



**RIDGEFIELD PLANNING COMMISSION
MEETING AGENDA**

**Wednesday, August 1, 2018
Ridgefield Community Center
210 N. Main, Ridgefield, WA 98642**

I. GENERAL SESSION CALL TO ORDER - 6:30 PM

- 1. Flag Salute**
- 2. Roll Call**
- 3. Late changes to the agenda**

II. PUBLIC COMMENT

Anyone requesting to speak to the Council regarding all items not subject to a specific Public Hearing may come forward at this time. Please state your name and address. Comments are limited to three minutes. Written comments may be submitted to the City Clerk prior to the meeting.

III. CONSENT AGENDA

- 1. Approval of Minutes from Wednesday, 7/11/18 Meeting**

IV. BUSINESS

- 1. Freeway Scape - Jeff Niten, Community Development Director**
- 2. Boat and RV Storage Standards - Jeff Niten, Community Development Director**

V. PUBLIC COMMENT

Anyone requesting to speak to the Council regarding all items not subject to a specific Public Hearing may come forward at this time. Please state your name and address. Comments are limited to three minutes. Written comments may be submitted to the City Clerk prior to the meeting.

VI. STAFF REPORTS

VII. FROM THE COMMISSION

VIII. ADJOURN



CITY OF RIDGEFIELD, WASHINGTON
Planning Commission MEETING MINUTES
July 11, 2018

Regular Meeting - 6:30 PM

GENERAL SESSION CALL TO ORDER - 6:30 PM

FLAG SALUTE

ROLL CALL

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Jerry Bush	Commissioner	Present	
Jason Carnell	Chair	Present	
Stan Okinaka	Commissioner	Absent	
Victoria Haugen	Commissioner	Present	
Paul Young	Commissioner	Present	
Jen Lindsay	Commissioner	Absent	
Patrick Flynn	Commissioner	Absent	

It was discussed that Commissioner Flynn may arrive late to the meeting, Commissioners held off on including Commissioner Flynn's name in the motion to excuse.

COMMISSIONER BUSH MOTIONED TO EXCUSE COMMISSIONERS LINDSAY AND OKINAKA. COMMISSIONER HAUGEN SECONDED THE MOTION. APPROVAL WAS UNANIMOUS.

LATE CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

No late changes.

Jeff Niten, Community Development Director, introduced the Planning Department's summer intern, Jamie Carlson.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

CONSENT AGENDA

1. Approval of Minutes from Wednesday, 6/6/18 Meeting

COMMISSIONER YOUNG MOTIONED TO APPROVE THE MINUTES AS PRESENTED. COMMISSIONER BUSH SECONDED THE MOTION. APPROVAL WAS UNANIMOUS.

BUSINESS

1. Comprehensive General Sewer Plan - [6:35 PM](#)

Minutes Acceptance: Minutes of Jul 11, 2018 6:30 PM (CONSENT AGENDA)

SUMMARY/BACKGROUND:

The District has prepared a document titled “Comprehensive General Sewer Plan” (Plan) to serve as both the General Comprehensive Plan and the General Sewer Plan for the collection system. In accordance with the requirements listed above, the District must adopt a Plan for the facilities that the District proposes to provide, *before* ordering any such facilities. All portions and sections of the District must be investigated and a Plan selected for a sewer system that is suitable and adequate for the present and reasonably foreseeable future needs, including a long-term plan for financing and distributing the cost and expense of the facilities and services (57.16.010 RCW). The District has prepared the proposed Plan accordingly, in consultation with BHC Consultants, LLC. The Plan is consistent with the 2016 update to the City’s Comprehensive Plan. It replaces the City adopted 2013 General Sewer Plan, which was later adopted and incorporated by the District as part of its General Sewer Plan. In accordance with RCW 57.16.010(7), the Plan must be approved by resolution of any City, all or a portion of which is included in the District’s Plan.

The Plan consolidates planning for the Districts current and future service areas in both Ridgefield and Vancouver urban growth areas into a single document. Thus providing for consistent assumptions, methodology and planning throughout. The Plan identifies the general location and size of sewer infrastructure and the estimated cost of the improvements. The capital improvements identified in the Ridgefield Urban Growth Area total \$40.6 million in investment over the 20-year planning period. The improvements identified in the Plan promote the eventual decommissioning of the Ridgefield Treatment Plant within the 20-year planning horizon. Approximately \$4.3 million is forecast for restoration and replacement projects (R&R) and \$36.3 million in capital improvement projects. The grand total investment in the Plan, across the entire District, is \$147.2 million.

A threshold determination of non-significance was issued for the plan on May 4, 2018. Public comments were invited for fourteen days, with only one comment received from Clark County. The District’s response to the County comments is included in the Appendix of the Plan. A public hearing was held by the District Board of Commissioners on June 26, 2018. Clark County Public Health has reviewed and endorsed the plan.

