



CITY OF KIRKLAND
Planning and Community Development Department
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MEMORANDUM

To: Houghton Community Council

From: Angela Ruggeri, AICP, Senior Planner
Paul Stewart, AICP, Deputy Director
Eric Shields, AICP, Director

Date: August 15, 2014

Subject: Citizen Amendment Requests – Houghton Community Council
(HCC) Jurisdiction - File No. CAM13-00465, File #14

RECOMMENDATION

Review and discuss options to consider Houghton/Everest Neighborhood Center CAR requests.

BACKGROUND DISCUSSION

The Comprehensive Plan (CP) Update, done approximately every eight years under the mandate of the Growth Management Act, is a complete review of the general chapter elements of the CP for consistency with state law and regional growth policies. As part of looking at the adopted land use plan to address our assigned growth targets, the CP Update is an opportune time to look at potential changes to the City's planned land use and densities and at development regulations that do not reflect adopted goals and policies. Thus, it is a logical time to consider Citizen Amendment Requests (CARs). Three of the CARs received were located in the area of the HCC jurisdiction.

The Planning Commission reviewed the CAR applications on July 10, 2014 and made a recommendation to the City Council at its July 15, 2014 meeting. The City Council agreed with the Planning Commission recommendation as described in the attached memo. There were three CAR applications located in Houghton. The City Council determined that the Nouwens CAR which is located at the parking lot east of Houghton Shopping Center (see Attachment 2) should not be studied further and that more discussion was needed about the Markl/Nelson Legacy Group CAR, the Houghton Shopping Center property (see Attachment 3)

and the Waddell CAR, which is west of Houghton Shopping Center (see Attachment 4) to determine how they would be handled.

PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

After discussing the process options in the attached memo, the Planning Commission agreed with the staff recommendation, which is to:

- Defer action on Houghton/Everest Neighborhood Center CARs until Everest Neighborhood Plan can be updated.
- Evaluate business districts with the CP EIS, but only consider amendments to the general business district policies. Defer neighborhood specific policies and zoning regulations to future study.
- As soon as possible after the completion of the Comprehensive Plan update, initiate an update of the Everest Neighborhood Plan and consider the entire Houghton/Everest Neighborhood Center. Prepare zoning regulations and design guidelines as part of the update of the neighborhood plans.

SCHEDULE

The recommendation of the Planning Commission (PC) and comments by the Houghton Community Council (HCC) on the proposed process for the Houghton/Everest Neighborhood Center CARs will be presented to the City Council at their meeting on September 16, 2014. The City Council will then make a final decision on how to proceed with the two CARs.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Staff memo to the Planning Commission dated 7/30/2014
2. Map #13 – Nouwens CAR
3. Map #12 – Nelson CAR
4. Map #14 – Waddell CAR



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MEMORANDUM

Date: July 30, 2014

To: Planning Commission

From: Angela Ruggeri, Senior Planner
Paul Stewart, Deputy Director
Eric Shields, Director

This memo addresses the following Comprehensive Plan Update topics:

- Citizen Amendment Requests (CAR)s, **File No. CAM13-00465, #14**

I. RECOMMENDATION

Review options for a process to consider the Houghton/Everest Neighborhood Center (CAR Map #12 and #14) and the staff recommendation, and provide a recommendation to the City Council on how to study these requests.

II. BACKGROUND DISCUSSION

The Comprehensive Plan (CP) Update, done approximately every eight years under the mandate of the Growth Management Act, is a complete review of the general chapter elements of the Plan for consistency with state law and regional growth policies. As part of looking at the adopted land use plan to address our assigned growth targets, the CP Update is an opportune time to look at potential changes to the City's planned land use and densities and at development regulations that do not reflect adopted goals and policies. Thus, it is a **logical time to consider Citizen Amendment Requests** (CARs). Outside of the CP update process, these requests are accepted every other year under the Private Amendment process outlined in Chapter 160 of the Kirkland Zoning Code.

The Planning Commission reviewed the CAR applications at the July 10, 2014 Commission meeting and made the following recommendation to the City Council at the July 15, 2014 Council meeting. Applications for all CARs were included in the packets for both the July 10, 2014 and the July 15, 2014 meetings. The City Council agreed with the following recommendation made by the Planning Commission.

