in relation to recommendations for Council. Chair Paisner said there does not seem to
8 be enough of a consensus to make a motion. Mr. Bennett said the staff’s role in the FEIS is reviewing
9 drafts with Otak. Cmr. Larson asked if the next meeting could include review Alternative 1’s
10 application/approval process. Mr. Bennett said he would add that to the draft agenda.

11

12 **New Business:** No new business.
13 **Reports and Announcements:** None.

14

15 **Public Comments**

16 Lori Bodi: Ms. Bodi said she is disappointed the Commission isn’t making a recommendation to Council
17 to provide a clear process. The Council is saying there is going to be a clear process but have not
18 produced this. The Commission should have enough independence to make recommendations.
19 She noted there should be more discussion on how the code should be updated in light of a new parking
20 garage and what it will look like. She said the current land use procedures were developed after a lot of
21 public input and noted her concern about adequate public input in this process.

22

23 Barton Shilvock: Mr. Shilvock said he was impressed by tonight’s discussion but is also frustrated by the
24 lack of a Commission recommendation. It is difficult for a resident to have a detailed level of
25 understanding without public engagement. There needs to be an explanation of the documents’
26 purpose, benefit, how they relate to each other, and how they’ll achieve end goals. He said publishing
27 the Council’s Vision at this point will be confusing and agrees that having a July 18th meeting is going to
28 feel rushed.

29

30 Mike Dee: Mr. Dee agreed with the concern on not enough notice for July 18th, noting that the Deputy
31 Mayor asked for feedback on the July 18th meeting via email. He recommends renaming Council’s new
32 Vision document to prevent confusion and reminded the City that they are the lead agency for the
33 SEPA process.

34

35 Chair Paisner said he felt strongly about not making a recommendation to Council and that
36 Councilmember French can adequately relay the feelings from tonight’s meeting.

37

38 **Agenda for Next Meeting:**

39 Cmr. Paisner said that the main priority will be the FEIS discussion in terms of what pieces will be
40 useful in shaping the code and design guidelines.

41

42 Cmr. Katz moved to adjourn. Cmr. Morris seconded the motion and it was unanimously approved.

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44 **Adjournment:** 8:54pm

45

APPROVED:

46

Joel Paisner, Chair

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