CITY OF KIRKLAND
PLANNING AND BUILDING DEPARTMENT
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MEMORANDUM

Date: **October 23, 2015**

To: **Kurt Triplett, City Manager**

From: **Jeremy McMahan, Planning Manager**
Paul Stewart, Deputy Director, AICP
Eric Shields, Director, AICP

Subject: **Study Session: 2013-2015 Comprehensive Plan Update, Nelson/Cruikshank Citizen Amendment Request, File CAM13-00465, #9**

I. RECOMMENDATION

Provide direction on the Nelson/Cruikshank amendments.

II. BACKGROUND DISCUSSION

October 6th Study Session:

The Planning Commission's recommendation on the Nelson/Cruikshank amendments was presented to the City Council at its October 6, 2015 study session. The City Council gave preliminary direction that it was supportive of the Planning Commission recommendation on density for the subarea, but had concerns about the proposed reduced setbacks. The Council asked staff to bring back options to the recommended setbacks, with a particular emphasis on addressing impacts to existing single family homes from larger, aggregated multifamily developments. The Council also requested additional staff direction on the potential for design review for future development in the subarea.

October 20th Study Session:

Staff recommended that the City Council modify the Planning Commission recommendation with the following adjustments to required setbacks:

- **Front** – reduce to 10' but require garages to be setback 20' to maintain a parking pad.

- **Side** – reduce to 5' but require 10' for projects with four or more units abutting existing single family homes.

The City Council appeared to support this change, but identified ongoing concerns about the potential for piecemeal high density development within a subarea of existing single family homes. The Council asked staff to bring back options that might limit development to medium density with an incentive for high density only when adequate property was aggregated to avoid piecemeal redevelopment. Options to address the identified concern are identified and evaluated below.

Examples of high density (24 units/acre) were also requested and are provided in Attachment 1. The table below is provided for easy reference of existing parcel sizes in the subarea and the development potential of those parcels under the medium and high density scenarios.

	Lot sizes	Units/parcel @ 1,800 (24 units/acre)	Units/parcel @ 3,600 (12 units/acre)
	3,200	1.78	0.89
	3,200	1.78	0.89
	4,940	2.74	1.37
	5,130	2.85	1.43
	5,130	2.85	1.43
	5,416	3.01	1.50
	6,024	3.35	1.67
	6,150	3.42	1.71
	6,150	3.42	1.71
	6,150	3.42	1.71
	6,581	3.66	1.83
	6,800	3.78	1.89
	6,800	3.78	1.89
	6,880	3.82	1.91
	6,970	3.87	1.94
	7,120	3.96	1.98
	7,600	4.22	2.11
	7,600	4.22	2.11
	7,600	4.22	2.11
	8,000	4.44	2.22
	8,200	4.56	2.28
Total	**131,641**		
Max Yield		73 units @ 1800	37 units @ 3600

The Council did not indicate its preference on future consideration of a design review process for development in the subarea.

III. <u>OPTIONS FOR AGGREGATION</u>

1. <u>Minimum Aggregation Incentive</u>. A minimum aggregation regulation would allow medium density development of property in the subarea, regardless of parcel size, and allow high density development if a defined minimum square footage of land were aggregated. The intent of this approach is to reduce piecemeal redevelopment of the subarea into a mix of high density projects among existing single family homes. The following options for minimum aggregation are presented for discussion. Figure 1 (below) illustrates the size of each option relative to the size of the subarea. Note that

there are many permutations of how parcels could be combined into different redevelopment sites.

a. Low – 10,000 square foot minimum aggregation. The largest parcel in the PLA 6C study area is 8,000 s.f. Therefore, a 10,000 s.f. minimum would ensure that some consolidation of properties is required to achieve high density.

b. Moderate - 20,000 square foot minimum aggregation. The PLA 6A zone, located to the west of the study area, allows for high density at 24 units/acre and is largely developed. The average parcel size in PLA 6A is approximately 20,000 s.f. This option would be consistent with that average.

c. Substantial – 38,000 square foot minimum aggregation. According to King County Assessor records, the total square footage of parcels on the south side of 3rd Avenue South is 39,624. If the intent is to allow all of the subarea to redevelop, then this would be the highest aggregation required because there is no opportunity to aggregate more property south of 3rd Avenue South. As a result, this option would require a development to assemble all of the property south of 3rd Avenue South (including the two recently constructed homes) in order to achieve high density. North of 3rd Avenue South, this size would require aggregation of about 41% of the block.

Issues. Staff has identified the following issues for consideration under this approach:

- The allowed building height in medium and high density zones is the same – 30' (see examples in Attachment 1). Incentivizing aggregation may actually encourage larger buildings by incentivizing larger development sites/building footprints.
- Aggregation may make redevelopment of the subarea less likely or a longer term proposition if the market holds out for aggregation at higher density.
- Staff would suggest we draft the code to allow smaller parcels to develop at high density if the abutting property developed at high density. This would avoid "stranding" a property at medium density even though its neighbors had redeveloped at high density.
- Because 3rd Avenue South is narrow and would likely require future right-of-way dedication for adequate sidewalks and travel lanes, staff would suggest calculating the minimum aggregation size prior to any right-of-way dedication.

