

Compiled Comments

The following are all of the written comments received as of Feb. 5, 2021, from both emails and the general comments offered as part of the open house surveys.

Comprehensive Plan Goals & Policies

- Consistent landscaped frontage to be compatible with North Ave. D should be required.
- I endorse the County's alternative A & B – at a maximum of 4 stories, mostly residential.
- I would be for housing on the land where the County works were. Those 9 acres could be 4-story housing.
- We say "yes" to the increased density ... with a caveat. We understand that the city would like to use this commercial corridor for increased revenue. We certainly would like to benefit as residents from the increased opportunities and business choices that could come from this development. However, obviously we are concerned that it will take away from the early-1900's feel that we like about this area. There needs to remain a good balance between the two: progressive and conservative outlook on Snohomish ... more revenue/amenities balanced off with the desire from local residents to keep that "Snohomish feel".
- I like the idea of splitting it into two zones, and keeping the area around the high school as a transition from historic district to the highly commercial area heading north.
- I believe in the idea of the district but please focus on allowing a development pattern that rewards slow organic growth from a variety of developers, not just a "Mill Creek Town Center" plopped down in a span of a year. This will create an illusion of value but saddle the town with infrastructure costs and also demoralized political will in the future. Let's create a few simple rules for the area. Low parking minimums, incentivize multi-family and mixed use building sure but then get out of the way. Let's try something like splitting up the lots and have a variety of designers and investors try new things. Let's not create rules and regulations that only allow a certain type of developer or cookie cutter development/fake town building prosper.
- Allow taller buildings more to the north.
- I have mixed feelings about this. I live in the area included. While I wouldn't mind a greater housing density in the now-vacant county property, I totally understand that the residents of the mobile home park can't move. I agree that taller buildings and greater density are needed. I think we need to put some limits in. An example of poor planning in my mind is Lynnwood's Destinations Apartments. They began their life as a SHAG building, but were quickly sold to a for-profit company. No planning was done for paratransit or delivery parking, creating huge issues for residents. Some adjustments were made, but they were poor add-ons. Walking through the area was poorly planned, and some in wheelchairs cannot navigate the neighborhood (while their paratransit use is limited).

- Development regulations are needed to enhance future redevelopment. Current regulations have produced a generally unappealing corridor between the roundabout and 6th Street. With increased density and height allowances comes tradeoffs. Regulations need to mitigate "massing" to provide architectural interest as well as to preserve mountain view from the streetscape where appropriate.
- Allow higher density housing.
- No condos or apodments. Roads and infrastructure are already overloaded.
- Increasing housing along the bus routes on Avenue D is one of the best places to encourage growth in Snohomish. Make the area more walkable by placing buildings closer to the road and parking behind similar to the Mill Creek Town Center.
- I like the idea of the two zones in Midtown development.
- Improve access and streetscape.
- Please make sure developers help pay for enhanced pedestrian amenities and the "greening" of the corridor.
- The Avenue D Corridor is the perfect embodiment of the "Stroad", coined by the Strong Towns Movement. We need to look at ways to retrofit or add shopping or housing to the parking lots to create a better sense of place. Avenue D, with the hill veering off, really doesn't make the best "downtown" street in this section. There are some really unique and good restaurants in this area that are hidden in the strip malls. We need to do what we can to support these stores and restaurants, instead of catering to the new McDonald's and Taco Time
- Strict design standards must be implemented. Can the Pilchuck district standards be used?

Land Uses & Density

- Let's make sure to expand road capabilities as well.
- Build parks, not cram more businesses and residential buildings.
- Anything that is faux building diversity. Let's give incentives for small businesses of any kind to develop, if it is at a small enough scale it can create the economic diversity and experimentation a town like ours needs. I agree that outdoor storage or car dealerships don't look the best and take away from a walkable area. But we can allow for some industry and if at a small enough scale and is designed to the street well it can create a unique experience for even tourists or visitors to see a variety of work/building types.
- Limited increased density, but with very careful planning. The amount of trucking through the area, especially at night, should be considered. The ability of residents to sleep in quiet surroundings should also be considered. Do not allow housing near where there will be lots of noise at night.

- There has been limited development of the Pilchuck District. Height above five floors will probably not materialize for decades, if not generations. Five floors seem about right. There should be an allowance for multiple uses that attract people, particularly on foot and minimizes new auto dependent business, such as auto repair facilities and drive retail drive through with the associated curb cuts and continued promotion of vehicle idling.
- Would be great to include residential living stacked on top of retail spaces.
- Require neighborhood park with increased residential.

Building Height

- No residential additions.
- It all depends. I think if it adds too much street level parking , then it isn't worth it. This area is already too heavy on strip malls and adding multi-family with a large parking lot will only make this feeling worse. If we can come up with some creative solutions or if a developer wants to install underground parking, or be fine with on street parking, the added height will be nice for Snohomish.
- I cannot foresee under what economic circumstances there would be a desire to go up to 75 feet. That would appear to be extremely out of character with surrounding land uses and even a 55 foot height allowance.
- As I am not an expert, my knowledge in what allowing 75-ft building would mean in terms of how it impacts the city... restricting views, negatively impacting the aesthetics, etc. Those would be my biggest concerns. Perhaps the 75-ft exception rule could include verbiage that stipulates those plans would be reviewed by a committee with public comments before approval, AND it would require the plans include usable green space and extra glass to help light pass through and perhaps improve the general views.
- We are in a housing crisis in this state and top priority should be given to affordable housing. Midtown is the perfect area to begin allowing taller buildings in Snohomish, as it's not right up against a purely residential neighborhood.
- All higher buildings (above 3 stories) should have setbacks to lessen the street view visual. Would Pilchuck district standards work?

