

Burlington Planning Commission

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Harris Roen
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vacant, Youth Member*



Burlington Planning Commission Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, July 19, 2016 - 6:30-8:30 P.M.

Public Works Conference Room, 645 Pine Street, Burlington

Present: Y Bradley, B Baker, E Lee, Andy Montroll

Absent: H Roen, J Wallace-Brodeur

Staff: D White, M Tuttle, E Tillotson, E Blackwood

I. Agenda

No changes.

II. Report of the Chair

No report.

III. Report of the Director

D White: Will be out of the office for a couple of weeks.

IV. Proposed CDO Amendment – Downtown Mixed Use Core Overlay

A Montroll: Confirming what was sent to Council with the ordinance was just the statutory report?

M Tuttle: Yes. Tonight, working on the letter summarizing the PC comments.

A Montroll: Should reflect where the PC reached consensus and where they did not.

Y Bradley: Suggests that the Commission strike the second sentence in paragraph 2, redundant.

B Baker: Feels as if the last sentence could have less strong language.

E Lee: Commission hasn't had a full group despite adding a lot of meetings to meet the Council timeline. Don't want the City Council to misunderstand what is being sent.

B Baker: This is the introduction; as we proceed, can come back to refine. Feels comfortable supporting the major points in the proposed amendment in the timeline given.

A Montroll: Amendment sent to City Council was not a finished draft; the message is that there has not been enough time to provide a final draft.

M Tuttle: Add language to effect of "despite the PC efforts, it does not feel that there was adequate time..."

E Lee: Add the lack of a model.

Y Bradley: Not sure Commission agrees on specificity of these comments. Reality is Commission did not have the time normally would have, and meetings have been devoted to listening to the public. Lack of normal dialogue has polarized the Commission.

E Lee: Members haven't been in attendance, we need to convey lack of time. Hope City Council sends it back to the Commission, because timeline rushed our work.

Tuesday, July 19, 2016

M Tuttle: The second paragraph discusses most of those points; revised line to say ordinance sent meets City Council timeline, not requirements.

D White: Next section highlights what the PDA requested be included in the ordinance. Following section reiterates the Ch 117 report sent with the amendment.

A Montroll: This seems redundant; should we focus on Commission's additional comments?

Y Bradley: This information puts the comments into perspective, suggest retaining them.

A Montroll: If anything in the memo has already been sent to Council, need to be clear on what is reiterated versus what is new information.

D White: Next section includes PC Comments on various elements of the ordinance. Begins with boundaries.

B Baker: Important to indicate where whole Commission agreed versus individual Commissioner comments.

D White: Includes pros and cons about two sites discussed; incorporated language regarding "whole commission" or "some commissioners" to make this distinction. Next section regarding Official Map, indicates the PC as a whole supports amendment of the map and recommends better alignment of the streets.

D White: Next section discusses Height & Massing. Includes all four comments shared by commissioners.

A Montroll: What we are trying to do is to incorporate the work done by Commission. Even if there are comments that all Commissioners don't agree with, should include them all.

Y Bradley: Do we want to discuss the bullet points, or include them as written?

E Lee: Is not comfortable taking action on each item without everyone here.

A Montroll: Personally, support the second bullet, regarding lowering height.

M Tuttle: One other comment regarding height is about the change to Church Street height.

B Baker: Did we agree on the official map should make the streets align?

Y Bradley: Recall a discussion that it is not possible.

D White: More difficult to make them align, but as close as possible.

A Montroll: Redevelopment has to be in conformity, but existing can stay the way it is. Wouldn't the line then be the closest fit?

D White: If the street spans multiple properties, can't compel properties not part of the redevelopment to come down, and can't compel the property being redeveloped to provide the whole street unless it is illustrated that way on the Official Map.

A Montroll: The official map is one thing, one way or another want to require that the streets be open.

D White: We can't require it to be open without the public acquisition.

Y Bradley: Add "as close as possible" to the official map comment.

M Tuttle: In the comments on by-right height, included various Commission comments, including that some elements be discretionary.

Y Bradley: Do we support moving away from discretionary requirements?

B Baker: Supports first paragraph.

Y Bradley: Agree with next paragraph about reconnecting St Paul and Pine Streets as a major goal in this area.

A Montroll: Very strongly in favor of this comment.

Tuesday, July 19, 2016

D White: Even if we find a tool to exclude buildings in those ROW, cannot require that they be improved as connections.

A Montroll: Goal is that the City takes over the ROW. If there is not a building there, City can do it later.

Y Bradley: This is tied to the height. Opening these streets is a condition of a higher height.

D White: Seems that Commission is not talking about by-right height, rather community benefits.

