

**City of Kenmore
Planning Commission Meeting
October 6, 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 7:04 p.m.

2. CITIZEN COMMENTS

Stacey Valenzuela from Kenmore commented that she is grateful to see the 18.77 amendment to address low and very low-income housing.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

August 18, 2020 Meeting Minutes – A motion to approve as written was made by Commissioner Greathouse and seconded by Commissioner Mulcare. The motion passed unanimously by roll call vote.

September 15, 2020 Meeting Minutes – A motion to approve as written was made by Commissioner Mulcare and seconded by Commissioner Greathouse. The motion passed unanimously by roll call vote.

4. AGENDA ITEMS

The two scenarios from the September 15, 2020 Planning Commission meeting were refined. Part of the process to refine them included reviewing two chapters from the zoning code: Chapter 18.77 and 19.25. The Planning Commission reviewed the sections of each chapter that were revised in accordance with the two scenarios.

There was a request to clarify the wording in Subsection B of Chapter 18.77.060 regarding the expedited review process. This section will be reworded to more clearly define the conditions under which the determination is made regarding whether City Staff has the capacity to take on the expedited process, or if it will be handled by a consultant.

There was a discussion on the exceptions to the lower level process in Subsection A of Chapter 18.77.060. A concern about excluding projects from the lower level review process based on a request for a variance was brought up. The Commissioners requested more information regarding the percent of projects that request variances. They requested the Development Services Director's opinion on the acceptance criteria's potential impact to preventing affordable housing projects from being eligible for the lower level review process.

There were five questions from the Staff Memo that were discussed.

Question 1: What percentage of units in the development should be affordable to be eligible for the special review process?

The Commissioners discussed many different options regarding how to set thresholds for a project to be eligible for the special review process. Topics of discussion included: requiring a certain percentage of affordable units to be in the very-low income level; varying percentages of by size of project; and if extra density in certain zones were allowed then a higher percentage of affordable units would be required. City Staff will draft different options for the next meeting.

Question 2: What size of project should be able to take advantage of the special review process?

The Commissioners felt that this special review process should be available to projects of all sizes.

Question 3: Should senior housing or housing for those with disabilities be eligible for the review process, regardless of income level?

The Commission agreed that the special review process should be limited to Affordable Housing but encourages housing for seniors and those with disabilities.

Question 4: How should the City approach the State law (2019) that requires consideration of higher densities on properties owned by religious organizations?

There was a discussion regarding how to address this. City Staff feels that the Development Agreement is the best approach. There were questions to clarify the State law. City staff will work to clarify it.

Question 5: Should the City consider increasing the SEPA review threshold for residential dwelling units?

The level of environmental review that the City conducts is duplicative of SEPA, so the thought is to increase the City's threshold for SEPA review to 60 dwelling units. This increase would expedite the review process for smaller projects. The Commissioners were interested in exploring this as a separate item and not as part of the special review

process for affordable housing. They expressed a desire for a side-by-side comparison of the City requirements.

6. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Ohrenschall adjourned the meeting at 8:29 p.m.

Planning Commission
Approved by Planning Commission on: November 17, 2020 via virtual roll call vote