



December 11, 2019

**WORK GROUP LEADERSHIP SUMMIT (MEETING #2)
City of Maple Valley Downtown Design Standards & Guidelines**

Attendees:

Syd Dawson – City Council	Tim Morgan – Economic Development Manager
Erin Weaver – City Council	Matt Torpey – Community Development Manager
Jonathan Miller – Planning Commission	Amy Taylor – Senior Planner
Dave Pilgrim – Planning Commission	Jeff Taraday – City Attorney
Jeff McCann – Property Representative	Daren Crabill – NBBJ
Laura Philpot – City Manager	Kim Selby – NBBJ
Tawni Dalziel – Public Works & Community Development Director	Gerrard Allam -NBBJ

Excused:

Candace Tucker – Planning Commission

Meeting Summary & Intent

Confirm Vision Statement & Guiding Principles
Build Common Understanding of Form-Based Code
Approve Proposed Downtown Standards & Guidelines Outline
Review and Provide Direction on Key Concepts
Introduction of a Walkable Downtown Structure* (postponed till next Workgroup Meeting)

Proposed Schedule

- City Staff mentioned the possibility of checking in with the Planning Commission(PC) and City Council(CC) sometime between January and early February.
- Information to be released before Open House.
- Joint meeting with PC and CC to create “the strongest document possible”. No exact date was established.
- Schedule to be revisited and tweaked a bit to address concerns.

Draft Vision Statement

- The vision statement must be finalized by January or early February at the latest.
- It was mentioned that the wording related to “walkable and bikeable” seemed limited.
 - This was discussed briefly and then moved on as a non-issue
- Concern was voiced that R.O.W would be expanded to include bike lanes. This was made clear that that will in fact not be the case and the proposals will always be working within the existing 60’ R.O.W
- Workgroup does not want to create complicated intersections with “too much circulation competing for space”



- The difference between Retail and Commercial uses was explained: Retail uses represent stores that sell goods and products, whereas a Commercial uses are service oriented such as office or walk in service centers.
- The word “existing” to be removed from the vision statement as it may be interpreted to only serve existing businesses and not future businesses
- NBBJ will post a Word version to Sharefile for the Workgroup to provide edits.

Guiding Principles

- Vision-Oriented Section
 - Wording to revisited as the business owners’ vision might not be “in-line” with the city’s vision.
- Be Inclusive and Affordable Section
 - Affordable business opportunity sounds limiting revisit wording
 - Multi-Family Housing, which already exists in Maple Valley, is an asset that needs integrated into the hybrid form based code and the city’s vision.
 - Question was asked: if there were any downtown’s that were studied that did not allow housing as a use? No, all downtowns that have been reviewed as a precedent allow housing by right. The trend over the last 20 years around the country is to reintroduce or encourage housing in downtown in order to provide a thriving place.
- NBBJ will post a Word version to Sharefile for the Workgroup to provide edits.

General Comment

- The diagram depicting the view direction of Mt. Rainer proved helpful.

Gap Analysis: Recommended Organization

- Question about how to incorporate residential into scope/code. NBBJ will continue to assume its inclusion as it is a use currently allowed by right.
- A question was asked whether the square footage difference between FBC examples effects how uses are allocated. It was reinforced that these examples are not 1-to-1 and that scale of a an area where an FBC is implemented is not a defining factor for uses or program allocation.
- MV code is organized into 2 chapters 18.40 and 18.70 related to design guidelines. This was used a reference of the “current state of affairs” in MV if you were to look at the code today.
- The design standards proposed would override some these codes as there are some issues.
- We recommend that your design guideline and standards are organize big scale to small scale:

- Administration of Design Standards > Connectivity and Circulation Standards > Site Design Standards > Building Design Standards.
- NBBJ's recommendation after dissecting chapter 18.40 and 18.70 there is a lot on Site Design Standards , a couple sub chapters of Administration of Design Standards, a minor amount referencing building design, nothing on connectivity. This gives an overview of what is missing today and what needs to be addressed in the proposed design guidelines.
- Form Based Code references (<https://courses.planetizen.com/track/form-basedcodes-101> and <https://formbasedcodes.org>)
- NBBJ's understanding is that the City and the workgroup want to move towards Form Based Codes for the downtown and NBBJ thinks it is a good recommendation.
- Form based code definitions were stated:
 - Traditional, Euclidian Zoning v FBC
 - FBC Definition
- Shared 4 FBC precedents that are relatable to MV (page 20 through 23 in Workgroup #2 Presentation)
 - Walla Walla, WA - Downtown Design Standards
 - Lacey, WA - Woodland District Form-Based Code
 - Mill Creek, WA - Design Guidelines
 - Mountlake Terrace, WA - Updated Town Center Design Standards

Proposed Design Standards & Guidelines Outline Discussion

- The code that will be presented to the City of Maple Valley will be a "Hybrid Code" where the Form Based Code will be inserted as an amendment, a sub-section, or a separate chapter adding to the existing code and be referred to when developing the Downtown area of MV.
- The hybrid FBC code aims to be straight forward enough yet specific to MV in order to be attractive to developers so they choose to develop in MV and not elsewhere.
- Add in "Site Landscaping," need to make it clearer where this will apply.
- Street Furniture to be included in a separate line.
- It was clarified to the Workgroup that material use is often exclusionary as way to have a minimum standard for quality materials.
- Invited Workgroup to contact NBBJ if they come across other FBC elements that they found interesting and NBBJ would try to incorporate it into the code. Also if there is something that the Workgroup does not like, in other FBCs, NBBJ will take into consideration omitting it.

