



MEMORANDUM

TO: Planning Policy Commission
FROM: Minnie Dhaliwal, CPD Director
RE: Title 18 Update – Part 7 Neighborhood Overlays
DATE: June 9, 2022

Meeting Purpose

The purpose of the June 9, 2022, joint Planning Policy Commission (PPC) and Development Commission meeting is to hold a public hearing to receive public comments and feedback pertaining to Part 7 Neighborhood Overlays.

Background

The Council Ad Hoc Committee's Title 18 Update Desired Goals and Outcome document identifies the following priority relevant to this topic.

Goal 8: *Neighborhoods retain their charm and distinctive character, pattern, and setting that includes both built and natural environments. Update codes and standards to retain and protect essential characteristics in established neighborhoods.*

Desired Outcomes:

- Neighborhoods retain their charm and distinctive character, pattern, and setting that includes both built and natural environments.

Goal 13: *Modernize code and incorporate best practices.*

Desired Outcome:

- Create a well-organized, clear code that improves public access to information; provides tools that address community needs; and helps create the kinds of places the community expects.

Separate design and development standards existing for Central Issaquah, the Olde Town Cultural Business District (CBD) and Multifamily (MF) zones, the Olde Town Single Family-Duplex zone, Talus, and Issaquah Highlands. Many of the standards for Central Issaquah and Olde Town CBD and MF are applicable citywide; or in reverse, citywide standards, such as landscape and parking, can easily be

applied to these areas. However, there are standards in all three documents that are unique to those areas.

The draft code for Neighborhood Overlays brings those unique standards into one document, still separated by neighborhood, and removes those standards that can be applied citywide. Standards included in this draft document include:

- Central Issaquah Development and Design Standards including Chapter 18 Design Manual
- Olde Town Design Standards for CBD and MF
- Olde Town Architectural Standards for Single Family-Duplex
- Issaquah Highlands Replacement Regulations and
- Talus Replacement Regulations

Analysis

The packet includes a summary of substantial changes in Attachment A that focus on improvements to organization of code, process, or implementation of direction from the Administration or the Commission; but are actions that do not warrant discussion with the Commission.

The following Analysis includes the additional information to help the Commission's discussion of the policy questions posed for this section of code.

Question 1: The existing Olde Town Design Standards include standards for the Multifamily-Medium (MF-M) zone (within Olde Town) and the Multifamily-High zone, on E Sunset Way only. The Zones Chapter includes multifamily standards for citywide multifamily development. **Are the citywide standards sufficient for MF-M in Olde Town, or do we want to keep them in the Olde Town standards which are more specific and add more character, consistent with MF-H on E Sunset Way?** Specific criteria from the draft code are included below for easy reference.

18.700.070 Olde Town Multi-family Front Yard Standards

- A. The intent of Olde Town Multi-family front yard standards is to:
 1. promote pedestrian friendly streetscapes.
 2. provide a feeling of separation between buildings and the public realm.
 3. ensure that front yards function as usable, outdoor spaces.
 4. provide private outdoor spaces that encourage a sense of ownership by residents.
- B. Standards
 1. Front yards must include entrance elements between the sidewalk and the building.
Appropriate elements include, but are not limited to:
 - a. Gateways
 - b. Archways
 - c. Arbors
 - d. Pedestrian or accent lighting
 - e. Variety of paving materials

18.700.080 Roof Form Standards for Olde Town Multi-family Buildings

- A. Intent. The intent of Olde Town Multi-family building roof form standards is to:
 1. promote and maintain the historic image of Olde Town and its residential neighborhoods.

2. enhance access to views of the surrounding hills and forests.
 3. Ensure each façade facing a street has a gabled form roof.
- B. Standards
1. Pitched roof forms must have slopes between 4:12 and 12:12.
 - a. Dormers less than half the façade length may be pitched at shallower slopes or flat.
 2. Portions of a flat or lower sloped roof must have parapets or edge details that provide visual interest.
 3. Each street-facing façade must have a gabled roof form.
 4. Buildings must incorporate other roof forms, such as hip roofs, dormers, and overhangs to break up otherwise large expanses of roof.
 5. Variation in roof form must be coordinated with the overall massing and modulation of the façade.
 6. Buildings must incorporate sustainable roof design and materials, when feasible, such as:
 - a. Green roofs
 - b. Solar panels
 - c. Sustainable materials
 - d. Rainwater collection systems
 7. If using a flat roof design, buildings must provide rooftop decks or amenity spaces, when feasible.

