

Seattle Neighborhood Workshops

23rd & UNION-JACKSON WORKSHOP SMALL GROUP NOTES

January 31, 2017

*** Please also see map of potential zoning changes discussed at the workshop*

Note: **Yellow highlights for consensus**

GROUP 1

Assets

- Light rail station
- Close-in location – convenient to downtown and East side
- Café at 23rd & Cherry
- Red Apple store
- East Pine Sub Station – brick walls
- Bike path that goes through Judkins
- Washington Middle School, Garfield High School
- Architectural gems in several single family areas
- Diversity of neighborhood – racial, economic, age
- Small business district at 23rd & Union
- Ezells, the Standard Brewery, Wood Shop, Broadcast coffee shop
- History of neighborhood
- Pratt Fine Arts Center
- Douglas Truth Library
- East/west streets that cross 23rd Ave., assets with small businesses
- Affordable nonprofit space in neighborhood is very important

Urban Village Boundary

- **On Union St., Urban Village should be expanded to the west (consensus)** and to the east to MLK Way area
- Create an urban village at 34th & Union. Different point of view – it doesn't have enough transit or density.
- Expand boundary east on Cherry – mixed-use zone, NC both sides of street
- Boundaries do not need to include full blocks, could be half blocks

Zoning

- Consider commercial hub around light rail station and Judkins Park
- Vacant land available east of MLK Way & Jackson
 - Increase intensity to LR1
 - Some concern that upzone would affect churches in this area
- **Expand NC along 23rd north of I-90 (consensus)**
- Increase LR2 and LR1 and RSL in area north of I-90 – more intensity in this area
- Consider higher intensity LR zones adjacent to Garfield
- At 23rd & Union, consider changing NC2 or NC3
- On Yesler, consider changing NC1 to NC2 – but some concern about higher density displacing small businesses

Transitions

- At 23rd & Union, transition between NC zone and RSL is stark. Create LR transition in single family zones next to NC.
- On Cherry, create more of a buffer between NC and RSL on south side of Cherry. Create LR zones in proposed RSL.

MHA

- Percentages for affordable housing are not set high enough
 - Want fee structure and support people who live here
 - Concern that fees are too high to encourage development
- The fees raised in this neighborhood should stay in this neighborhood
- Percentages of MHA should be based on intensity of use, not the jump in zoning
- Create MFTE for commercial space
- Need public spaces and pedestrian amenities with new development

Summary

- East/west streets should be the focus on the Urban Village
- Higher intensity around light rail, more commercial, better walkability & bike, access to light rail
- Additional transition zones between higher intensity zones and SF
- Fairness of fees – Will they adversely affect property owners? Will they dampen development?
- Use of fees – some felt should be used citywide; others felt should be used in the neighborhood
- Create MFTE for commercial space

GROUP 2

Key Community Assets

- Neighbors
- Garfield Community Center, pool
- Pratt Park, other parks
- Garfield High, Washington Middle School, Bailey Gatzert
- Judkins Park churches
- Library

Zoning Proposal

- Do community members know the value of their property?
- How to increase wealth and take advantage of zoning changes?
- What causes displacement?
 - Rising rents
 - Redevelopment
 - Land sales
- Increased taxes, construction costs
- Can you combine lots within RSL and subdivide? Answer: Yes
- Concern that gentrification will be increased by MHA program – loss of culture, loss of neighbors
 - Will there be access to ground-oriented housing for low-income?

- Seeing more townhomes in SF areas
- Smaller units
 - Design review threshold is too high
 - Leaving density on the table to circumvent review
- Should boundary be extended to MLK Way north of Cherry?
 - To MLK on both sides
- My kids can't afford to live here
- Townhouses in LR zones could be too expensive
- I want the neighborhood to stay diverse
- Building and financing program to prioritize performance
- Which pots does the Office of Housing go to?
- Midrise around park and light rail station, TOD and cultural opportunity
- ST3 – Support for
 - LR2 – to LR3
 - LR3 – to Midrise
- Commercial hub at Jackson
- Consider adding flexibility on south 23rd
- Access to parking below Jackson on 23rd
- Could support more activity
- NC 40 – to NC 75 up to rail
- LR2 – to LR3
- More density in LR2
- We shouldn't be building micros in low-rise zones
- Setbacks contribute to character
- Stacked flats are a good model
- CCNR – to townhouse stock
- Affordability will be too concentrated in larger multifamily apt buildings
- "Affordability" differs by neighborhood
- Need more cooperative ownership, shared care of buildings, too much variety in design options within zones
- Emphasize homeownership in the neighborhood
- Nonprofits and community land trusts opportunity could fill some voids of "missing middle"
- Minimum density potential to shape the market (Design Review threshold is too high)

Summary Points

Most Concerned:

- Loss of affordable housing ratios/prices might not be high enough
- Cost a lot of money
- Taxes – impacts to seniors
- Affordable housing at low levels
 - People aging in place
 - Workforce options
 - Creating options throughout spectrum

- Gentrification, cultural loss
- Might not be able to claw back – happening now
- Building type, size, design is important
- Design flexibility and loss of cohesive character at the street level
- More ownership options would be idea (mix with rentals)
- Spectrum of affordability
- Full spectrum of housing types

