



Planning Commission Minutes – May 27, 2009

Members Present: Commissioners Clay Leming, Marty Laumbattus, Bertis Rasco, Laurie Gere, Larry Nelson, Lin Folsom and Stuart Janke.

Staff Present: Director of Planning & Community Development, Ryan Larsen and Assistant Director of Planning Don Measamer, Secretary Michelle Deaton, Gary Robinson, Director of Parks & Recreation

The Chair, Ms. Laurie Gere called the meeting to order at approximately 7:30 p.m. The minutes from May 13, 2009 were approved as written.

Correspondence

No correspondence was presented.

Old Business

Continued Public Hearing: Forest Management Plan & Parks Comprehensive Plan

Chair Gere opened discussion on the Continued Public Hearing on the Forest Management Plan and Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Plan. Mr. Ryan Larsen, Director, Planning, Community & Economic Development, suggested that the Commission take additional public testimony on the forest lands plans. Mr. Larsen asked that citizens who have not had the opportunity to speak on this issue, speak first and then any others will have an opportunity to again address the Commission on topics not previously discussed for this project. Mr. Larsen then suggested four avenues the Commission may choose in considering the Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Plan and the Forest Management Plan:

1. Approve as is
2. Approve it subject to recommendation specific changes that you deliberate
3. Approve subject to Council discussing specific topics that you would identify or
4. Denial.

Chair Gere then opened the hearing for public comment and asked participants follow the request of Mr. Larsen to allow first time speakers the opportunity to speak first and also to limit comments to three to five minutes each.

Ross Barnes, 1004 7th Street, Anacortes pointed out that a comment was made that not all of the ACFL is a critical area yet when the City prepared the Critical Areas Ordinance a few years ago, the City made a big point out of stating that all of the ACFL is a critical habitat conservation area under this Ordinance and is the centerpiece of the City's protection of the environment. Mr. Barnes also pointed out that the Ordinance states the ACFL will be managed under the terms of the management plan which accommodates a large amount of public low intensity recreation as well. Mr. Barnes

would like to make that correction. Mr. Barnes went on to state the City's ordinance does not mean that all of the area of the ACFL is in fact pristine and could not use some improvement. Mr. Barnes stated that the Hart Lake boat ramp area has great potential for both improving the environment and improving the recreational potential.

Mr. Barnes also pointed out that the goal on page 31 of the ACFL plan, all land management decisions should be compatible with adjacent land owners within Anacortes and on Fidalgo Island. Mr. Barnes stated that the language could be interpreted to allow an adjacent land owner to require that the City manage the adjacent forestland in the same manner as the land owner. Mr. Barnes believes this language should be changed.

Andrew Stewart, 2003 M Avenue, spoke as President of Friends of the Anacortes Community Forest Land in support of the plan as written. This group believes the plan is a good compromise given everything that is happening with the forest lands in this community. Mr. Stewart also thanked the Parks Department.

With no further public comment, Chair Gere turned the hearing over to the Commissioners as to how they would like to proceed after all public comment was heard. Commissioner Leming stated that he wasn't sure he was ready to have the hearing closed because he believes it is important to come up with a plan that really accommodates everyone. Commissioner Leming requested further information regarding the specific types of bicycles and motorcycles that would be eliminated and stated that he believes the plan needs further review

Mr. Larsen discussed options for further hearings including holding a special meeting on a night other than a regularly scheduled meeting night. All Commissioners agreed June 10 for the hearing and it was agreed that discussion would include dog use of the forestlands, Mt. Erie, bicycles and motorcycles. Mr. Gary Robinson, Parks Director, stated that he could provide additional information regarding motorcycles, the dogs off leash, the Mt. Erie area and bicycles at the upcoming meeting. Commissioner Leming asked if there was information on the percentage of usage on any one given trail. Mr. Robinson responded that Jonn Lunsford and Dave Oicles would be able to answer the question more readily and they would be in attendance at the next meeting. With that, Chair Gere moved to the next item on the agenda.

Adult Day Care Facility – Conditional Use Application

Chair Gere opened the hearing to consider a conditional use application for an Adult Day Care Facility at 1208 7th Street. Mr. Don Measamer, Assistant Planning Director, provided basic information about location, size and purpose of the proposed adult day care facility, presented the 16 letters of support for this project with no objections. Mr. Measamer stated that City staff recommends approval of the proposed conditional use permit subject to staff conditions. With that, Mr. Measamer turned the hearing over to the applicant for discussion and questions.

