

Planning Commission
Auke Bay Implementation Ad Hoc Committee
Thursday, June 28, 2018, 12:00 PM
Marine View Building, 4th Floor Large Conference Room

Call to order 12:22

I. Roll Call

Planning Commission:

Dan Miller (Chair)
Paul Voelckers
Nathaniel Dye
Ben Haight

Absent:

Dan Hickok

Staff:

Jill Maclean, Director, CDD
Beth McKibben, Planning Manager, CDD
Allison Eddins, Planner II, CDD
Laurel Bruggeman, Planner I, CDD
Marjorie Hamburger, Administrative Assistant, CDD

Members of the public:

Joann Schmidt
Jerry Quigg
Ann Doty
John Doty
Debi Ballam
Mark Schwan
Rick Currier
Lisa Currier

II. Approval of Agenda

Public testimony will be heard after the Approval of Minutes.

MOTION: *by Mr. Voelckers to approve the agenda as amended.*

The motion passed with no objection.

II. Approval of Minutes

A. May 17, 2018 Draft Minutes

MOTION: *by Mr. Dye to approve the minutes with no edits*
The motion passed with no objection.

III. Public Testimony

Joann Schmidt - Tanner Terrace Subdivision

Ms. Schmidt wanted to share her comments in response to the public testimony at the last meeting (May 17, 2018). Mr. Quigg commented about parking and the road, and she is interested in clarification on that. Her building contains 8 units with 16 parking spaces in front as well as overflow for a total of 28 parking spaces. She does not see how this would be a problem.

Mr. Woodrow was concerned about property values. As Ms. Schmidt understands MU zoning, unless there is a change in actual use it will not affect property values. She believes instead that the value would increase because the property is rehabbed and upgraded from what is there now. Allowing the building of more new condos will only strengthen property values all-round. Currently there is low income housing at the bottom of the street so the use will not change.

In response to traffic concerns, Ms. Schmidt anticipates traffic calming. Making a more walkable community with this type of development will make a more pedestrian friendly community.

Ms. Ballam is concerned about views, said Ms. Schmidt, yet her house is at the top of hill, well above the building's elevation, which is limited to 35 feet. In the Auke Bay Plan, this is the most valuable view to preserve. Honsingers own waterfront property in front of Ms. Schmidt's property, and she believes that they have a right to develop this even if it may impact her own development's views. Ms. Schmidt said she is concerned about tone of the letter submitted to the Committee by Ms. Ballam and Mr. Schwan. She asked if by the sweep of a pen something that was written into the Auke Bay Plan can be changed due to some neighbors' feelings. This Plan is a vision for the community of Juneau, not just a few individuals, said Ms. Schmidt. She feels strongly about thinking beyond individual concerns to the good of the community. Keep in mind the impacts of shutting down economic development crafted by the Steering Committee and CBJ, she said. She advocates for the plan and sticking with its intent but is concerned the work will be thrown out.

Rick Currier - Cross Street

Mr. Currier read excerpts from a letter he submitted to Ms. Eddins and the committee on June 28, 2018. The issue is the Traditional Town Center (TTC) boundary. Others TTC's are zoned commercial due to long term use. Auke Bay is different and residential areas will be inversely impacted by commercial development. Mr. Currier said the biggest investment he has made is his house. Taking away the water view results in a reduction of his property value and a reduction in his quality of life, he said. CBJ paved his neighborhood's streets 3 years ago. Sidewalks are 3 feet wide and only on one side. He is concerned about congestion and safety

with increased vehicle and pedestrian traffic. Attachment B to the Ad Hoc Committee's May 17 meeting packet showed 4 yellow dots defined as "view sheds" for Auke Bay. Most Tanner Terrace residents can see 3 or 4 of these points. In his letter, Mr. Currier recommends moving the TTC east of Bay View Street.

