



**CITY OF KIRKLAND**  
**PLANNING AND BUILDING DEPARTMENT**  
**123 FIFTH AVENUE, KIRKLAND, WA 98033**  
**425.587.3225 - [www.kirklandwa.gov](http://www.kirklandwa.gov)**

---

## **MEMORANDUM**

**DATE: September 28, 2015**

**To: Planning Commission**

**FROM: Janice Coogan, Senior Planner**  
**Paul Stewart, AICP, Deputy Director**

**SUBJECT: FINN HILL NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN, FILE CAM15-01754**

### **RECOMMENDATION**

The Planning Commission receive a briefing on the process planned for developing the Finn Hill Neighborhood Plan. Staff and Finn Hill Neighborhood Alliance board members Matt Pruitt and President Scott Morris will provide an overview of the neighborhood plan process and the format for the first public outreach meeting scheduled for October 15, 2015, 5-7pm at Finn Hill Middle School.

### **BACKGROUND**

Currently there is no neighborhood plan for Finn Hill. The land use and zoning designations are a carryover from King County at time of annexation in 2011.

With the major task of updating the Comprehensive Plan during 2013-2015, the Planning Department lacked the staff resources to oversee an extensive neighborhood plan process for Finn Hill. Eager to initiate a neighborhood planning process going, in 2014, the Finn Hill Neighborhood Alliance (FHNA) approached the City to request hiring a planning consultant to assist the Planning Department and neighborhood in development of a neighborhood Plan. The FHNA was interested in using the University of Washington's Green Futures Lab.

#### **U.W. Green Futures Lab Consultant Team Selected**

The University Of Washington [Green Futures Lab](#) (GFL) is now under contract with the City to assist the Finn Hill Neighborhood in creation of the neighborhood plan. The professor/graduate student team is not able to attend your October 8, 2015 meeting. They will attend future Commission meetings as the process moves forward.

Services to be provided by GFL include conducting a series of community meetings to engage the public to explore key components of a community plan, compile public comments, generate alternatives, and conduct briefings with City Boards and Commissions. Attachment 1 illustrates graphically how the planning process will work. The final outcome will be a neighborhood plan

that describes how the neighborhood wants to evolve over the next four decades (due by June 2016). GFL has provided similar services for Lake Forest Park, Edmonds and Seattle ([See website](#)).

The Finn Hill Neighborhood Alliance hopes to have GFL's help to craft a broadly supported vision statement of how the community wants to evolve and long term planning principles that will shape the neighborhood future through 2050. They would also like to explore innovative and unconventional planning ideas that have been successful elsewhere and could be applied in Finn Hill.

### **Actions taken to date**

Over the summer, the GFL consultant team was assembled and worked with City staff and the neighborhood on accomplishing the following activities:

- Tour of neighborhood with representatives from GFL, the Neighborhood Alliance and City staff
- GFL and staff met with FHN Alliance Board
- GFL manned a booth at Dennyfest to inform and solicit comments from participants about the Neighborhood Plan and invited people to attend the first neighborhood meeting or **Listening Session to be held on Oct 15**
- [Finn Hill Neighborhood Plan webpage](#) is available on the Planning and Building Department webpage under the Code Amendments section and a list serv email list is available for people to sign up to receive email announcements
- A city wide press release was issued to inform the public about the neighborhood plan process, webpage and list serv
- An advertisement will be printed in the Kirkland Reporter advertising the October 15 Listening Session

### **Key milestones and timeline**

An overall process and timeline for the neighborhood plan project is shown in Attachment 2. City staff and the FHNA will handle the public outreach during the process which will include list serv announcements, updates to both City and FHNA websites, articles in City Update and other techniques.

### **Potential issues to be studied as part of neighborhood plan process**

It is too early in the process to pin down the key issues to be studied with the neighborhood plan. Public comments received at the neighborhood meetings held in 2014 as part of the city wide Comprehensive Plan update and future meetings as part of this current process will help define the issues. In 2014, the FHNA submitted a list of issues they would like to be addressed with the neighborhood plan update (See Attachment 3). One issue that staff and the consultants will need to discuss with the Planning Commission at a future meeting will be how to handle the processing of citizen amendment requests for changes in land use. We also know that an update of the City's Critical Areas regulations may also have implications for the neighborhood's stream, wetlands and geologically hazardous areas. A more thought out list of study issues will be brought back to the Planning Commission for discussion.

