

Everest Neighborhood Association Meeting

September 25, 2012 Houghton Fire Station (#22)

TOPIC: Houghton-Everest Neighborhood Plan

Summary of participant comments about the city's planning process for the Houghton-Everest Neighborhood Center

Prepared by: Marie Stake, Communications Program Manager (Facilitator)

On September 25, 2012, staff from the Planning & Community Development Department and City Manager's Office attended the Everest Neighborhood Association meeting for the purposes of presenting background information regarding the City's efforts to study the Houghton-Everest Neighborhood Center and to facilitate a discussion around participants' concerns and ideas about the planning process. There were over 60 attendees.

Angela Ruggeri, Senior Planner, presented information about how the study came about, recent efforts by the Planning Commission and Houghton Community Council, and the current status of the planning process. Many participants had questions following this presentation. Kurt Triplett, City Manager, and Paul Stewart, Deputy Director, Planning & Community Development Department helped to answer them. During the "Q & A," Marie Stake (facilitator) recorded the various concerns participants expressed. Also, Kari Page, Neighborhood Outreach Coordinator (co-facilitator) recorded comments that specifically pertain to expectations residents have about the planning process.

The two issues that most participants expressed high concern about were: Traffic and Timeline. Below are the concerns expressed which are sorted by "themes:"

Timeline

- How did this (study) become a priority?
- It's a big commitment for residents to attend multiple meetings
- When will the Everest Neighborhood Plan be updated?
- Why the rush?
- Everest Neighborhood Association should have been consulted when the Central Houghton Neighborhood Plan update was happening.
- Everest Neighborhood was due for a neighborhood plan update after Central Houghton
- Water Utility Comprehensive Plan updates are required every 5-10 years, why isn't the requirement the same for the (Everest) Neighborhood Plan?

Traffic

- 6th Street South is dysfunctional, broken
- How is the City going to address 6th Street?
- Do developers have to improve 6th Street?
- Google has produced more traffic and reduced parking for residents
- Parking along 6th Street makes it difficult for residents to exit onto 6th Street from 9th Avenue S.
- Too many back ups
- No one is using the bike lanes on 6th; turn them into car lanes
- Traffic Management Plan is needed

- Traffic is “insane” now; will worsen
- Need to look at on/off ramps at I-405
- Look at back ups at 68th and 108th intersection
- If Neighborhood Center gets to “build out,” traffic will worsen
 - Traffic mitigation needs to extend outside of the Neighborhood Center
- Fix traffic first, then let development happen.
 - The development of the Neighborhood Center has the potential to be larger than Google
- Concerned about child safety around Lakeview Elementary (sidewalks)

Process & Proposed Amendments

- What is the planning process?
- Why did the City spend money on the conceptual drawings?
- Object to the scale of the conceptual drawings; provide alternate concepts
- Concerned that the Comprehensive Plan amendment being proposed for Everest removes language that results in eliminating a buffer for residential development
- The Comprehensive Plan drives the zoning code. The Comprehensive Plan allows five stories in Central Houghton. This will result in amendments to the zoning code that will be the same.
- The Neighborhood Center Plan assumes only local shopping is occurring but shoppers come from other places; the area is “now a destination.”

Study Area

- The property owners/developers in the area want to maximize their property value
- How does “build out” of the Neighborhood Center compare to Parkplace redevelopment?
- Why isn’t the industrial area north of Houghton Village being considered?
 - There is an opportunity to maximize the use of the Cross Kirkland Corridor
- Have the property owners (in the Neighborhood Center) agreed to this study?

Density

- Send density to Totem Lake
- Don’t accommodate growth
- Why do we have to continue accommodating growth?
- Concerned about spot zoning – if this is done without a process for the whole neighborhood plan update

Neighborhood Character

- We don’t want to be like Bellevue
- Keep Everest the way it is; just fix the roads

Public Involvement

- Want assurances our voices will be heard
- Citizens encouraged to comment via email

Information Requested

- Provide topography maps
- Describe what is allowed now (in the Neighborhood Center)
- Provide artist renderings of what is allowed now

- Tell us more about the Central Houghton Neighborhood Plan
- How do the proposed changes compare to the scale of Parkplace or Juanita Village?
- Does the city have plans to update 6th Street sidewalks?

