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Mixed Use Zones Project Advisory Committee (PAC)

Meeting Notes

Date: December 17, 2014

Time: 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Location: 1900 SW 4th Avenue, Portland, 2nd Floor - Room 2500

Meeting goals: Share information on form and economic modeling; design issues; gather PAC feedback

PAC members in attendance: Bob Boileau, Lori Boisen, Eric Cress, Daryl Garner, Brendon Haggerty, Michael Hayes, Heather Hoell, Duane Hunting, Sarah Iannarone, Lauren Jones, Doug Klotz, Susan Lindsay, James McGrath, Jason Miner, Dennis Petrequin, Cora Potter, Vicki Skryha, Yu Te, Frank Walsh

Project team in attendance: Barry Manning, Bill Cunningham, Samantha Petty, Lora Lillard (BPS); Deb Meihoff (Facilitator); Shem Harding, David Hyman, Jerry Johnson (Consultants)

Public in attendance (20)

PAC process updates and feedback

- Meeting notes distributed – PAC members should forward corrections or comments within a week; tonight’s agenda packet will be made available on the Mixed Use Zones Project website.
- The MUZ Project is pursuing further research including a tenant survey, a parking survey, and a business intercept survey. Project staff seek to learn more about the lifestyle/living and travel/vehicle use characteristics of those that live in newer mixed use and multi-dwelling residential developments in several mixed use centers/corridors. Staff also want to develop an origin/destination and travel profile of the customers accessing businesses in mixed use districts. Staff are coordinating closely with Portland Bureau of Transportation (PBOT) which is conducting a concurrent Centers and Corridors Parking Study.
- We are planning to have the next public workshops in early February to accommodate feedback from the PAC on the modelling results. The PAC will continue to meet through June or July 2015. There may be a need for some extra work sessions in addition to regular PAC meetings - stay tuned.

In-progress modeling results – Full presentation available [here](#)

- Architectural Models – David Hyman, Shem Harding, DECA Architecture
- Market Feasibility Testing – Jerry Johnson, Johnson Economics



PAC feedback on modelling results

- Do the models show the required parking?
It depends on the size of the building modeled. Buildings with fewer than 30 units do not require any parking. Even where not required, the prototypes modeled small amount of parking, assuming the market may provide some parking regardless.
- What are some of the assumptions built into this economic model?
We are assuming current cap rates stay consistent. Apartment investments in inner Portland are really hot right now and cap rates are very low, making lots of buildings types viable. This is all a function of interest rates currently being low. However, the market is fast and fluid and the plan is for the next 20 years.

What about doing a long term nominal rate instead?

Long term nominal cap rate wouldn't reflect the recent market, but it will probably better reflect what will happen in the next development cycle (est. 8 years).

- How do the bonuses work in different pattern areas?
A density bonus in the inner markets can be very valuable to developers, but inner neighborhoods also command more rent so an affordable housing bonus is harder to take. A density bonus in the outer neighborhoods is less valuable because the market does not require the density or command high rents.
- Why are we stepping back the primary frontage when the goal is to add density here? Our stepbacks should be used to transition to the adjacent neighborhood, not lower the street wall.
We have heard through public feedback at the neighborhood walks and in workshops that the community also wants us to look at opportunities to lessen the feeling of building height at the street front.
- It does not make any sense at a regional level to grow in centers and corridors and then step back from the street. The problem is to step back to residential areas.
- Please do consider stepping back from the corridor.
- Are you assuming a standard size for the units?
Unit sizes varied by layout, but 1000 sq.ft. was used as an average gross unit size.
- Will there likely be units built without parking? How much does it cost the developer to provide it?
We have modelled all sites with some parking, but a developer could be driven to provide less parking by the market.



