

FAIRFAX PLANNING COMMISSION SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES
PRESENTATION ON OBJECTIVE DESIGN
AND DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS
VIA TELECONFERENCE ONLY
WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 31, 2022

Call to Order/Roll Call:

Acting Chair Swift called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Commissioners Present: Robert Jansen
Brett Kelly
Mimi Newton
Cindy Swift (Acting Chair)

Commissioners Absent: Norma Fragoso (Chair)
Philip Green

Staff Present: David Woltering, Interim Planning Director

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Acting Chair Swift stated she wanted the Commission to have the ability to ask questions after the presentation and before public comments and would like this added to the agenda.

M/s, Newton/Kelly, motion to approve the agenda with the addition suggested by Acting Chair Swift.

AYES: Jansen, Kelly, Newton, Acting Chair Swift

ABSENT: Green, Chair Fragoso

The Planning Commission is holding this workshop to discuss Objective Design and Development Standards and solicit public comment.

- 1. Introductory remarks by Planning Director**
- 2. Presentation on Objective Design and Development Standards (ODDS) by ELS Architecture & Urban Design, and Schemata Workshop, with zoning and schedule for Housing Element update by EMC Planning Group**
- 3. Public comments and questions**
- 4. Planning Commission discussion and feedback**

Interim Director Woltering presented a staff report.

Mr. Andi Flower, Principal Planner at EMC Planning Group, introduced the team: Mr. David Massenton, representing ELS Architecture and Urban Design, Mr. Ryan Call, representing Urban Field Studio, and Ms. Grace Kim, representing Schemata Workshop. The team gave a PowerPoint presentation and answered question from the Commission regarding whether the team has reviewed the ODDS subcommittee information; if the UR-10 Zone is identified in the ODDS as a T3 Suburban Neighborhood; how Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU) and duplexes are handled; parking standards with respect to guest parking; if Section 8 of the document will define the quality of what will be built; if the T3 typology (depicted on a hillside) will be updated; when the draft document will be distributed for review and comment; definition and selection of the zones; comments on the zone criteria; adjustments to the criteria; consideration of comments from the focus group or Town

Council; if three-story buildings would be allowed; how to mandate quality; definition of a durable material; how to mandate alternative housing typologies in the document; scale and clustered nature of buildings on a site; scale of development on large sites; if bonuses are tied to affordability; if affordability is deed restricted; homeowner options in terms of deviating from the standards; how current objective standards in the code would apply; would existing language in the General Plan with respect to views be superseded; what happens if there is a property where the standards cannot be met due to physical situations; would the standards allow for a round building; the slide about the zoning of the Town and Country Club; timeframes and why they are tying the ODDS development to the Housing Element; the concept of ministerial approval based on the ODDS; options for the large sites; if a site that is allocated towards the RHNA numbers have to be zoned for housing.

Acting Chair Swift opened the meeting to public comments.

Frank Egger, representing Save Fairfax, stated the proposal, if approved, will eliminate Public Hearings on many large and significant projects. Fairfax should not have to give up its Zoning Ordinance to comply with the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) numbers. He opposed the concept of consultants and staff determining future development.

Mallory Geithheim stated she does not want Fairfax to turn into Corte Madera or Mill Valley. She does not want to see tall buildings. Fairfax is a little Town.

Brenna asked how the public could find and comment on the document.

Michael Macintosh stated quality never goes out of style and style never goes out of fashion. He invited the consultants to the Marin Town and Country Club- a special property.

Acting Chair Swift closed the meeting to public comments.

Commissioner Jansen provided the following comments:

- He is glad to see that the styles are less complicated.
- He wants to limit defining exactly what needs to be to make it possible to develop.
- The biggest hurdle is the discretionary review.
- He suggested taking the current zoning code, stripping it of ambiguous language, and adding Section 8 of the ODDS (quality of the building)- this could be the tool.
- The zoning designations make sense.
- Hillside development has a lot to do with view corridors and an intentional separation of properties, which is important and should be a continuous volume as suggested in the slides.
- The T3 SN should have a T3 edge to make sure the side setbacks are accommodated.
- An occasional three-story building might not be a problem- if they were uniform it would be a problem.
- There is no such thing as 2 ½ story- stories have occupants.
- Styles should not be in the ODDS- they should qualify what is good and not good.
- The signage should be simple.
- There has to be incentives for developers.
- He did not support a typology/style for the larger sites- it should be left open

Commissioner Kelly provided the following comments:

- Tonight's presentation was very informative.
- He would like to see a draft of the document as soon as possible.
- The images of three-story buildings are alarming- they would be a huge impact to Fairfax.
- There was a shift in the tenor in tonight's presentation.

- Fairfax is an unusual Town with respect to parking- there is not enough. He supports increasing the numbers. They should not be near pedestrian zones.
- He does not support bundling the parking.

Commissioner Newton provided the following comments:

- She was excited about allowances for more creativity.
- Three story buildings have the potential to block views.
- Some of the design designations make sense and others do not.
- She has misgivings about three stories in the downtown.
- The General Plan talks about clustering to maximize open space with an emphasis on preserving the natural environment.
- She supported incentives to preserve wildlife corridors and open space.
- She supports putting specific architectural styles and typologies in the ODDS.
- She is in favor of considering the idea of replacing the existing signage with some version of the ODDS signage.
- She is not sure what she would want to do in terms of options that would make development attractive to developers.
- The more affordable the more attractive it should be.

Acting Chair Swift provided the following comments:

- The PowerPoint presentation does not reflect Fairfax's topography.
- More is better with respect to parking.
- Cars need to be parked off the road as much as possible.
- She did not want to unbundle the parking.
- She would like to leave signage out of this.
- She is not sure the ODDS and Housing Element development necessarily go together.
- They should look at the objective standards in the code and see how they fit into the ODDS.
- She was in favor of creating a density bonus schedule/chart.

Interim Director Woltering stated the next step would be for staff and the team to get together to debrief, go through all the comments, and put together a work list of things that need to be addressed. Staff will bring back a revised draft to the Commission on September 28th.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made, seconded and unanimously approved to adjourn the meeting at 9:46 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Toni DeFrancis,
Recording Secretary