

ASSEMBLY TITLE 21 COMMITTEE

Summary of Discussion on Meeting October 28, 2005

Public Review Draft #1 Discussion Chapter 7.

CHAPTER 21.07: DEVELOPMENT AND DESIGN STANDARDS

21.07.060 – Transportation and Connectivity

p. 353, line 22 – *Traffic Impact Analysis Required*. Committee asks if there is a threshold and when will it come. Planning states subsections a, b, and c are the minimum requirements and there is some predictability, but there are going to be situations when traffic will require TIA. Public: Commercial construction builders are highly incensed with this section. It needs to be simplified and worked on. TIA costs \$25,000; it's time-consuming; grossly increases what is required. Asks that it be thrown out entirely. TIA should be required when requested by Director of Planning and then hold meeting with developer to discuss it. By requiring every CUP (p. 354, line 3) to have a TIA will grossly increase costs. Believes this document will require a small restaurant with a dumpster to have a TIA. Not currently this way. Way over the top. Planning: Understood that development community didn't want it to be "leave it up to someone unless they ask for it" and they had been requested to put in something with predictability. Public: Objects that this portion had been developed strictly by traffic and no public input; developed by regulators. It is good to have specifics when developing a project by having objective standards, but this goes too far. Currently the process is a meeting with muni staff to look at project and determine whether or not TIA is required. Planning: Incorrect that traffic developed this without consultation. It was offstreet parking standards developed by Traffic, not this section. Public comment that there is absolutely a need to build collector roads and that developers do not produce a TIA until the day before Platting Board meets so timeliness is an issue. It should be a requirement that it be done prior so public can review. Another public comment that it may be appropriate to not require TIA for CUP but for rezoning or major site plan review. Might be the balance.

page 353, line 30 – Public comment relative to what mechanisms in place to ensure pedestrian safety in a TIA? Seems pedestrian analysis is almost left out. Public gave example of a rezone this week involving 5 properties that would have had to come up with a TIA under this document, and they were already paying nearly \$5,000 just to get rezone through planning. Committee asks developer to suggest a reasonable "trigger" if this one is not. Public: The point is that 3 years ago builders first raised this issue to have a dialog so would not be sitting here today. Will get

“trigger point” alternative by Wednesday. TIA’s start at \$25,000 and go to \$100,000.

p. 353, lines 32-33 – Planning reiterates that in C.1.a. the trigger point is trip generation (exceed 500/day or 100+ during one-hour peak). Suggestion to eliminate subsections b and c and keep subsection a. Public comment that another trigger might be that if an area in question is in study area in a long range transportation plan, it would require TIA. Committee: P&Z or Assembly should be able to require TIA if believe there is a concern with a specific site. Another public comment that if small development is inside a study area and they want to make a change, should not obligate them to pay \$25,000. Developers not arguing 400 new homes or a hospital wing should not have a TIA but infill development is the nature of our city and it’s a hardship to have TIA for small development.

p. 354, line 14 – Committee: Is the review process similar to what is happening now? Planning believes so.

p. 354, lines 21-30 – *Traffic Mitigation Measures*. Public: These are overly broad (e.g. other capital improvement projects). Committee: Isn’t that good? Public: There has to be some weighing of size and what is asked for; nothing here. City can ask for everything and developer provides. Adding the word “reasonable” or “economical” would go a long ways.

p. 354, line 28 – Public comment that “pedestrian” mentioned here again and there may not be mechanism in place to produce the intended result. This concern regarding “pedestrians” presents itself throughout the document.

p. 355, line 13 – *Connectivity index*. Committee: More rural parts of community may have difficulty meeting this standard. People like cul-de-sacs and this appears to limit them. Planning: It is intended to provide connectivity between subdivisions and flexibility. This will allow them and developer can design appropriate to the site. Planning will find examples.

p. 356, lines 4-7 – Committee asks if a sidewalk has to be provided at the top of every cul-de-sac. A blanket requirement is not good language. There could be a cul-de-sac with nothing behind it but a cliff! Public asked if this was intended to require connectivity for emergency vehicle access? Is the intent to make it a combination pedestrian and emergency vehicle access? Response from public: Width requirement for emergency vehicles is typically between 15 and 20 feet.

p. 356, lines 14-15 – *External street connectivity*. Planning clarified intent that with regard to a developing subdivision and undeveloped land there is a reasonable expectation that some day there will be development, and streets are to be arranged so that eventually they will connect. Committee believes section c (external street connectivity) is nonspecific and inconsistent with section e (connection to vacant land) which is very specific. Planning says you don't have to build to boundary line but c says you do. How many public streets do you have to have now for vehicular access for a 100 unit development? Two. Section d increases this from 2 to 4 public streets. Public would like justification for increasing.

