



CITY OF SNOHOMISH

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MIDTOWN TASK FORCE MEETING #3b October 27, 2020

TASK FORCE MEMBER ATTENDANCE:

Alice Armstrong	Thomas Kreinbring
Gordon Cole	Ethan Martez
Ray Cook	Kyle Stevens
Mitch Cornelison	Kat Thompson
Paula Denney	Van Tormohlen
Rio Ingram, Chair	

Task Force Members Absent: Karl Houtman, Jeanette Pop

There were 14 other meeting attendees from the public, City staff, and consultants.

CODE AND DESIGN STANDARD CONCEPTS

Consultant Bob Bengford continued the discussion of proposed development regulation and design standard concepts including:

- Roofline design
- Façade materials and details
- Parking requirements
- Sign standards

The Task Force was asked to vote in several polls to evaluate support for various design proposals. Prior to and after the polling on each issue the Task Force had detailed discussions about rooflines, façade materials, and parking requirements. Following are the polling results.

Poll 1:

Should pitched rooflines for residential buildings less than 4 stories be required?

5 (best approach)	20%
4	30%
3 (neutral)	40%
2	10%
1 (unacceptable)	

For all buildings over 4 stories tall, should flat roofs be allowed if other design elements are used such as cornices and modulation?

5 (best approach)	40%
4	30%
3 (neutral)	10%
2	10%

1 (unacceptable)	10%
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Poll 2:

Promote design standards to require integration of façades that are primarily wood and/or brick (with flexibility to integrate other materials)

5 (best approach)	64%
4	9%
3 (neutral)	27%
2	
1 (unacceptable)	

Mr. Tormohlen preferred not to encourage any specific materials, and noted the common theme in all of the highly rated images was variety of materials. The Task Force discussed the issue and determined promoting materials is a better option than requiring specific materials.

Poll 3:

Allow tandem parking for townhouse units?

5 (best approach)	36%
4	36%
3 (neutral)	18%
2	9%
1 (unacceptable)	

Create unique parking standards for the Midtown District that are relaxed from the current city-wide standards?

5 (best approach)	18%
4	36%
3 (neutral)	27%
2	18%
1 (unacceptable)	

Reduce parking requirements for studio and 1-bedroom units to 1.0 spaces per unit from (the current 1.2 for studio and 1.5 for 1-bedroom units)?

5 (best approach)	18%
4	36%
3 (neutral)	27%
2	18%
1 (unacceptable)	

Consolidate off-street parking standards for most commercial uses to standard 1.0 space per 400 square feet of gross floor area?

5 (best approach)	18%
4	46%
3 (neutral)	9%
2	18%
1 (unacceptable)	9%

For small storefront spaces, should we provide credit when on-street parking is available?

5 (best approach)	46%
4	36%
3 (neutral)	
2	18%
1 (unacceptable)	

Mr. Cole stated in his experience one stall per 300 square feet is optimal, but it could be reduced to one per 350 square feet. He does not think reducing it to one per 400 square feet would work very well.

Mr. Cornelison suggested separate parking regulations for the north and south portions of the Midtown district.

It was noted that ride sharing may increase, which could reduce parking needs in Snohomish.

Mr. Bengford stated no special sign standards are proposed for Midtown; rather the district will be subject to the existing standards of Chapter 14.245 SMC (Sign Regulations).

PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE ARRANGEMENTS

Planning Director Glen Pickus talked about how the next step in the Midtown District planning process is a public open house. The original concept of the open house was to provide the public an opportunity to review the concepts the Task Force has been considering and to offer their input/comments regarding those concepts. The open house was also going to be an opportunity for Snohomish County to provide some conceptual drawings to show how their property might be redeveloped.

Although the continued restrictions on public gatherings due to the Covid-19 pandemic limit the opportunities for an in-person open house the intent is still to deliver the same content as originally envisioned.

Mr. Pickus presented a three-prong approach for the public open house. First would be an in-person open house held at the Carnegie Building once construction is complete, with limited attendance over a longer period of time. Attendees would be asked to make an

appointment with 30-minute time slots. Social distancing would be enforced and masks would be required. Staff and some task force members would attend to answer questions.

The second prong would be a remote open house using Zoom. Staff is proposing two separate sessions; one in the afternoon and one in the evening. It would include a presentation from staff and polling to let attendees vote on the concepts.

The third prong would be a self-guided online open house on the City website that would be available for a longer period of time. It would include an introductory video and a storymap with polling imbedded.

Mr. Cole asked when the County is planning to surplus the property, as that will affect timing of the public open house and the overall project. Mr. Randy Blair, a representative for Snohomish County, answered that the County is hoping to surplus the property in summer of 2021, because they need the revenue for other projects that they are committed to.

Mr. Pickus then presented a series of questions for the Task Force to respond to regarding the proposed three-prong open house approach.

1. *Do we move forward with the project or put it on hold until meeting restrictions are relaxed to allow for a traditional in-person open house?*

The Task Force agreed to move forward.

2. *If we move forward when should we do the in-person and remote open houses?*

The Task Force agreed the in-person event should be held in January at the earliest, but the date should be flexible to accommodate the construction schedule at the Carnegie building.

3. *Does the 3-prong approach make sense?*

Yes.

4. *Is it worth the effort to have an in-person open house giving the possibility few will attend?*

Yes.

5. *Will an in-person open house as presented work (appointment only with 30-minute limit)? What hours?*

Task Force members suggested allowing some percentage of unfilled appointments to allow for walk-ups. The Task Force agreed the open house should be held until 7pm.

6. *Does the remote open house as presented work?*

Yes. One could be pre-recorded and could tie into the self-guided experience.

7. How long should the self-guided experience be offered?

The Task Force agreed it should be offered for as long as possible in order to maximize public feedback. The self-guided open house elements should be online for at least a month, posted 2-3 weeks prior to the in-person and zoom meetings, and left online until the fourth Task Force meeting is held.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENTS

Randy Blair, Project Manager for the Snohomish County Shops site, commended the Task Force, staff, and consultants for all the work being done. He knows that Snohomish County will be asked to come up with concepts for their site that work with the regulations that are ultimately recommended. Although the County will not be the developer for the site, concepts have been developed by the County that are pretty consistent with the concepts discussed by the Task Force and he would be glad to show them. He noted the results of the visual preference survey the Task Force held are very close to what was shown to City staff and the City of Snohomish Economic Development Committee last year. He also urged the Task Force not to require a development agreement for the Shops site. He noted the site should not be differentiated from the shopping centers across the street. There are advantages to a development agreement, but they should be optional. He also urged the Task Force to consider flexibility with parking standards, such as shared parking. There is transit service on Avenue D and that should be considered.

Mayor Kartak thanked the Task Force for their work. He observed that the Task Force is very well rounded and they speak from their own perspectives. He is seeing everyone work very hard and he appreciates their work.

TASK FORCE MEMBERS COMMENTS

Ms. Thompson raised concerns about the additional traffic on Avenue D that would result from higher density development in the District. Some of the specifics she mentioned were what the Level of Service forecasts took into account and how the setback and landscaping requirements that have been discussed might impact the ability to widen Avenue D.

Ms. Armstrong wanted to make sure the Task Force's comments about requiring landscaping were not forgotten and that those regulations include a requirement for evergreen species.

NEXT STEPS

Mr. Pickus stated he will be emailing the Task Force seeking their input as details of the three-prong open house approach are developed. He said that if any Task Force member has questions regarding the project they should send an email to the group and he will attempt to provide an answer. Once the dates for the open house activities are known, he will be polling the Task Force regarding setting a date for the final Task Force meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting adjourned at 7:36 p.m.