Due to the extended amount of time to answer questions, minimal time was available to complete a comprehensive facilitation around the planning process. Following the "Q&A," Facilitator Stake checked in with the participants on the concerns she had recorded to ensure they were reflected accurately. Participants agreed they were. Participants were asked if any other concerns needed to be added. One attendee asked about a traffic study for the area. This was added to the concern list.

Next Facilitator Stake explored the comments recorded by Co-facilitator Page about the process. Again, addressing the current traffic issues before starting any evaluation of the Neighborhood Center and creating a realistic timeline to complete the Neighborhood Center Plan were very important to participants. The Summary below reflects the thoughts of the attendees:

- Conduct system wide traffic study first
- Provide artist renderings of current zoning
- (Citizens need) Better understanding of growth management requirements and Kirkland's status
- Look at Capital Improvement plans for 6th Street, NE 68th and 108th
- Everest Neighborhood felt it should have been consulted on the Central Houghton Neighborhood Plan
- Follow typical planning process (Plan, zoning, permit, build)
- Provide more than one conceptual option
- Look at economic incentives
- Conduct parking study. Address parking needs
- Provide realistic timeline like other Neighborhood Plans were allowed
- Develop Neighborhood Center Plan at same time as (citywide) Comprehensive Plan

Wrap Up:

Facilitator Stake advised participants that the summary of comments would be posted to the City website and those who have subscribed to updates will receive an email that the webpage is updated.

Central Houghton Neighborhood Association Meeting

October 3, 2012 Houghton Fire Station (#22)

TOPIC: Houghton-Everest Neighborhood Center Plan

Summary of participant comments about the status of the Houghton-Everest Neighborhood Center Plan

Prepared by: Kari Page, Neighborhood Services Coordinator (Facilitator) and Marie Stake, Communications Program Manager (Facilitator)

On October 3, 2012, staff from the Planning & Community Development Department and City Manager's Office attended the Central Houghton Neighborhood Association meeting to provide an update on the Houghton-Everest Neighborhood Center Plan and to facilitate a discussion around participants' concerns and ideas about the planning process. There were over 25 participants.

Angela Ruggeri, Senior Planner, discussed how the study of the Houghton-Everest Neighborhood Center Plan (Business District) came about and that last night the City Council agreed with the City Manager's recommendation to delay the Neighborhood Center plan update. She stated that there is currently no development application (within the Business District) on file with the city.

Ms. Ruggeri explained the purpose of the City's Comprehensive Plan (Comp Plan) as a "vision" document that is intended to plan for growth in Kirkland and that neighborhood plans are a section of the Comp Plan. She explained that an update to the Central Houghton Neighborhood Plan was completed in 2011. The updated Neighborhood Plan only addressed the portion of the Houghton/Everest Neighborhood Center area that is in the Central Houghton Neighborhood (south of NE 68th Street). It stated, however, that the Houghton Neighborhood should coordinate with the Everest Neighborhood to develop a plan for the entire Neighborhood Center. The City has received feedback from both neighborhoods that it is important to look at the Neighborhood Center as a whole.

She recognized that the City was moving quickly on the Neighborhood Center Plan and in response to citizen feedback the Planning Commission and Houghton Community Council recommended to slow down the process. She stated the City Council agreed with the recommendation on October 2 and will be presented with a revised Planning Work Program on October 16.

She stated the City will initiate a 10-Year update to the Comp Plan in 2013 which is a process that takes two years to complete.

Facilitator Stake introduced herself and Kari Page and opened the conversation with the following question: "What is the most important issue the planning process should address?" She explained that question applies to the 10 Year Comp Plan Update, the Houghton-Everest Neighborhood Center Plan update or updates to a Neighborhood Plan. Below is a summary of concerns and questions raised by participants.

