



MEMORANDUM

DATE: September 17, 2010

To: Houghton Community Council

FROM: Janice Soloff, AICP, Senior Planner
Paul Stewart, AICP, Deputy Director

SUBJECT: LAKEVIEW NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN UPDATE- DRAFT VISION STATEMENT, OVERVIEW, HISTORIC CONTEXT AND NATURAL ENVIRONMENT, (FILE ZON07-00032)

RECOMMENDATION:

Give staff direction on the draft Vision Statement, Overview, Historic Context and Natural Environment sections of the Lakeview Neighborhood Plan and discuss next steps in the neighborhood plan update process.

BACKGROUND:

On August 23, 2010, the Houghton Community Council held a joint meeting with the Planning Commission to receive the Lakeview Advisory Group preliminary recommendations for changes to the Lakeview Neighborhood Plan. Staff was given direction to first bring back the more general sections for study. At the September 27, 2010 Houghton Community Council meeting we will discuss the draft Vision Statement, Overview, Historic Context and Natural Environment sections.

The existing Lakeview Plan does not currently include the Vision and Historic Context sections. The key concepts expressed in the Vision Statement are from the Lakeview Advisory Group and comments received at the joint meeting in August. For the Historic section, the information from the Kirkland Heritage Society was summarized to avoid repeating text written for the Central Houghton neighborhood. The History section does not contain goals and policies because they are covered in the Community Character Element in the Comprehensive Plan found at this link

http://kirklandcode.ecitygov.net/CK_comp_Search.html. The Natural Environment section is not intended to duplicate the general Element goals and policies but point out what is unique to be protected in the Lakeview area.

NEXT STEPS:

The following is the tentative meeting schedule for the Lakeview Neighborhood Plan update:

Fall-Winter 2010 Schedule

Oct 25	Houghton Community Council	Discus edits, begin Land Use
Nov 8	HCC special meeting	Continue Land Use and other sections
Nov 10	Park Board	Review and comment on Open Space & Parks
Nov 17	Transportation Commission	Review & comment on Transportation
Nov 18	Planning Commission	Study – Lakeview & Central Houghton Plans
Nov 22	Houghton Community Council	Study – Lakeview & Central Houghton Plans

December

- Lakeview Advisory Group Review
- Open House

2011 Schedule

January- HCC/PC Joint Public Hearing

February- PC/HCC Recommendation

March City- Council Review

April- City Council Action

May- HCC Action

ATTACHMENT:

1. Draft Vision, Overview, Historic Context, Natural Environment sections

Draft Lakeview Neighborhood Plan 9/17/2010

1. OVERVIEW

The Lakeview Neighborhood is bounded by Lake Washington on the west and the Burlington North Santa Fe Railroad tracks and the Central Houghton Neighborhood to the east. Lake Washington Blvd and Lakeview Drive provide north-south vehicular, bicycle and pedestrian connections from the SR 520 interchange to Downtown Kirkland and adjacent neighborhoods. Marsh and Houghton Beach waterfront parks are a recreational draw for local neighborhood residents and visitors. Yarrow Bay wetlands with its lush tree canopy are home to wildlife habitat, function as a pristine wetland and stream system, and are a sanctuary from surrounding urban development.

Land uses between the railroad and Lake Washington Boulevard are a mix of low to medium residential densities. In the center of the neighborhood between Lakeview Drive and Lake Washington Boulevard are medium density residential uses, offices and neighborhood oriented businesses.

Carillon Point is an important employment center and regional tourism draw with its mix of offices, retail, hotel, restaurants, housing and marina along the shores of Lake Washington. The Yarrow Bay Business District contains large office parks with some services for businesses and freeway travelers.

The policy direction for the waterfront has already been established in the Shoreline Master Program. The thrust of these shoreline policies is to maintain residential uses, permit water-dependent commercial uses where commercial uses presently exist, place a high priority on public access to the water either through park acquisition or pedestrian easements negotiated during development.

