



Memorandum

DATE: September 9, 2010

TO: Shoreline Planning Commission

FROM: Joseph W. Tovar, FACIP, Director
Paul Cohen, Senior Planner

RE: Draft Town Center Design Standards

On August 19th staff oriented the Planning Commission to the draft Town Center Design Standards. The draft included most of the improvements that the community preferred plus improvements that were compatible but not fully articulated by the community. While some of these are desirable, we have opted to scale it back to avoid confusion and volume. We think it is important for applicants as well as neighbors to understand the regulations and likewise for the staff to be able to administer them.

On September 16th staff would like to explain the list below of organizational and fundamental changes to further refine the design standards. Technical changes will be forthcoming. Staff would like to hear your responses to these changes and any other suggestions for us to consider.

1. Thresholds for Review (20.92.010) – Repeat the threshold used in other parts of the development code for when full site or just the areas proposed for change must meet code requirements. The proposed additions and remodels threshold is problematic with the tracking of changes over 3 years and, secondly, basing this threshold on footprint percentage will be inequitable either with a 50% change to a small 200 SF building or to a 50,000 SF building. This threshold does not work well with site improvements such as plazas or parking areas. Of course, any changes to a portion of building or site would have to meet the design standards. I suggest that a next section C should be the ADR review process. That section needs criteria and clarification. I suggest that we want ADR for design departures and for proposals that meet the base threshold of 50%+ of assessed value. That will include all new buildings and be proportional to any additions.
2. NE 180th St and Aurora Intersection - The concept map may be better off in the subarea plan with this possible intersection identified accompanied with a

policy. “Pursue the development of a signalized intersection at Aurora Ave N and N 180th St. to facilitate vehicular and pedestrian access to and across Aurora Avenue. Approval of this intersection should be coordinated with the vacation and closure of N 182nd between Midvale Ave and Linden Ave.”

3. Zoning Map – Convert subdistrict TC-4 into an overlay zone and locate only where the Town Center is opposite single family zones. The overlay width can be reduced to about 80 feet if the stepback requirements are changed from 40 to 20 horizontal foot increments.
4. Building Height.1 - Section 20.92.040.B can be deleted because it tries to fine tune the heights near Stone and Linden Avenue but has little improvement and is confusing. Move stepback charts into Neighborhood Protections section. Amend stepbacks to 20’ wide x 10’ high after an initial 40-foot stepback. In reshaping the building bulk standards to remove development potential adjacent to the single family neighborhoods we are shifting and therefore balancing the building potential toward the interior of the Town Center.
5. Building Height.2 - Remove height bonuses because they are not incentives when “green” building standards will be a part of the building code. Also, they may become disincentives considering the higher site, building, and sign design standards and the current lack of development market for such higher development standards. Internal to the Town Center maximum height is 70 feet which allows a 15 foot concrete base (commercial standards) plus 5, 10-foot stories plus 5 feet to accommodate roof designs.
6. Neighborhood Protections – Add stepback charts, traffic diversion, parking, and vehicle access standards to Neighborhood Protections section.
7. Change section heading from "Streetscape" to "Street Frontage" because it only addresses curb, amenity strip, and sidewalk but not lane configuration or street parking.
8. Change section heading from "Street Frontage" to "Site Design" because it addresses how the site development interfaces with the street frontage, open space, internal circulation, landscaping, street corners, lighting, fences, parking, etc.
9. Change section heading from "Commercial, Mixed-Use, and Multifamily Design Standards for Town Center" to "Building Design" to separate it from the bulky site design section. This section should only address scale, façade, blank walls, windows, roof design, mechanical equipment, etc.
10. Relabel street types to "Boulevard, Storefront, Greenlink" streets because they more accurately convey the desired function and character of these streets.
11. Subsection removals – The following design items are recommended to be set aside: building material and colors, roofline modulation, window detail,

secondary entries, solar access, privacy, and stoop and light courts. Once there is a smaller, cleaner draft then we can discuss whether they are needed and should be returned to the draft.

12. Combine some of the terms and requirements for “Focal Open Space, Public Gathering Space, Internal Open Space, and Open Space for Multifamily”. Currently, it is not clear how they are different and whether they are collectively a too large requirement when applied to one site.
13. Do not require that commercial uses be located on ground floors of residential buildings but do require that commercial construction standards be used on ground floors so that the spaces can be converted when the market for small commercial space is relevant.
14. Remove guideline language such as “should, suggest and encourage” and either use the code language of “shall” or offer a menu of requirements in which to select a specific number from.

Next Steps

Staff will return in November with a polished proposal and illustrations how they would apply to several test sites and provide a Sketch-up model to view how the entire subarea could be assembled. A public hearing will be schedule at that time.

Attachment

1. New Zoning Map

Draft

Shoreline Town Center Zoning

-  Town Center Boundary
-  TC-1 (Aurora-South-West)
-  TC-2 (Aurora)
-  TC-3 (Midvale/Firlands)
-  TC-4 (Stone Ave Transition)
-  Transition Overlay

0 100 200 400 600 800 Feet

March, 2009
Aerial Photography



Plot date: 9/8/2010

Filename: TownCenterConcept_8511v2.mxd