Mr. Frank McCoy, 4205 Glasglow Way, Anacortes, a member of Christ Episcopal Church, apologized for the confusion over the time for the site visit. Mr. McCoy then explained that in the process of developing the concept for the adult day care, they spoke with many of the neighbors and received no negative responses whatsoever. Mr. McCoy discussed the operation and that the physical changes would really only affect the inside of the building and so there would be no change to the character of the neighborhood. Mr. McCoy requested that the City consider reducing the permit fees either in whole or in part to help alleviate some of the costs for the Center.

Ms. Anne Giboney, 2319 Hickory Drive, Anacortes, provided information regarding the hours of operation which will be approximately 7:30 a.m. to 5:00-6:00 p.m. during the week. Ms. Giboney, introduced herself as a facilitator of the Alzheimer's support group in Anacortes and also serves on the Board of Directors for Skagit Adult Day Care. Ms. Giboney stressed the importance of providing relief for caregivers and how this facility will benefit families in Anacortes.

Commissioner Rasco inquired as to how many individuals would use the facility at one time. Ms. Liz Stoddard, Executive Director for Skagit Adult Day Care, discussed the regulations and that this site's maximum capacity is 15 individuals at one time. Ms. Stoddard explained there may be up to 20 families a day served but those people will be coming and going at different times so the facility will not be over capacity. Ms. Stoddard also stated they expect to have 1 staff person for every 4 individuals served.

After discussion, the Commission approved the Conditional Use Permit subject to staff conditions. This action was taken on a motion by Commissioner Folsom, seconded by Commissioner Laumbattus, and passed unanimously. Mr. Measamer clarified the motion is a recommendation to approve the conditional use permit to the City Council with all the conditions.

Northwest Career & Technical Academy – Conditional Use Application

Chair Gere opened the public hearing for the conditional use application for the Northwest Career & Technical Academy, 1601 "R" Avenue. Mr. Don Measamer, Assistant Planning Director, pointed out the location of the project site which is between "Q" and "R" Avenues, Seafarer's Way and what would be the extension of 17th Street. The parcel area is about 5.94 acres and the building for the conditional use permit proposal is approximately 16,000 square feet. Discussion this evening will focus on the discovery of any issues and to possibly set up a site visit on June 10 at approximately 6:00 p.m.

Mr. Don Measamer, introduced the applicant's representative, Mr. Chris Borgen, Superintendent Anacortes School District, 2200 M Avenue. Mr. Borgen thanked the Commission for allowing them the time for their presentation and thanked Mr. Ryan Larsen and Mr. Don Measamer for their help in moving forward their chance to present their vision of the Marine Technology facility. Mr. Borgen provided an introduction of the Northwest Career Technical Academy and discussed the funding by the State for the full operation of the facility and the uniqueness of that funding opportunity.

Mr. Tim Bruce, Superintendent of La Conner School District, discussed the history of this project and thanked State Representative Dave Quall for helping to bring this dream to reality. Mr. Bruce discussed the training and skills the students will develop through this program and the benefits provided to the community.

Brian Young, 619 Commercial Avenue, Project Manager for the Northwest Career & Technical Academy. Mr. Young stated that the facility in Anacortes is one of two facilities they have been developing concurrently for the past two years. The construction contract for the main campus building at Skagit Valley College was awarded this month and that project is now underway. The marine technology facility proposed for Anacortes is a satellite to that main campus and, pending conditional use approval, the intent is to bid that project this summer. Both projects are scheduled to be completed by summer of 2010 so the doors can be opened to students by September of that year. Mr. Young then presented project planning and development and discussed this history of the project. Mr. Young introduced architect Kevin Aremas, a principal at Hudabel Aremas Architecture in Kirkland. The firm specializes in school architecture and have worked on various projects in Anacortes, including the design and reconstruction of Fidalgo Elementary School, the Anacortes Middle School and Whitney Elementary School.

Mr. Aremas, 4010 Lake Washington Boulevard NE, Kirkland, Washington. Mr. Aremas identified three main key objectives or goals they believed were important for this project. First, a place for education which will promote hands-on learning in a lab environment; second, connections of pedestrian and automobile circulation; and third, architectural language which reflects the marine setting that respects the scale, the character and the context for the surrounding. Mr. Aremas included discussion on parking and how this project was going to fit into the existing landscape, including building materials.