If You Get It Right:

- Ownership option
- Stacked flats and density
- Create and increase affordability at all income bands
- Keep history and legacy of Central District
- Ownership option, neighborhood direction
 - Mix and preference for housing \$\$
- Encourage co-housing, intergenerational housing
- Shared spaces
- Stop and maybe reverse rate of gentrification

GROUP 3

Concerns

- Growth
- Taxes
- Multifamily outside Urban Village
- I-90 redevelopment

Assets and Opportunities

- Light rail stop at Rainier – 23rd – Judkins – opportunity for TOD
- Vulcan at 23rd & Jackson – opportunity for density
- Between Rainier & 23rd
- Urban Design Framework for 23rd Ave Plan – 3 – 4 years of community involvement
- Cherry between 23rd & MLK Way
- Historic buildings
- Community Center

Zoning Proposal

- Don't change zone meanings – if it's an upzone, then upzone it – use decimal numbers if needed (e.g., LR1.5)
- Do not just add a story everywhere because people don't understand that the rules have changed
- Protect Cherry from upzone per 23rd Ave Plan, keep historic character
- A U-shaped, 12-unit building on Cherry, courtyard building that rents at below market now, would go away with MHA
- RSL: most likely developers would buy

- Strategies?
 - Add incentive for homeowner to stay and add a DADU
 - How to incentivize so we don't destroy existing homes?
- RSL and LR1 are both family housing
 - Adding 6 – 8 townhomes doesn't hit MHA fund
 - Is there a way to help people become owners?
- 16th & Jefferson, 4 units – 3 market rate and community land trust
 - CLT can be beneficial
 - Example: cottage courts and cottage on long lot
- 3-story, 18-unit apartments can be in LR3 – but we get townhomes instead
- Zones not performing as they could
 - City needs to look at why
 - Example: 4-packs
- Confusing language in proposal
- Where does the growth end?
- Lots of growth at 26th & Jackson
- Would like changes to better the community
- Single homes torn down and townhomes going in
- Will the MHA take into account that a large percentage of properties are already being developed?
- Maybe focus instead on economic development on 23rd
- Why not upzone MLK between Cherry & Union? Look at history of development
- Why not expand Urban Village to MLK?
 - They want upzones – Y, church
 - No transitions there
- OK to upzone around light rail station but study carefully, it's complex
- Consider NC zone on Judkins
- Don't split a zone in the middle of a street
- Stencil Building at 24th & Union – example of great transition to single family behind it
- "Missing middle" – smaller apt buildings with 15 – 20 units
- Tweaking code to make a tall LR1 makes homeowners not trust upzones
- Need design guidelines: "form-based code" requirements to make better transitions between zones
- Four-plexes that look like single family home
- Need form-based code, design guidelines to mitigate transition between zones
 - Must include height, bulk, setbacks
 - Needs to apply to LR1
 - Suggest what is good design
 - Entry, setbacks, how it relates to neighbors
 - Form-based better for equity because it doesn't say the use
- Form of building is critical – should fit historic typologies
- Many planning meetings in neighborhood for three years – people are tired!
- Cultural workshop to create design guidelines
- It's not if we grow, but how we grow
- New buildings need to be human scale and fit historic homes – No Wonder Bread building!

- 23rd & Union bank building – historic parts being preserved – building with a big foot print that is being developed
- Put height/density at intersections – corner of 23rd & Union
- Concerns about scale and mass of building – 35,000 square-foot grocery
- Important to keep the “grain” of the neighborhood – Look at plat for historic grain of neighborhood and avoid combining too many blocks into a monolith
- Important to maintain low-rise on back of building
- Upzone to south
 - Makes sense but look at historic use and dense fabric of retail
 - Hill in area – is it walkable for retail?
- Former commercial node – Judkins Café was there – destroyed by townhomes – would like to see it renewed
- Invest in upgrading neighborhood plans – there is a thirst for this!
- Mixing rezoning with 10 ft. isn’t the best way to create affordable housing
- Tell LR1 residents we’re upzoning to LR2 – more fair
- Don’t want a one-floor increase throughout the neighborhood
- Could do MHA with larger buildings
- Discussion re higher risk of displacement will need more development to get affordable housing – is confusing
- Development pressure here is because of proximity to downtown and where people work
- Needs active monitoring – Is displacement happening? Is there more affordable housing?
- Examine what has happened to other upzoned properties—what building types have been displaced?
- MHAR is great tool when there are motivated developers
- Planning is a process to do constantly, not upzoning all at once
- Like the policy to build affordable units or pay into a fund
 - But rezones don’t need to be part of it
 - Don’t just add a floor everywhere
- New tools for enhanced historic preservation, nonrenewable resources
- When you develop a commercial use, need to figure out how to keep the business

Summary

- Form-based code
- Design controls needed to protect area’s character
- Keep the grain of the neighborhood, no monolithic buildings
- Form is important
- Planning – don’t just add one story everywhere
- Consider expansion/upzone on MLK where people want it
- Preserve Cherry’s capacity
- Protect small businesses
- Don’t ignore concurrency