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Citizen Amendment Requests, July 30, 2014
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Of the 31 applications received:

- 19 applications should be studied as part of the current CP update;
- 10 applications should not be included in the update;
- More discussion about two Houghton/Everest Neighborhood Center requests (Map #12 and #14) is needed before a recommendation can be made.

The following 10 applications will not be included in the update:

- **Map #13 - Nouwens** – 108th Avenue/NE 68th Street (Parking lot east of Houghton Shopping Center) –The request is to amend the Zoning Code to permit residential suites in this BC zone. The PC and CC want to see how the residential suite project being built in the CBD works out before allowing this type of development in other areas of the City.
- **Map #15 and #16 – Dibble and Kilburn** – 1029 Market Street and 207 8th Avenue West: Requires changes to the zoning regulations along the Market Street Corridor, but not changes to the CP. The requested zoning changes are to be considered as a separate work task.
- **Map #19 – Hoerth** – 7830 NE 122nd Place: Change designation from RSA6 (residential) to BNA (commercial). Defer consideration to future work on Finn Hill Neighborhood Plan.
- **Map #26 – Levenson:** Amend development regulations in BN/BN (1) (Neighborhood Business), BNA (Neighborhood Business Annexation) and MSC 2(Market Street Corridor 2) zones. These commercial zones were recently studied in 2013.
- **Map #9 – Waddell/Watermark** – 220 6th Street: Change affordable housing requirement. This is outside the scope of the CP Update and not a change that the City would consider given its affordable housing targets
- **Map #17 – Isbister/Bennett** – 340 11th Avenue West: Rezone from RS 7.2 to RS 6.3 (smaller residential lot size). Defer issue to future Market Neighborhood Plan update.
- **Map #20 – Healy** – 8506 129th Place: Rezone from RSA4 to RSA6 (increase residential density from 4 units/acre to 6 units/acre). Defer consideration to future work on Finn Hill Neighborhood Plan.
- **Map #24 - Geibel** – 12809 NE 84th Street: Rezone from single family to multifamily. The PC did not see a reason for the change considering the surrounding area.
- **Map #25 – Shenoy** – 7830 115th Place NE: Rezone from RS 8.5 to RS 7.2 (increase residential density). Defer to future Everest Neighborhood Plan update.

The Planning Commission also made these additional comments about the CAR recommendations:

- **Map #15 and #16 - Dibble and Kilburn** – 1029 Market Street and 207 8th Avenue West – PC agreed with the staff recommendation not to study now, but suggested that this section of the Market Street Corridor be reviewed with the next Zoning Code update.
- **Finn Hill area** CARs are being put off to the Finn Hill Neighborhood Plan update. The PC is open to further study if it fits with the Comprehensive Plan work on the Finn Hill Neighborhood.
- **Expand study areas** for various requests beyond the specific parcels indicated in the CARs.

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III. HOUGHTON/EVEREST NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER

The Planning Commission directed staff to come back with additional information on the options available for handling the Houghton/Everest Neighborhood Center review that includes the two CARs below and the City Council concurred.

- **Map #12 - Markl/Nelson Legacy Group CAR** – Houghton Center – Zoning Code amendments for commercial Business (BC) zone to have regulations that reflect CP Goals CH-6 and CH-7 and related policies (see Attachment 1).
- **Map #14 - Houghton Court Apartments/Waddell CAR** – west of Houghton Center – Zoning Code amendments to allow 5 stories and higher density to reflect CP policy CH 5.4 (see Attachment 2).

Considerations:

- The City needs to reconcile conflicting CP goals & policies and zoning for the Houghton Center. The question is when and how to do this.
- The EIS for the CP is the ideal time to test issues, such as traffic and school impacts, related to higher density zoning. One of the EIS alternatives would consider all business districts near transit lines.
- The Central Houghton Neighborhood Plan establishes goals and policies for the Houghton/Everest Neighborhood Center and the Houghton Center which include:
 - Coordinate planning for the entire business district lying in both the Central Houghton and Everest neighborhoods (see Attachment 3);
 - Allow for a mix of uses and building heights up to five stories in the Houghton Center (see Attachment 1);
 - Expand the area for “higher intensity use” (no height specified) to properties west of Houghton Center (e.g. Waddell property at Map #14) (see Attachment 2).
- The current BC, BCX, BC1 and BC2 zoning regulations do not require pedestrian oriented development. Regardless of whether additional building height is allowed, consideration should be given to amending the regulations to require or encourage greater pedestrian orientation. However, this need not happen as part of the Comprehensive Plan update.
- Many people in the surrounding neighborhood are opposed to increased density and fearful of the potential impacts density would cause. The City should be respectful of these concerns and seek to allay fears that City officials aren’t listening.
- The Houghton Community Council (HCC) has disapproval jurisdiction over plan and zoning changes. The recommendation of the Planning Commission on whether to proceed with study of Houghton/Everest Neighborhood Center will be discussed with the HCC at the meeting on August 25, 2014.
- Planning for business districts is multi-faceted and could be broken into stages:
 - Environmental analysis (EIS);