Traffic was the greatest concern expressed by most participants. Traffic subthemes included: provide more pedestrian and bicycle safe routes and connections, evaluate parking conditions (now and with future development), and study traffic to and from key destinations and city wide.

Traffic (including pedestrians and bicycle safety)

- Provide surface parking (better for neighborhood).
- Provide free parking (if private developments start charging for parking – it will kill the neighborhood/community feel of this center).
- Slow traffic.
- More pedestrian/bicycle friendly roads and crossings.
- Too much backup during rush hour (east on 68th and north on 108th).
- How can we add more development with existing traffic being so bad now.
- Provide safe place for ICS students to stand and wait for the bus (this helps keep cars off the roads)
- Determine what roadway improvements need to be made if area is fully developed (regional approach – Google, transit oriented development, downtown, Houghton shopping center, etc.)
- Create a walking community
- Schools want more students to walk and bike
- Not enough room for bicycles on NE 68th Street (feel like you get squeezed next to the curb in places).
- We aren't a walking City like Seattle – it isn't going to happen in the suburbs – no matter how much you want it.
- Provide consistent sidewalks and consistent bicycle widths throughout the City and people/families will use them more.
- Create a safe passage corridor (like spokes of a wheel) to schools, neighborhood center, and shopping. Have dedicated bike lanes and sidewalks leading to key points/destinations.
- Look at fixing traffic flow to and from key destinations: I-405, South Kirkland Park and Ride, downtown, Carillon Point, SR520.
- Need better integration with Metro – restore 234 and connect better with Microsoft and Houghton and restore 255 back like it was.
- Consider impacts from Google if they expand.
- There is limited access both in and out of neighborhood as well as in and out of Houghton Shopping Center. Exiting the shopping center during rush hour is hard.
- We need a Pedestrian/Bicycle Commission – not just a Transportation Commission.

Process & Proposed Amendments

- The plan should address the great connections that can be/should be made with Cross Kirkland Corridor (connections to schools, parks, shopping, commercial areas).
- The proposed plan didn't fit into the neighborhood scale or character.
- Was the proposed plan more about Growth Management Act – instead of neighborhood character?
- Consider the traffic impacts – when we appear and feel like we are at capacity now.
- Looking at the entire City first makes the best sense – plan regionally first – then locally.
- Consult businesses who are there now. Neighborhood doesn't want them to move.
- Foster neighborhood scale retail development, diverse businesses, and keep properties affordable for the businesses.
- Height and density is out of scale with what we want and the neighborhood. If you change retail to commercial you will totally change the character of the neighborhood.

Study Area

- Where does the Neighborhood begin? (Lakeview Elementary School catchment area all care about this center). Look to everyone who is impacted and how they are impacted to determine who should be involved.
- 8-9 schools in the area – schools should get involved as they are all impacted.

Density

- The plan should be about who is there now (the businesses and the residents). The plan should be about the existing neighborhood (not increasing density).

Neighborhood Character

- Preserve our quality of life.
- Keep pedestrian overpasses across I405.
- Keep/foster/preserve the businesses that are there – they serve the neighborhood.
- Create a community center for the neighborhood.
- Think of neighborhood first – not the businesses.

Public Involvement

- Use post card mailings to residents to keep them informed (especially when there is a proposed development).
- Use schools and PTSA's to help get meeting notices and information out (many people who showed up tonight heard about the meeting through the PTSA at Lakeview).
- (City should) Assume the public is "stupid – like Planning for Dummies." Use word we understand and illustrate to us what you are talking about so we understand.
- Note many people can't attend so many meetings. Can you have fewer but more meaningful/productive meetings?
- Involve us when there are only 3 options or so (boil it down so our time is productive)
- Email is useful.
- Notify us of the process early – not so late in the process.
- Meetings are better than emails as you can really work on issues and hear from your neighbors.
- Summers don't work for residents – many on vacations and neighborhood associations don't meet in the summer.
- Use post cards – small – red – catch our attention.
- Pictures help – maybe do what you did this time – show outlandish diagrams. It worked!
- Web site is good as people can fit reviewing/reading into their own schedules.
- List serves help for getting word out and help to keep people involved who want to stay informed but can't come to meetings.
- Press Releases.
- Non computer users – don't forget them. Use mailings. These are the people who usually can't come to meetings either. Don't leave out their input.
- Kiosks (wish the bus stop was still there).
- Join up with the Kirkland Reporter (public/private partnership) and restate the neighborhood section (as people really liked this – felt it was a great way to stay informed in their neighborhoods – and heard the news from their own people). This also gets the people who aren't connected electronically.

