



Memorandum

TO: Longview Planning Commission

FROM: Adam Trimble, Planner

HEARING

DATE: August 2, 2017

TYPE OF

DECISION: Legislative

SUBJECT: Case Number PC 2017-2 Petition from Village Pointe LLC, represented by Baysinger Partners Architecture, to amend the City of Longview Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map and Zoning Map for three properties in West Longview totaling 26.55 acres. The proposal is for Assessor's Parcel Numbers 107340103, 108550100 and 108560100. The site is located in the NE ¼ of Section 23, T8N, R3 and SE ¼ of Section 14, T8N, R3W, Willamette Meridian, in Cowlitz County.

BACKGROUND AND PROPOSAL

Village Pointe LLC proposes to convert approximately 15.72 acres of existing R-2 Residential District land to R-3 zone and reconfigure and reduce existing General Commercial zoned land along Ocean Beach Highway to 5.27 acres. The proposed modification from R-2 to R-3 (High Density Residential) will allow for construction of multi-family housing in groups greater than four (4) units. It will also allow higher density to compensate for approximately 16% of the site building unbuildable for ground floor residential due to Floodplain and Slough easement requirements. Reconfiguration of the existing commercial land will allow for construction of mini-storage units, a low traffic and noise generating use, as a buffer between the proposed multi-family units and the existing single-family residences to the east.

The comprehensive plan amendment application is attached Exhibit A

The zone change application is attached as Exhibit B.

An aerial photograph and other images are attached as Exhibit C

Ownership

Parcel 108560100: Wood & Wood Properties LLC

Parcel 108550100: Village Pointe LLC
Parcel 107340103: Wood & Wood Properties LLC

Existing Land Use

Vacant

Adjacent Land Uses

East: Single-family homes

South: Ocean Beach Highway (SR 4), Roy Morse Park, homes on large lots, vacant land.

West: South Cutoff Slough, Commercial shopping development, undeveloped commercial lots.

North: Mark Hoehne Park, Single-family homes

Comprehensive Plan

The 2006 Longview Comprehensive Plan currently classifies the lots as Medium Density Residential and Community Commercial. The Comprehensive Plan classifications for the adjoining properties are Public/Quasi-Public/Institutional to the north and west, Low Density Residential to the east, and Community Commercial to the west. Across Ocean Beach Highway to the South, land is designated High Density Residential.

Zoning

The subject properties are currently zoned R-2 Residential District and General Commercial, (GC). The zoning designations for the adjoining properties are: R-1 Residential District to the east, R-2 PUD to the north, General Commercial to the east R-3 Residential District across Ocean Beach Highway.

Availability of Utilities

Sanitary sewer, water, fire protection and storm sewer are available to the subject properties. Any future development will require compliance with the City of Longview Storm Water regulations for retention/detention and water quality.

S.E.P.A Determination

An Environmental Checklist for the proposed Zoning Map revision was reviewed pursuant to the State Environmental Policy Act and a determination of non-significance was issued on July 11, 2017. [E 2017-7 SEPA checklist]

The comment period for the SEPA checklist ended on July 25, 2017. SEPA documents are attached as Exhibit D.

Traffic

The city traffic engineer has reviewed the application and has determined that the proposal will not result in any critical impacts to the adjacent roadway system. The applicant has submitted a traffic analysis based upon specific land uses and used corresponding trip generation calculations to determine that the proposal would potentially generate less trips than build out of the existing zoning could potentially generate due to the commitment to develop the majority of the commercial land with

mini-storage. This determination was based upon the specific land uses the applicant chose to propose

Critical Areas

Geologic Hazards:	No mapping indicators
Shoreline Designation:	NA
Floodplains:	Zone X – areas protected by levees from 100-year flood and approximately 16% of the site is Zone A, areas of special flood hazard (located at edges of South Cutoff Slough).
Wetlands:	None mapped. Delineation may be required for a specific project.
Steep Slopes:	None.
Unstable Soils:	None.
Soils Description:	Caples silty clay loam
Gradient of Soils on-site:	0-1%

Additional Information

Pursuant to Chapter 19.81 of the Longview Municipal Code, legal notice was published in the Longview Daily News on July 13, 2017 and July 30, 2017. Property owners approximate to the site received mailed notice of the project, environmental review and public hearing on or after July 11, 2017. Notice of the land-use application and public hearing was posted on the property on July 18, 2017.

Citizen Correspondence

As of this writing, the City has received 4 comment letters. The letters are attached as Exhibit E

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN POLICIES AND INTENT STATEMENTS

The relevant Comprehensive Plan goal and policy and map intent statements are given below.

Goal LU-A

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

Policy LU-A.1.6

Process requests for rezones together with requests to amend the Future Land Use Map, as required.