Previous Meetings

- January 20, 2021 – Planning Policy Commission & Development Commission: Building and Design, ([Agenda/ Minutes/Video](#))
- January 27, 2021 – Planning Policy Commission: Building and Design, ([Agenda/ Minutes/Video](#))

Things to Consider: Policy Discussion

PPC could give additional thought to the following topics in their review of the Discussion Draft:

- Are the citywide standards sufficient for MF-M in Olde Town, or do we want to keep them in the Olde Town standards which are more specific and add more character, consistent with MF-H on E Sunset Way?
- Are the proposed changes adequately address the goals and outcomes identified by Council?

Timeline

- June 9, 2022 – Public Hearing: IMC 18.606 Building Design, IMC 18.400 Zones, IMC 18.402 Permitted Uses.
- June 23, 2022 – Deliberation: Title 18 – IMC 18.400 IMC 18.300 Subdivisions, IMC 18.400 Zones, IMC 18.402 Permitted Uses, IMC 18.404 Form and Intensity, and IMC 18.500 Land Use Standards
- October 2022 – Public Hearings: Consolidated Draft Title 18 Update

Attachments

- A. Summary of Substantive Changes
- B. Summary of Public Comments

B. Summary of Substantial Changes

The following summarizes the substantive changes made to develop the proposed 18.700 Neighborhood Overlays. The changes are based on the gaps analysis, previous discussions with the Planning Policy Commission, a Staff evaluation of existing code and feedback from the City attorney's office.

CHANGE	REASON
1. Olde Town Design Standards for CBD and MF – overview. Text was updated and modernized where possible without changing context. Standards that are consistent with citywide standards, such as parking and landscape, were removed. Standards unique to CBD and MF remained.	The Olde Town Design Standards were adopted in 2001 and, except for small changes, have not been updated since adoption. The CBD and MF standards need to be updated but this requires a focused public process.
2. 18.700.030 Entries and Windows. Revised text to add clarity and specificity such as removing “more” and “larger” and replacing with measurable percentages.	Existing language was vague, unmeasurable, and unenforceable.
3. Olde Town Cultural and Business District and Multifamily material color standards adapted from Olde Town Architectural Standards for Single Family-Duplex	The color methodology for Olde Town has been challenging and antiquated and using a single method for all of Olde Town is simpler. The new standards for materials provide more specificity.
4. Central Issaquah Development Bonus Program Adapted from CIDDS Chapter 5. Name was modified from Density Bonus to Development Bonus.	It has been suggested that the name change is a more accurate reflection of what the code does. For example, adding height to a floor does not increase density; adding units increases density. Also, a sample calculation of Development Bonus is provided to facilitate applicant use.
5. Development Bonus Fee changed from a number to a formula used to calculate price changes as they occur.	The existing price of \$15.55 was an estimate in 2013. Changing it allows staff to use current costs per square foot.
6. Central Issaquah, Chap 18 Design Manual, Architecture Styles were added. Various sections of the current Design Manual were combined to create a single set of standards. Language was revised to clarify when all elements are required or when there are options. Some definitions were included here for use with the Styles; other definitions will be incorporated into the general definitions chapter.	Having one set of standards will be clearer and easier to use. Users have found the structure confusing (options vs all items required). Revised structure will improve usefulness.
7. For the former Urban Villages, portions have been added for character: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issaquah Highlands Urban Design Guidelines for Neighborhood Types from 18.19B, Attachment 2 • Talus Urban Design Guidelines , Neighborhood Character from 18.19C, Attachment 2 	Ensure the neighborhood character tools that shaped these existing areas are carried forward.

