



RENTON PLANNING COMMISSION

Meeting Minutes

August 9, 2006
6:00 p.m.

City Municipal Building
Council Chambers

Planning Commissioners Present: Robert Bonner, Ray Giometti, Jerrilynn Hadley, Joshua Shearer, and Greg Taylor

Planning Commissioners Absent: Jimmy Cho and Nancy Osborn

City Staff Present: Rebecca Lind, Long Range Planning Manager; Don Erickson, Senior Planner; Judith Subia, Recording Secretary

1. CALL TO ORDER: Due to a lack of quorum, Commissioner Giometti opened the meeting at 6:19 p.m.
2. ROLL CALL: Commissioner Hadley called roll; Commissioner Bonner arrived at 6:45 p.m. and Commissioners Cho and Osborn were absent and excused
3. POLICY/CODE STUDY SESSION: **Prezone Briefing for the East Renton Plateau Potential Annexation Area (PAA)**
STAFF PRESENTATION

Rebecca explained that that the City has a large annexation request, the Preserve Our Plateau Annexation (POPA). As a result of some of the issues involved in this annexation, the City has determined to convene a citizen's task force of unincorporated area residents. They will be working through the Fall on some of the community planning and pre zoning issues. The pre zoning will come to the Planning Commission later in the Fall.

Rebecca presented the Commission with different maps of the East Renton Plateau PAA. The City has three large PAAs established under the Regional Planning Policies: the East Renton Plateau, West Hill, and Soos Creek (which is further divided into the Fairwood and North Renton/Cascade area). The urban growth boundary defines the urban area, land outside the line is in the rural area. The bulk of the growth that is anticipated in the region is planned to occur within the urban area. The East Renton Plateau is within the urban area. The East Renton Plateau is a term that has been used and was assigned by the City and County when the urban growth boundary was established. It is not necessarily the name that may be used by citizens that live in this area.

Rebecca presented the City's Comprehensive Plan and Zoning maps to show that the area within City limits has zoning assigned to it. Land outside of the City limits do not have zoning assigned. When an area is annexed, at the time annexation occurs, the City must determine what the zoning will be. There is a Comprehensive Plan land use designation for this areas, and is established as part of the Comprehensive Plan. The zoning that implements the land use designation has not yet been established. In this particular PAA, there are three possible zones that can be used. The land use designation for the entire East Renton Plateau is Residential Low Density (RLD). Within this designation, the three implementing zones are: Resource Conservation (RC), Residential 1 (R-1), and Residential 4 (R-4). These are residential zones and do not allow attached housing or multi-family of any type or commercial development. As annexation discussions proceed in this area, determinations will be

made about the zoning. The State allows Cities to go through a rezoning process to consider zoning and enact a zoning ordinance prior to annexation.

A discussion of the rezoning of the East Renton Plateau PAA is being brought to the Planning Commission. This will involve the area larger than the proposed POPA. During this rezoning process, Staff will be looking at areas that are not proposing to annex at this time.

Rebecca presented a map that shows the Fire Districts that serve the areas surrounding Renton in the PAA and rural areas. The East Renton Plateau PAA is served by Fire District 25, which is provided by the City of Renton under contract.

Rebecca presented maps that show the characteristics of the area. A significant issue in this area is sewer extension. The City has currently adopted and enacted a sewer moratorium within the East Renton Plateau PAA. It is not the entire PAA, and excludes the area north of 128th Street. The sewer extension map shows sewer planning and the likely route of future sewer extensions. Parts of the area is expected to continue to be served by septic. The septic service is expected to continue past any future annexation. As development occurs, developers extend the sewer separate from the City's Capital Improvement Program. Liberty High School, in the Issaquah School District, is served by septic.

Commissioner Hadley asked about wastewater treatment facilities, and if the facilities are prepared for future sewer. Rebecca said that it has been anticipated in the Wastewater Comprehensive Plan.

Rebecca gave background information regarding the Renton zoning compared with the King County zoning. One of the agreements that occurred at the time PAAs were set up, and King County enacted its Comprehensive Plan policies for this area, was that future subdivision would require sewer service. At the time, there was no sewer provider in this area. The City of Renton had the capacity to be the sewer provider for the area. Whether annexation occurs or not, the issue of sewer is separate from annexation. The City of Renton Sewer Utility is the designated service provider for this entire area.

A sewer moratorium is in place because of the pending annexation discussions and the difference between the City of Renton and King County zoning standards. A number of residents of the area approached the City Council, represented by a community organization, Citizen's Alliance for a Responsible Evendell (CARE), and asked the City Council to stop issuance of sewer permits until a community discussion and potential election on the issue of annexation. A sewer moratorium is in place until December 2006. An application has been filed and certified by King County for an annexation election.

Don gave a presentation and gave background about this PAA. Beginning in 2002, the City met with residents of the East Renton Plateau interested in preserving its lower density suburban character. The King County zoning was allowing development equivalent to the City of Renton's R-8 zoning at that time. In 2003, the City changed its Comprehensive Plan land use designation from Residential Single Family (RS) to RLD. In 2004, the City amended its Comprehensive Plan land use designation for most of the East Renton Plateau from RS to RLD with the latter designation having a maximum density of 4 units per net acre. With the Comprehensive Plan amendment from RS to RLD, the City began issuing Sewer Availability Certificates at a maximum density of 4 units per net acre. Although reducing the density allowed under King County development regulations, this action did not prevent smaller lot development allowed by King County. In June 2005, the City adopted a sewer moratorium for the unincorporated portion of the East Renton Plateau. This moratorium was extended to December 6, 2006.

The East Renton Plateau PAA is 2,091 acres with an estimated population of 7,287 residents. This PAA has 37 lineal miles of roads, 85.93 acres of undeveloped parks, and an assessed value of \$719,506,500 in 2005.