Policy LU-A.1.5

Facilitate redevelopment of existing developed land when appropriate. Encourage infill development on vacant or underdeveloped land within the City.

Policy LU-A.1.2

Provide a variety of residential zoning districts at different densities to meet the needs of different households in the community.

Policy LU-D.3.5

Encourage affordable ownership and rental housing through the allowance of apartments, townhouses, senior housing, assisted living facilities, manufactured/mobile home parks and other similar housing types.

Policy LU-D.3.8

New multi-family land use classifications should be applied as follows:

- a. located in or abutting areas already containing multi-family uses; or
Staff comment: The land currently allows multi-family, but none is existing or abutting.
- b. in or next to Central Business, Regional or Community Commercial Districts or more intensive institutions; or
The site meets this policy and is next to Community Commercial.
- c. located in areas offering unique amenities such as in Downtown or along the Cowlitz and Columbia River waterfronts; or
The site does not meet this policy.
- d. along arterials where access consolidation and transit are available.
The site meets this policy.
- e. In all cases, existing or planned transportation capacity should be adequate to accommodate projected travel demand according to City standards.
The site meets this policy.

Policy LU-E.1.3

Ensure zoning regulations accommodate a range of allowable business and commercial uses in appropriate locations at the neighborhood, community and regional levels.

Staff comment: The applicant has proposed mini-storage, a low intensity use, as the commercial use for much of the site adjacent to a residential neighborhood.

Goal HO-A

Promote balanced city growth that will accommodate projected population and provide alternative approaches to meeting changing demographics and emerging needs.

Staff comment: Current trends in housing supply and rental vacancy rates suggest a shortage of housing and housing options in the local market.

Policy HO-A.6.1

Increase the supply of quality housing stock and encourage a range of housing options that meet the need for low, medium, and high density housing types.

Staff comment: The proposal includes townhouse and multifamily housing types at various densities.

Intent Statements

The Comprehensive Plan Map Intent Statements for the Community Commercial and the High Density Residential classifications 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.

Medium Density Residential

This classification provides for a mixture of housing unit types, including single-, two-, three-, and four-family dwellings; townhouses; or clusters thereof. The classification is also intended to apply to planned unit developments having a mixture of housing unit types and limited commercial land uses. Development should incorporate safe, attractive, and continuous connections and walkways for travel and access by foot at a human scale as an integral part of its overall layout and design. Development adjacent to lower density uses should incorporate elements in the site design and building design to soften its impact and to result in a compatible transition. Multi-family development should incorporate provisions for transit service and pedestrian and bicycle access. Manufactured housing parks designed according to firm standards for screening, buffering, parking, recreational areas, distance between units, and other matters may be appropriate when deemed compatible with adjacent property by the City or County planning commissions and local legislative bodies. Home occupations may be acceptable. The recommended density is up to 18 dwelling units per gross acre.

High Density Residential

This classification provides primarily for multi-family dwellings of more than four units. Multi-family development adjacent to lower density residential uses should incorporate elements in the site design and building design to soften its impact and to result in a compatible transition. Multifamily development should incorporate provisions for transit service and pedestrian and bicycle access. Manufactured housing parks designed according to firm standards for screening, buffering, parking, recreational areas, distance between units, and other matters may be appropriate when deemed compatible with adjacent property by the City or County planning commissions and local legislative bodies. Some home

occupations may be acceptable including some professional offices. The recommended density is up to 25 dwelling units per gross acre.

STAFF DISCUSSION

The applicant's property is currently classified as Community Commercial and Medium Density Residential by the Longview Comprehensive Plan. The commercial land runs along the Ocean Beach Highway frontage and the residential land lies behind to the north. Village Pointe LLC provides the following about the need for this requested amendment and rezone to accommodate their development:

“The proposed modification from R-2 to R-3 (High Density Residential) will allow for construction of multi-family housing in groups greater than four (4) units. It will also allow higher density to compensate for approximately 16% of the site building unbuildable for ground floor residential due to Floodplain and Slough easement requirements. Reconfiguration of the existing commercial land will allow for construction of mini-storage units, a low traffic and noise generating use, as a buffer between the proposed multi-family units and the existing single-family residences to the east.”

Residential Request

The applicant requests to amend and modify the future land use map and zoning code to increase the allowable density on a 15.72 acre portion of the property, from R-2 to R-3 (Medium Density to High Density Residential), leaving 5.56 acres in the existing R-2 designation. If the amendments are approved, the location of the R-2 zoning, which allows single family homes and townhouses as well as duplexes, triplexes and fourplexes will be adjacent to the existing single family neighborhood of 52nd Avenue. At this time the applicant has indicated in a submitted traffic analysis townhouses on individual saleable lots are proposed. The R-3 zoning which allows higher densities and multifamily dwelling construction will be roughly 450 feet away from the center of 52nd Avenue, resulting in a buffering and gradual stepping up of the density from single family, low density, to medium density (townhomes) to multifamily, high-density.