p. 357, line 8 – Public: “Where cul-de-sacs or dead-end streets are unavoidable” substitute *proposed* for *unavoidable* and add “if adjacent properties considered likely to be developed.” Public: subsection (h) looks like a Catch 22 by saying minimize ability to cut through. Committee: The goal is to create grid pattern that takes congestion off the streets, create a street that is traffic calmed, moves at good rate but does not run through a neighborhood really fast, with more than one way into the neighborhood. Planning: Each development is reviewed on a case by case basis. Intent to provide connectivity. Public: this is exactly what is needed in subdivisions to minimize cut-throughs.

p. 357, line 20 – Committee: What exactly is *cross access easement*? This is a fairly common situation in platting. Two properties have one common access to two lots. Done by easement or access agreement with already developed lots.

p. 357, line 36 – “Sidewalks shall be installed on both sides . . .” is a current requirement. In Design Criteria Manual and Title 21 subdivision regulations. Committee: On large rural lots, don't know if a sidewalk is necessary. Planning: This specifically exempts large lot areas of approx. an acre (40,000 sq. feet). Committee: Criteria used to be volume of traffic and now is size of lot? Change proposed here would make sidewalks more places than current law. Planning: It likely will. Again, does not apply to rural areas. New R5 is actually a large lot district of an acre. R6 is half acre lots. There will be a waiver process. Public: Stay with volume of traffic. Public: On a bus route separated sidewalks should be on both sides. Committee: Does not like blanket requirement.

p. 358, line 2 – *Pedestrian facilities*. Discussion on “eliminating free right-turn lanes.” In some circumstances beneficial for flow of traffic. Can they be looked at individually? Public: Medians give pedestrians shorter crossing distance. Another public member believes they are a “death knell for the blind.” Planning: There is qualifying language. Committee: In LRTP not mandatory in certain

neighborhoods. “Whenever possible” sounds stricter than what is intended.
Planning: Decisions are based on reasonable judgment on case by case basis.

p. 358, beginning line 8 – *On-site Pedestrian Walkways*. Public: Do we need to split lots to put in these walkways? Planning: If you put a building on a lot, you have to have a pedestrian connection to the road. Public: Confused on subsections a and b and request Planning prepare sketch as to what is actually required. Is this requiring a dedicated pedestrian access from the street in front? How wide and where and how do car lanes cross this? What about satellite stores, for example in Fred Meyer complex on Abbott Loop. Is there pedestrian access required to those? Planning: Now requiring that with site plan review and agree it’s good to have an illustration and will prepare. Public: Think this causes a drastic increase in parking lot sizes. One developer said it added 10 feet to a small lot. Planning: Objections are not being made where this is being applied. Fairly minor increase in percentage if commercial property.

p. 358, beginning line 41 – *Trails*. Committee: In local service areas there is a real desire to hold costs down. All the road design standards say separated path from road. But with a wide shoulder, snow plow blade can do road and shoulder together. Separated trails also cause a greater “taking” of property on road construction. Planning: It depends on function and amount of traffic on street whether sidewalk is separated. Generally speaking separate moving traffic from pedestrians for safety and backsplash. Committee: On major roads in Chugiak a wider shoulder would be good because separated sidewalk covered with snow. It would take property to meet this new standard. Planning: 50 mph traffic not safe for pedestrians. There is a different standard for rural areas.

p. 359, lines 9-17 – If restricting poles, signs, trees and utility boxes in the sidewalk area; will those nonconforming be grandfathered? Planning: This new application is most likely with new subdivision development. Makes no sense to put poles, etc. in sidewalk. Public: If this is intent, need to clarify grandfathering and desire to maintain 4 foot width for pedestrians. Rewrite to more clearly state intent. Public: Surprised bollards or garbage containers allowed. Impossible to use equipment around them and requires hand shoveling. Bollards are necessary to keep motorized vehicles off sidewalk.

p. 359, lines 19-21 – *Maintenance and Snow Removal*. Public: Do not like language “maintained in a useable condition throughout the year, including snow removal as appropriate.” This is too watered down. “Usable” too weak a word . Appropriate for all users? Any areas exempt? Who is responsible? This is not

appropriate for Title 21. Other parts of code say property owner responsible (even if not done).

p. 359, line 23 – *Bicycle Lanes Encouraged*. Discussion about Southport: public believes bike lanes there are excessive and Planning explained that that development is not the standard but was a choice.