2. VISION STATEMENT

Located along the eastern shores of Lake Washington the Lakeview Neighborhood serves as a southern gateway to the City from SR-520. The neighborhood has a special waterfront town charm and is safe. Lakeview residents value the visual and physical connection to Lake Washington. Wide, expansive views of the Lake and Olympic mountains beyond have been sustained because of careful selection and placement of trees and vegetation, to avoid view obstruction of the Lake from public streets and properties to the east. Over time, overhead utility lines have been undergrounded to enhance views of Lake Washington and territorial views.

The neighborhood is a mix of single family and multifamily residential areas, offices, neighborhood oriented businesses and two commercial centers - Carillon Point and the Yarrow Bay Business District. Neighborhood oriented retail and service businesses are easily accessible by pedestrians and

monitoring of parking along neighborhood streets help to ensure there is adequate parking for businesses and park visitors.

Infill low density residential development on the Houghton and Yarrow Bay slopes will continue while maintaining the visual character of the hillside and retaining trees to the maximum extent. New development along the slopes is required to conduct a slope stability analysis using best management geotechnical practices specific to the site to ensure health safety and welfare of surrounding property. Overall, the neighborhood has resisted development pressure to allow a large amount of density increases.

With direct access to SR 520 the Yarrow Bay Business District has the potential to transform from the primarily office park setting into a more vibrant community with a mix of commercial uses and housing, hotels, services for businesses and neighbors, transit users, freeway travelers. Even with improvements to SR 520 freeway and future new development in the Yarrow Bay Business District, the neighborhood has maintained its unique waterfront neighborhood character. The Kirkland gateway sign located at the south end of Lake Washington Blvd has been moved to a more appropriate, prominent location and updated in its appearance.

The South Kirkland Park and Ride lot has transformed from a surface parking lot and transit center to a transit oriented development with additional parking stalls to serve transit riders, a mix of housing for all income levels, commercial services, improved vehicular and pedestrian access to the site and well designed architectural gateway to the City. To ensure that future development of the Bellevue portion of the park and ride lot will be developed in the same scale and compatibility with the Kirkland site and surrounding residential neighborhood, King County Metro, the City of Bellevue and City of Kirkland have established principles of mutual agreement. The potential impacts were evaluated and mitigated to ensure the project was designed to be an asset and attractive gateway to the neighborhood and City.

The street network of the Lakeview neighborhood is well established. Lake Washington Blvd and Lakeview Drive have been upgraded to include pedestrian amenities such as wider sidewalks, landscaping, pedestrian lighting, benches, and art. Traffic calming measures and pedestrian improvements have been implemented along Lake Washington Blvd and Lakeview Dr to improve pedestrian safety, and reduce traffic congestion.

New improved pedestrian and bicycle trails provide increased east-west connections between Yarrow Bay Wetlands and Lake Washington Boulevard to Watershed Park, Carillon Woods Park and the future Cross Kirkland Trail/Eastside Rail Corridor along the old Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railroad right of way.

Lakeview's four parks are clean, well maintained, and renovated as needed. Our waterfront parks are a model for how shoreline areas can be restored to provide a softer, natural shoreline, and improve shoreline habitat by replacing invasive species with native vegetation.

Our streams and wetlands are protected and properly managed through limitations on development, maintaining existing vegetation and with restoration projects. At the Yarrow Bay wetlands, people may observe the scenic beauty of the wetlands and wildlife habitat from new viewpoints.

3. HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The Lakeview Neighborhood is part of what was once the town of Houghton until 1968 when Houghton annexed to Kirkland. As a result of the merger, the Houghton Community Council retained jurisdiction over land use decisions within the Lakeview neighborhood.

