

**Open House #2 Summary Notes
AmberGlen Community Plan
June 25, 2009**

An open house for the AmberGlen Community Plan (Community Plan) was sponsored by the City of Hillsboro Planning Department on June 25, 2009 from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. The open house was held at the AmberGlen Conference Center located within the Plan area and was attended by approximately 25 people including local residents, employees, and other interested parties. The purpose of the Open House was to provide information on the market feasibility analysis, plan refinements, transportation planning, and draft land use policies. The June 25, 2009 open house was the second of three public events scheduled to occur during the Community Plan process.

INFORMATION PROVIDED

Michael Cerbone of CardnoWRG (project consultants) summarized analysis by project economists at Johnson Reid LLC on retail capacity within the Community Plan area, and on the market viability of proposed residential development. He noted that economic findings and comments by Community Plan area stakeholders provided the basis for reducing and reconfiguring retail space and for replacing retail designations with increases in employment and residential uses. Michael also noted that mid-rise residential development was found to be economically more viable in the short-term compared to high-rise forms, and that the central park and specialty commercial amenities provide proximate residential price premiums of 15% and 17.5% respectively. He identified plan refinements to relocate mid-rise residential development adjacent to the central park on undeveloped parcels with buildings stepping back to high-rise redevelopment to occur at a future time when existing improvements depreciate in value relative to land prices. Michael closed by reviewing draft policies for land uses identified in the refined AmberGlen Community Plan.

Don Odermott, Transportation Planning Engineer for the City of Hillsboro gave an update on Metro's High Capacity Transit Plan and the study corridors that affect the AmberGlen Community Plan area. He explained how transportation impacts were related to the skewed balance between jobs and housing in Hillsboro. He discussed how the City's jobs-rich housing ratio was a primary reason for planning for significant housing in the AmberGlen area because it was close to major employers, linked by existing and planned transit, and located within the urbanized area. Don explained that the transportation system in the area is over capacity under the current zoning and emphasized the necessity of identifying transportation system improvements for current conditions and for added demand created by the Community Plan. Funding sources include development exactions, traffic impact fees, and the Major Street Transportation Improvement Program (MSTIP). He noted that the MSTIP is the most robust funding source for needed improvements. Don reported that modeling of transportation investment scenarios is underway to test the effects of area build-out, increased density due to proposed zoning amendments, and a range of transit and roadway improvements with associated costs. He explained that the work will inform Community Plan stakeholders and policy-makers by establishing a financial target for transportation investments, and identifying system costs under current zoning compared to costs specifically associated with Community Plan impacts.

QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

Questions and comments received by participants and project team members' responses are provided below. (Q. = Question; C. = Comment; R. = Response)

Q. *What is the maximum height limit?*

R. Current zoning standards establish a maximum height limit. Height limits will be established by zone amendments following adoption of the land use policies identified in the Community Plan. Higher density development heights are expected to be largely determined by the market.

(Note: Current SCBP and SCRZ zoning standards allow development up to a maximum of 75' based on 5 stories at 15' per story. Draft land use policies do not establish maximum heights for 'High Density Urban' and 'Urban Activity Center' designations. Draft land use policies propose minimum height thresholds of three stories with development targeted for around 6 to 8 stories

based on the target floor area ratio of 3. Several point towers are envisioned for the 'High Density Urban' designation. The majority of development within the Community Plan area is envisioned to be 3 to 6 stories for Medium Density Urban designations.)

Q. *Is the idea of the plan to go in the direction of Vancouver B.C.?*

R. Vancouver is a great example. The idea is to recognize some of the trends that people are looking at and provide them with different options and alternatives for living (i.e. quality higher density living vs. single family home).

Q. *Do you have any schools planned? The development target for 6,686 households equals six elementary schools, one to two junior high schools and one high school.*

R. There are no specific school sites identified but schools may be developed under draft land use policies as conditional uses. Property in the plan area is currently owned by the Beaverton School District and is being master planned for their future needs. A representative from the Beaverton School District sits on our Technical Advisory Committee. The majority of the district is within the Beaverton School District boundary. City policy makers have expressed that they would like to explore options for adjusting the boundary line.

Q. *Doesn't the master plan have 185th as the eventual dividing line between Hillsboro & Beaverton School Districts? It is bad planning, especially if you're in the early stages, to mix the city with other school district boundaries.*

R. The school district boundary has been there for many years. District boundaries bear no real correlation to city limit boundaries (i.e. Tualatin Valley Water District). As noted, this idea has been brought up by our policy makers and will be explored further.

