



## **MEMORANDUM**

**Date:** September 18, 2009

**To:** Houghton Community Council

**From:** Eric R. Shields, AICP, Planning Director  
Paul Stewart, AICP, Deputy Director  
Janice Soloff, AICP, Senior Planner  
Angela Ruggeri, AICP, Senior Planner

**Subject:** **LAKEVIEW AND HOUGHTON NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN UPDATE  
PLANNING WORK PROGRAM OPTIONS, FILES ZON07-00032 and ZON09-00016**

### **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

This fall staff will be starting the Lakeview and Central Houghton neighborhood plan updates and would like input from the Houghton Community Council on the best approach for the planning process. Staff has attached a preliminary work program with project objectives and a timeline and a list of issues.

Specifically staff would like your input on the following:

- *As a city, what do we want to achieve by updating the neighborhood plan? How can we best explore what are the neighborhood residents' expectations with the update?*
- *What will be the role of the Houghton Community Council in the development of the neighborhood plans? Should there be a joint public hearing with the Planning Commission at the end of the process?*
- *Shall an Advisory Committee be formed? If yes, what should its role be? Who should be on the committee? At what point in the process should they be involved?*
- *The two neighborhood plans do not currently have vision statements for the future growth of the neighborhoods. What is the best approach to seek out community values to write these vision statements?*

### **BACKGROUND**

1985 was the last major neighborhood plan update for both neighborhoods. Since then, the general sections of the Comprehensive Plan have been updated several times making both neighborhood plans' goals and policies out of date. In addition, several institutional and commercial uses have undergone redevelopment in these areas such as NW University, the Lake Washington School District Administration offices, and Carillon Point. These sections of the plan also need updating.

The current Lakeview and Central Houghton Neighborhood Plans within the Comprehensive Plan are available on the City's website at [http://kirklandcode.ecitygov.net/CK\\_comp\\_Search.html](http://kirklandcode.ecitygov.net/CK_comp_Search.html)

Both neighborhoods are located within the jurisdiction of the Houghton Community Council. Staff has discussed the two plans at a study session with the Planning Commission that was held on September 10 and will now have the discussion with the Houghton Community Council. As the plans develop, we will branch off into separate public participation processes for each neighborhood. The Planning Commission has recommended that the Houghton Community Council take the lead in the plan update process. Staff and the Houghton Community Council will be discussing their role at the meeting on September 28.

Staff recently met with both neighborhood association chairs (Lisa McConnell from Central Houghton and Steve Jackson with Lakeview) to discuss the upcoming neighborhood plan updates and to listen to their suggestions for the process. Staff came away from those discussions with the impression that the associations do not have the resources to take a strong independent role to lead the update process and would need staff's support to conduct the community involvement process. The chairs suggested it would be best to set up a schedule of public meetings by subject area, so people can choose which meetings to attend based on their interest. They agreed to help get the word out about the plan update to their residents and suggested that staff provide information at the Hought Down picnic to inform people about the upcoming planning process. Staff prepared a handout that was available at the picnic which was held on September 7<sup>th</sup>.

Another idea that has been discussed separately from the Lakeview and Houghton update processes, is to participate in the KAN Neighborhood University and to have a dialogue about what the expectations are of a neighborhood plan both from the neighborhoods' and the City's perspectives.

### **PRELIMINARY ISSUES**

In preparation for the process discussion, staff has prepared a list of preliminary issues that we are currently aware of for each neighborhood (see Attachment 1). Additional issues will unfold as we begin the public participation process.

### **PLANNING PROCESS OPTIONS**

Attachment 2 is a preliminary draft work program, project objectives, key milestones and timeline for the neighborhood plan updates.

Below are some initial thoughts and questions that staff would like direction on so that we can finalize the work programs for each neighborhood plan update.

1. Shall we form advisory groups for each neighborhood? Each advisory group could be comprised of: the neighborhood association chair, 5 to 10 residents, 1 or 2 members of the Houghton Community Council, 1 or 2 Planning Commissioners, representatives of the business community, and staff.

Two options for the role of the advisory groups:

- a. The advisory groups could lead a series of open houses or meetings to discuss key issues and form draft policies to be written by staff. Staff could facilitate these meetings. Or
  - b. Staff could take a stronger lead in the community meeting process. Staff would then go to the advisory committees at the end of the process to inform them of what we heard from the community and present draft policies for the advisory groups' comments.
2. Another option is to not have advisory groups. Instead, the open houses or meetings to discuss key issues would be lead by staff. Then staff would take what we heard from the community and draft policies which would be brought to the HCC and PC for further edits.

If we have advisory groups, it should be clear that their role will be to make recommendations to the Planning Commission and Houghton Community Council. Then the Planning Commission and Houghton Community Council will in turn make their recommendations to the City Council.

