**City of Kenmore**
**Planning Commission Meeting**
**September 15, 2020 @ 7:00 p.m.**

**Planning Commission Members – In Attendance (the meeting was held virtually using the Zoom online platform)**

Mark Ohrenschall, Chair
Carol Baker
Suzanne Greathouse
Nathan Loutsis
Mike Mulcare
Dennis Olson
Mike Vanderlinde

**Consultants & Staff**

Lauri Anderson, Principal Planner
Debbie Bent, Community Development Director
Maura Query, Administrative Assistant

## 1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chair Ohrenschall at 7:01 p.m.

## 2. CITIZEN COMMENTS

Stacey Valenzuela from Kenmore commented that the highest need for affordable housing in Kenmore is for people in the lowest income brackets.

## 3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

There were no minutes to approve at this meeting.

## 4. AGENDA ITEMS

City Staff presented three proposed scenarios for the Special Affordable Housing Review Process for discussion. There were three questions discussed by the Planning Commission for each scenario: Question 1 – Should this apply to moderate income housing or only low and very low income housing; Question 2 – Should all housing for seniors or those with disabilities, regardless of income, be included in these processes; Question 3 – Should investment of public money be a criterion for a shortened timeframe.

Scenario 1: Reduce review process in multifamily and commercial zones to a Type 1 permit. There would be no administrative appeals or public noticing/commenting - streamlining the process to expedite projects. This would not apply if there was a waiver to development standards requested for the project. There was general support from the Commissioners for this scenario as it makes the process for Affordable Housing Projects easier and faster. There was a comment that the size of a project might make affect the importance of a public comment period. There was support for this applying to low and very low-income housing as that is where the highest need appears to be, and it might encourage more of that type of housing to be built. The Commissioners generally agreed housing for seniors and those with disabilities will not always be affordable so extending this process to those projects does not help meet affordable housing needs or goals. Investment of public money was generally thought to be an unnecessary criterion as the source of funding is not a significant factor when the goal is to help establish affordable housing.

Scenario 2: Allow a developer to propose an expedited review process based on their timeline needs and key dates. The City could agree to the timeline if staff had capacity, or the developer could pay for a consultant to process the review. The Commissioners clarified that any consultant used would be City hired and reviewing the project to the City's standards. In general, the Commissioners felt this was a good option and would enable affordable housing projects to be constructed in a faster timeline. There was a discussion around a developer being able to pay for their project to be moved in front of other projects in the queue, however since consultants would be used there would not be an impact to City staff time and it wouldn't affect the timeline for other projects. Overall, the Commissioners had the same reaction to the three questions as they did for Scenario 1; this should apply to low or very-low income projects and there should be no requirement for the source of funding to include public money. There was a brief conversation regarding whether to include or extend this process to projects for seniors and those with disabilities. There was a question regarding whether these two types of housing projects might have more complexities that make the review more difficult. City Staff will consult with Development Services to confirm if there is a different level of complexity.

Scenario 3: Amend the Development Agreement to extend to all zones for publicly funded, 100% affordable, housing projects. Eliminate the need for a threshold decision and allow adjustments to certain standards. There would be only one public hearing and the applicant's payment of attorney's fees and public notice expenses would be eliminated. There was clarification around what publicly funded meant. This could be a partnership between the City, County, and non-profit agencies; it wouldn't have to be 100% publicly funded but would require some portion to be public funds. The Commissioners expressed concerns that residents would be upset about changes to single family and residential zones. City Staff commented that there could be additional conditions added where this would only apply if the project were being developed on land owned by a non-profit (church, etc.) that was in a residential zone. There was a concern that this could lead to nonprofits buying property in order to obtain this waiver, and concerns about density in single-family zones leading to unhappy citizens. City Staff mentioned that the process would not be an automatic approval of the project under the Development Agreement, and that the decision would be brought to City Council for each project. Overall, the Commissioners felt it would be difficult to create boundaries on this process. Commissioner Vanderlinde made a motion to eliminate this option at this time and suggested it be revisited in the future. Commissioner Loutsis seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

The next meeting will be held on October 6, 2020. City Staff will provide a rough framework for the two scenarios. The next steps will be defining the details and parameters for each.

## 6. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Ohrenschall adjourned the meeting at 8:39 p.m.

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Planning Commission
Approved by Planning Commission on: October 6, 2020 via virtual roll call vote