Parking

- No residential additions.
- There needs to be adequate parking. Supportive of increasing density but concerned when not enough parking is allowed. Most people do not use mass transit.
- Avenue D is two lanes. I find it difficult to believe that on street parking would be incorporated that expands the width of the street. There is a need to keep speed limits low to encourage a more pedestrian environment. If on street parking (parking pockets?) is allowed, it might be optimized by making it subject to a 15-minute limitation.

- Is there any way to incorporate parking garages to avoid the ugly look of huge parking lots?
- Along with the relaxed parking requirements, it would be great if there could be more support for pedestrians and bicycles in Midtown (and throughout the city). This may look like additional bike racks, expand the roadway to allow for bike lanes, improved protected walkways for pedestrians, increased lighting, alternative rideshare support (contracts with stand up and sit down e-scooter companies, for example).
- Specify generous numbers of disabled parking. Consider sprinkling of short term parking (e.g. 15 min). Multi-unit dwellings need guest parking. Don't forget space for delivery folks (speaking as ex-UPSer). What on street parking? Hopefully not on avenue D or 10th/13th west of Ave A. The existing hill on 13th street between Haggens and Safeway is a line-of-sight hazard.
- If there's not enough available parking people will not come. For example, the Josh's taps and caps strip.
- Public access to public transportation and walkability are critical.

Building & Site Design

- No residential additions.
- I don't think there should be requirements if the lots and areas are small enough to create diversification on their own. Just because a strip mall uses nice materials doesn't make it a better use pattern. The Haggens in this area has nice wood on the front but it still follows the same big box development pattern
- Not sure why flat roofs is a requirement for buildings taller than 4 stories?
- Good design "begets" good design. Good developers want to build projects next to good development. Standards are necessary. One factor in peoples' decision to walk is whether the walk is interesting along a chosen corridor. I have a circular loop around town that I walk and if I could avoid Avenue D between the Roundabout and 6th, I would. But, there aren't options that can get me east/west very efficiently at the present.
- Again, since I'm not an expert it's hard for me to see what impact the pitch of the roof on a residential building would have on the aesthetics of the city, however, it seems like that is too broad of a requirement. Need more information on roof pitches to make a more informed recommendation.
- Why is no reference made to the Pickchuck district design standards? There was a lot of community input on that project!

Open Space

- No additional residential. Add parks and nature areas.

- I love the images here. I think by adding in a trail through this development especially if it can connect to the park and other amenities around town, it would be a plus. I am hesitant about large green open spaces in this area unless it has good development around it. It seems like in this region we have a lot of nice open green spaces but then surround it with junk making it not fun to be in.
- We need both.
- I'm unsure how to create the open space standards. One concern I have is that the city has not committed to maintaining the trees we already have. When storms blew the trees along Ave D down, they are not usually replaced. Our town is losing the trees that clean and cool our air and make our views more pleasant. The city would have to come up with a plan to maintain the amount of trees and green spaces.
- I would like to promote hardscape surfaces (e.g. plazas) and enhanced walking. Those are both of place of gathering and socialization. They are also relatively inexpensive to maintain. To have each individual development create a small green space that will not be used by the public is wasteful. I would rather require that a contribution be made to a fund to develop a Midtown public open space large enough for the public to use. That would be a better use of private dollars than to take the space from what could be developable property.
- Walking/biking trails around town would be great! The Centennial Trail is good but I would love to be able to meet up with someone at a restaurant/cafe in Midtown and then take a stroll through nature on to our next shop. Even the ability to walk on a nice trail to the grocery store would add so much. YES please!
- Open space will invite users thus requiring parking.
- Open green space is CRITICAL. That includes urban trails such as sidewalks as well as pocket parks and trails. The most successful urban environments are those that plan for outdoor space! The city often complains about the cost of O & M [Operations & Maintenance] to the parks department but maybe this could be a part of the design process and fall under the responsibility of the property owners.

Other Comments

- Incent green sustainable building practices.
- Provide electric vehicle charging stations.
- Incent inclusion of appropriate tree-canopy (we need more trees).
- Require building exteriors to be a single or mixed use of wood, brick, or stone (Mill Creek Town Center).
- Allow for mid-rise MF development including 5-floors wood over 2-floors concrete.
- Allow increase in density.

- Offer Multi Family Tax Deferral.
- Be more specific and direct about providing affordable housing and what incentives could be offered to encourage.
- I question LU Policy 5.5 saying siting/design of bldgs. Should be “compatible” [Actually it says, “should reflect the relationship to vehicular volumes”] with traffic volumes; could be misconstrued.
- Greening of corridor should address ensuring green areas remain an attractive amenity by providing for maintenance.
- Strengthen encouragement of commercial uses on ground floor of Avenue D frontage (proposed policy CO 6.1.e-4).
- Streetscape should require 4’-6’ planting strip and sidewalks wide enough for two people to walk side-by-side (12’ probably overkill).
- Create a mechanism for new development to contribute to a new, publicly owned open space in the District.
- “Encouraging” does not guarantee.
- Improve walkability for both Avenue D and Bonneville Avenue; create pedestrian connections to other parts of town.
- Create a welcoming gateway at both ends of the District.
- Armory site should, at least in part, include a play field and parking that are an extension of Ferguson Park.
- Need a safe gentle sloped pedestrian crossing of Avenue D around 14th Street.