Commissioner Leming inquired as to the total length of the building versus the width in regard to providing view corridors. Commissioner Leming also inquired as to the roof materials. Mr. Aremus did not have the exact specifications to answer the question on the length and width and provided a description of the roofing materials.

Commissioner Rasco asked about parking and how the area would be improved for additional parking to accommodate the facility's neighbors. Mr. Aremus responded that the facility will need fewer parking spaces than the 88 being installed. The technical facility is also working with the Educational Service District to open a driveway between the two facilities that will provide additional parking, bringing the total parking spaces to approximately 115. The spaces not utilized by the technical facility will be open to the public.

Further questions included Commissioner Folsom inquiry about the use of the facility by the public including the lecture hall and whether members of the community can take classes at the facility. The response was that there has been discussion with the Port

about evening classes and other types of things. Commissioner Laumbattus asked for clarification on the parking concerns, especially in relation to the additional parking at ESD. The response was that the ESD additional parking would be applied for separately by ESD.

With that Chair Gere opened the meeting to public comment.

Dave Malseed, 1702 Sterling Drive. As a representative of the Anacortes Marine Trades Association, stressed the importance of this facility to the community.

Mr. Robert Hyde, Executive Director of the Port of Anacortes, believes that the marine skills center will be a jewel for the region. Mr. Hyde discussed the study by Beck & Associates of a four-county area focusing on the marine trades. The study determined that Anacortes is the biggest marine cluster in the entire four counties. This study determined that the only thing missing was an educational arm such as a marine skills center. Mr. Hyde thanked Representative Dan Quall and others for their hard work to get this facility. Mr. Hyde also discussed the various uses for this facility beyond 11th and 12th grade students and believes that this facility will grow.

Howard Bean, 3119 Georgia Place, Anacortes, current owner of North Harbor Diesel. Mr. Bean stated that the biggest problem expanding his business is finding skilled help and believes the technical center will certainly help that situation.

Scott Lee Bullock, 816 34th Street, Anacortes. Mr. Bullock explained that when he grew up in this town, the only technical experience available was with the Bellingham technical school. Mr. Bullock believes that the training received at the technical center will enable people to work in marine jobs in Anacortes and that these positions can provide family wages.

Keith Rubin, 915 Haddon Road. As a Port Commissioner, Mr. Rubin stated his support of the skill center and hopes the Commissioners will support it as well with a conditional use permit and with as few conditions as possible. Mr. Rubin stated that it is good for students. They will be able to leave high school, if they so choose, with some skills that they can put right to work. It's good for the local businesses who can hire those students. They're always looking for skilled workers. It's a good partnership.

No other community members wished to speak. Mr. Measamer presented the Commissioners with correspondence from the attorney representing MJB, an adjacent property owner to the site for the facility.

Chair Gere thanked the audience and set the site visit for June 10 at 6:00 p.m. The Commissioners will then reconvene at the regularly scheduled meeting time of 7:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers.

Development Regulations and Comprehensive Plan Recommended Amendments 2009 – Continued Public Hearing

Chair Gere opened the continued public hearing on the development regulations and comprehensive plan for amendments for 2009. Mr. Larsen, Director of Planning, Economic and Community Development, stated that tonight's meeting is a continuance of the previous public hearing on the comprehensive plan and development regulation amendments. Mr. Larsen outlined the review schedule for this public hearing and that the review would specifically cover Exhibits 1 through 13 and exhibits 42 and 43 and requested that all public comment be limited to those exhibits. All other exhibits will be discussed at the June 10 meeting. At the conclusion of public testimony, Mr. Larsen will then request the meeting be continued to address all exhibits at the meetings of June 10 and June 24.

Mr. Bill Weaver, 2401 Skyline Way, #101, Anacortes. Mr. Weaver spoke in regard to Exhibit 12, the rezone request to go from LM-1 to commercial on Highway 20 area. Mr. Weaver stated that he has a number of parcels of property within the City limits of Anacortes because he believes firmly in the future of this City. Mr. Weaver explained his business interests within the county and stated that he does not support wholesale rezoning of this section to commercial. Mr. Weaver believes this is completely contrary to the zoning intent under which he purchased his property and urged the Commission to either allow retail via a variance or adopt a mixed use zoning designation.