A. Summary of Public Comments

Date	Commentor Name	Topic	Comment	Response Notes
7/22/2021	Steve Bolliger	Building & Design	I support incorporating both climate change mitigation and sustainability into all sections of the code and adopting a “performance based” approach to development. The performance approach would establish strong minimum thresholds to meet but also provide meaningful incentives for a developer or builder to go beyond minimums by offering potential increases in FAR and height.	Staff agree that climate mitigation and sustainability need to be integrated into all sections of code. The current approach is to provide incentives and requirements for building and design, such as for LEED and Built Green standards. This draft, however, does not propose any changes in FAR and height requirements and limits.
1/30/2022	Connie Marsh	Building & Design	This comment is regarding whether a site needs to completely comply with regulations and what incremental compliance looks like. During the joint DC & PPC meeting the Jacksons Shell Station was presented as an example. The plan set shows this site having a 50-foot wetland buffer and being located within the flood plain. When should a site with critical areas need to adhere to the new code? This conversation cannot be split apart ignoring the environment and non-confirming conditions.	We recognize that the current code is limited on when an existing building must comply with the standards upon redevelopment. This is being addressed in a new thresholds section in the forthcoming process and procedures chapters.
Kristi Tripple	Building & Design	Building & Design	We are encouraging a delicate balance of current vs. future be kept in mind. In regard to thresholds for the design manual or a neighborhood overlay, code must allow for existing buildings to easily and efficiently be maintained, enhanced, and/or updated. If the codes are too onerous, building owners are discouraged from reinvesting in/updating their properties and blight will happen faster as the buildings age.	As far as ensuring consistency with existing standards, the current approach is to apply standards in a consolidated code across the City. Neighborhoods with differing standards and design standards are maintained through Part 7, Neighborhood Overlays. The goal is to simplify the existing baseline standards through consolidation, while ensuring continuity of neighborhood characteristics.

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			<p>The updated code should enable an existing building/development to address parcel constraints or opportunities and use; allow for flexibility in design and/or developer obligations; and not be financially burdened.</p> <p>Older buildings serve a necessary need with industrial flex use that enables small businesses that provide services residents expect. New construction is very expensive and is harder for most startups and small businesses to accommodate. Buildings can have multiple uses throughout the life of the building. A building's use should be able to change over time without adding extra mandates and costs to keep the rents affordable. Making the most of a building and its useful life is an important aspect of sustainability.</p>	<p>We recognize that the current code is limited on when an existing building must comply with the standards upon redevelopment. This is being addressed in a new thresholds section in the forthcoming procedures and permitting chapters. The intent will be to ensure that older or existing buildings are not encumbered with complying with the code requirements.</p>
2/23/2022	Tia Heim	Building & Design	<p>Request that staff more clearly identify the proposed changes, taking into consideration different areas of the City. Also, request that staff provide examples from other jurisdictions and analysis of how that has worked in other jurisdictions.</p> <p>How does this proposed code ensure consistency of new projects within the neighborhoods that are already developed?</p> <p>It is essential that regulators understand the costs and impacts of those regulations. What is the estimate cost</p>	<p>The lighting standards are consolidated and addressed in the new chapter, 18.614. The code intends to balance safety, aesthetics, and dark sky standards.</p> <p>As far as ensuring consistency with existing standards, the current approach is to apply standards in a consolidated code across the City. Neighborhoods with differing standards and design standards are maintained through Part 7, Neighborhood Overlays. The goal is to simplify the existing baseline standards through consolidation, while ensuring continuity of neighborhood characteristics.</p>

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			<p>that this adds to a multifamily or complex project? Has impacts on housing affordability, commercial project viability and ability to develop new ball fields and lighted outdoor recreational spaces been considered?</p> <p>How would the prohibition on outlining buildings or roofs with LED lights or the prohibition on blinking lights found in this proposed code be consistent with holiday lighting – particularly in retail areas?</p> <p>Why include some ROW lighting standards in this code section, if they are found elsewhere in the IMC? Requiring property owners to look in multiple places for lighting requirements seems counter to the stated goal of streamlining and making the IMC more user-friendly. The memo says they are included on a temporary basis but there is no evidence of that temporary nature in the draft code itself?</p> <p>Have you considered how the limitations on lighting imposed by this proposed code will impact safety?</p> <p>Where are the provisions that allow for exceptions and flexibility?</p>	<p>Regarding costs, the goal of the consolidation will be greater consistency and clear design standards and expectations for projects, ensuring greater ability of the city and projects to anticipate the requirements of code. And since these are existing codes being made consistent across the City, staff expect no new, unanticipated impacts are likely.</p> <p>Flexibility is provided in more concrete situations through deviation sections in code chapters. If an applicant wishes to pursue greater flexibility, a variance would be needed, outlined in the forthcoming Procedures chapter.</p> <p>Research was conducted on peer cities on drafting the code. Such cities included Redmond, Kirkland, Bellevue, and others based on the content of the code. The content of such research was integrated into update Memos for PPC. And where relevant, added into code with explainers on the code standard inspiration.</p>