3. Conduct public workshops/open houses- In late October an open house could be held to kick off the neighborhood planning process followed by a series of meetings by subject area (vision, land use changes, housing, and transportation). Staff or the advisory groups will lead these meetings.

A visioning process should be conducted for each neighborhood to determine existing and future community values and future growth for each area before discussing the private amendment requests that have been received for both neighborhoods. The majority of both neighborhoods are largely developed so it may not be necessary to spend too much time on an elaborate visioning process.

4. Staff takes a first cut at drafting a plan- Another option is for staff to take the lead in doing some up front work on writing the plan; then gain public input on specific policies at the public meetings.

### **PUBLIC NOTIFICATION PROCESS**

Consistent with our standard operating procedures and Zoning Code regulations for long range planning projects, the following public notification techniques will be used to inform the public about the ongoing neighborhood plan update process:

- Inform and coordinate with the neighborhood associations during the process
- Create a webpage on the Planning Department website
- Create an electronic list service for announcements (initially will use the neighborhood coordinators list serv to get the word out about the project specific list serv).
- Conduct public meetings, hearings, open houses, or workshops on visioning and study issues
- Conduct a web based opinion survey (*new*)
- Install notice boards at key places within neighborhood
- Mail post cards to property owners to notify about public hearing dates
- Distribute flyers at neighborhood association meetings, at grocery stores or neighborhood kiosks (e.g. Houghton Neighborhood notice boards), etc.
- City Update article describing process
- Cable TV announcements of public meetings and city webpage

ATTACHMENTS

1. Preliminary key issues
2. Draft work program
3. Letter from Lisa Mc Connell

Cc: Project Files:  
ZON07-00032  
ZON09-00016

**HOUGHTON AND LAKEVIEW NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN UPDATE***Issues Scoping*

September 2009

**Central Houghton Neighborhood Potential Issues**Land Use

- Update plan text to reflect new development and changes in general Comprehensive Plan policies.
- Lake Washington School District future plans for schools in the area
- NW College expansion plans
- Houghton Shopping Center
- Explore affordable housing and small lot opportunities
- Update historic structures inventory
- Address requests for potential land use changes

Transportation

- Transportation management
- Pedestrian and bicycle connections and safety
- Neighborhood role in dealing with the regional issues related to the railroad right-of-way.

**Lakeview Neighborhood Potential Issues**Land Use

- Update plan text to reflect new development and changes in general Comprehensive Plan policies.
- Consider Plaza at Yarrow Bay private amendment request to increase retail uses in PLA 2 and PLA 3 A and B.
- Consider several property owners requests to increase density on Yarrow Slope from RS 12.5 to RS 8.5 zoning
- Look for opportunities for mixed use commercial/residential land use changes
- Explore affordable housing and small lot opportunities
- Compare existing plan text with recent land use decisions for consistency (e.g. Yarrow Bay Marina and Carillon Point)
- Review plan for consistency with Shoreline SMP update
- Update historic structures inventory

Transportation

- Highway 520 expansion plans
- Traffic problems and assess speed limits in neighborhood; expand number of crosswalks with flags
- Lake Washington Blvd: increase pedestrian safety, increase lake access
- Identify new pedestrian and bicycle access opportunities through neighborhood
- Neighborhood role in dealing with the regional issues related to the railroad right-of-way.

Natural Environment

- Research where wetland or stream restoration projects are needed



**LAKEVIEW AND CENTRAL NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN UPDATES***Preliminary Work Program*

9/18/2009

Project Purpose To update the Lakeview and Central Houghton Neighborhood Plans to reflect changes in the neighborhoods since the plans were last updated in 1985 and for consistency with the vision, framework goals, and other elements of the Comprehensive Plan.

Project Objectives

- Develop a vision statement, new goals and policies and implement new policies with Zoning Code amendments.
- Encourage and provide opportunities for residents to actively engage and take ownership in the process.
- Conduct a reasonably fast update process that allows for public input but will not hold up other neighborhood plan update projects.
- Combine private amendment requests with the study issues so that they do not dominate the plan amendment discussions.