Ms. Jeanne Wallin, 219 "U" Avenue, Anacortes. Ms. Wallin spoke in regard to Exhibit 10, the proposed rezone north to the alley between 3rd and 4th Streets and between "T" and "U" Avenues. Ms. Wallin discussed the historic value of the properties in the area and the view accessibility for visitors and citizens and also expressed concern for homeowners who are not able to obtain home improvement financing due to the proximity to the manufacturing and shipping zones. Ms. Wallin concluded by asking the Commission to consider the historical significance of this property because it has greater value than the marine shipping zoning designation.

Hal Rooks, 1219 10th Street, Anacortes. Mr. Rooks spoke in support of Exhibit 7. Mr. and Mrs. Rooks put forward this request to rezone block 78 from R-4 to R-3 and to include it in the Old Town overlay district. Mr. Rooks provided the geographic location of the property being considered for rezone along with a brief personal history of their involvement with the City. Mr. Rooks also discussed the citizen involvement and boundaries currently defined as Old Town created by the rezone. The Rooks believe that their immediate neighborhood should be included in the Old Town zone and presented letters of support from neighbors.

Susan Rooks, 1219 10th Street, Anacortes. Ms. Rooks spoke in support of Exhibit 7 emphasizing the historical significance of the homes, the relationships of these homes as a neighborhood, and how this change is consistent with the Growth Management Act, the Comprehensive Plan and the Consolidated Plan.

Ms. Monica Oppel, 2803 “B” Avenue, Anacortes. Ms. Oppel supports the rezone of Exhibit 7 and stated how she and her husband enjoy the location and details of their home. Ms. Oppel stressed how the neighborhood would be ruined if some of the old houses were torn down and replaced with triplexes, four-plexes and 40-foot-tall buildings.

Ms. Arlene French, 1411 8th Street, Anacortes. Ms. French expressed her support of Exhibit 7.

Mr. Keith Rubin, 915 Haddon Road, Anacortes. Mr. Rubin, as a City of Anacortes Port Commissioner, spoke in regard to the proposed restrictions in the manufacturing and shipping zones. Mr. Rubin stressed that Washington State is the most trade dependent state in the entire United States and that restrictions on light, noise, building height, dust, etc. in the manufacturing and shipping zone will make it harder to compete for jobs. Mr. Rubin requested this proposal be rejected.

Ms. Sharene Elander, 1406 8th Street, Anacortes. Ms. Elander expressed her strong support of the adult day care center and then provided her input regarding the Old Town zoning change. Ms. Elander shared her experiences with the efforts to preserve the Old Town area and her personal history when moving to Anacortes. Ms. Elander believes the proposal outlined in Exhibit 7 should be granted.

Ms. Virginia E. “Bunny” Heiner, 804 “K” Avenue, Anacortes. Ms. Heiner discussed her home and how she was involved in the work to draft the Old Town overlay. Ms. Heiner strongly urged the Commission to request the change as outlined in Exhibit 7.

Mr. Robert Hyde, Executive Director, Port of Anacortes. Mr. Hyde requested the Commission deny Exhibit 10 which is a request to rezone a piece of the manufacturing and shipping zone on 4th Street. Mr. Hyde discussed the location where the change would occur and explained his reasons for the denial request. Mr. Hyde believes that the area as currently zoned creates a nice transition from the manufacturing shipping to the residential neighborhood. Mr. Hyde believes that if the area is changed to R3, it will cause the same problems experienced at the Anacortes Airport.

Mr. Bill Langjahr, 115 “V” Avenue, Anacortes. Mr. Langjahr believes that any changes to the zoning at the base of Cap Sante (Exhibit 10) would be a detriment to the business community and asks that this request be denied.

Mr. Scott Bullock, 816 33rd Street, Anacortes, supports the proposal of Exhibit 7.

Ms. Karolyne Deatley, 1313 6th Street, discussed the proposal of Exhibit 12. Ms. Deatley believes allowing retail on Highway 20 will take shopping away from the downtown merchants and believes this proposal should not be granted.

Mr. Ross Barnes, 1004 7th Street #202, spoke in regard to the area north of 4th Street and between “T” and “U” Avenues and believes that four of the proposals actually

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concern this same subject (Exhibits 10, 20, 21 and 22) and that this should be set aside for further consideration and brought back as a uniform, integrated proposal next year.

Chair Gere thanked everyone for their participation and stated that the meeting will reconvene on June 10. The meeting adjourned at approximately 9:40 p.m.