



TO: Longview Planning Commission

FROM: Steve Langdon, Planning Manager

HEARING

DATE: July 6, 2016

SUBJECT: CASE NUMBER PC 2015-8: Zoning code amendments regarding the siting of new emergency shelters.

TYPE OF

DECISION: Legislative

BACKGROUND

The City Council has concerns regarding the siting of new emergency shelters and the impacts they could have on neighborhoods. On October 22, 2015 the City Council adopted Ordinance No. 3302 that implemented a six-month moratorium on the siting of emergency shelters within the City. The Council appointed a four member committee consisting of council and planning commission members to develop recommendations on the siting of emergency shelters. The committee has met five times. The meetings included discussions with service providers and video-conferencing with State agency representatives. At their fifth meeting, the committee produced a draft recommendation. On May 5, the Planning Commission held a workshop on the recommendation and then decided to set a public hearing for their July 6 regular meeting. The committee's recommendation is attached as Exhibit A.

PROPOSAL

Under the proposal, emergency shelters could be located in the City's General Commercial and Office/Commercial (zoning) Districts upon receiving a special property use permit. The proposal also requires emergency shelters to locate a certain distance from single-family residential districts, parks, schools and from other emergency shelters. A public hearing will be required and a management plan must be submitted.

S.E.P.A. Determination

An Environmental Checklist for the proposed zoning code revisions was reviewed pursuant to the State Environmental Policy Act and a determination of non-significance was issued on June 20, 2016. [E 2016-7 SEPA checklist] The comment period for the SEPA checklist ended on July 4, 2016. SEPA documents are attached as Exhibit B.

Additional Information

Pursuant to Chapter 19.81 of the Longview Municipal Code, a legal notice was published in the Longview Daily News on June 22, 2016 and July 3, 2016.

Citizen Correspondence

As of this writing, the City has received no written comments.

Comprehensive Plan Goal and Policies

Goals, Objectives and Policies

The Comprehensive Plan does not contain any specific goals, objectives and/or policies that address specifically emergency shelters. However the comprehensive plan contains a multiple goals, objectives and policies relating to land use compatibility including the following:

Goal LU-A - To encourage orderly, efficient, and beneficial development within Longview while maintaining a balance of business and residential uses within the City.

Goal LU-B - To ensure that the location and design of new development is appropriate in type, density, and location considering existing land use patterns, capacity of public facilities, natural characteristics of the land, and the vision of the community.

The following policies are more directly related to the issue:

Policy LU-B.2.4 Consider the impacts of a proposed development on other more citywide public facilities and services, such as existing park and recreation facilities, schools and transit operations, and the need for future capital improvements.

Policy HO-C.4.4 Recognize the need for supportive housing environments and support appropriate siting of facilities.

Comprehensive Plan Intent Statements

Under the proposal, emergency shelters would be allowed in the General Commercial and Mixed Use-Office/Commercial districts. The comprehensive plan classifications for these two zoning districts are Community Commercial and Mixed Use – Office/Commercial. The intent statements for the two comprehensive plan designations are given below.

Community Commercial

The Community Commercial classification recognizes activity centers that serve the day to day needs of the community as well as the surrounding neighborhoods and residential areas but that are less intense than regional commercial areas. When near or adjacent to residential areas, development in the Community Commercial areas are typically anchored by a grocery store, with supporting establishments including, but not limited to variety, drug, and apparel stores; and

personal service establishments such as beauty shops and restaurants. In nonresidential areas, Community Commercial tends to be small businesses that serve the surrounding businesses, their employees, and visitors. Community Commercial development should be at scales and intensities that make them generally compatible with surrounding neighborhoods. Facilities should be designed to permit pedestrian, bicycle, and transit access, as well as automobile traffic.

Mixed Use

This classification is intended for areas that will promote an urban-style development with a mix of uses that commonly include commercial, office, and residential, with a strong emphasis on pedestrian connections. Strip commercial and residential development should not be allowed; instead, development should be focused into nodes or clusters. Mixed Use development may include permitted activities mixed within the same building or within separate buildings on the same site or on nearby sites. This classification should provide flexible development standards, which will ensure design compatibility between the site and the development, as well as between the development and the surrounding area. Three Mixed Use Designations (Residential/Commercial, Commercial/Industrial, and Office/Commercial) are described below.

Office/Commercial

This designation accommodates commercial and personal service establishments of a Citywide or regional nature. In the area designated Office/Commercial immediately south of the Central Business District, public and private health care facilities, including continuation of care residential uses, offices, and similar professional services are appropriate types of uses. At the confluence of the Cowlitz and Columbia rivers, development along portions of the City's shoreline areas should focus on commercial and office uses compatible with the shoreline, such as water-oriented uses.

STAFF DISCUSSION

None

STAFF FINDINGS

Staff has examined the merits of the proposal to amend the Longview Zoning Code and makes the following findings:

1. Emergency shelters have the potential to negatively affect neighborhoods.
2. The proposal limits the location of new emergency shelters to two commercial zoning districts. These districts contain services or are near services typically used by the homeless.

3. The proposal requires emergency shelters to locate a certain distance from single-family residential districts, parks, schools and from other emergency shelters. This will help avoid inordinate impacts on these land uses.
4. To site a new emergency shelter, a public hearing will be required and a management plan must be submitted. This will help ensure that any concerns relating to the specific site are addressed.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission recommend to the City Council to adopt the subject zoning code amendments.

EXHIBITS

- A. Emergency Shelter Committee Recommendation
- B. SEPA Documents

Report Date: June 28, 2016