Mr. Currier went on to say that as far as height and view, an elevation above a lower structure does not mean it won't block the view. Neighbors on Tanner Terrace took a balloon up to 35 and 45 feet and looked from their deck. Cross Street is at the top of the neighborhood, and 45 feet blocked most of the water view while 35 feet blocked 65% of the view. A house on Glacier View that was recently built took away 10% of the view.

Lisa Currier – Cross Street

Ms. Currier said when she and her husband moved into the neighborhood it was their biggest investment. They took some trees down to see more of the view. This is our forever house, she said. Soon as this is done there is nothing anyone can do. We might as well live in the desert. Progress is important but quality of life is also important. So much empty commercial land is not being used in the borough, why put commercial here, she asked? Housing is increasing all over the borough as well. Ms. Currier said that 13 families will be impacted in this little area. She does not feel she is being selfish. She sees no reason to add so many more people to this little area that it impacts the quality of life for all 13 families.

Commissioner Discussion

Mr. Voelckers made a friendly suggestion; there is confusion about maps and origins of maps. Can Ms. Eddins clarify?

Ms. Eddins brought map images up on the projection screen (see PowerPoint from June 28, 2018). The original map approved in the Auke Bay Plan identifies the hub with a black outline and the center with a blue is outline. It was adopted by the Assembly in the Auke Bay Area Plan. The Plan calls for some rezoning, higher density, and protection of viewsheds. When it came time to implement the vision, in 2016 the Steering Committee and CDD staff had a meeting and produced a second map which excludes the Tanner Terrace neighborhood. Now the committee is trying to grapple with this issue. The official adopted map is in place, but the second map went through a public process.

Mr. Voelckers noted that at the last meeting, some efforts were made towards the creation of a third map; this is recapped in the minutes of the May 17 meeting.

Mr. Miller pointed out that the public testimony points to the difficulty of this undertaking. It is not just a matter of changing an existing zone. We don't think any current zones fit, said Mr. Miller. We are talking about an overlay or some new type of zone defined specifically for Auke Bay. It is not an easy process but there will be a full public component complete with neighborhood meetings before anything is finalized. Receiving written comments are helpful,

he noted. Mr. Miller said that the committee would hold off on any more public comment at this committee meeting, however, and he directed Ms. Eddins to run committee members through zoning district regulations.

Ms. Maclean asked if moving forward there will there be other opportunities for public testimony. Yes, said Mr. Miller

IV. Agenda Topics

A. Zoning versus Overlay: Where regulations should live

Ms. Eddins said the goals for today are to come to a consensus about which regulations should be included in a new district and which in an overlay district. Also the committee needs to consider which should be mandatory and which should be optional. Once she receives her marching orders from the committee, Ms. Eddins said she will make a presentation at the next meeting to include research on how other communities preserve viewsheds. Also Ms. Eddins wants to encourage discussion about how to make design standards palatable to developers. It will be helpful to see real numbers for development, but first the committee needs answers to first two items (see PowerPoint from June 28, 2018).

Ms. McKibben asked if the committee looked at the staff memo dated June 4, 2018. There is a list of zoning district regulations in a base zone and a list of overlay district regulations to gain a density bonus.

Mr. Voelckers wanted clarification that the committee is creating, hypothetically, a unique new zoning district with Auke Bay flavors and features presented as an overlay. But, he asked, could the underlying zoning could work elsewhere in borough? Yes, said Ms. Eddins.

Ms. McKibben said perhaps zoning regulations on the water side could apply elsewhere.

Mr. Miller said he wanted to emphasize that he is not necessarily convinced it is best to have a zoning district that is applicable anywhere else in the borough. He said he wants to get Auke Bay done, and if later it turns out to fit somewhere else, that is okay. But he does not want to worry if the zoning overlay will fit somewhere else. The committee's job is to get Auke Bay implemented, he said, and he wants to move forward on this specific goal.