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- General CP policies about desired nature of districts (e.g. – important services, walkable, transit supporting, mix of uses, density, character, etc.);
- Specific neighborhood plan policies;
- Zoning regulations;
- Design standards.

The citizen amendment requests in question are fundamentally about zoning and design regulations.

Options for handling Houghton/Everest Neighborhood Center:

Various options are listed below, followed by issues related to each option.

1. Defer entirely: Leave CP and zoning conflict for now. Resolve the conflict through a focused study after the CP update.
 - Conflict between CP and zoning remains for now;
 - Waddell property remains unresolved;
 - Opportunity to use EIS to evaluate impacts is missed;
2. Draft new zoning for only the Houghton Center. Assume that the existing plan is valid. Initiate a separate work program task to develop zoning. Do not study the remainder of the neighborhood center. This could happen after the Comprehensive Plan update.
 - This option is in conflict with policies encouraging coordinated neighborhood center review
3. Study the Comprehensive Plan policies only for Houghton Center – examine whether 5 stories are appropriate.
 - This option is in conflict with policies encouraging coordinated neighborhood center review.
4. Evaluate intensity of development in business districts with the CP EIS, but only consider amendment of general business district policies. Defer neighborhood specific policies and zoning regulations (and therefore the CARs) to future business district studies - possibly as part of neighborhood plans.
 - If this option is selected, should the City proceed to make changes to zoning regulations reflecting only the new general policies - for example pedestrian orientation?
5. Consider all stages of business district plans as part of the Comprehensive Plan update, for all districts, including the Houghton/Everest Neighborhood Center.
 - A public involvement plan would need to be established that would honor neighborhood expectations;
 - This would be beyond the capability of staff at this time given other amendment tasks.

Staff Recommendation:

Staff option 4:

- Defer action on Houghton/Everest Neighborhood Center CARs until Everest Neighborhood Plan can be updated.
- Evaluate business districts with the CP EIS, but only consider amendments to the general business district policies. Defer neighborhood specific policies and zoning regulations to future study.

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- As soon as possible after the completion of the Comprehensive Plan update, initiate an update of the Everest Neighborhood Plan and consider the entire Houghton/Everest Neighborhood Center. Prepare zoning regulations and design guidelines as part of the update of the neighborhood plans.

IV. NEXT STEPS

Staff will go to the Houghton Community Council on August 25, to present the Planning Commission's recommendation on the Houghton/Everest Neighborhood Center study and then to the City Council on September 16, 2014 for a final decision on the process to be used. The Planning Commission will hold study sessions on the selected CARs in the fall of 2014 and early winter 2015. A public hearing will be held by the Planning Commission on the Draft Plan, including the CARs, in early spring 2015.

Also starting in the fall of 2014, the City will prepare a Draft EIS on the CP update that will include an environmental analysis of the CARs. A Final EIS will be prepared based on comments on the Draft EIS. Once the Final EIS is issued, the City Council will consider the Final Draft Plan, including the CARs. The Council is expected to make a decision on the Plan, including the CARs in the summer of 2015.

Attachments:

1. Comprehensive Plan Goals CH-6 and CH-7
2. Comprehensive Plan Policy CH 5.4
3. Comprehensive Plan Policy CH-5.1

**ATTACHMENT 1
HCC 08-25-14 MEETING**

XV.B. CENTRAL HOUGHTON NEIGHBORHOOD

Policy CH-5.3: Implement transportation improvements that support the existing and planned land uses in the Neighborhood Center and adjoining neighborhoods.

A review of transportation impacts should be done for all new development in the Neighborhood Center. Transportation system improvements should be designed to encourage traffic to use existing arterials and to include traffic calming devices on neighborhood streets. Alternate modes of transportation should also be encouraged.

