

**City of Kenmore
Planning Commission Meeting
October 5, 2021 @ 7:00 p.m.**

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

Mark Ohrenschall, Chair
Mike Vanderlinde, Vice Chair
Tracy Banaszynski
Suzanne Greathouse
Nathan Loutsis
Dennis Olson
Dwight Thompson

Consultants & Staff

Debbie Bent, Community Development Director
Lauri Anderson, Principal Planner
Rita Moreno, Recreation Coordinator/ Admin. Assistant

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chair Ohrenschall at 7:00 p.m.

2. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Leanne Hust – Spoke about single family neighborhoods and rezoning. She is against opening up every single-family zone for building. Feels most land will go to developers to build cottages, duplexes, and row houses. Would like to see the city focus on affordable housing near major arterials and bus lines. What can a middle-income family really afford? Are we really helping families by rezoning all of Kenmore and letting investors build? Kenmore is not set up for this.

Jim Myers – Has concerns about no additional parcels of land for growth and that the only option is to increase the density of Kenmore. Trying to increase density without creation of infrastructure will have consequences for the environment and the livability of Kenmore. It will result in degradation of the environment that we live in. How will the commission balance all these things? Would like variance loopholes to be closed.

Pastor Anja Helmon – Would like to challenge the commission to consider how to make the change and ensure that the new higher density homes that are built will not be fancy style living catering to the wealthiest among us. Would like to make

sure zoning change results in affordable options not just rentals. Would like to see a high percentage of new housing to be affordable. Maybe we need to change zoning to encourage inclusion of services that are needed. Every neighborhood should have both affordable and expensive homes.

Dylan Thornberry – Very supportive of the missing middle zoning. The affordability issue is getting very bad; glad that the Planning Commission is looking at ways to fix it. This is a good step.

Elizabeth Mooney – Would like to call attention to the tree canopy, salmon habitat, urban setting, and the consequences of these major zoning proposed changes. Does care about affordable housing but thinks there are some unintended consequences to considering single family residential housing being changed. Think in terms of 100 years. Would like to have some of these discussions at the Hangar with the community and talk in person to collect a lot more people's ideas.

Marylin Knudsen – Expressed concerns about the environment and how we all fit into it and how important it is to us. Noticed in Bothell that requests for change are granted over and over again to laws that are on the books regarding setbacks to wetlands and setbacks to environmentally sensitive slopes. If something is going to be done to try to infill regulations should be followed. Please consider how to regulate so we don't lose what we love. How can we meet each other in the middle of the road? Very concerned and would like commission to talk to as many people as they can. Spoke of need to protect the wetlands and other areas.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The September 14, 2021, Planning Commission Meeting Minutes - A motion to approve by unanimous consent was made by Commissioner Thompson. Commissioner Vanderlinde seconded the motion. The motion passed 6-0. Commissioner Loutsis asked to abstain from approval of the minutes as he was not at the meeting.

The September 21, 2021, Planning Commission amended Meeting Minutes - Staff proposed a change to the minutes. The minutes stated that 95% of the land is zoned for residential use and should read 95% of the 78% of the land that is zoned for residential uses. A motion to approve the amended minutes by unanimous consent was made by Commissioner Thompson. Commissioner Loutsis seconded the motion. The motion passed 7-0.

4. AGENDA ITEMS

- Vision Statement

Staff gave an overview of the notes on the vision statement and asked the Commission to suggest any changes to the vision statement or to the notes. If the commission is satisfied, staff would put it on the web page and let the community know that it was there and that we would appreciate their input. Commissioner Vanderlinde stated that he was fine with the statement as is but would want it to be clearly stated on the web page that this is a work in process.

Commissioner Greathouse talked about adding aspirational environmental type things to the vision statement. Staff asked Commissioner Greathouse to send the language that she had found so that it could be cross referenced with the policies in the natural environment element.

Commissioner Banaszynski commented on the 3rd bullet point and suggested a further edit to the Commission. Would also be in favor to putting this out to the community for additional feedback. Commissioners had a conversation about the language Commissioner Banaszynski suggested – to act boldly and aggressively. Commissioner Olson suggested boldly and wisely. Commissioners then decided to go boldly and wise on the draft by a show of hands.

Commissioner Vanderlinde asked staff how the public was going to be informed of the draft vision statement on the website. Staff stated the upcoming opportunities for getting the word out: e-news, flyer, social media.

Commissioner Thompson asked about the issue that Commissioner Banaszynski brought up and if it still needed to be addressed. Staff was asked to amend note 2 to be reflective of Commissioner Banaszynski's concerns that were outlined in her email. Commissioner Thompson made a motion for the two pages of the vision statement be put out to the public for comment. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Banaszynski. Motion passed 7-0. Commissioner Banaszynski asked about the possibility of there being a statement at upcoming city events that would point people to the vision statement. Staff will provide a flyer which is still being worked on and is in its first draft stages.

- Housing Element: Missing Middle housing

Staff resumed the discussion on tiny house villages and the options for offering them. Commissioner Loutsis asked if there was a desire for tiny houses in our area. Commissioner Banaszynski asked if the tiny homes are for people who want a smaller footprint, or is it transitional? Commissioner Greathouse asked if the Commission was considering a village, how many homes would make a village? Staff will research the two concepts, tiny home villages as market rate locations for tiny homes to park versus tiny home villages to serve as transitional homeless housing with centralized facilities and services. Commissioners asked what the goal with tiny houses and tiny house villages is. Commissioner Banaszynski asked if staff had heard of Eco thrive in Burien. Would like to look into that model for the Commission to consider. Commissioner Loutsis asked staff if the conversation on tiny home villages for different lifestyles, transitional tiny homes would fit better in affordable housing than in missing middle? Staff will gather more details and determine if a policy is appropriate.

Staff presented preliminary scenarios that could allow duplexes and/or triplexes in Kenmore while addressing Commissioners' concerns. Commissioners discussed the scenarios and gave their feedback to staff for moving forward. In particular, Commissioners agreed that conversion of an existing house to a duplex or triplex within the existing building footprint and within ¼ mile of high frequency transit was appropriate. The chair asked for a show of hands to see how many preliminarily supported this concept. The Commissioners supported the idea 5-2.

Commissioners decided to continue the conversation on the scenarios at the next meeting.

7. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Ohrenschall adjourned the meeting at 9:16 p.m.

Planning Commission

Approved by Planning Commission on: _____

