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Date: April 26, 2021

To: Our Salem Zoning Subcommittee

From: Ashleigh Fordham, President
Mid-Valley Association of REALTORS®

RE: Zoning options to reduce greenhouse gas emissions

On behalf of the over 1500+ members of the Mid-Valley Association of REALTORS® (MVAR®), thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the six zoning options you will be considering intended to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. We appreciate Long-range Planning Manager Eunice Kim taking the time to attend MVAR's meetings to discuss the ongoing project, including these zoning options. We support the City's commitment in the Our Salem Vision Statement to being a livable city where everyone has access to affordable housing, where families and local businesses can thrive.

As you consider the zoning options related to the environment, we urge you to remain conscious of how those same options would impact housing and commercial development to avoid any unintended consequences.

No one can command what the future housing market will support or force developments that are not cost effective. The increasingly high cost of creating housing developments in Salem will force developers, and therefore Salem's citizens, to the surrounding suburbs. As these people then commute to/from Salem for their jobs and the shopping and entertainment Salem provides, have we really addressed the concerns of greenhouse gas emissions?

Setting mandates to require multifamily housing in mixed-use zones or requiring neighborhood hubs and/or middle housing in large subdivisions will not make those developments happen. Instead, by providing incentives and rewarding the types of housing and development desired while removing related barriers, we are more likely to achieve the goal of affordable housing and a livable Salem.

Eliminating parking near major thoroughfares (Cherriots' Core Network) where jobs and shopping are located will force vehicles to side streets, nearby neighborhoods, or existing large commercial lots. Rather, we suggest building flexibility into zoning related to parking by setting a minimum, rather than a maximum.

We appreciated being included in the drafting process of the Our Salem Vision and look forward to continuing to work with the City and staff to ensure zoning codes support a healthy market for desired development including affordable housing.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments.

Shelby Guizar

To: Eunice Kim
Subject: RE: Written Testimony for the April 30 Zoning Subcommittee Meeting

From: Jim Scheppke <jscheppke@comcast.net>
Sent: Thursday, April 29, 2021 2:18 PM
To: Eunice Kim <EKim@cityofsalem.net>
Subject: Written Testimony for the April 30 Zoning Subcommittee Meeting

Eunice:

I would like to submit today's Salem Breakfast on Bikes blog post as written testimony for your meeting tomorrow. I think the blogger makes some excellent points about how the Zoning Subcommittee's work must be data-driven and evidence-based ("deductive" he calls it), something I am hoping Councilor Phillips in particular will insist upon.

With reference to Option #5 I share the bloggers concern about "large subdivisions" like the one that the Council took the first step in approving on Monday night. Aren't 40 acre subdivisions on the very edge of town fundamentally incompatible with the kind of dramatic reductions in VMT we are going to need to reach the Council's goals for GHG reductions, even if you sprinkle in a bit of middle housing and space for a neighborhood hub? Maybe we'll need to require everyone to own an EV. ;-)

Jim

THURSDAY, APRIL 29, 2021

Zoning Subcommittee Meets Friday to Start Looking at Six Zoning Concepts to Reduce Pollution


On Friday the 30th, the new Zoning Subcommittee for Our Salem will convene to receive what looks to be mainly an introduction to the concepts for analysis and debate.

Zoning Options: Greenhouse Gas Emissions

1. Increase maximum heights in mixed-use zones, particularly along Cherriots' Core Network
2. Eliminate parking requirements for all uses near the Core Network
3. Increase the minimum density in the mixed-use and/or multifamily zones near the Core Network or throughout Salem
4. Require multifamily housing in mixed-use zones
5. Require neighborhood hubs and/or middle housing in large subdivisions
6. Establish a minimum density in the Single Family Residential (RS) zone near the Core Network

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Six zoning concepts for GHG pollution reductions



The agenda is pretty minimal, and, again, what appears to be the case is that popularity and palatability rather than effectiveness is going to frame and drive the discussion. The new subpage for the committee is also very thin and lacks any information about the six options. You have to know to go back to the full Our Salem page for that. Even so, the presentation to Council on March 8th in which they were first made public doesn't give any analysis for why they were selected and how much additional carbon pollution they would eliminate.