## Next steps- October 15, 2015 Listening Session 5-7 pm at Finn Hill Middle School

The GFL is organizing for the first public neighborhood meeting or "Listening Session" to be held on October 15<sup>th</sup> at the Finn Hill Middle School. The purpose will be to inform and solicit comments from participants about the neighborhood plan. The Planning Commission is invited to attend. More details about the format for the event will be provided on October 8<sup>th</sup>. Staff will use a variety of public outreach to get the word out about the event including distributing the post card below. In addition, a new technique is being used to publicize the event. An announcement on the Lake Washington School District PTSA websites for each school in the neighborhood will invite parents and kids to attend the Listening Session.



*Participate in creating the first neighborhood plan for Finn Hill!*

**Finn Hill Neighborhood Listening Session**  
**Thursday, October 15, 2015**  
5:00-7:00 pm · Finn Hill Middle School Commons  
8040 NE 132nd Street · Kirkland WA 98034

You are invited to attend this listening session to share your ideas for how Finn Hill neighborhood should accommodate future change.

In collaboration with Finn Hill Neighborhood Alliance, City of Kirkland and students from the University of Washington Green Futures Lab (GFL), a new Finn Hill Neighborhood planning process is underway. When complete the neighborhood plan will be added to the City's Comprehensive Plan.

**For more information about the Finn Hill Neighborhood Plan process:**

- Sign up to receive an email announcement to keep informed about the process at [www.kirklandwa.gov/ebulletins](http://www.kirklandwa.gov/ebulletins) (Select: Finn Hill Neighborhood Plan)
- Visit the Finn Hill Neighborhood Alliance Association webpage at [www.finnhillalliance.org](http://www.finnhillalliance.org)



**Contact:** Janice Coogan, Senior Planner, Kirkland Planning and Building Dept., [jcoogan@kirklandwa.gov](mailto:jcoogan@kirklandwa.gov) or 425-587-3257  
Scott Morris, President, Finn Hill Neighborhood Alliance, [scott@finnhillalliance.org](mailto:scott@finnhillalliance.org) or 206-972-9493

The GFL is planning a second community workshop tentatively scheduled for **Saturday November 14** with a location and time to be determined.

### Planning Commission Discussion

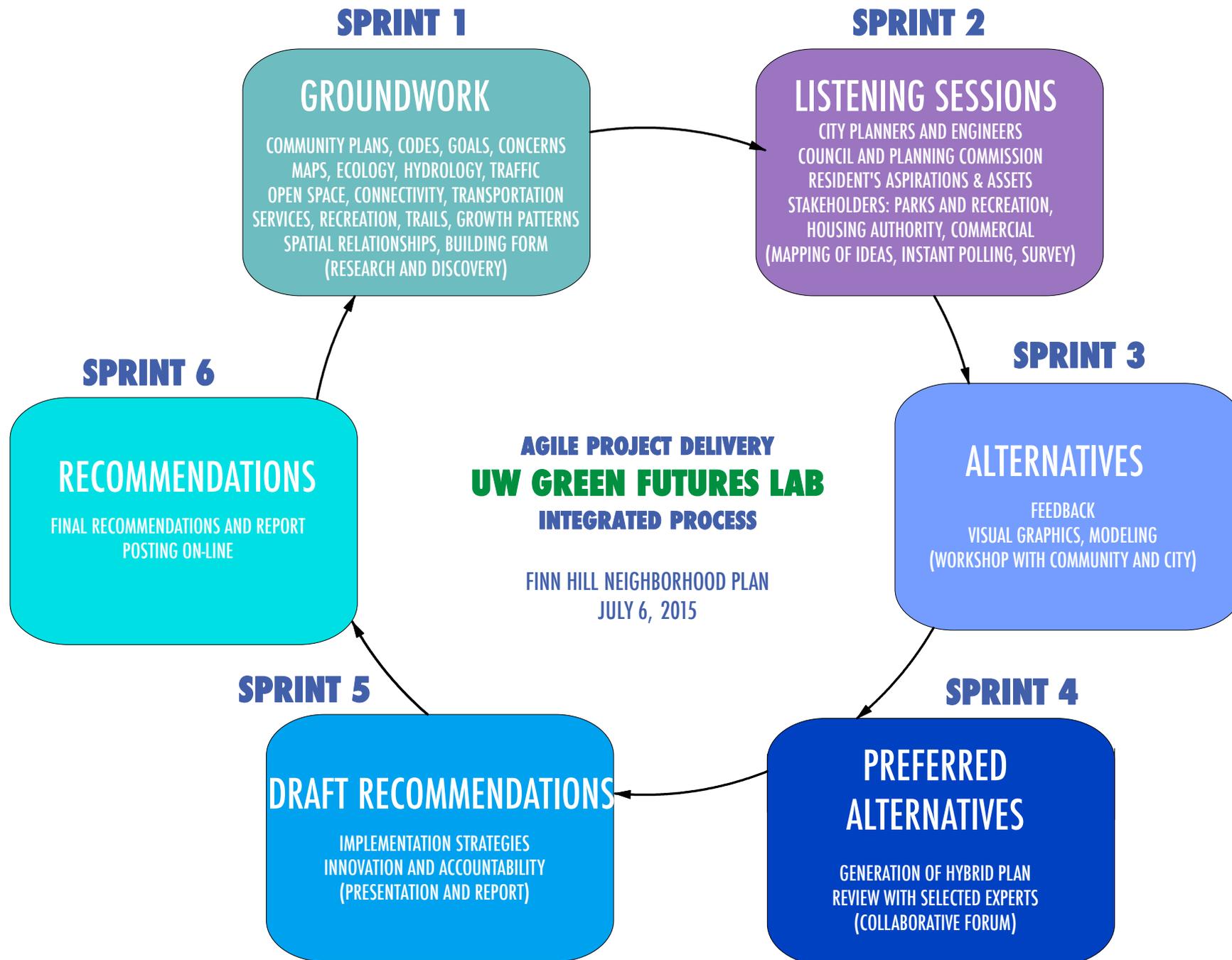
- ***Do you have any questions or suggestions about the overall planning process?***