A Montroll: Not sure what the tool is, and don't have time to flesh it out, but this is an important concept to include. Not tied to the height, tied to redevelopment within the district as a whole.

B Baker: We want to reestablishment the streets, but that takes developable space so need to consider the tradeoff.

Y Bradley: The language should indicate that we are trying to facilitate development, be upfront that for any redevelopment to take place new streets must be provided. Allow higher height to allow for this to occur.

D White: Revised language to say that creating a zoning district that does these things, and in addition, want these things.

A Montroll: It is not just the building height. Allowing more dense development, consider what we are getting. Opening the streets, better design, and other benefits. Making it easier in some ways, putting more requirements in, too.

M Tuttle: Need to be clear this is not about "conditions;" the Commission is saying that opening streets are not tied to height at all, but are required of this district.

D White: Truly only applicable to substantial redevelopment. Substantial is defined in our ordinances.

A Montroll: PC in agreement on this.

M Tuttle: Next section reflects the overall the feeling of the PC is that parking should be underground. Some felt that if it is not, clearly demonstrate why that doesn't work. Comments about design/screening later on.

Y Bradley: Issues is how to define infeasible?

A Montroll: It is vague, but accurately reflects some Commissioners' opinion. Didn't have time to figure out how to do it. Maybe it doesn't work, but for now, include as a comment.

M Tuttle: In opening of this section, include statement about some of the suggestions being challenging to address, because it applies to all of these.

Y Bradley: And may require further analysis and definition.

A Montroll: Recognize these are challenging, but important to continue to discuss.

D White: Last point is about housing diversity. This is a comment from some Commissioners.

B Baker: Requirement prevents some development as it is. 20% of bigger development is substantial. Add comment to this that some Commissioners believe the required inclusionary is sufficient.

M Tuttle: The first paragraph about urban design standards is a higher level policy statement about importance of this element regardless of height and massing.

A Montroll: Add "or behind a liner building" to the statement about underground parking not being feasible.

D White: Next item is green buildings, took language from an expired bonus.

M Tuttle: To reflect the conversation, added "or equivalent rating system" in comments on the draft language.

E Lee: Is pleased to see changes in language.

Tuesday, July 19, 2016

D White: Reflected Commission feeling that post-secondary school should be conditional, not permitted.

A Montroll: In conclusion, need to discuss the purpose of this is to facilitate redevelopment in a way that planBTV discusses, particularly how buildings activate and energize streets.

B Baker: Regarding green buildings, bond requirement might be tied to something tangible and realistic. Five times the building permit fee seems unrealistic.

D White: If a builder doesn't achieve the prescribed certification level, will lose the bond.

Y Bradley: The City Council should explore this more to ensure it's a reasonable way to tie the energy standards to performance.

The Commission unanimously approved a motion by A Montroll, seconded by B Baker, to send the revised memo to the City Council.

M Tuttle: Clarify staff suggestion is to send memo and markups on the draft ordinance language. Have incorporated all comments from the chart into one of these documents.

A Montroll: Where the memo contains staff comments, they should be explicitly noted.

V. Proposed CDO Amendment – Neighborhood Activity Center-Cambrian Rise

The Commission unanimously approved a motion by Y Bradley, seconded by E Lee, to postpone this item and move to the public forum.

VI. Public Forum

Eric Morrow: Congratulate the diversity of the board, acting with deference and respect. However, a four person quorum, slanted towards real estate interests, undermines that diversity.

Barbara Weinroff: What is intent of discussing connections at St. Paul and Pine Streets? If want them built as full roads, need to say it; if it can't function as a road, then what?

Ann Taylor: The Commission has done a lot of work. Has been asking lots of people for their opinions about the BTC project. We all know we need housing, need more office space, smart growth, work/play, business/retail. Like the overlay district, question is how do we cause development in the rest of the City. Had some things to direct to the Coalition, but tonight must not be the place to do it. Also wants the City to think about tiny houses. Someone said this would allow 160 ft buildings in the South End. What to say about that?

Y Bradley: Overlays are created to establish specific purposes in a part of town. This is specific to implementing more dense development in a part of downtown per planBTV.

M Tuttle: This is why discussion of relevance to planBTV is so important. When Commission considers amendments, have to consider if it's relevant to plans. Would be hard to find justification for 14 story buildings in the South End in our plans.

B Weinroff: Has the Commission seen recent housing studies? We will have a glut of housing with the proposed projects. People are using a scare tactic that we need more housing.

Resident: This has been a learning process; tonight felt like democracy. Thank you.

VII. Adjourn

On a motion by A Montroll, seconded by B Baker, the Commission voted unanimously to adjourn at 8:59 pm.



Y Bradley, Chair

Signed: 08.15.2016



E Tillotson, Recording Secretary