Notable Houghton settlers were the French, Marsh and Suttoff families. In 1929, Louis Marsh built the Marsh Mansion on the property his parents purchased in 1905. Marsh Park, donated by Mr. Marsh, is on the land he acquired when Lake Washington was lowered in 1916. The French family home was built at 10120 NE 63rd St and later moved to 4130 Lake Washington Blvd in 1978. Harry French and other Houghton residents commuted to Seattle to work in Yesler's Mill either by rowing boats, by horse or daily ferry service. Harry French built a frame cabin for his family which later became Pleasant Bay's (original name for Houghton) first classroom and its first Sunday school. On Lake Washington Blvd. between NE 59th – 60th Streets two older buildings exist (real estate offices). One was built in the 1900's and was the early site of the Houghton Post Office. Terrace Park once housed the former Houghton City Hall.

Where Carillon Point is today was the original location of the Lake Washington Shipyard. The shipyard was an employment hub, building wood ships during WWI, then steel ships during the Second World War. After the shipyards closed, the site was used for a practice facility for the Seahawks football team before moving to NW university campus on 108th Avenue and later to Renton in 2009.

See the Central Houghton Neighborhood Plan for more detail on the history of Houghton and Community Character Chapter for goals and policies regarding the preservation and designation of historic buildings, structures, sites and objects of historical significance.

Policy: Encourage property owners to preserve buildings, structures, sites and objects of historical significance.

The Community Character Elements establishes the different hierarchy for designating historic buildings, structures, sites and objects in the City. The Community Character Element lists the Marsh Mansion, the French House, and the Sutthoff House, the Shumway site, Lake Washington Shipyards site and the Lake House site on the City's list of Historic Buildings, Structures, Sites and Objects. The Marsh Mansion is recognized on the National and State Registers of Historic Places and contains a Historic Landmark zoning designation. In addition to the historic structures and sites above, the French and Sutthoff houses should be preserved to provide a link to Lakeview's history.

Should this existing text be retained?

The existing Lakeview Plan includes the following text:

Notwithstanding the language regarding historic structures in the Goals and Policies Section of this Comprehensive Plan, it is the intent of the Houghton Community Council and the Kirkland City Council that only residential use should be permitted in either the Sutthoff or French houses at their present site. The Marsh Mansion is the only historic structure which should be considered as possibly appropriate for non-residential use.

Staff recommendation: Staff recommends this text be deleted because Kirkland Zoning Code 115.65 allows home occupations including bed and breakfasts within single family homes.

Policy: Provide directional signs, markers and interpretive information at structures, buildings, sites or objects of historical significance.

Staff comment: This policy is redundant with an existing policy listed in the Community Character element but the Advisory Group felt that installing directional signs in front of the French and Sutthoff homes was important. Is this policy necessary?

4. NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

Goal: Protect and enhance the natural environment in the Lakeview Neighborhood.

Natural Water Systems

Policy: Protect and improve water quality and promote fish passage by undertaking measures to protect Lake Washington, wetlands, streams in the Carillon Creek, Yarrow Creek and Houghton Slope basins.

Four drainage basins and associated creeks flow through Lakeview toward Lake Washington: Yarrow Creek, Houghton Slope A, Houghton Slope B, Carillon Creek and Yarrow Bay wetlands. These drainage systems provide important ecological functions such as flood and storm water conveyance, water quality, fish habitat and wildlife and riparian corridors and open space benefits. Cutthroat Trout inhabit Yarrow Creek. Cochran Springs Creek is considered a tributary to Yarrow Creek and also contains Cutthroat Trout, juvenile Coho salmon and Lamprey.

Where feasible, barriers within stream corridors should be removed to allow fish passage (such as through SR 520 interchange, along Northup Way and at the railroad crossing). Use of pesticides and fertilizer near stream and wetland areas should also be avoided.

See Natural Environment Chapter for the maps of wetlands, streams, and environmentally sensitive slopes and additional goals and policies to preserve and protect these natural systems:
http://kirklandcode.ecitygov.net/CK_comp_Search.html

Policy: Develop viewpoints and interpretive information around streams and wetlands if protection of the natural features and private property can be reasonably ensured.

