

**Snohomish City Council Workshop Minutes
January 21, 2020**

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Mayor Kartak called the Snohomish City Council Joint Workshop with the Planning Commission to order at 5:00 p.m., Tuesday, January 21, 2020, in the Snohomish School District Resource Service Center, George Gilbertson Boardroom, 1601 Avenue D, Snohomish, Washington.

COUNCILMEMBERS/MAYOR PRESENT

Larry Countryman
Judith Kuleta
Tom Merrill
Donna Ray
Linda Redmon (*arr. 5:41 p.m.*)
Jason Sanders
John Kartak, Mayor

STAFF PRESENT

Debbie Burton, Finance Director
Glen Pickus, Planning Director
Steve Schuller, City Administrator and
Utility General Manager
Brandi Whitson, Administrative Assistant

PLANNING COMMISSION PRESENT

Gordon Cole
Mitch Cornelison (*arr. 5:02 p.m.*)
Hank Eskridge
Terry Lippincott

2. **DISCUSSION ITEM:** 2019 Planning Commission's Annual Report and 2020 Work Program

Planning Director Glen Pickus provided background on the Planning Commission's annual report as required by SMC 2.16.060, and introduced the Commission's 2020 Work Program.

Mr. Pickus explained the Work Program is for guidance and planning purposes only, and is not meant to bind the Commission in their goals for the year. He provided a chart showing the projects, in order of priority, and the estimated timeframe for consideration.

Mr. Pickus introduced the first topic for discussion, the Midtown Snohomish Subarea Plan/Revision of "Commercial" Regulations. He explained staff is determining a process with which to review the Commercial zoning of the subarea along Avenue D, which includes the former County Public Works site, the "keystone" site for the area. Since the site is vacant and is the largest parcel in the area, it possesses the highest potential for development. It may be best to tailor regulations of the area based on what might happen at that site. To assist with the process, staff proposed retaining Bill Trimm, a planning consultant, to facilitate a Task Force composed of two City Councilmembers, two Planning Commissioners, two or three City residents, and four or five business owners/developers. The Task Force would meet four times to review and discuss what type of development they feel would be appropriate for the Midtown Area. Staff anticipates a resolution outlining the structure, responsibilities, and goals of the Task Force to be presented to Council in February.

Councilmember Merrill questioned if Snohomish County had consultants for the former public works yard. Mr. Pickus confirmed they did, and are attempting to include the City in their process knowing it is part of a larger area within the City.

Councilmember Kuleta questioned the timeframe for the planning. Mr. Pickus stated the County is following its own schedule with their market analysis of the site, but the City's next step would be to review the proposed resolution, due next month. The entire process will

hopefully be completed this year. Impacts of the code revisions that may evolve from the Task Force might impact what can be done at the County site.

The Council and Commission discussed the various aspects the Task Force will determine, which may include building design, density and parking regulations. In response to Council President Sander's question, Mr. Pickus explained the Task Force meetings would be open to the public, and public comments and feedback would be solicited. In addition, Mr. Pickus explained Task Force recommendations could lead to code amendments, which will follow the normal amendment process: Planning Commission discussion, a public hearing before the Commission, then to the City Council for adoption.

The group discussed current zoning of the area (Commercial with some Mixed Use), and how the site could accommodate growth. Staff advised the Midtown Area was the best place within the City to accommodate commercial growth, increasing sales tax revenues which the City uses to provide services.

Commission Chair Lippincott questioned if transfer development rights (TDR) would be allowed in the area. Mr. Pickus advised it was possible, with the Pilchuck District as the receiving area.

Council President Sanders asked what would happen to the trailer park on 14th Street. Mr. Pickus advised it is in the subarea, and since it is adjacent to the County yard site, it could be sold for development. The Commission and Council discussed affordable housing, and whether that could be incorporated either in the Midtown Area or elsewhere in the City. Mr. Pickus advised affordable housing could be part of the direction for the Task Force to consider and included in the initiating resolution. However, he cautioned leaving the resolution fairly open, allowing the Task Force the opportunity to consider the bigger picture, and not be too constrained. Council President Sanders commented on the Pilchuck District having too many regulations, which has left development stagnant. The Council and Commission agreed avoiding another Pilchuck District would be prudent when considering the Midtown Area.

Mr. Pickus advised Council he will have a bullet list of Task Force responsibilities at the next Council meeting, so Councilmembers will have plenty of time to review them prior to the resolution being presented. Commissioners Cole and Cornelison requested the Planning Commission be provided with the same details as the Council so they could organize Planning Commission activities accordingly. Mr. Pickus agreed.

Mr. Pickus then provided a brief description of each of the remaining projects listed, but noted the top three were the most critical:

- Midtown Area
- Consolidate Definitions in Land Use Code Chapter 14 SMC
- Comprehensive Plan Amendments

The group discussed VRBOs and Airbnbs briefly, and potential development of regulations beyond the current requirement of only obtaining a City business license.

Discussion returned to the Task Force for the Midtown Area. Commission Chair Lippincott inquired about the application process for the Task Force. Mr. Pickus advised those details will be determined with the resolution, as well as requiring the Task Force report to the Planning Commission at one of its meetings.

Councilmember Ray questioned the Planning Commission’s involvement with parking studies. Commissioner Cole responded it has been discussed, and explained parking requirements vary in different areas. Parking, in general, is adequate for Commercial and Multifamily zones.

Council President Sanders commented on the Council’s current objective of reviewing its goals, and how important it is for the Council to align those goals with what other groups are doing, such as the Planning Commission. He is concerned about too much time spent on items that are not high priority, especially by staff. Mr. Schuller explained the Midtown Area planning will be successful, if staff can focus on it, and although Mr. Trimm will help, planning will still require a considerable amount of staff time.

The group briefly discussed the Pilchuck District, potential developments, and causes for limited development. Commissioner Cornelison cautioned against zone activities competing with one another within the City. Commissioner Cole agreed, and suggested the Council not make “wish lists” that would constrain development, potentially creating another Pilchuck District.

3. **ADJOURN** at 5:50 p.m.

APPROVED this 4th day of February 2020.

CITY OF SNOHOMISH

ATTEST:

John T. Kartak, Mayor

Brandi Whitson, Administrative Assistant