### Attachments:

1. GFL process graphic
2. Outline of overall process and timeline
3. Preliminary issues identified by FHNA in 2014

Cc: File CAM15-01754







***Key Milestones and Schedule for the Finn Hill Neighborhood Plan Process***

9/28/2015

<b>September 2015- January 2016</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inform community about process</li> <li>• Briefings with Planning Commission and other Boards and Commissions regarding planning process and schedule</li> <li>• Listening sessions or workshops conducted with community to identify issues using techniques such as instant polling, surveys, interactive mapping- -<i>First Listening Session October 15, 2015 5-7pm at Finn Hill Middle School</i> -<i>Second workshop tentatively scheduled for Saturday November 14</i></li> </ul>
<b>January- March 2016</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alternatives developed</li> <li>• Preferred alternatives developed</li> </ul>
<b>Summer 2016</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• GFL report on recommendations for neighborhood plan template and implementation strategies due in June</li> <li>• Share draft plan with Neighborhood Association</li> <li>• Planning Commission study session presentation</li> </ul>
<b>Fall 2016</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draft neighborhood plan available for review and comment</li> <li>• City conducts environmental review</li> <li>• Planning Commission study session and public hearing</li> <li>• Planning Commission recommendation to City Council</li> </ul>
<b>December 2016</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tentative final adoption by City Council</li> </ul>





## Comprehensive Plan Update Objectives for Finn Hill

June 3, 2014

### Land Use

- Rationalize RSA8 zoning, especially islands of RSA8 amidst RSA6 zones and/or adjacent to RSA4 zones
- Consider downzoning some RSA8 and RSA6 areas in exchange for promoting greater densities in Finn Hill's two business districts
  - Consider giving property owners who are in areas to be downzoned the opportunity to be compensated with TDRs
- Promote mixed uses (commercial, professional, residential) in business districts;
  - encourage access for pedestrians and cyclists and the development of spaces (e.g. plazas) for community gatherings, conversation, etc
- Tie future development to more meaningful traffic concurrency standards
  - A simplistic 1.4 concurrency factor does not control development in a way that limits further traffic congestion

### Transportation and Connectivity

- Promote better pedestrian and cyclist connectivity between adjacent sub-neighborhoods (Hermosa Vista and the top of Finn Hill, for example) and between sub-neighborhood and commercial zones by opening easements and improving pathways/sidewalks and bike lanes
- Consider a transit node in one of the business districts to facilitate express trips to larger transit hubs (downtown Kirkland, South Kirkland Park & Ride)

### Parks and Open Space

- Identify existing open spaces, including City-owned greenbelts, as park land/open space on zoning and other city maps; change zoning to open space as necessary
- Promote pocket parks in Northeast Finn Hill
- Secure parkland opportunities (including expansion of Juanita Heights Park) in southeastern quadrant of Finn Hill (Goat Hill to 132<sup>nd</sup>/90<sup>th</sup>) through acquisitions and public easements
- Pursue long-term goal of connecting open spaces and parks on Finn Hill via land acquisition, easements and trails

### Surface Water

- Strengthen surface water management plan to minimize environmental degradation (water quality, erosion, "flashing" of ravines and streams)
- Promote low-impact development