Policy CH-5.4: Expand the area designated for higher intensity use to properties west of Houghton Center and south of NE 68th Street.

Land located west of the Houghton Center shopping area, directly east of the Cross Kirkland Corridor, has the potential to provide higher density residential use within walking distance of retail and business services. The Cross Kirkland Corridor provides a wide buffer between this area and the low density residential area to the west.

Goal CH-6: Promote high quality design by establishing building, site, and pedestrian design standards that apply to commercial and multifamily development in the Houghton/ Everest Neighborhood Center.

Policy CH-6.1: Establish design guidelines and regulations that apply to all new, expanded or remodeled commercial, multifamily or mixed use buildings in the Houghton/ Everest Neighborhood Center.

These design guidelines and regulations should support appropriate building scale and massing, produce buildings that exhibit high quality design with a sense of permanence, and incorporate site design which includes pedestrian features and amenities that contribute to the livability of the surrounding area. They should also strengthen the visual identity of the neighborhood center by addressing streetscape improvements and public views to the lake along NE 68th Street.

Houghton Center: The shopping center development located at the southwest corner of NE 68th Street and 108th Avenue NE (shown in yellow on the map) is known as the “Houghton Center.” This large strip retail development sits on several parcels occupying approximately five acres. Redevelopment to a more cohesive, pedestrian-oriented concept may be feasible since a single owner controls the bulk of the site. In addition to its potential to serve the community through expanded neighborhood commercial uses, Houghton Center can contribute to the livability and vitality of the neighborhood by providing residents and visitors with a welcoming place to shop, congregate and relax.



Goal CH-7: Support the transition of the Houghton Center into a pedestrian-oriented mixed use development, including retail, with office or residential and other compatible uses.

Policy CH-7.1: Promote a pedestrian-oriented development concept through standards for a coordinated master plan for Houghton Center including retail, with office and/or residential and other compatible uses.

A master plan for the Houghton Center should provide for a complementary arrangement of facilities, pedestrian amenities, open spaces, and linkages, as well as shared parking that meets the needs of Houghton Center and a coordinated sign system.

XV.B. CENTRAL HOUGHTON NEIGHBORHOOD

Policy CH-7.2: Reduce ingress and egress conflicts within and around Houghton Center through creation of a circulation system for vehicles and pedestrians as part of a master plan for development of the property.

The circulation system for both pedestrians and vehicles should provide the minimum amount of ingress and egress locations necessary for an effective circulation system into and through Houghton Center.

Policy CH-7.3: Allow building heights to step up to five stories if careful attention is given to building modulation, upper story stepbacks, and use of materials to reduce the appearance of bulk and mass.

Specific design guidelines should be developed to ensure that modulation is used to break down scale and massing of buildings into smaller and varied volumes, and to provide upper story stepbacks from the sidewalks to improve the pedestrian experience and maintain human scale.

Policy CH-7.5: Provide gathering spaces and relaxation areas within Houghton Center.

Houghton Center is an important community meeting place within the Central Houghton Neighborhood. Gathering spaces should be provided when Houghton Center redevelops as a way to provide places to meet neighbors and enjoy the facilities.

SCHOOLS AND PLACES OF WORSHIP

A strong relationship between schools, places of worship and the surrounding community is a key factor to ensuring compatibility and minimizing conflicts.

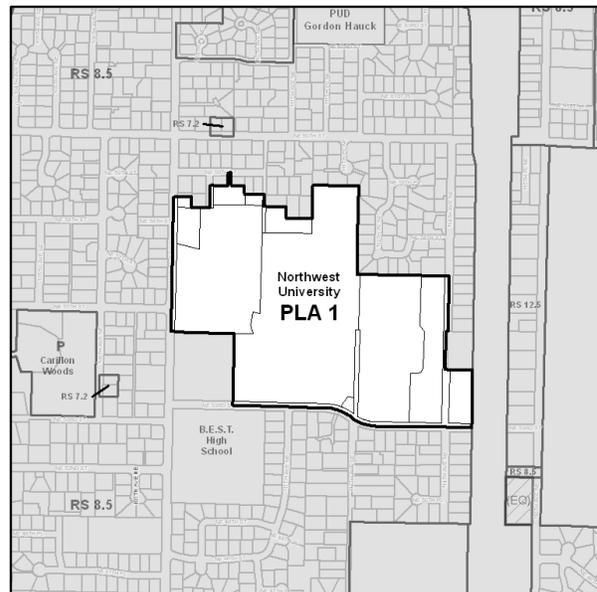
Goal CH-8: Acknowledge the value to the community of schools and places of worship. Encourage interaction between these institutions and the residents of the Central Houghton Neighborhood.