Key Milestones

Hold PC and HCC study sessions to approve process/consider appointment of advisory group representatives	September 2009
Hold kick off public meeting	Late October 2009
Conduct 2 Neighborhood U meetings	November 2009
Establish advisory groups for each neighborhood (if advisory groups are to be used) – appoint groups by the HCC and PC	November-2009
Hold public advisory group meetings or open houses conducted by staff	November 2009 to February 2010
Have PC and HCC study sessions to review draft goals, policies, and potential code amendments	March to May 2010
Review draft plans with advisory groups (if advisory groups are used in the process)	June 2010
Review draft plans with citizens at public open houses	July 2010
Complete SEPA Addendum and CTED 60 Day Review	September 2010
Conduct public hearings before PC and HCC (possible joint hearing)	October 2010
Revise plan per PC and HCC direction	October 2010
Hold City Council study session to discuss PC and HCC recommendations	November 2010
Adopt plan and code amendments by City Council ordinance	December 2010
Approve final plan through HCC final approval	January 2011



Date: September 10, 2009

To: Houghton Community Council Members

From: Lisa McConnell, Central Houghton Neighborhood Association chairperson

Subject: Lakeview and Houghton neighborhood plan update, planning work program options, Files ZON07-00032 and ZON09-00016

Dear Council Members,

After review of the preliminary work program, I would like to make a few comments, seen in blue below:

### **Page 1**

\_ As a city, what do we want to achieve by updating the neighborhood plan? How can we best explore what are the neighborhood residents' expectations with the update? *As we discussed at the KAN meeting last night (September 9, 2009), I think that the Neighborhood U "classes" on the update process will be vital to introducing the subject to residents. Not until they understand what the Neighborhood Plan Is and Is Not, will they be able to communicate their expectations.*

\_ What will be the role of the Houghton Community Council in the development of the neighborhood plans? *I think they should have a strong leading role in the development of the plan. HCC members are our most knowledgeable residents on the Comprehensive Plan and how the Neighborhood Plan works within that, and the special circumstances for land use issues that occur in Houghton. Should there be a joint public hearing at the end of the process? Yes*

\_ Shall an Advisory Committee be formed? *Yes* If yes, what should its role be? Who should be on the committee? At what point in the process should they be involved? *See Planning process options, page 3*

### **Page 2**

to revisit those suggestions listed below before designing the public process for the Lakeview and Central Houghton neighborhood plan updates:

Simplify the plans by only including policies that are unique to the neighborhood while having a template of standard text that refers to policies covered elsewhere in the Comprehensive Plan. Defer city-wide issues to other efforts (e.g. Non-motorized Transportation Plan, Parks Plan etc.).

*While I agree in theory with these statements, my concern is that it should be fully explained (to residents) why certain policies are covered in Comp Plan and will not be included in the Neighborhood Plan process. I want residents to feel that their vision is what is driving the process, and not give the appearance that the City is picking and choosing which policies it is including in this process.*

### **Page 3**

Two options for the role of the advisory committees:

- a. The advisory committees could lead a series of open houses or meetings to discuss key issues and form draft policies to be written by staff. Staff could facilitate these meetings. Or
- b. Staff could take a stronger lead in the community meeting process. Staff would then go to the advisory committees at the end of the process to inform them of what we heard from the community and present draft policies for the advisory committees' comments.

**I choose a. Although it may make the process longer (more cooks in the kitchen), I think the community will feel more satisfied with the process if they are involved in open houses or meetings.**

3. Staff takes a first cut at drafting a plan **NO**

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**more of a question than comment regarding Public notification process. I realize that the City can not submit things to blogs such as KirklandViews, but can CHNA or any members of the advisory committee submit "articles" to them regarding this process? I'm thinking more of "please join us, this is why the Neighborhood Plan is important to you", rather than an opinion on any of the specific policies.**

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Land Use

**\_ Lake Washington School District future plans for schools in the area I would also like to include our 2 private schools, Puget Sound Adventist Academy and Kirkland Children's School as well**

**\_ Look for opportunities for mixed use commercial/residential land use changes. This is in the Lakeview section for Land Use. I would also like to explore this issue as well with the Nelson group who owns the Houghton Market area. (Yes I know I may be opening a can of worms here ☺ )**

**Natural Environment I would like to include Watershed Park in our potential issues list.**

#### **Page 9 (I swear this is the last of the comments for now)**

**Establish advisory committees for each neighborhood (appointed by the Planning Commission) November 2009**

**Conduct public advisory committee meetings November 2009 to February 2010**

**I think this is a completely unrealistic timeframe to cover all the issues. November and December is the holiday season for most people and they will not be in town to attend any meetings. Also if last year is any indication, December travel (aka SNOW) will prevent anyone from going anywhere. Such a compressed time frame will put an extreme burden on advisory committee members to attend all meetings on all issues, while still continuing their service in their other leadership roles. While no one will be able to maintain enthusiasm and participation if the process takes years, it also does not serve the process well if we shortchange it.**

**Public open house to review draft plans July 2010 Summer, especially July, is never a good time to expect attendance for anything as important as reviewing a draft plan. I would like to see this pushed to September.**

I appreciate your time and consideration of my comments. Hopefully we can make this process efficient and a positive community building event.

Sincerely,

Lisa McConnell  
Chairperson, Central Houghton Neighborhood Association

