

**SE 122nd Avenue Rezoning
PAG Meeting #2
November 17, 2011
6:30 pm- 8:30 pm**

Staff Present: John Cole, Chris Scarzello, Jackie Gruber

PAG Members Present: Jim Braet, Jean DeMaster, David Edwards, Sue Gillean, Michelle Lohn, Annette Mattson, Nick Sauvie

Guests: Adi Sandu, Ali Joory, Mimi Songsermsawas, Adam Green, Melody Davis

Materials Distributed: Mailed PAG packet

John Cole convened the meeting. Meeting minutes were approved by the PAG.

John brought up the Evaluation Criteria Worksheet. Members seemed to agree that the worksheet should be used as a point for generating conversation, but did not need to be filled out formally. Annette Mattson voiced her priority on item #4 in regards to the down-zoning of multi-family properties. John stated that the objective remains an important component of the project and hopes to refocus on that topic and others at future meetings.

Commercial Zoning Considerations

John initiated discussions on the types and physical characteristics of future development desired by the community. John hoped to better understand the magnitude of rezonings and the amount of commercial land the community desires. Annette suggested that it would be helpful for future discussions if there were visuals/pictures of what potential development might look like in form, scale, and design.

Commercial Type

Michelle Lohn mentioned that the Foster intersection is already busy with traffic and that commercial properties already exist there. Michelle wondered what other commercial development might fit there and what the potential complications of additional development would be. The group responded with suggestions of consolidating and redeveloping properties to be more effective. Annette mentioned that SE 122nd and Foster is slated for improvement through Urban Renewal Area plans. With PDC's involvement, it is more likely that the properties might be transformed or redevelopment. Chris Scarzello mentioned that increased traffic at this intersection could impact ODOT facilities.

Jim Brat said that he would like to see more of the small business types that are lacking in the area. He hopes to see small businesses established mid-block for bookstores, barber shops, etcetera.

Annette said it is important to have a mix of development types and sizes, explaining that larger businesses may bring the foot traffic needed to support smaller businesses. She also mentioned the need for food and restaurants in the area. A medium or higher-end grocery store might draw people to the area.

Annette said that she wants to see all multi-family on SE 122nd removed due to her concerns of children and street safety.

Sue said that she does not want any more drive-through restaurants and stated that there is a lot of automobile services along the strip. Jean agreed and said she wants to see business types that include insurance companies, banks, credit unions, and other daily service needs.

Michelle suggests food carts as a solution to the lack of fresh food in the area and as an interim use for vacant lots. Jim questioned the tenure of that solution and hopes for something more stable and permanent.

Chris reminded the group that the city has no control over the types of commercial development and uses that might be attracted to the area. Once a property is zoned commercial, most commercial uses can occupy the site.

Site Design and Building Footprint

Jean says parking in front of buildings is unattractive. Buildings should have enough parking for customers and residents since the neighborhood is auto-driven, but parking should be placed behind the building. Jim says it is a problem to have parking in the back of buildings because then there either needs to be two entrances (one in the front and one in the back) or customers are forced to walk around to the front of the building. Jim suggested keeping parking in the front, but using landscaping to improve the appearance of the lot out front. Annette agreed that the area is auto-dependent, but claimed that if we do not design for change, change will never occur.

Jean said that tall buildings can add excitement to a neighborhood if they're designed attractively and can add to the neighborhood. She referenced Hawthorne's mix of building age and height and suggested that buildings up to 3 or 4 stories be permitted. Jean and Annette agreed that a lot of these decisions to depend on design. Jim said it is important that a building's height is compatible with the ones next to it. For example, it would be appropriate to set a regulation that only allows a developer to build x% higher than the building next to it. Sue said that building up is better than building out.

Annette worried that full lot coverage is a concern for tree coverage in the area. Everyone agreed that landscaping is an important component in all of these decisions.

Nick Sauvie said that he supports a diversity of uses that will make the street active and attractive. He says that greenspace is missing from the neighborhood, and to have a garden or park would be a great benefit to residents.

Specific Property Recommendations for Rezoning and/or Redevelopment

Michelle raised the point that the minimart parking lot at 122nd and Foster has two entrance points so it may be a strategic property for redevelopment.

Annette says SE 122nd and Carlton on the SE 122nd side are dilapidated and she would like to see those structures converted into commercial uses.

Some cited the apartment buildings next to Tina for bad design. John reminded the group that those buildings are new so it is unlikely a rezoning would result in any near-term changes.

Participants discussed the church property at Harold. Annette suggested that the extra land onsite be used for community gardens.

Cole mentioned that the nursery at the Holgate intersection owns adjacent properties and that the owners may be open to a zone change.

Michelle said that Holgate and 122nd would be a good location for a grocery store because it has less traffic than Foster. Sue said adding a restaurant there might be better since Safeway is already so close to that site. Michelle agreed saying that Holgate also just installed bike lanes and a grocery store might cause additional, unwanted traffic on that corner.

Nick suggested using residential properties as home businesses. Annette worried about the effects of allowing home businesses and controlling for outside storage.

PSU Project

Chris explained the outcome of a recent community walk with Portland State architecture students. The walk focused on design and scale of development on SE 122nd. She asked that the students think about ways to create smooth transitions between small and large buildings. Students thought that landscaping and other aesthetic modifications could help create this transition without actually altering the heights of any existing structures. Students looked at ways to create these transitions and establish 'curb appeal.'

PSU student Adam Green presented the work they had completed since the neighborhood walk. He explained that the streetscape is important to the overall goals of the SE 122nd Rezoning Project and commented on the lack of cohesion or continuity in surrounding development. Adam explained that dead end corridors have positive and negative impacts on neighborhoods. While they provide a place for niche communities, they also segregate themselves from adjacent development. Lack of fresh food and the abundance of vacant lots were other constraints noted by the students. Streetscape challenges and lack of sidewalks remain a serious challenge for the success of the neighborhood. PAG members were surprised to learn that the neighborhood has more people per square acre than the City as a whole.

The students came up with a series of small-scale items they call, "The Kit of Parts." The tools in the kit can be used to create a cohesive feel and include items such as signage, benches, cornices, textured surfaces, and lighting. Solutions were presented on a 1, 5, 10, and 20-year continuum.

Students suggested that new development include more single-family units that promote home ownership since the neighborhood has a higher percentage of renters than most Portland neighborhoods.

One sketch presented a redevelopment of the site where the restaurant Tina's is currently located. The scenario proposed creating a park and gathering space for community residents.

Wrap Up & Next Steps

John wrapped up the meeting by saying that the future meetings will focus on the 7 other recommendations proposed through the previous pilot study. In particular, December 17th's PAG meeting will focus on design and the concepts surrounding Cottage Commercial business.

Follow-up

In reflecting on the PAG meeting discussion, Sue Gillean later made the point that the neighborhood is lacking bike facilities. Few bike racks exist along the 122nd corridor, with the exception of those on the Safeway site.