Mr. Dye said he echoes Mr. Miller's thoughts. However he keeps coming back to the question of why not use zoning districts already nearby and use overlay district tactics for fitting Auke Bay specifically.

Ms. Eddins said that material was provided in past meetings which had allowable uses and dimensional standards and presented what is proposed for Auke Bay. Staff's opinion was there

are so many discrepancies that it would be easier to create a new zoning district rather than eroding an underlying district.

Ms. McKibben reminded the committee that at a meeting prior to May 17, it was decided to go down this path - to investigate a new zoning designation.

Mr. Voelckers said we were persuaded that it was better to create a new district, but he agrees completely that maybe a zoning district that addresses all is best. No matter what, he said, we have determined a new zone should be proposed. It is a minor adjustment whether the details within that zone are intrinsic or should live in an overlay.

Mr. Dye asked about the advantages to having these two units, a new zone and an overlay. Why not just create a new district, he asked?

Ms. McKibben said it is in the details now; the committee can talk about mechanics later.

Mr. Miller said if the waterfront is kept as a commercial zone and the uplands are designated as a new zone, then maybe an overlay makes sense as it can apply to both. This may end up being best way, he said.

Mr. Voelckers asked if Waterfront Commercial allows for condo development. Ms. Eddins replied that any zoning district with waterfront property has to meet some standards regarding uses related to or dependent upon water. An argument in the past is that residential uses meet this criterion, she said.

Ms. McKibben said the zoning is 18 units per acre.

Mr. Miller said the maximum height is 35 feet.

Ms. Eddins directed the committee's attention to the staff recommendations for zoning district recommendations listed on the PowerPoint:

- Permissible Uses
- Density Standards
 - Mixed use development receives higher density as a bonus*
- Dimensional Standards
 - Maximum square footage for one story, single use buildings*
 - Lot size
 - Lot coverage
 - Setbacks
 - Building heights
- Vegetative Cover

- Parking Standards
 - Minimum Parking Requirements (20% reduction from what is currently required)*
 - New parking lots located along the side or rear of a building*

But, she said, exact details are not spelled out yet. The items with an asterisk are brand new concepts not in any current zoning district.

Mr. Dye asked about the maximum square footage recommendation. This is to incentivize developers to construct 2 stories or more, said Ms. Eddins. Ms. McKibben pointed out that this recommendation came from the Auke Bay Steering Committee.

Ms. Eddins said staff is proposing a 20% reduction in minimum parking requirements, but this is just a recommendation.

Mr. Voelckers asked if staff is hoping the committee will say this is a good framework. Yes, said Ms. Eddins, then details about what the setbacks mean, and so forth, can be hashed out. It is her hope that the committee likes the framework and asks staff to bring back details.

Mr. Voelckers asked if the 20% figure was arbitrary. He said he favors a larger reduction; downtown has a 60% reduction. The goal as he understands it is a more walkable community.

Ms. Eddins said she can run some numbers for the next meeting to play with. Mr. Miller would like to see the parking reduction tied to the bonus.

Mr. Dye said he struggles with parking lots and forcing them to the rear. He wondered if anyone had thoughts on the matter. Mr. Voelckers said it might work to incentivize. The goal is to have a walkable community with canopies, etc. What really is the front or the back, he asked?

Ms. Maclean said there are safety concerns for pedestrians and kids walking to school. She reminded the committee that this is not just a plan for today, but for 20-30 years into the future. If the community wants to create something new, the committee needs to keep that in mind.

Mr. Dye asked about bonus points.

Ms. McKibben said there is flexibility in requirement and then if not feasible, the director or the commission could make a finding with some criteria. There can be a default and the applicant has the onus to show why he/she cannot meet the default requirement. Mr. Miller mentioned a combination for reduction and bonus. This helps a developer figure out how to do it. The only way this happens is if the developer sees the benefit in doing it that way and penciling it out to see if it is a good idea. We need to figure it out so that they can, said Mr. Miller.