Figure 1

2. <u>Single Family Isolation Rule</u>. If the primary concern is limiting the impact of high density redevelopment on existing single family homes, another approach would be to prohibit "isolating" a single family home by such development. This approach would allow medium density development of property in the subarea, but only allow high density development if it does not isolate an existing single family home. For purposes of regulating this, an existing home would be "isolated" if it were to have high density development abutting on more than one side. An example is illustrated in Figure 2 below. If Parcel A redeveloped at high density, development of Parcel C at high density would isolate the existing single family home on Parcel B. The consequence for Parcel C would be to either redevelop at medium density or to aggregate with Parcel B.

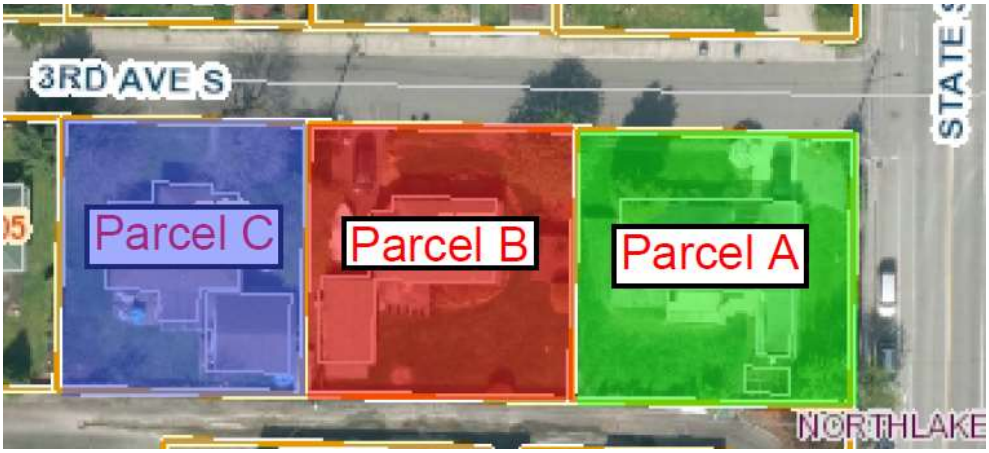

Figure 2

3. Combine an Aggregation Incentive With the Isolation Rule. This option would combine the results of the options above - the aggregation incentive would reduce piecemeal redevelopment and the single family isolation rule would lessen impacts to existing single family homes.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the City Council adopt the Planning Commission recommendation with the following adjustments:

1. Confirm density. Staff recommends a combined aggregation and isolation approach as requirements for high density (24 units/acre) redevelopment in the subarea. With this approach, staff recommends the low aggregation incentive of 10,000 s.f. combined with a prohibition on isolating a single family home with high density development. Medium density (12 units/acre) would still be allowed as the base density without these limitations.

2. Confirm setbacks. The staff recommendation is as follows:
   - Front – reduce to 10′ but require garages to be setback 20′ to maintain a parking pad.
   - Side – reduce to 5′ but require 10′ for projects with four or more units abutting existing single family homes.

3. Confirm design review direction. Staff recommends not expanding design review into this subarea. The zone is residential-only zone and allowed building heights are moderate at 30′. The City's design review program is currently busy with project review in mixed use business districts. The program could expand and get busier with upcoming planning efforts for mixed use neighborhood business districts. In addition, existing zoning regulations for multifamily development, such as land use buffers, building height, and setbacks may address many of the basic transitional concerns.

Council should indicate if it desires this topic to be added to the discussion for the next Planning Work Program.

The suggested modifications to the Planning Commission recommendation would now incorporate three additional mitigations to reduce impacts to existing single family homes from high density redevelopment. Unless the Council provides different direction, this three pronged approach of 10' setbacks, minimum aggregation, and limits on isolating an existing single family home should allow redevelopment and transition of the subarea while minimizing impact to the homes that remain.

V. NEXT STEPS

December 8, 2015: City Council will take final action on the Comprehensive Plan Update, map and code amendments.

Attachments:
1. Examples of high density development

Density Examples

322 5th Ave (26 units/acre), 10,200 sf parcel

312 5th Ave (23 units/acre), 7,650 sf parcel

302 5th Ave (24 units/acre), 12,825 sf parcel

Density Examples

718 7th Ave S (12 units/acre)

125 5th Ave S (24 units/acre), 10,863 sf parcel

427 2nd St S (25 units/acre), 6928 sf parcel

Density Examples

130 5th Ave S. (24 units/acre), 7,245 sf parcel