

Fairhaven Neighborhood and Urban Village Master Plan

November 16, 2011

Follow-up on Discussion Topics and Responses

- 1. What can be done about empty parking garages and lots in the daytime?**
Response: This can be approached by "unbundling" parking, meaning that parking that is required as part of a new development (one apartment gets one parking stall under the building) may separate that required parking from its use and potentially use it for another use (i.e. commercial business nearby can lease it for their employees). This is complicated, but certainly possible. We could explore, then incentivize this recommendation, as we move through the various phases of parking management.
- 2. RT-4 - suggest making new uses case by case rather than allowed outright.**
Response: Making any new uses subject to conditional use permit creates more of a burden for the property owner, the permit review system, and the public to provide oversight for each. Also, if we know the impact of a proposed use, we should require the use to deal with the impact (i.e. headlights in a bedroom window, etc.). However, the point was well-taken that perhaps the list of additional uses was too extensive - staff is cutting back the use types as a result of the public input received.
- 3. Parking system - how does it link to development?** Response: The parking system links to development by how parking is required for each type of development. Parking regulations are currently being drafted to reflect an urban center type of parking requirement. Parking is impacted by historic buildings as well as the two existing parking districts.
- 4. Permitted uses versus proposed uses - what are the differences?**
Response: Staff is also in the process of creating matrices that depict the existing zoning vs. proposed zoning for the areas where any zoning use would be changed. These matrices will be available when the draft is issued for public review.
- 5. Re-connecting parking requirement to new development in the core.**
Response: Currently, property owners that bought in to the Fairhaven Parking District are not required to provide parking for new commercial uses within the Parking District boundary. The market will likely require the development of some parking when the remaining undeveloped parcels develop, and parking would still required for any residential uses. There are several un or under-developed parcels that have parking requirements that are not part of the Fairhaven Parking District. A mechanism could allow those parcels to "buy in" to enable small parcels to develop without underground parking, while generating funds for development of additional on-street parking.
- 6. Extending Historic Influence area north along the trail.** Response: As was discussed on November 16th, at this time the City decided not to extend any boundaries beyond the existing Fairhaven Neighborhood Boundary. Any future

expansions would be decided on their merits, and design review would be one of the issues to be analyzed.

- 7. Mixed uses - expanded list for industrial areas.** Response: Again, staff will provide clear comparison matrices to detail what changes are suggested for industrial areas. At this point, no residential uses are proposed for the industrial areas, however, policy language may talk about the suitability of a residential component as part of a future development proposal.
- 8. What defines a historic building?** Response: Anything over 50 years that has not had major exterior changes.
- 9. What about vested projects in areas that previously had no height limit?** Response: There are no remaining vested projects within the Fairhaven areas. Height limits will go into place when the plan and regulations are adopted.
- 10. Chuckanut Ridge acquisition and its impact on parking at Fairhaven Park - any improvements planned?** Response: That area is not within the planning area and will be part of future planning efforts likely associated with the recent acquisition.
- 11. Industrial - no height limit - what does that mean?** Response: Industrial properties are typically not limited by height within the city to encourage flexibility and support jobs and new industry. It is very rare that industrial development is built any higher than 40 or 50'. All non-industrial development will be restricted to the proposed height limits.
- 12. Height on waterfront - what about commercial development (i.e. Bellwether)?** Response: As proposed, height limits in all industrial areas for commercial uses would be limited to 56' and four stories, 56' and five stories with one set back, or 66' and 6 stories with two setbacks. There is a clear difference between the building configuration and infrastructure needs of industrial versus commercial, which would presumably prevent an industrial development from morphing into a commercial one.
- 13. Parking demands versus bike/pedestrian safety.** Response: Angled parking in Fairhaven is a way to fit as many on-street parking spaces as possible into a constricted, dense area. It slows traffic considerably. Clear bike signage and pedestrian amenities such as crosswalks and trail connections can also improve safety.
- 14. Access to waterfront through industrial areas (ped and bikes).** Response: After discussions with the Port of Bellingham, it is clear that short-term access is not likely to happen as long as industrial leases are filled within the Fairhaven Marine Industrial Park. However, policies and goals regarding long-term improved waterfront access will be included in the plan. Short-term improvements will focus on the west side of Padden Estuary, at the existing railroad crossing that accesses the Community Boat Launch, and at the overlook

at Gambier Avenue. Long-term policies will focus north and east towards the Bay and connecting with Taylor Dock.

15. View corridors through industrial areas. Response: This issue is still being analyzed and will likely be addressed through the design guidelines and will focus on areas closest to the core where the most potential negative view impacts could occur.

16. Limits on uses in I-3 versus what is proposed to be permitted (existing special regulations). Response: As previously mentioned above, staff will be distributed matrices of the different uses, and will make sure that any pre-existing special regulations will be assessed for inclusion or met with other mechanisms.

17. View modeling - can we look from the inside out (i.e. from Harris & 11th)?
Response: Yes we can - that will be posted with this document.

18. Quantification of land use model/capacity - for 20-30 year build out.
Response: Staff provided a detailed description of the modeling used to project build out and capacity. For the details, see below.