- Before a neighborhood plan is finalized, it would be helpful if the planners summarized the big changes. It is so hard to read through a whole plan and try to figure out what changed and what was significant and what wasn't. Some read the new Houghton Plan but didn't notice the move to allow 5 stories.

Information Requested

- Determine how the proposed zoning and subsequent development will impact the neighborhood. For example, Google has impacted Everest but no one told them how much it would – before they moved in.
- Create a pedestrian/bicycle overlay over the neighborhood plan and strategize ways to improve pedestrian and bicycle safety and circulation (include social paths/trails).
- Are we close to capacity at the intersection of 68th and 108th Avenue NE? How do we get beyond current capacity without widening streets?
- With more development, we get more kids, need more schools, where do we put them? Is someone planning with the school district as zoning changes to bring in more people?
- What if Waddell applied for redevelopment now under the new Central Houghton Neighborhood Plan? Would he be able to build 5 stories? How can we stop this now from happening – if we are going to hold off on the shopping center planning process? Can't afford to wait/sit on the existing Central Houghton neighborhood plan now that it has been changed.
- Will 5 stories be allowed in at the shopping center now?
- What part of the Houghton Shopping Center plan will be part of the Citywide Comprehensive Plan? How do we know where to be involved?

KEY ISSUES THE FUTURE PLANNING PROCESS SHOULD ADDRESS

- How do we know what process to be involved in during the Comprehensive Planning process? What key words do we look for or special meetings that will address traffic and eventually have an impact on what gets planned for the Houghton Shopping Center?
- Need data on demographics, population, school capacities, business plans, traffic flows, etc. Better understand the development impacts on each of these elements before you change the zoning.
- Address pollution of adding development and cars.
- Create a community gathering space (like North Kirkland Community Center).
- Bring people together like tonight – to brainstorm what we want in our neighborhood as you go into the planning process. We didn't know this was done for the Central Houghton Neighborhood Plan.
- Use pictures like you did with the proposed plan – helps us visualize better than reading through a planning document.
- Use words that everyone understands – rather than planning terms.
- Can we relook at the Central Houghton Neighborhood Plan – specifically the Houghton Shopping Center piece. We didn't know it was being changed so dramatically. Would have liked to know this before it was passed by Council.
- Do an economic feasibility of the comprehensive plan changes before they are done. Can we support this level of development (economically) before we change the zone – as we do not want someone to build and leave a ton of vacant space that the economy can't sustain.
- Include PTSA and Schools around the area – as there are so many and they should be part of the planning process as they have to “house” the people who move here. We are an “education center.” (NW University, Lakeview, ICS, Community School, Lake Washington High School, Adventist School, Day Care, Emerson High School, Northstar).

Neighborhood Dialogue

October 9, 2012 Houghton Fire Station (#22)

TOPIC: Comprehensive Plan, Houghton-Everest Neighborhood Center Plan, Everest Neighborhood Plan and Central Houghton Neighborhood Plan

Summary of participant comments

Prepared by: Marie Stake, Communications Program Manager (Facilitator)

On October 9, 2012, staff from the Planning & Community Development Department and City Manager's Office hosted a "Neighborhood Dialogue" meeting to provide an update on the Houghton-Everest Neighborhood Center Plan, to further facilitate a discussion around participants' concerns expressed at recent neighborhood association meetings and to listen to further concerns and ideas about planning processes associated with the City's Comprehensive Plan and subarea plans associated with the Central Houghton and Everest neighborhood areas. There were over 35 participants.