Don showed the King County Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map where R-4 zoning predominates the area, the Parkland designation in public ownership, and commercial near 128th. The larger parcels, where sewer is not expected for another 15 years, are parcels that are half an acre or greater in size. These areas are being considered for RLD land use designation. There is a trail system that the County

is interested in that goes through undeveloped parkland, through a subdivision, and to an existing open space.

Don showed a map of the City of Renton's Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map pre-November 2004 showing RS allowing R-8 (eight dwelling units per net acre) zoning and RLD. Staff proposed a designation to RLD with five dwelling units per net acre, which was implemented. This was later amended to four dwelling units per net acre.

The POPA is about 1500 acres of the area. In November 2005, residents of the East Renton Plateau PAA submitted a ten percent petition calling for an annexation by election. In February 2006, the City Council held a public meeting and adopted a resolution calling for an election on the question of whether this area should be annexed to the City. In March 2006, the City invoked the Boundary Review Board's (BRB's) jurisdiction requiring that a public hearing be held. The BRB held public hearings on the POPA on June 14 and 15 of this year.

Don showed different maps showing the POPA boundaries, aerial, and topography. There are four creeks that run through this area, which inhibits the City to provide sewer. It is anticipated that the eastern portion of this area is unlikely to develop in the next 20 years. Steep slopes exist below the bluff, where there are existing subdivisions.

Don showed the buildable lands data for the POPA area. There are 216 acres that are considered developable or vacant. This would bring the population to approximately 1,060 people.

Don discussed issues about whether there should be an urban separator in the East Renton Plateau. And if so, what would be the most appropriate area for such a separator. The Countywide Planning Policies (CPP) support designating lands that provide environmental, visual, recreational, or wildlife benefits between urban and rural areas. Such areas are protected with low density zoning for at least 20 years and typically are part of a regional open space system.

Continuing, Don discussed the concept of an East Renton Plateau urban separator. In compliance with the CPP, urban separators are designated RLD and zoned R-1. Under City code, designated urban separators must establish a contiguous open space corridor. Dedication of at least 50 percent of the gross acreage of such urban separator parcels must be set aside as "non-revocable" open space. Such "open space" is limited to passive recreation, pedestrian trails, animal husbandry, and existing structures and utilities.

The potential areas for this designation are the 210-acre Briarwood east (Renton Suburban Tract) area at the eastern portion of the proposed POPA where parcels are typically half to one acre in size, the 38.3-acre Renton Fish and Gun Club, the approximately 57.6-acres of undeveloped County park lands west of 156th Ave SE and the large parcels west of 154th PI SE, north of the Renton-Maple Valley Hwy and south of the Maplewood Heights, Cedar River Bluff, and the Briar Ridge and Briar Hills subdivisions at the top of the hill.

Commissioner Giometti wanted clarification about urban separators and gave an example of two property owners with parcels next to each other. With the urban separator between them, one could develop and the other couldn't. Don explained that many property owners are concerned about high density that are being created by developers. They would like to keep the suburban character. A majority of the people that the City has heard from do not want high density. Rebecca explained the way the zoning for urban separators is set up. The open space that Don referred to is not public open space. It is on a private lot, however, there are use restrictions on it and cannot be further divided. The Growth Management Hearings Board has interpreted the CPP and GMA that the only way that a City can establish R-1 zoning would be within an urban separator or where there were substantial environmental constraints.

Commissioner Hadley asked if there were two different PAAs. Don explained that POPA is an actual annexation and the East Renton Plateau is in Renton's PAA.

Commissioner Hadley asked if properties are required to hook up to sewer. Don explained that the City does not have the authority to require anyone to hook up to sewer. If there was a failing septic system, the Seattle/King County Health Department is the jurisdiction that determines if a property must be hooked up to sewer, if it is available. Rebecca added that this area is built out with the County's standards. There are no large developable parcels and very few parcels that could subdivide.

The issues for this area are governance, service deliveries, and other issues which will be discussed with the Task Force. The City is recruiting Task Force members from outside the POPA area to have broader look. The areas in the actual proposed annexation area are the areas where development is occurring.

Commissioner Taylor asked about dry sewer. Don explained that this is where a developer puts in the lines, but is not connected because the sewer is not there to connect to. Commissioner Bonner asked what the cost is for dry sewer. Don said that this was beyond his expertise.

AUDIENCE COMMENT

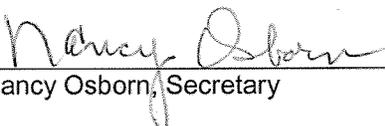
Ronda Bryant, 6220 SE 2nd Pl, Renton, WA 98059: Ms. Bryant lives in a newly annexed area and thanked Don and Rebecca for an excellent presentation. She said that there is a definite difference between the County and City's R-4 zoning. She gave an example of a five acres property. The County's R-4 zoning is four units per gross acre. This would allow 20 homes. The same property with the City's R-4 zoning with four units per net acre, removing non-buildable areas, playgrounds, roads, and wetlands would allow approximately 16 homes.

Tom Carpenter, 15006 SE 139th Pl, Renton, WA 98059: Mr. Carpenter is the chair of the Growth Management Committee of the Four Creeks Unincorporated Area Council. He lives in the area that is not part of the annexation. In general, the attitude of the area is to not annex. The Four Creeks Unincorporated Area Council is working with King County and the City of Renton to ensure that an Interlocal be put in place. This is an important transitional period for the residents and feels that net R-4 and gross R-4 zoning discussions should not exist.

4. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS: The next Planning Commission meeting is scheduled for September 6, 2006.
5. ADJOURNMENT: The Meeting was adjourned at 7:31 p.m.



Ray Giometti, Chair



Nancy Osborn, Secretary