Mr. Voelckers said the big thing, the key starting point, is the suggestion that we have Waterfront Commercial on the water side of the arch. If we did that, then the task is easier just focusing on the upper band. D18 zoning comports with the Auke Bay Plan, he said, and the committee might not need to re-create too much on the water side so that we are looking at new area. Mr. Miller asked if there was consensus on this. Yes, said the committee.

Ms. Eddins clarified by stating that the waterfront will be excluded from the discussion right now.

Mr. Haight said now the focus should be talk about the overlay.

B. Zoning Regulations: Mandatory vs. Opt-In

Ms. Eddins directed attention to the staff recommendations in the PowerPoint for the overlay district:

Mandatory

- Waterfront-specific Uses
- Special height and side yard setback standards to protect viewsheds - exceptions will require a Conditional Use Permit (CUP)
- Screening standards required for commercial/existing industrial developments adjacent to residential uses (not zoning districts), AND multi-family adjacent to single-family residential uses
- Special parking lot location standards for waterfront properties – exceptions will require a Conditional Use Permit

Optional

- Building design standards (canopies, recessed entryways, 25% transparency for windows at street level) – density bonus for opting in
- Screening standards for commercial and multi-family properties not abutting residential uses – density bonus for opting in
- Landscaping standards for commercial and multi-family properties - density bonus for opting in
- Site features (outdoor seating, outdoor planters, public art, pedestrian walkways) - density bonus for opting in
- Reduction in parking if providing bike/ped infrastructure or proximity to a transit stop and provide a bus shelter

Mr. Voelckers noted that the first bullet point can now be dropped.

Ms. Eddins said Bullet 2 states a CUP is needed if a developer can prove the standards cannot be met. Some screening standards came from the Auke Bay Committee. What would standards

look like, she asked, to make a buffer between commercial and residential uses to include multifamily and single family?

Parking lot locations for waterfront properties needs to be considered. The community does not want parking with waterfront views. Those properties have parking on the alternate side, said Ms. Eddins. None of this is pulled out of thin air; it either has come from the steering committee or the meeting minutes.

Mr. Dye said he is concerned about screening; some areas hardest to achieve this are alongside large roads unless the lot affords an area to push away things like road salt. Vegetation along these roads is difficult to maintain.

Mr. Voelckers said Mr. Dye had a good point about screening being hard to achieve. He suggested gaming up the options and thinking about this in the standards.

Ms. McKibben said she wanted to enter consideration of different sign standards in Auke Bay into the conversation. There is an emphasis in this neighborhood on aesthetics, and current CBJ sign standards are outdated. This could be an opportunity to align sign standards with visual aesthetics, she pointed out. Mr. Dye said he would love to redo all sign standards and then talk about Auke Bay. Ms. McKibben said this could be a way to start the change and later address the situation for the whole community. Mr. Voelckers agreed this might be such an opportunity, but he feels a sense of time urgency and thinks the committee should keep blinders on for the big picture, and then later take on the signage issue.

Ms. Eddins stated she will remove waterfront specific bullets from the list. Now there is a list of optional regulations for the district allowing for density bonuses; parking can be added here too. These things anticipate if something is mandatory in a zoning district but would be hard to sell to developers and the public. It is expensive to develop in this town and we hate to put the kibosh on development. However the public put a lot of time into this so we want people to do it but still be worth their while. So some standards should come with a density bonus or a parking reduction bonus. These are concepts but she is happy to do more research.

Mr. Voelckers asked if there is talk about vertical development. He thinks vertical density is obvious to be meaningful but needs to be linked to protecting the viewsheds. However in some areas it is possible to build very high. All of this should be included in a density bonus.

Mr. Miller said he thinks if you protect or widen a viewshed, you should get a bonus. He would like to leave options open for people.

Ms. McKibben pointed out that there is a lot of talk about density, but for a single use building these options are not available.