Key Concepts-Building Design

- A minimum of 3 stories and/or 33' along primary streets was proposed by NBBJ. 13' first floor 10' and 10' floor to floor above that.
- Concern that 85' is too high for downtown MV
 - This maximum height was not changed by the design team it is what is already in the code.
- 45' - 55' seemed to be the general agreement of height limit.



- It was suggested to have a 2-story minimum on primary streets and a 3-story minimum on secondary streets
- The cost difference between a 2-story minimum and a 3-story minimum is very minimal.
- The feel of the massing between 2 stories and 3 stories is also minimal.
- Need to revisit the 45'- 55' height limit and the 2 story minimums.
- Stepbacks at certain heights were mentioned in order to preserve view corridors.
- Concern that angled view corridors complicates development.
- The view corridor may change the way we Form Base the standards and we will look at how to treat each side of the street in regards to heights. Is it uniform all through downtown? Are there certain stepbacks to maximize the view to Mt. Rainier? This needs to be explored more by the design team.
- The idea of a R.O.W land swap was mentioned. However, it was made clear that this was not part of NBBJ's scope and could be explored as a parallel track if The City chose to do so.
- All must be aware that there are currently only two (2) Rights of Way within the town center site.
 - One being North – South which connects to the other East – West extension of SE 260th St. ROW, adjacent to the Legacy site that.

Building Design – Building Height Adjacent to R-Zones

- It should be mentioned clearly which Prohibited Uses should not be allowed in the FBC.
- Downtown district property within 200' of an R-Zone and not separated by a ROW shall have a limit of 55'.
 - The height limit here of 55' can be revisited given the request to lower the height maximum throughout the downtown. So maybe that height may be lowered as well, perhaps to 35' to align with residential height limit in R-Zones.
 - A 45' would be invite a richer typology of massing.
 - The height needs to be respectful that residential uses exist nearby.

Building Design – Ground Floor

- Concern that the word “continuous” allowed for developers to develop a large frontage in a monotonous manner and the wordage should indicate the need for modulation along frontages, facades, and awnings.
- The Workgroup had an agreeable demeanor concerning the Ground Floor parameters
- It was asked if NBBJ could consider adding pedestrian connectivity (walkways, breezeways, etc) every X amount of feet to the code.
- The primary access needs to be clearly defined and must not be from the back of building or from the rear parking lot.

Parking – Minimums v Maximums

- The Workgroup were generally open to this idea.
- Wanted some potential examples where this has been done successfully

- The first floor of square footage to be free. You don't have to park the first floor of multi-story buildings because you are sharing parking. Supports small business owners.
- On street parking does not count into parking minimums or maximums
- Concern about West Seattle condition of a business district managing shared parking – was clarified that West Seattle is a different parking model than proposed.
- The idea of not requiring parking on active first floor uses potentially allows additional development to take place. A downtown is where you want active (shops full, people walking around, etc) and don't want to burden developer with excessive parking requirements and instead focus on the development and creating a great space.
- Want to avoid allocating most of the site for parking and this is what happens with Parking Minimums. By switching to Parking Maximums more of the site is allocated for development and be able to create a better place.
- Shared parking in the form of structured parking was mentioned but given the cost of structured parking it was advised to be careful when requiring a percentage of parking to be structured. It could be revisited in the future once development increases.
- Maximum parking encourages transit use, multi modal transportation, and reduces Vehicle Miles Traveled even in a bedroom community such as Maple Valley.
- It was mentioned that some areas to be set aside as temporary surface parking and be shared parking. Then as downtown activity and investment increases these parcels could be redeveloped. This idea needs to be revisited
- Need to talk about the restriction of use parking so it becomes a shared amenity no matter who builds it.
- Ann Arbor example where the downtown association owns a number of parking lots which are used to fund various downtown amenities and takes the burden off business owners to provide parking.
- To build a parking lot for the initial phase to help incentivize and spur downtown development is something that could be pursued by the City of Maple Valley but this is not in the scope of this project...is worth being explored.
- NBBJ cannot assume for the purposes of this project that the City will take on the role of "Parking Builder."

How do we manufacture a walkable downtown

- This section was postponed till the next Workgroup as the meeting had already went over time.
- Workgroup members can review the slides online and be ready for discussion in January.

----End Meeting----

Tabled Discussions

- Proposed Schedule
 - o Have an extra joint meeting in January or early February with Planning Commission and City Council.
 - o Have updates for City Council and Planning Commission between meetings by way of the Workgroup members.

- Vision Statement
 - o Revisit wordage in Draft Vision Statement omitting the word existing and potentially rewording “walkable and bikeable”

- Right of Way
 - o R.O.W. Land Swap to align R.O.W. with view corridor of Mt Rainer

- Parking
 - o To build a parking lot for the initial phase to help incentives and spur downtown development.
 - o Angled parking along Primary Streets potentially on one side of the road or the other to create a staggered pattern, which could result in slower traffic along the street.
 - o Shared parking in the form of structured parking was mentioned but given the cost of structured parking it was advised to be careful when requiring a percentage of parking to be structured. It could be revisited in the future once development increases.

- Building Design:
 - o Have an overhang, two stories high, protruding over the sidewalk into the R.O.W to act as weather protection
 - o Articulation of roof styles “Pitched” vs “Flat with Parapet” and whether the code would address this.

- View Corridor :
 - o Only have views of Mt. Rainer from certain “key intersections”