

2023 Comprehensive Plan Amendments Findings and Conclusions

Findings of Fact

1. **Proposal:** Dove House Advocacy Services proposes a site-specific rezone and amendment to the Comprehensive Plan. The amendments relate to:
 - a. Granting an applicant-initiated site-specific rezone of a historically residential property from C-I to C-I/MU.
 - b. Altering the Comprehensive Plan Official Zoning Map to show the block on the South side of the intersection of Blaine Street and Kearney Street as C-I/MU instead of its current zone of C-I.
2. **Location:** The proposed amendment applies to 909 and 939 Kearney Street.
3. **Environmental Review:** Amendments to the land use/development regulations are subject to review under the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA). The SEPA Responsible Official issued a Determination of Non-Significance (DNS) (Exhibit B) on August 23, 2023. The SEPA comment period will expire on September 12, 2023.
4. **Commerce Review:** The City must notify the WA Department of Commerce of any proposed amendments to the comprehensive plan or development regulations. The City submitted the proposed amendments to Commerce on August 21, 2023. The City is awaiting further response from Commerce.
5. **Planning Commission Review:** Per PTMC Section 20.04.080 Planning Commission Hearing and 20.04.090 C. Planning Commission Review, the Planning Commission shall hold a public hearing on any Comprehensive Plan final docket and text amendments to the land use code. The Planning Commission must make a recommendation to City Council using the decision criteria set forth in PTMC 20.04.080.A.3 and 4 for site specific amendments. In accordance with PTMC Section 20.04.090(B), notice of the public hearing will be posted and published on August 23, 2023.
6. **Meetings:** Staff presented and refined amendments with the Planning Commission and City Council on the following dates:
 - May 25, 2023, Planning Commission Regular Meeting
 - July 26, 2023, Planning Commission Special Meeting
 - August 9, 2023, Planning Commission Special Meeting
7. **Public Hearing:** Public Hearings are scheduled on the following dates and will be duly noticed in the paper of record at least 10 days in advance of each hearing:
 - September 14, 2023, Public Hearing before the Planning Commission
 - September 28, 2023, Planning Commission Final Action on Proposed Comprehensive Plan Amendments
 - October 2, 2023, Public Hearing before City Council
 - October 16, 2023, City Council Second Reading of Proposed Comprehensive Plan Amendments

Findings and Conclusions

- a) **Whether the amendment will adversely affect the public health, safety and welfare in any significant way.**

Finding: The SEPA Responsible Official has reviewed the proposed amendments issued a Determination of Non-Significance.

Conclusion: PCD Staff conclude that the proposed amendments will not adversely affect the public health, safety, and welfare in any significant way.

b) Whether the proposed amendment is consistent with the GMA and adopted county-wide planning policies.

Finding: The proposed amendment enacts the following GMA goals and CWPPs:

GMA Goal 1: “Urban growth. Encourage development in urban areas where adequate public facilities and services exist or can be provided in an efficient manner.” And CWPP #1: “The designation of urban growth areas (UGAs).”

The proposed amendment incentivizes multiuse development in a block that has been consistently used for residential, not commercial, use despite its current C-I zoning. The block has sufficient public facilities and services to provide more residential and multiuse services.

GMA Goal 2: “Reduce sprawl. Reduce the inappropriate conversion of undeveloped land into sprawling, low-density development” and CWPP #2: “Promotion of contiguous and orderly development and the provision of services to such development.”

The proposal would support higher-density multiuse development in a block that can support more units.

GMA Goal 3: “Transportation. Encourage efficient multimodal transportation systems that are based on regional priorities and coordinated with county and city comprehensive plans” and CWPP #5: “County-wide transportation facilities and strategies.”

The subject block is on a transit line. Allowing multiuse development at this site would encourage greater use of non-motorized transportation and the county-wide public transit system.

GMA Goal 4: “Housing. Plan for and accommodate housing affordable to all economic segments of the population of this state, promote a variety of residential densities and housing types, and encourage preservation of existing housing stock” and CWPP #6: “The need for affordable housing for all economic segments of the population.”

The proposed amendment would permit multiuse housing and commercial development in a block that is proximal to transit, recreation, groceries, and employment opportunities.

GMA Goal 5: “Economic development. Encourage economic development throughout the state that is consistent with adopted comprehensive plans, promote economic opportunity for all citizens of this state, especially for unemployed and for disadvantaged persons, promote the retention and expansion of existing businesses and recruitment of new businesses, recognize regional differences impacting economic development opportunities, and encourage growth in areas experiencing insufficient economic growth, all within the capacities of the state's natural resources, public services, and public facilities” and CWPP #7: “County-wide economic development and employment.”

The proposed amendment would continue to permit commercial use on the subject block, while also allowing multifamily housing. Historically the parcel has been used for permitted nonconforming residential use because the residential use predates the Comprehensive Plan. Allowing residential use may make adding commercial use more appealing to owners and developers.

GMA Goal 8: “Natural resource industries. Maintain and enhance natural resource-based industries, including productive timber, agricultural, and fisheries industries. Encourage the conservation of productive forestlands and productive agricultural lands, and discourage incompatible uses.”

GMA Goal 11: “Citizen participation and coordination. Encourage the involvement of citizens in the planning process and ensure coordination between communities and jurisdictions to reconcile conflicts.”