Yarrow Bay wetlands function as a pristine natural wildlife reserve and water quality system filtering contaminants prior to discharge into Lake Washington. The wetlands can also provide passive recreation and educational opportunities with improved access to the area. Installation of viewpoints would improve visual access to the wetlands and Lake Washington if they could be constructed to protect the natural system and maintain the rights of private property.

Soils and Geology

Goal: Protect potentially hazardous areas, such as landslide, erosion, and seismic areas through limitations on development and maintenance of existing vegetation.

Policy: Require slope stability analyses and design development to avoid damage to life and property on properties containing high or moderate landslide or erosion hazards areas.

Policy: Regulate development on the Houghton and Yarrow Slopes due to environmentally sensitive slope conditions. *Staff comment: this policy could be moved to the Land Use section where we will include a list of development standards.*

The Houghton and Yarrow Slopes are designated as containing soils susceptible to moderate to high landslide hazard areas particularly when wet or sliding in time of low intensity earthquake. For these reasons development on these slopes should be regulated to protect life and property. Some properties surrounding the Yarrow Bay Wetlands are designated as containing seismic hazard areas because the soil type is subject to risk of earthquake damage as a result of seismically induced settlement or soil liquefaction. Regulations governing development on geologically hazardous areas are located in the Kirkland Zoning Code.

Houghton Slope

The most sensitive portions of the Houghton Slope are generally south of NE 58th Street. This area is prone to sliding and erosion. Slopes are steep at an average of 15 percent with some slopes greater than 40 percent. There are several steep ravines which have a particularly high hazard of sliding because of the large amounts of groundwater in the slope causing artesian pressure and many small streams. The slopes area is heavily wooded and of significant aesthetic value particularly for those who enter the City from the south on Lake Washington Boulevard. Besides the aesthetic value of the wooded cover, it is also important in contributing to the slope's stability and provides habitat for small wildlife.

The northern portion of the Houghton Slope lies north of NE 58th Street. Although less sensitive than the slopes further south, this area also bears careful scrutiny. This area is mostly developed with low- and medium-density residential. Construction on or adjacent to these slopes may cause or be subject to landsliding, excessive erosion, and drainage or other problems associated with development on a slope.

Yarrow Slope

The Yarrow Slope, west of the Yarrow Bay Wetlands has also been identified as a potentially hazardous slope. Some landslides occurred in the early 1960s southward along the present location of SR520. However, nearby landslides, steep slopes, high water content, and peat deposits warrant additional investigation as to slope analysis indicating minimal hazards. House configurations that minimize disruptions to natural systems are preferred. Existing vegetation in these areas should be preserved to the greatest extent feasible to help stabilize the slope and maintain drainage patterns. Development on these slopes should consider the same development standards listed under the Houghton Slope land use section below. Special care should be taken during and after construction in order to minimize adverse impacts on the wetlands.

Prior to development on the Houghton and Yarrow Bay slopes, a slope stability analysis should be required to identify the magnitude of the hazard and possible mitigating measures. These measures may include restrictions on the type, design, and/or density of land use. Existing vegetation should remain to the greatest extent possible to help stabilize the slope.

See Land Use section below for the appropriate density and development standards that should be followed when developing on the Houghton and Yarrow Slopes.

Goal: Preserve, protect, and manage the urban forest.

Policy: Enhance and protect the tree canopy.

Descriptive text to be added.

Policy: Preserve and carefully manage trees adjoining the Eastside Rail Corridor.

Goal: Protect wildlife in the neighborhood.

Lakeview contains many wildlife corridors connecting parks in Central Houghton and along stream channels to Lake Washington and Yarrow Bay Wetlands.

Policy: Encourage the creation of backyard sanctuaries for wildlife habitat.

Within the Lakeview and larger Houghton area residents are encouraged to improve wildlife habitat on their private property by planting native vegetation, providing food, water, shelter and space for wildlife. The City, the State Department of Fish and Wildlife and other organizations and agencies can provide assistance and help organize volunteer projects.