Q. *Existing citizens will be saddled with costs and impacts. Who supports this and what is the driving force for adding an additional 2,000 dwelling units to the revised plan?*

R. Envisioned urban quality development is supported by our City Council and Plan area property owners and stakeholders. A key public goal is to provide an urban housing option with high densities close to employers, and to achieve densities that will support high capacity transit and urban amenity retail businesses. Property owners have expressed a desire to maximize development opportunities.

Q. *Is this just a business decision made without considering quality of life?*

R. It is about the quality of life and choices. The intent is to create an environment that supports a high quality of life and provides choices for people who want to live in an urban environment on the west side.

Q. *Won't the taxpayers carry the financial burden of widening roads like Walker, Baseline & 206th to accommodate the density?*

R. There is a cost share of the burden with any development. The plan with this district is to have the district itself pay for the infrastructure improvements with possibly urban renewal or other financing mechanisms that the City Council has suggested we explore further.

Q. *Are there 1 or 2 property owners or a whole group?*

R. There are approximately eight primary owners with Oregon Health Sciences University (OHSU) and Principal Financial Group controlling a significant amount of land within the plan area.

Q. *What about the residents who live on the edge, outside of the district – do they get sucked into paying for the improvements?*

R. The City of Hillsboro does not have a history of extending a burden to those that aren't reaping the benefit. Oregon statutes set limits on how urban renewal district boundaries can be drawn, who benefits from funded projects, etc. Tax increment financing (urban renewal) could be used to fund the majority of the improvement costs. The funding has not been decided yet. That will be one of the next steps and it will be an open, public process.

Q. Please include in the transportation modeling at least 10-15% more housing for redevelopment in the residential areas south of the district.

R. The City now has the capability in-house to include redevelopment scenarios like this and will be running these kinds of scenarios in the transportation model.

Q. If we already have difficulties with mobility under current conditions, why are we adding over 6,000 more units? People in this district are not going to stay within the boundaries of the plan area – they are going to burden the areas the district as well. (Additional comment that the reason is that Principal Financial, being an out-of-state owner, doesn't care about local impacts.)

R. The City is required to consider where to locate projected additional growth driven by job supply. Transportation system requirements are addressed as part of the planning process.

(Comment from public to open growth boundary and let growth occur north of US-26)

R. We are short in housing close to employment. We need to create choices for denser, urban residential living and carefully consider the impacts of future expansion.

Q. It is a sustainable solution to put the people next to the jobs so you can decrease their commute given lower fuel costs? It is currently difficult to get down to the Quatama station as a pedestrian, are you going to improve the pedestrian connections: bikes lanes on 206th and other types of pedestrian lanes?

R. Yes. A component of the plan's transportation framework is the alternative modes system. Protected bicycle tracks, completing the Rock Creek Trail system, etc are addressed by the Community Plan.

Q. Is the 17B High Capacity Transit (HCT) corridor (identified on Metro's Regional High Capacity Transit System Plan) intended to be a connector route to get to Evergreen and employers to the west such as Intel and Solar World?

R. Yes.

Q. Is anybody still talking about the Westside Loop that was looked at a few years ago? This legislative session David Edwards was supporting Highway 47 as a possible Westside corridor – has that faded away?

R. There are still supporters for the Westside Loop. The problem is that the corridor was not protected, and at the regional level, many think the issue was resolved back in the 1990's. We are currently facing the same challenges that were being debated in the mid '90s. Metro is ready to adopt their Regional Transportation Plan update with a set of road improvements which were based on a 2020 forecast. The City is trying to submit our projects, but we are working within a constrained budget and unfortunately the politics tend to be "Portland-centric" – we are facing an uphill battle. The City now has the in-house ability to look closer at different scenarios and introduce the information into the transportation conversation at the regional level.

Q. Where does the growth come from?

R. Metro projects the addition of one-million people to the region in the next 20 to 25 years. How much each county receives depends on where the housing will grow – it is projected that around 400,000 will come to Washington County. (The average multiplier is 2.5 persons per dwelling unit.) This brings up the debate of where to put them: the open farmland or stack them vertically? Hillsboro's approach is to find a balance between the two by pursuing a comprehensive planning approach: Develop and adopt plans for higher densities in AmberGlen, Downtown Hillsboro and South Hillsboro, support appropriate infill throughout the city, strategic expansion of the UGB, and designation of Urban Reserves.

Q. In terms of the residential buildings, what percent are rentals and what percent are owned? Does the City currently allow buildings as tall as envisioned in the AmberGlen Community Plan? Will development feature green building practices or LEED construction?

R. We don't envision any policy that will determine how much of a building will need to be rented vs. owned – it will be up the individual property owner.

The zoning code currently does not allow anything as high as envisioned in the High Density Urban designations within the district (seven stories and taller with no height limit and the

opportunity for point towers). Draft land use policies presented earlier could be revised by the City Council to include a maximum height based on feedback received by the public.

