

**SE 122nd Avenue Rezoning PAG
September 29, 2011
6:00 pm- 8:00 pm**

Staff Present: John Cole, Chris Scarzello, Jackie Gruber

PAG Members Present: Jim Braet, Kristy Knapp (on behalf of Jean DeMaster), Sue Gillean, Michelle Lohn, Nick Sauvie, Steve White, Mark White

Guests: B.D. Wortham-Gavlin, Toni Lettiere, Max Lachik, Adi Sandu

Materials Distributed: (1) Mailed PAG packet, (2) Commercial zone descriptions, Use table, Development Standards table, (3) Home occupation zoning description

John Cole convened the meeting.

John expressed his wishes to honor the work that has already been done in the previous SE 122nd Avenue Study and to move forward on the general objectives set by the pilot.

PAG Member Introductions

Steve White of Oregon Public Health Institute said he hopes to add a health lens to the project. White explained his involvement in a health impact analysis. He also spoke about the East Portland Connectivity Study which considers several factors beyond sidewalks, including site design, street connectivity, and the importance of a variety of local destinations.

Jean DeMaster's assistant, Kristy Knapp represented Human Solutions. The organization provides housing for low-income families, as well as programs and services for the disabled.

Sue Gillean, neighborhood resident, is interested in seeing zoning changed to enhance the area. Gillean said she is frustrated by bad site design and low-quality construction. She is concerned with conserving Doug Fir trees in the neighborhood, improving pedestrian safety, and supporting commerce in the area. She said residents are moving out of the neighborhood due to a decreasing quality of life.

Michelle Lohn is a long-time resident whose biggest priorities are sidewalks and fresh food. She wonders if empty lots can be used as food cart pods as an inexpensive way to promote small business and provide fresh food choices. She's concerned about emergency food solutions and the absence of a food pantry in the neighborhood.

Nick Sauvie introduced himself on behalf of the Rose Community Development. The organization works to improve outer SE neighborhoods through housing and economic development. Sauvie has been around since the neighborhood was rezoned in the 1990s, and is disappointed in the consequences it had on the neighborhood. He hopes this project will help improve upon bike and pedestrian safety, transit accessibility, connectivity, and better parks and schools.

Jim Braet is a resident for 25 years and a business owner. He's concerned about the low quality development that has been occurring in the area. He wants future development to be more

thoughtful, of better quality, and be set back further from streets. He said that rapid development is hurting schools and deteriorating the neighborhood character.

Mark White, president of the Powellhurst-Gilbert Neighborhood Association sat in on this initial meeting but will not be an official member of the PAG.. He explained indicators which illustrate how the neighborhood is changing rapidly, including spikes in population counts and the increased number of free and reduced lunch recipients in the E. Portland School Districts.

Three Portland State Architecture Master's students were present to introduce themselves and their mission. They will be attending PAG meetings for class credit in hopes of bringing creative solutions to the table and to help visualize potential project recommendations.

Advisory Group Role, Schedules, and Protocols

John Cole explained the role of the advisory group and said that there is no formalized decision-making process. The group is meant to be an advisory committee. It is not necessary that the group arrives to a consensus, but rather that all viewpoints are expressed. Future documentation at the staff level, including recommendations presented to City Council, should include ideas and recommendations vetted by the PAG.

Minutes will be taken each meeting and sent out within a week. Minutes will be approved at the beginning of each subsequent meeting.

The initial schedule includes four meetings and one open house, with meetings ending in January. Recommendations will be presented to City Council in July.

There was a group consensus that future PAG meetings should occur from 6:30-8:30 pm (instead of 6-8 pm). It was agreed that the Leander Court meeting location is convenient.

Chris Scarzello explained that the PSU architecture students are interested in doing an on-site exercise in October with the PAG, potentially as a neighborhood walk. Site design is a major issue that needs to be cracked. Efforts in solving these problems will be shared with a similar project currently happening in Cully. In the meantime, PAG members are encouraged to find examples of good development and design. Specific site design plans can be analyzed to see if a site's positive attributes can potentially be codified.

Project Introduction

John Cole explained that the recommended project list from the SE 122nd Ave Pilot Project (in handouts) is actually a land use oriented subset of the total set of recommendations contained in the SE 122nd Avenue Pilot Study. Individuals who might disagree with the selection of recommendations are encouraged to share their concerns. Cole explained that recommendations pertaining to land use planning may be more achievable given the abilities of the Bureau of Planning & Sustainability, while other recommendations may require the support and leadership from other bureaus.

The eight recommendations fall into two priority areas. The first is reviewing specific properties and the zoning applied to them with the intention of rezoning properties from residential to commercial. This task could potentially be completed by BPS during the course of the PAG meetings. The second priority is to analyze zoning code text for residential site design improvements. This action would involve more interested parties on a citywide level and therefore warrants a larger timeframe.

The group discussed a variety of tools that could be used to change zoning code in a targeted manner, including plan districts, overlay zones, form-based codes, as well as the upcoming comprehensive plan update.

Discussion of Evaluation Criteria

The group discussed their criteria for considering and prioritizing the eight project recommendations.

Item 1. Zoning changes to support desired retail at south end of study area:

Group agrees that Harold, Holgate, and Foster are locations where people are interested in converting residential, corner properties into commercial uses. Specifically, residents desire a grocery store or other fresh food options (potentially at the corner of SE 122nd and Foster). Mark White informed the group that two census tracts in the neighborhood are considered *food deserts* by federal standards.

Item 2. Regulatory tool to allow for commercial or mixed uses in R1:

Jim Braet said getting businesses to the area is a huge priority for him. He thinks zoning should allow small business owners to live above their business. Braet expressed his frustration with current regulations and said that city codes are making businesses jump through hoops. The group agreed that micro-businesses are important for a high quality of life in a community. White noted that houses are already being converted to businesses between Division and Powell, and it's important to find a way to legalize this activity. Nick Sauvie suggested the creation of a business boundary around SE 122nd that would allow for more reasonable business standards and flexible zoning.

John Cole said that one outcome of this project might be to publicize the ability of people to have home occupations, or otherwise potentially create a 'home occupation plus' zoning category to allow more people to operate businesses in their home.

Item 3. Site development standards to improve building to street interface:

Group agreed that even attractive development needs to be set back from the street. Mark White said that buildings that have front doors which open to the street are more inviting and contribute to the community ambiance, unlike buildings that are fenced off and place their entrances out back.

Item 4. Zoning changes to reduce impacts of development 400 feet from arterials:

John Cole expressed concern that changing zoning set-backs might induce resistance from owners and developers. Chris Scarzello said that lot sizes and lengths do not lend themselves to multi-family development and are not adaptable to good design. She suggested considering zoning the lots to single family with a multi-family overlay that requires a site design review. (In contrast, PAG member Annette Matteson has submitted written comments prioritizing this as an objective of the current project.)

Items 5 through 8. Issues of residential design:

The group discussed tactics for encouraging mixed-use and commercial development. Some participants stated that zoning needs to be flexible to allow both residential and commercial development, according on the given market.

Chris Scarzello explained the idea of creating a potential commercial sanctuary that would protect and prioritize commercial uses. She also mentioned the possibility of allowing houses to be converted to businesses, so long as they maintain their current form and character.

Next Steps

John Cole explained that staff will be reviewing comments from the meeting and will return next month with a set of defined approaches for residential and commercial solutions. Materials will be sent out ahead of time to give PAG members a chance to review materials before the meeting. PAG members were asked to read a portion of the commercial zoning code for homework and to consider how home occupation and commercial standards might be altered without bothering adjacent, residential neighbors.

Meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.