21.07.070 – Neighborhood Protection Standards

p. 359, line 39 – Discussion about which decision-making body makes decisions. Major site Plan review is UDC. P&Z on CUP. Process different for each body. Public objects to overly broad list of conditions to minimize adverse impacts. Site plan review includes placement of vending machines and telephones! Planning gave example of gas station next to apartment building. There is a lot of noise and activity surrounding vending machines and phones day and night. Not an issue in rural areas. What if Platting note has landscaping easement requirement in conflict with other requirements in code? Planning will look back at notes.

p. 360, lines 9-10 – *Placement of trash receptacles, compactors or recycling*. Employee of waste service company commented that relative to screening, service companies are not involved in review of plans and utilities should be if possible to ensure access. Not always a municipal agency so how do you get them involved? It's now an informal determination working with trash hauling companies and waste management and Planning acknowledged it is not fully adequate. Incumbent on developer to work with service company. Cost for screening can be significant.

p. 360, line 14 – B9. *Preservation of natural lighting and solar access*. Public would like to delete and other public member disagrees.

21.07.080 – Landscaping, Screening, and Fences

p. 361, line 33 – *Alternative Equivalent Compliance*. Public: Who has resources to inspect and identify all of these nonconformities and to get approval? Planning: Very few things are proposed for amortization here.

p. 361, line 32 – *Title 21 Users Guide*. How and when will that be developed and will there be a public process? Planning: A shortened, illustrated manual and no public process. Nothing in it that will differ from what is adopted. Developers will get real familiar with Title 21 but single property owner will use manual. Intent to have it prepared by the time this takes effect. Public wants to make sure it is

consistent. Planning: Reference to Users Guide may not stay in Title 21.

p. 363, Table 21.07-2 – Public: Once all the points are assigned who adds them up and how many do you have to have? The tables are backwards, and table on page 367 that tells you how many points you need should come first. Planning has developed a spreadsheet to total these points for you. You can play with it, get something conforming, print it out. Available to landscape architects now. Level of landscaping separating parking lots from streets has security issues. Public: not a proper balance given to security. Drawings could help. Planning: The point of crafting in this manner is to be less proscriptive and provide more latitude. Point scale only seems complicated. Planning will look at reversing tables. Committee comment that this draft reflects concerns of landscape architects in Real Estate Task Force report. Public comment this has a horrible impact on spaces for parking.

p. 364, Table 21.07-02 landscape boulders, include length or height

p. 365, line 3 – *Site Perimeter Landscaping*. Discussion regarding deciduous trees, security. Type of vegetation depends on location, use, and owner's preference. Owner may want site obscured. Case by case basis. Intent is to provide that latitude. Committee member believes our city looks so much better. Buildings closer to street with lots of activity are the most secure.

Discussion of landscaping beneath utility lines and committee surprised because before you needed permission from utility. City does not want to talk to utility and utility does not want to talk to city. Committee: It would be nice if city would take lead and recommends specifically requiring some type of landscaping and being selective in exactly what. Envision being in crosshairs. Try to strike workable solution everyone can accept and work with. Planning will try to avoid conflict.

p. 366, line 7 – *Specifications for Site Perimeter Landscaping*. Public says access driveways should be (rather than shall not be) subtracted from linear frontage in calculation. About half of parking lot is access driveways. Planning: landscaping gets concentrated, so should use whole length of site to calculate.

p. 367, Table Additional Standards [3]. Committee asks about a directional sign along freeway. Planning states DOT directional signs are exempt. This standard applies to properties adjacent to a freeway. No signs shall be permitted w/in 30 foot wide highway screening line. Examples: Welcome to Chugiak is in right of

way and approved by DOT. Minnesota is part freeway and part limited access. This could create confusion.

p 371, lines 9-11 – *Minimum Tree Density*. Public: Average tree worth 8 points, requires 21 trees per acre. Is quite high . Homebuilders request 1 per lot (on the low side). 7 or 8 per acre might be more reasonable requirement. Planning: Will look at. This density is for newly planted trees. Requires fewer for retaining; point values for retaining is 10 or 12 per acre.

p. 371, line 26 – Committee asks how to define a landmark tree. Planning: Definition on page 552, but need to amend this as city does not have municipal arborist.

p. 371, line 42 – *Tree tracts*: Committee: Is this private open space and do Homeowners associations own tree tracts? This will require covenants. Don't want city dictating this. Planning: This is pretty standard. Trying to preserve high value of trees.

Meeting adjourned. Begin again on page 372.

Next meeting Wednesday November 2 in City Hall, Mayor's Conference Room 10-noon.

November 9 meeting at Planning Department, upstairs second floor in code room, 10-noon.

November 16 meeting in Room 170 Planning Dept. Bragaw,10-noon.

Respectfully Submitted by,

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Legislative Services

Reviewed and approved by,

Debbie Ossiander