<p>Subcommittee Members Jose Gonzalez, City Councilor Chane Griggs, Salem Planning Commission President Chris Hoy, City Councilor Ian Levin, Salem Planning Commissioner Trevor Phillips, City Councilor Joshlene Pollock, Salem Planning Commissioner Ashley Schweickart, Salem Planning Commissioner Virginia Stapleton, City Councilor</p> <p>City Staff Norman Wright, Community Development Director Lisa Anderson-Ogilvie, AICP, Deputy Director and Planning Administrator Eunice Kim, Long Range Planning Manager Austin Ross, Long Range Planner Shelby Guizar, Admin Analyst</p> <p>Next Meeting: May 27, 2021 https://www.cityofsalem.net/Pages/our-salem-zoning-subcommittee.aspx https://www.cityofsalem.net/our-salem</p> <p><small>It is the City of Salem's policy to assure that no person shall be discriminated against on the grounds of race, religion, color, sex, marital status, familial status, national origin, age, mental or physical disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, and source of income, as provided by Salem Revised Code 97. The City of Salem also fully complies with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and related statutes and regulations, in all programs and activities.</small></p>	<p>VIRTUAL MEETING AGENDA</p> <p>Friday, April 30, 2021 12:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. ONLINE</p> <p>VIRTUAL MEETING ACCESS: To view this meeting LIVE on YouTube, please visit this link with your computer, tablet, or smartphone by clicking this link: https://bit.ly/planningpublicmeetings</p> <p>TO PROVIDE WRITTEN COMMENTS FOR THIS MEETING: Written comments may be emailed or mailed to: Eunice Kim, Long Range Planning Manager City of Salem / Community Development Department 355 Liberty St SE, Suite 305, Salem, OR 97302 ekim@cityofsalem.net</p> <p>All comments submitted by 5 p.m. April 29th will be sent to the subcommittee prior to the meeting. Comments received after the deadline will be forwarded to the subcommittee after the meeting. We recommend emailing comments to ensure timely receipt.</p> <p>TO SIGN UP TO PROVIDE IN-PERSON COMMENTS: You may sign up to provide live comments at this meeting by emailing sguizar@cityofsalem.net or calling 503-540-2315 no later than 10:00 a.m. on meeting day.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Welcome and Introductions2. Project Overview3. Six Zoning Options4. Public Comment (15 Minutes)5. Next Steps
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Meeting agenda

There is no more now. Maybe the analysis and discussion will get a different frame, but in the absence of any kind of Staff Report or other preparatory memo is a little worrisome.

Just generally, it remains strange that there is not more of a deductive shape to the project:

1. Our initial goal is for a 50% reduction by 2035
2. Here are the strategies that will be most effective in reaching that goal
3. Therefore, here are more specific policies/tactics to instantiate those strategies.

But that is not at all how the project has gone. Instead it's more like spitballing: Here are a couple hundred ideas, which ones do you like best?

And now it looks like: Here are six ideas, a subset, which do you like?

Without more context for why these six in particular, and just taking them absolutely without reference to any other context, in general they appear to be an effort to protect exclusionary single detached housing in existing neighborhoods.

Changes to building heights, costly parking mandates, and minimum density are contemplated mainly for areas near the transit core network.

On the one item for large subdivisions, it's not clear we have thought enough about the penumbra of density and upzoning necessary to make neighborhood hubs successful. Simply dropping a hub into an existing sprawled out neighborhood is no guarantee for success and likely to result in unleased commercial space. Mandating a hub in a new, single detached subdivision does not seem like a recipe for success either.

So as I read it, there remains a NIMBY subtext or residue to many of the concepts: On busy streets we will concentrate change with warehoused multifamily housing and density, but we will work to protect swaths of existing single detached housing from too much change.

It is reasonable, of course, to want to leverage transit's existing core network. But continuing to insulate existing neighborhoods from change, and replicating those 20th century patterns in brand new neighborhoods, is not fully effective and not fully fair.

Because in an aggregate sense change will be distributed randomly and unevenly, at least over shorter durations, we should cast the net as widely as possible in order to capture as many favorable changes as possible. When we restrict change to only along the transit core network, we will miss opportunities and likely create a suboptimal amount of change.

But in general, if we are serious about meeting our climate goals, the structure here is a little *ad hoc* and pays insufficient attention to effectiveness and to a full suite of policy actions.