Policy CH-8.1: Provide opportunities for early community involvement in any expansion plans for, modifications to, or changes in uses within schools and places of worship.

Early community involvement is important in addressing issues that may affect the surrounding area and the neighborhood as a whole. Issues such as parking and public safety should be taken into account when considering additional ancillary uses, expansion of facilities, or the addition of new facilities. Required buffering should be designed to minimize impacts to and be compatible with neighboring uses.

NORTHWEST UNIVERSITY (PLANNED AREA 1)

Northwest University is designated as a Planned Area because of its unique conditions including large parcel ownership, interface with the surrounding community, traffic patterns, and topographic conditions. The complex issues related to this planned area can best be dealt with through the master plan for the university.



The planned area designation permits the application of special development procedures and standards to minimize adverse impacts resulting from the natural growth and operation of the facility.

XV.B. CENTRAL HOUGHTON NEIGHBORHOOD

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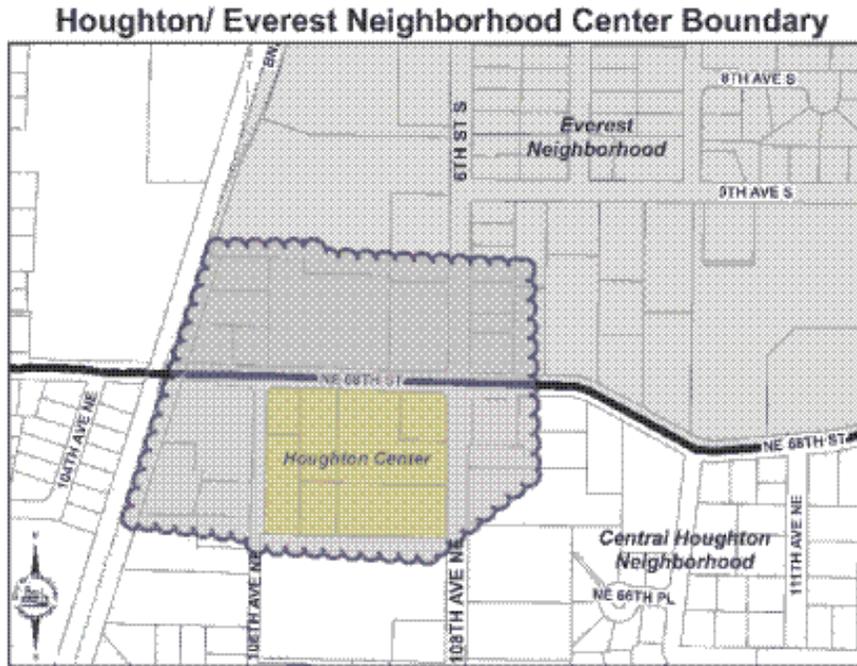
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**ATTACHMENT 1
HCC 08-25-14 MEETING**

XV.B. CENTRAL HOUGHTON NEIGHBORHOOD



Goal CH-5: Promote a strong and vibrant Neighborhood Center with a mix of commercial and residential uses.

Policy CH-5.1: Coordinate with the Everest Neighborhood to develop a plan for the Houghton/ Everest Neighborhood Center, which overlays properties along the NE 68th Street corridor in both the Everest and Central Houghton neighborhoods (see inset).

This plan should promote a coordinated strategy for the Neighborhood Center while minimizing adverse impacts on surrounding residential areas. The existing land use map designations will be used until the land use, zoning and development regulations for the entire Neighborhood Center are re-examined.

Policy CH-5.2: Encourage a mix of uses within the Houghton/ Everest Neighborhood Center that includes commercial development such as neighborhood-oriented shops, services, and offices, as well as multifamily residential use.

A variety of uses, including retail, office and residential, should be combined in order to contribute to a vibrant mixed use Neighborhood Center.



**ATTACHMENT 1
HCC 08-25-14 MEETING**