Marilynne Beard, Assistant City Manager, started the meeting by presenting a matrix (attached) that lists the major issues raised by residents and the processes, programs, and projects that the City administers that address those concerns. She highlighted how comprehensive and subarea planning address transportation, growth management, density and other issues identified by residents. She explained how City processes involving street and sidewalk repairs, neighborhood traffic control, and parking management help to address residents' issues. She explained that city processes, programs and projects all provide for public involvement and include city-initiated communications (webpage, email updates/list serves, media relations).

Angela Ruggeri, Senior Planner, then gave an update on the Houghton-Everest Neighborhood Center Plan (Business District). She explained that due to citizen response the original timing of developing land use policies, zoning regulations and design standards for the business district has been delayed. She stated the City Council will take a more formal action at its October 16 meeting on the timing of the City's Comprehensive Plan update, including how subarea planning (e.g. Business District and Neighborhood Plans) will be conducted.

For the sake of participants who had not attended the previous neighborhood meetings, Ms. Ruggeri explained the purpose of the City's Comprehensive Plan (Comp Plan) which is to serve as a city-wide "vision" for what the community wants Kirkland to be in the future. She stated neighborhood plans and business district plans are subsections of the Comp Plan. She stated the City will initiate a 10-Year update to the Comp Plan in 2013 which is a process that takes two years to complete.

She explained that the Central Houghton Neighborhood Plan was updated involving a citizen advisory group and was accepted by the City Council and Houghton Community Council in 2011.

Ms. Ruggeri further explained the sequential relationship between the Comp Plan, subarea plans and zoning regulations and that the best time for residents to get involved with community planning is when the Comp Plan is updated.

Ms. Ruggeri, Ms. Beard and Paul Stewart, Deputy Director, Planning & Community Development Department answered questions. Facilitator Stake called on participants.

Many participants asked about the timing of completing the city-wide Comp Plan update in relation to completing the Houghton-Everest Neighborhood Center (Business District) Plan and conducting an update to the Everest Neighborhood Plan. A second common theme was that participants were curious (and confused) about the purpose and requirements of the Growth Management Act (GMA). A third common theme was about density and its impact on traffic. A fourth theme was concern that the current (approved) Central Houghton Neighborhood Plan allows for up to 5 story buildings now, if certain criteria are met, and how can there be assurances that this type of development not be allowed. Below is a summary of participant comments:

Comprehensive, Subarea Planning

- How does the Comp Plan Update work?
- What is the order of comprehensive planning? Comp Plan then neighborhood plan then business center plan? (Preference)
- Comp Plan should look at all of Kirkland, including annexation area
- Need confirmation that the Neighborhood Center Plan will be revisited within a year
- Will Business District (plans) be a part of the Comp Plan Update?
- What are the City Council's goals and vision?
- We need to trust that the City will do the Business District plan

Growth Management

- What does GMA require? ("What does it force us to do?")
- We need a meeting about GMA

Density

- Totem Lake Mall needs to develop so that it will absorb density (spare the Houghton-Everest neighborhood of more density)
- How much population does Kirkland have to accept?
- How much population does Hunts Point have to accept?
- If Kirkland is dense now (6th in State), why do we have to accept more density now?

Zoning

- How is zoning changed?
- What's the difference between zoning and planning?
- There's an inability to make infrastructure improvements. How does the City limit what can happen for development?

Building Height

- Why does there seem to be a trend toward 5-6 story buildings?
- Concerned about scale of potential development in Houghton/Everest Neighborhood Center (5 stories)

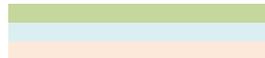
Public Involvement; Public Information

- Citizens should continue to participate
- Residents should participate in neighborhood associations and attend meetings
- Make the planning process easy for residents to participate; easy to understand
- Thank you to City for opportunity to share thoughts
- When will the project signs be removed?