Probably we should also have more of a review and analysis of the Fairview project. It should have been something of a template and model for what we are trying now to do. Why has it not developed in as sustainable a mode as was originally planned? Why hasn't more middle housing been built there? The same kinds of zoning mandates or guidelines that did not seem to work there may also not work more generally in Salem. It's not exactly a failure, but we are not using that project as enough of a laboratory and case study (To a lesser extent, the project on the North Campus of OSH was also supposed to be more forward-looking, and it reverted to 20th century types with single detached homes and three story walkup apartment blocks set on a parking lot. Our Salem and our Climate Action Plan should be more explicitly self-aware about lessons from these projects.)

With the subcommittee being half from the Planning Commission, those who work in development may also suss out unintended consequences or inefficiencies, and it's probably a good thing to subject the concepts to critique from this angle. But we can't lose sight of the fact that we have a real goal to reduce actual pollution by 50% in 2035, not merely to write nice words that will signal our lofty intent, and that will require real change.

Jim Scheppke
jscheppke@comcast.net
503-269-1559

Shelby Guizar

To: Eunice Kim
Subject: RE: Comments for Zoning Subcommittee - Our Salem

From: Jeff Schumacher <jeff.schumacher@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 29, 2021 3:48 PM
To: Eunice Kim <EKim@cityofsalem.net>
Subject: Comments for Zoning Subcommittee - Our Salem

Hi Eunice,

I read this morning about Our Salem's "Zoning Subcommittee" meeting tomorrow. SCAN's Land Use Committee has been looking pretty closely at the proposed Mixed Use zoning along the Commercial Street SE corridor (particularly Mission St. to Rural) but I thought I would email you on my own behalf with a concern.

One of the points most of our committee members agree on is the building height issue. We all thought Mixed Use I with its 65-foot height limit was too high. I think ultimately the committee will recommend Mixed Use II for that corridor, but we would also like to keep most if not all of the overlays in place.

I am probably the most excited about Mixed Use along this corridor, but I do worry about the height. I see the new building at 990 Broadway and think that type of development could be an excellent addition to SCAN (or any other busy corridor in Salem). I think it is 23 residential units above first-floor retail, and it includes 46 parking spaces. And the whole site is just over 15k square feet (so about three standard residential lots). This project is only 50 feet tall, but it was able to add some really nice medium density housing without towering over too much of anything.

I hope this subcommittee closely analyzes the need for a 65-foot limit. My view is that the City's housing goals could be met with a more moderate limit on building heights particularly when the existing structures along this corridor rarely if ever exceed 40 feet.

Thank you,
Jeff Schumacher

Shelby Guizar

To: Eunice Kim
Subject: RE: Comments for Zoning Subcommittee Meeting April 30

From: Roz Shirack <rozshirack7@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, April 29, 2021 4:47 PM
To: Eunice Kim <EKim@cityofsalem.net>
Cc: Lorrie Walker <dakotalor@msn.com>
Subject: Comments for Zoning Subcommittee Meeting April 30

Hi Eunice,

Please forward these comments to the Zoning Subcommittee for its April 30 meeting.

To Salem Zoning Subcommittee,

The South Central Association of Neighbors (SCAN) has been participating in the Our Salem Project for the last two years. Now that it is moving into the zone implementation phase, we are studying the Commercial St. SE corridor in SCAN from Mission St. to Vista Ave SE. As you consider mixed-use zones for the Commercial St. corridor, please consider that most of the current commercial development on the east and west sides of Commercial St SE are one to two story buildings, including many newer commercial buildings. Also, SCAN has single family and small scale multi family uses adjacent to the commercial development on the west side of Commercial St down to Rural Ave; and on the east side from Oxford St down to Vista Ave. These residential and nonresidential uses have remained compatible because of the scale of the commercial development, especially the height, which seldom exceeds 40 feet. The existing CR zone has a maximum height of 50 feet. This is lower than the maximum heights allowed in the Mixed Use I Zone (65 ft) and the Mixed Use II Zone (55 ft).

As we continue our assessment of the Commercial St corridor, we will provide a more detailed recommendation for mixed use zoning at your next meeting.

Thank you for your consideration.

Roz Shirack, Chair
SCAN Land Use Committee