The applicant has identified how a 16% reduction in buildable area due to floodplain and diking ditches poses a significant barrier to development of the site under the current R-2 zoning because the R-2 zone requires each home, duplex, triplex or fourplex to be on its own lot and therefore fronting on a public street; and does not allow for multifamily housing except under a Planned Unit Development scenario which would require setting aside 20% of the site for open space and amenities. If approved, the increase in density will allow the applicant to cluster housing units in apartments and configure more than one building on a lot, avoiding significant dedication of land for public streets and right-of-way and ultimately compensating for the reduction in buildable area of the site. Due to the number of units being proposed and the City of Longview requirement for recreation amenities when more than 20 units are proposed, the applicant will likely be required to provide a third route into the development. In talks with the applicant one

possible new access would cross South Cutoff Slough with a bridge or culvert and provide vehicle access to Robbins Street as well as pedestrian access to Mark Hoehne Park. For residents of 52nd Ave this has the potential to provide walking access to the park within roughly 1,300 feet where currently it is roughly 3,600 feet away.

Regarding the need for this request to increase the density for a portion of the site and allow multifamily housing, the Longview City Council has recently held a workshop to explore ways of encouraging more housing construction and in particular, ways to spur multifamily housing construction to alleviate a shortage of affordable housing many residents are experiencing. For spring of 2017 the Washington Center for Real Estate Research found the apartment vacancy rate in Cowlitz County was 1.2 percent, (9) units out of 752 units surveyed. In 2005 when the current Longview Comprehensive Plan was being drafted it was reported that “The Washington Center for Real Estate Research found that 6.0% of the rental units (68 units) in Cowlitz County were vacant in September of 2005. This survey is conducted from a sample of rental properties with four or more units...” (p.3-6). Only three other counties in 2017, all on the East side of the State had a similar or lower apartment vacancy rate [WCRER Spring 2017 Apartment Market Survey p.1].

Commercial Request

Village Pointe LLC also proposes to reconfigure and reduce existing commercial zoned land on the site from 5.28 acres to 5.27 acres. The reconfiguration of the commercial land moves the commercial designation from the entire Ocean Beach Highway frontage to roughly two thirds of the frontage and extends it north adjacent to 14 residential properties on 52nd Avenue. The request raises concerns about suitability and compatibility of the intense uses allowed in the General Commercial zone being located immediately adjacent a low density residential neighborhood. To allay these concerns the applicant has committed to construct mini-storage on the land adjacent to the residential properties. Mini-storage, in comparison to the full list of commercial uses allowed in the General Commercial zone is a low intensity use, generating little noise, odor, vehicle trips or light and glare. City staff is recommending a condition to the application, if approved, to require the applicant to sign a concomitant agreement with the City to contractually limit the allowed uses in the commercial land adjacent to the 52nd Avenue residences to mini-storage. The applicant’s submitted traffic analysis additionally specifies up to 6,000 square feet of commercial uses including a coffee shop and commercial/retail, to be located along the Ocean Beach Highway frontage, west of 52nd Avenue.

STAFF FINDINGS

Staff has examined the merits of the petition to amend the City of Longview Future Land Use Map and Zoning Map for the subject properties, and has made the following findings:

1. The proposal is consistent with City’s Comprehensive Plan goals for land use and housing, specifically Policy LU-A.1.6, Policy LU-A.1.5, Policy LU-A.1.2, Policy LU-D.3.5, and Policy HO-A.6.1.

2. With conditions of approval, the proposal is consistent with Policy LU-E.1.3 (Ensure zoning regulations accommodate a range of allowable business and commercial uses in appropriate locations at the neighborhood, community and regional levels).
3. The proposal is consistent with the intent statement for Community Commercial designated land and “will provide commercial 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.”
4. By retaining R-2, medium density residential designated land adjacent to existing single-family homes the proposal is consistent with the intent statement for High Density Residential designated land that; “Multi-family development adjacent to lower density residential uses should incorporate elements in the site design and building design to soften its impact and to result in a compatible transition.”

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the planning Commission forward a recommendation of approval to the City Council for the proposed Comprehensive Plan Amendments and Zoning Map changes subject to a condition that the applicant agree to and signs a concomitant agreement (contract re-zone) with the City, limiting development of the commercially zoned land adjacent to existing residences along 52nd Avenue to mini-storage.

EXHIBITS

- A. Application to Amend the Comprehensive Plan
- B. Rezone Request Application and Zone Change Petition
- C. SEPA documents
- D. Maps of subject properties.
- E. Public Comment Letters 1-4

Staff Report Date: July 25, 2017