Attachment: Issues Matrix

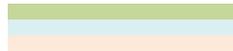
Projects						
Short to Medium Term						
	<i>Intelligent Transportation System</i>	<i>Cross Kirkland Corridor</i>	<i>I405 Widening</i>	<i>520 Bridge Improvements</i>	<i>South Kirkland Park and Ride</i>	<i>6th Street Sidewalks</i>
Issue						
Moving Cars, Bikes and People						
<i>Transportation Planning</i>						
<i>Intersection Capacity</i>						
<i>Traffic Flow (6th Street)</i>						
<i>Pedestrian Safety</i>						
<i>Bicycle Safety</i>						
<i>Parking in Neighborhoods</i>						
Community Planning						
<i>Growth Management</i>						
<i>Density</i>						
<i>Everest Neighborhood Plan</i>						
<i>Houghton/Everest/Neighborhood Center</i>						
-Scale						
-Density						
-Business Diversity						
-Scope of study area						
-Neighborhood Character						
Staying Informed and Involved						
<i>Involvement of Businesses</i>						
<i>Involvement of Schools</i>						
<i>Number and Type of Meetings</i>						
<i>Communication Tools</i>						
-Visual						
-Postcards						
-Web						
-Kirkland Reporter						
Early Involvement						
How to Stay in Touch						

City Activity
Other Agency Activity
Situational



Programs Short to Medium Term							
	<i>Street and Sidewalk Repairs</i>	<i>Neighborhood Traffic Control</i>	<i>Transit Service Coordination</i>	<i>Police Emphasis Patrols</i>	<i>Parking Management</i>	<i>Neighborhood U & Civics Academy</i>	<i>Communication and Public Involvement</i>
Issue							
Moving Cars, Bikes and People							
<i>Transportation Planning</i>							
<i>Intersection Capacity</i>							
<i>Traffic Flow (6th Street)</i>							
<i>Pedestrian Safety</i>							
<i>Bicycle Safety</i>							
<i>Parking in Neighborhoods</i>							
Community Planning							
<i>Growth Management</i>							
<i>Density</i>							
<i>Everest Neighborhood Plan</i>							
<i>Houghton/Everest Neighborhood Center</i>							
-Scale							
-Density							
-Business Diversity							
-Scope of study area							
-Neighborhood Character							
Staying Informed and Involved							
<i>Involvement of Businesses</i>							
<i>Involvement of Schools</i>							
<i>Number and Type of Meetings</i>							
<i>Communication Tools</i>							
-Visual							
-Postcards							
-Web							
-Kirkland Reporter							
<i>Early Involvement</i>							
<i>How to Stay in Touch</i>							

City Activity
Other Agency Activity
Situational



Processes Medium to Long Term						
Comprehensive Plan Update	Subarea Plans	Zoning Regulations	Development Review (new developments)	Capital Improvement Program	Other	
-How we accept growth (population, employment, housing) -Transportation Master Plan (level of service standards, multimodal, priorities) -How we plan for neighborhoods and business districts -Plus much more (Critical areas, infrastructure planning, etc.)	-Neighborhood Plans -Business District Plans	--Design Guidelines?	-Traffic impact analysis (SEPA) -Concurrency -Zoning compliance and permitting	Identify Projects Set Priorities Identify Funding	-Legislative Advocacy - Transportation Funding	
Issue						
Moving Cars, Bikes and People						
<i>Transportation Planning</i>						
<i>Intersection Capacity</i>						
<i>Traffic Flow (6th Street)</i>						
<i>Pedestrian Safety</i>						
<i>Bicycle Safety</i>						
<i>Parking in the Neighborhoods</i>						
Community Planning						
<i>Growth Management</i>						
<i>Density</i>						
<i>Everest Neighborhood Plan</i>						
<i>Houghton/Everest Neighborhood Center</i>						
-Scale						
-Density						
-Business Diversity						
-Scope of study area						
-Neighborhood Character						
Staying Informed and Involved						
<i>Involvement of Businesses</i>						
<i>Involvement of Schools</i>						
<i>Number and Type of Meetings</i>						
<i>Communication Tools</i>						
-Visual						
-Postcards						
-Web						
-Kirkland Reporter						
<i>Early Involvement</i>						
<i>How to Stay in Touch</i>						

City Activity
Other Agency Activity
Situational