One of the primary principles of this plan is to make this District a “Sustainable Showcase”. Staff intends to take advantage of technology available in Washington County (i.e. Solar World) and promote as many best development practices as possible.

Q. *Is Kaiser planning on building another hospital in this area?*

R. Yes. Kaiser Permanente broke ground on a \$360 million Westside Medical Center last week on 14 acres just north of the plan area.

Q. *Have you done studies to find out if there are people in Washington County who would want to live in a high-rise building? You can't compete with the urban environment of Downtown Portland (example of failure of the Round in Beaverton).*

R. People are willing to pay and live in a mid-rise building today. A lot of people are commuting from Portland to their jobs in Washington County and some of those people will chose to pay a higher premium to live in this type of urban environment closer to their employer. Fifteen years ago, the Pearl district was far more comparable to densities in parts of Hillsboro today. Nike, Intel and other high-tech employees buy in downtown Portland because there is nothing comparable in Washington County. These employees and older people interested in downsizing provide a ready market for an urban option.

Q. *What are the times for the City Council and Planning Commission work sessions? Are they televised?*

R. The joint City Council and Planning Commission work sessions identified for August 4 and September 15 (tentative) generally begin immediately after the regular City Council meeting, around 8 to 8:30pm. They are a great opportunity to learn more about the Plan and to hear their questions – they ask the same questions that you are asking. The work sessions are held in a room that is not televised.

Q. *The Pearl District was created because someone had a vision. This type of project requires a visionary thought process and you show a remarkable amount of patience as you are trying to describe this because people are resistant to change. People will come here because the population will grow by a great amount in Washington County. The Pearl District is heavily contaminated and people are still willing to pay a high price to live with the risk. This is a clean, pristine area. If you truly are going to be visionary and plan for the future, are you also going to take into account needs of the future like electric plug-ins for cars?*

R. We intend to promote the range of efficient innovations in the AmberGlen plan area to support the goal for creating a “sustainability showcase”. The City has already required the new Intermodal Transit Facility in Downtown Hillsboro to have electric vehicle plug in stations and Hillsboro Sustainability Coordinator Peter Brandom is currently looking at sustainable demonstration projects in Downtown Hillsboro.

Q. *Are these meetings designed to get public input on what you've already decided or is there opportunity to get public input so citizens can say “no we don't want this”?*

R. Nothing is a done deal. There are many people who have been involved in this vision for several years and think this is a good idea and important for effectively handling projected growth. This meeting is intended to inform you and to provide an opportunity to receive and document your questions and comments. These meeting notes will be forwarded for consideration by the Planning Commission and City Council. Adoption of the AmberGlen Community Plan targeted for this fall. The Community Plan process includes refining the original work and vision established by the 2007 Concept Plan by “ground-truthing” plan concepts to ensure economic viability and stakeholder support, and by developing data required to effectively address transportation requirements.

Q. *What is the approval process? Who makes the decision? What do you recommend for public testimony that would have the best impact?*

R. The process is outlined in the handout (Area Planning Timeline). We recommend you learn about the AmberGlen Community Plan, review plan documents, observe public work sessions (public testimony is typically not received at work sessions) and participate in the third and final open house scheduled for September 17, 2009 prior to the start of the public hearing before the Planning Commission. Contact Paige Goganian, Project Coordinator to obtain materials or to provide written comments as a follow-up to this open house. You can also refer to the project website <http://www.ci.hillsboro.or.us/Planning/OHSUAmberGlen.aspx>

All public meeting minutes and comments go to the City Council and Planning Commission for their review. Most importantly, provide written and/or oral testimony at the public hearings. The adoption of the Community Plan requires a Comprehensive Plan amendment and will be first be considered at a public hearing before the Planning Commission. The Planning Commission will consider testimony and make a recommendation to the City Council (it probably will take more than one meeting). The Planning Commission will listen to you and ask all the tough questions. City Council has the final say regarding adoption of the AmberGlen Community Plan.

Q. *Is there going to be a public vote on the funding issues or anything like that? It seems things are already set.*

R. It is not set at all. Important questions regarding transportation system requirements and funding for plan proposals still need to be addressed as the process moves forward. There are opportunities at the Planning Commission & City Council meetings (and at any City Council meeting, even if it's not on the agenda) to voice your opinion on the project.

Q. *As a long time neighbor, I really appreciate all the planning and work that is going into this. I was heavily involved in the 1982 efforts to move Cornell Road north. At the time, it was open fields and we couldn't have imagined the change that occurred in 20+ years. Because there were plans put in place, we have had really good development – the industrial buildings have been beautifully done. I am pleased there is a plan being developed to guide future decisions. I know it has taken a lot of time and I commend you all.*