The proposed amendments do not impact citizen participation. However, citizens have provided feedback on the draft amendments through public comments and meetings with the Planning Commission.

GMA Goal 12: “Public facilities and services. Ensure that those public facilities and services necessary to support development shall be adequate to serve the development at the time the development is available for occupancy and use without decreasing current service levels below locally established minimum standards.”

The proposed amendment would allow housing in a property that has access to sufficient public facilities and services.

Conclusion: Staff conclude that the proposed amendments are consistent with both the GMA and the CWPPs.

c) Whether the proposed amendment reflects current widely held community values or resolves inconsistencies in the city's comprehensive plan.

Finding: City Council and Planning Commission meetings are largely focused on the need for more housing and more affordable housing. Public comment shows that Port Townsend residents are highly concerned about having sufficient housing in their community. Business owners share that they are losing employees who cannot find housing. By rezoning to allow multiuse structures, including housing, the proposed amendment reflects the community’s widely held value of providing affordable housing for all economic segments of the City.

Conclusion: Staff concludes that the proposed amendments support the widely held community value of housing access.

d) Whether the proposed amendment would maintain the appropriate balance of land uses within the city.

Finding: The site block is the last remaining C-I property in Port Townsend. However, rezoning it will not remove C-I uses because the block has never served a Neighborhood Commercial use. Instead, it has been an allowed nonconforming use. Other properties that were formerly zoned C-I have all been rezoned to C-I/MU, reflecting that Port Townsend wants multiuse spaces and development. C-I uses are still permitted at this property and in other regions, along with the other uses allowed through C-I/MU.

Conclusion: Staff concludes that the proposed amendments will maintain the appropriate balance of land uses within the city.

e) Whether the proposal implements the comprehensive plan; or alternatively

f) Since the adoption of the comprehensive plan, there has been a substantial change in circumstances related to the proposed amendment and/or the area in which it is located which warrants the proposal.

Finding: The proposed amendments implement the following sections of the comprehensive plan:

Comprehensive Plan Direction Statement: “a great place to live,” with a “wide choice of housing types and prices is available for a diversity of lifestyles and incomes. Residential

development is centered in distinct neighborhoods.” The proposed amendment supports residential development in an area that does not currently permit new residences.

Comprehensive Plan Chapter 4 Land Use Element: per Goal 9, “accommodate the population growth objectives for the City of Port Townsend and further the objectives of the Housing Element of this Plan” Rezoning the subject block of Kearney allows residential development that better meets the City’s housing goals. The amendments also implement Goal 10, providing “adequate commercial land to conveniently serve community needs while maintaining Port Townsend’s small town atmosphere” by encouraging the development of commercial uses in mixed-use zones. This also contributes to Goal 12, encouraging “the creation of mixed use centers that combine commercial and residential land uses, providing an opportunity to develop areas in Port Townsend that are transit-oriented and pedestrian friendly and offering opportunities for affordable housing, convenience shopping, and quality design.”

Comprehensive Plan Chapter 5 Housing Element: providing more housing stock is an essential part of OlyCAP and Jefferson Shelter to Housing Partnership’s 10 Year Plan to End Homelessness in Jefferson County, WA. This includes enacting Goal 1, providing an “adequate supply of housing for residents of all income groups, including sufficient housing affordable to low and moderate income groups.” The proposed amendments encourage Goal 2, promoting “the provision of affordable housing throughout all geographic and economic segments of the community” because property cannot develop further housing in its current zone. The amendment implements Goal 6 by increasing development opportunities in mixed use zones that will “promote a balance of housing and employment opportunities.” Per Goal 7, these higher density residential developments are located within the City’s urban core instead of sprawling out. Finally, per An Affordable Housing Strategy for Port Townsend, the amendments re-evaluate development standards to maintain public health and safety while reducing development costs as a barrier to affordable housing.

Comprehensive Plan Chapter 6 Transportation Element: The subject block is proximal to transit, meaning that residents or visitors to multiuse commercial space can use public transit instead of private vehicles

Chapter 9 Economic Development Element: The subject site has not been commercially developed, suggesting that the location is not appealing for solely commercial use. Allowing mixed use development may make the block more affordable or appealing to develop with commercial and residential uses. Making the block more appealing would allow local businesses to implement Goal 1, fostering “a balanced, diversified, and sustainable local economy that contributes to Port Townsend’s high quality of life.” Even if the block is mainly developed into multifamily housing, this would aid local businesses that cannot retain workers due to local cost of housing.

The proposed amendment addresses that the subject block of Kearney Street has not been used as a Neighborhood Commercial space. Its residential use predates the Comprehensive Plan and has continued for decades without change. Rezoning the block to address its actual use instead of a conceptual use allows for more realistic development. The rezoning would also permit more multiunit housing on the block, which relates to Port Townsend’s housing concerns.

Conclusion: Staff concludes that the proposed amendments implement the Comprehensive Plan’s goals for community direction, land use, housing, transportation, and economic development.

Recommendation

Port Townsend Community Development Staff RECOMMENDS APPROVAL of the amendments to various sections of the Comprehensive Plan to

Respectfully submitted on behalf of Port Townsend Planning and Community Development,

List of Exhibits