Mr. Voelckers said tying a parking reduction to a bonus is key. The real trick to development is how many parking spaces must be provided. Incentivizing this is going in a good direction.

Mr. Dye pointed out some awkward wording that appears to set a standard for 25% transparency for windows. He reminded all to get the wording right.

Ms. Maclean said she will make a note for Ms. Eddins to look at the parking waiver. In order to incentivize, then this area would be excluded from the PD1 and PD2 areas. Ms. McKibben suggested maybe having a parking waiver in certain situations?

Mr. Voelckers said that a lot of this work was already started by Mr. Feldt, previously. Some of the geometries were roughed in by him.

Ms. Eddins said Mr. Feldt and the Steering Committee explored a marine commercial zone. A TTC proposes 50 units per acre and a 55 foot height limit.

Ms. McKibben said that a few years ago LC density was increased as well as GC. It used to be that WC and LC had the same density. We could explore this, she said, but if so the WC density would not just apply in Auke Bay. Or perhaps Auke Bay WC could have residential density beyond 18 units.

Mr. Miller said it might be hard to get to 18 units per acre with a 35 foot height maximum.

Mr. Voelckers said he wonders if there is an advantage to having an overlay district. It could apply to both sides of the road. It could be good to have pedestrian infrastructure and linkages on both sides.

Ms. Eddins said when talking about permissible uses, there was discussion about limiting to 5,000 sq. ft. showed photo of this footage. She showed an image of what a one story footprint looks like. Maybe the committee is not ready to have this conversation, she said, but when we get into the nitty gritty she suggests using information from other communities. Next she gave examples of screening and landscaping and suggested this be talked about at the next meeting (see PowerPoint from June 28, 2018). What would be the cost, she asked? She recommended keeping this in mind when the committee gets to talking about this and about permissible uses. When we say 5,000 sq. ft., what is doable? Per floor, asked Mr. Miller? Ms. Eddins said she was talking about the footprint and that this came from the Steering Committee.

C. Viewsheds/Bonuses: Next Steps

Ms. Eddins said she has also been exploring lot coverage versus height. She has been working with the CDD cartographer about viewsheds. He can help play around with a 35 foot building placed on the waterside and can project where views will be blocked and where preserved.

Mr. Voelckers suggested that this is interesting but not essential. The committee needs to figure out viewsheds and cones and draw where these are. This is the more germane thing, he said. What are we protecting?

Ms. Maclean said she had the same thought as Mr. Voelckers. She would like to have a look at old minutes since she seemed to recall that viewsheds are public, not private properties. It is good to have minutes for when this was discussed to clarify what the plan says.

Mr. Dye said as the committee goes down that path, hopefully it will be easy to draw the lines of the maximum footprint. It seems odd to say that large buildings in the area are ok as is but not if they are rebuilt. Ms. Eddins said this can be made to be specific to retail and commercial.

Mr. Voelckers pointed out that this is frequently the nature of a specific area plan. A long-range plan imposes standards that make what is there already out of compliance. This is done to avoid mega-development. There are often tensions between old and future goals, he said.

V. Committee Member Comments and Questions

Ms. Maclean said if the date for the next meeting is pushed out, staff can prep materials to look a little more like an ordinance, if so desired by the committee. She suggests using as a model the ordinance for non-compliance.

Ms. Eddins said she will try to anticipate questions and give visuals. Ms. McKibben suggests considering language first, before determining boundaries. Ms. Eddins replied it is helpful to imagine what parking look like if in one place or another.

Mr. Voelckers asked if was acceptable for ideas to circulate by email, due to people's travel plans? Ms. Maclean said she will email Ms. Eddins, and she will blind cc: everyone in the response. This can happen via email as long as this process is followed so as to keep all discussion in the public record.

The next meeting was scheduled for August 9, 12 noon in the CDD conference room. Members should plan for a 2 hour meeting.

VI. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 1:35 pm