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- Model 7B works well for East Portland because we have big lots in Lents that look like this model. The step downs to the local street would also work well for East Portland because lots of local streets run N-S.
- These diagrams are useful for modelling the economic impacts to developers and land owners but we need to model the impact on the pedestrian at street level. The complaints come from the public about the pedestrian experience.
- The models should represent adjacent buildings at maximum heights not existing heights. Show 35 foot buildings adjacent to the commercial.
- We should not reduce the current entitlement without bonuses.
- I think we need a variety of tools for a variety of situations. Our zoning code is based on height and bulk. This is not compatible to all neighborhoods. High traffic areas are a good fit for tall dense buildings because they are calming, but in smaller neighborhood streets smaller buildings with stepbacks match the neighborhood.
- On a commercial corridor the higher you go the flatter it can feel and the worse for the pedestrian experience.
- Can we get some data quantifying how much of the mixed use zones actually about the different types of residential zones?
Yes we can look into that.

In-progress design and use parameters – BPS Staff presentation can be seen in full [here](#)

- Street-Level Design
- Façade Articulation

PAC comment/discussion on design and use parameter presentation

- Why such low standards for glazing in the corridors?
The centers have not been mapped yet and may encompass a lot of the corridors.
Even so I would go with 60% minimums even in the corridors.
- I would worry that by requiring 60% glazing in too many places we forgo the opportunity to use other street activating elements like stoops etc.
- Where does the garage roll up doors fit in to this schematic?
- What standards will be applied to the side- or residential street sides of the building?



We are looking mainly at primary street frontages, but we are also considering changes to side street standards, not yet finalized.

- Can you speak more to your direction on building articulation and entrance requirements? ***We are thinking that in centers we may increase entrance requirements - frequency and number in relation to frontage. We are discussing whether 100 feet is the right length to trigger building articulation requirements. Or is that too much? The setback does not require articulation, should it?***

Pattern area - Staff presentation on pattern area approach can be seen if full [here](#)

There are five broad geographies in Portland referred to as “pattern areas” - inner, eastern, western, and industrial areas. The inner pattern area is the one our zoning code is currently designed for. The zoning code is less responsive to western and eastern neighborhoods. We are trying to make the mixed use zones responsive to the different contexts found within the city while staying committed to serving all parts of our city with 20-minute neighborhoods, good services, and pedestrian infrastructure.

PAC comments/discussion on pattern area presentation

In western, hilly neighborhoods a building that is the same height has varying numbers of stories due to sloped topography. The same building can be one story on the front of the building and three stories at the back of the building as it goes down a slope.

On a comp plan level, the pattern areas indicate to me that we are planning to absorb the majority of residential growth in the inner areas and planning to meet most of our transportation mode share goals in the inner areas. Are we just giving up on east Portland?

The intent is that all places in Portland serve the pedestrian experience and work towards mode share goals. However, there is more than one way to achieve those goals and we want to make sure our implementation is context sensitive.

In outer SE there are wide swaths of land that will be redeveloped. Maximum building coverage and landscaping allow for reestablishing habitat corridors.

- **CE Zone**

Update from project staff that based on feedback from the PAC, TAG, and the public we are planning to allow housing in the CE zone, but are unlikely to provide bonuses for housing in CE.



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Public Comment

- I'm from Woodstock and we had a well-attended neighborhood design charrette in October and a second round in December. There was a great deal of discussion about main street façade. There was a lot of surprise that current zoning allows 45' heights given that most buildings are only one story. There was however overwhelming support of setbacks from the street to preserve the street room feel. The 80 people at this meeting liked the idea of stepbacks after 2 stories.
- The parking problem will matter more than the other factors (being considered for the mixed use zones). People need somewhere to store their cars
- I am concerned that we are trying to use zoning to design buildings instead of using the correct tool, namely good architectural design. There are some neighborhoods that would benefit from a stepback but not all. You do not need transparency to create activity at the street level; articulation and rhythm matter too. The 60% transparency rule should be 60% articulation.
- Portland is unique because it maintains a sense of community even as it grows into a bigger city. The retail-oriented, walkable lifestyle is what makes these neighborhoods so charming. I would love to encourage more thought about the adjacent properties around the zones. It may just be five property owners behind the mixed use buildings but it affects the vibe of the entire neighborhood if the transition to adjacent residential is done poorly.
- Most of this talk is about new development. But in Brentwood-Darlington it is important to preserve small houses in commercial zones that host entrepreneurial activity.

Adjourn