Brenda Howell, Staff Engineer, introduced the business item and presenter, Shawn Moore, from Clark Regional Wastewater District (CRWWD).

Shawn Moore, Assistant Manager of CRWWD, presented a slide show on the topic of the Comprehensive General Sewer Plan.

Commissioners, staff, and CRWWD discussed presentation.

2. Public Hearing on Ridgefield Development Code Updates - [7:02 PM](#)

SUMMARY/BACKGROUND:

The City is proposing a series of housekeeping amendments and changes to the Ridgefield Development Code (RDC), which establishes zoning regulations for residential and nonresidential development throughout the City. This update to the code focuses on code refinements to clarify the interpretation of certain sections, adjust the details of a policy, reflect desired design standards, or simplify review procedures. The majority of updates relate to issues identified by staff and code users during implementation over the past year, or looking ahead to future applications.

Jeff Niten, Community Development Director, presented the Ridgefield Development Code Updates.

Chair Carnell opened the hearing at 7:12pm.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Darren Wertz - resident

-Would like the language refined where it states 'high quality architectural materials'. Would like it to be more specific as to what kinds of high quality materials are acceptable.

-The Downtown variance moving from 20% to 40% is a good idea as long as we're not overstepping fire access requirements. Suggested adding language to allow an extra 20% variance as long as there is Fire Approval.

Chair Carnell closed the hearing at 7:14pm, turned over to City staff to answer questions.

Commissioners' questions and comments:

-Agree with the need to refine the language on high quality materials.

MOTION:

COMMISSIONER BUSH MOTIONED TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF THE UPDATES TO THE RIDGEFIELD DEVELOPMENT CODE TO CITY COUNCIL. COMMISSIONER HAUGEN SECONDED.

It was discussed that the motion should state whether the adjustments brought up in tonight's meeting be included in the recommendation to Council.

COMMISSIONER BUSH WITHDREW FIRST MOTION.

COMMISSIONER YOUNG MOTIONED TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL TO CITY COUNCIL WITH THE AMENDMENTS DISCUSSED. COMMISSIONER BUSH SECONDED. UNANIMOUS VOTE.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None

STAFF REPORTS - [7:18 PM](#)

Jeff Niten, Community Development Director - Last year we processed over 150 Land Use applications. We expected less Land Use applications in 2018 and more permits for Building but Land Use applications haven't slowed down. We took in our 81st Land Use application of the year; we're at a higher pace than we were last year.

FROM THE COMMISSION

Commissioner Haugen - none

Commissioner Young - attended last month's Port of Ridgefield meeting

Commissioner Bush - None

Chair Carnell - None

CHAIR CARNELL MOTIONED TO EXCUSE COMMISSIONER FLYNN. COMMISSIONER BUSH SECONDED. UNANIMOUS VOTE.

ADJOURN - [7:20 PM](#)

Yonya Deshiell

Jason Carnell

Minutes Acceptance: Minutes of Jul 11, 2018 6:30 PM (CONSENT AGENDA)

**CITY OF RIDGEFIELD
PLANNING COMMISSION**

MEETING DATE: August 01, 2018

ITEM:

AGENDA ITEM TITLE: Freeway Scape

SUMMARY/BACKGROUND:

One of the items on the Community Development work program for 2018 is the design and implementation of regulations defining the appearance of Ridgefield's freeway frontage along Interstate 5. Staff has been working diligently to research various options, and are presenting the options to Planning Commission for a discussion to determine what items are preferable.

STAFF CONTACT: Jeff Niten, Community Development Director

ATTACHMENTS: Freeway Scapes_research (PDF)

General Findings

Summary of various standards used for the land adjacent to a freeway. These results are from reviewing municipal code from over fifteen various cities.

Freeway Scapes

Buffers

- Few cities require a standard buffer along Freeway Frontage. These vary from 10 ft to 25 ft with variations of dense screening and fencing.
 - The average buffer along commercial and industrial typically ranges from 10 ft - 15 ft (Residential Areas would require a larger buffer)
 - Some have a general buffer for all public right of ways, such as an 8 ft buffer along property frontage
 - One city requires a general planting plan of one tree per 25 ft of abutting property line, with no specified buffer
- Most cities do not have specific standards for buffers adjacent to Freeways. Decisions are based on the adjacent land use.
 - Residential zones requires a wider buffer, often up to 25 ft, with dense 100% sight obscuring screening
 - Industrial zones requires a buffer that is narrower, typically up to 15 ft, than residential but the screening provides more of a softening effect
 - Commercial zones typically have the smallest buffer, ranging from 8-15ft, with a screening that is meant to highlight the important features of the location.

Feedback from Planners:

When asked what worked well and what didn't work well, the most common answer received was that larger buffers were often superfluous, and could be reduced down to 8 ft - 10 ft. If there was a larger buffer they would often reduce it for developers.

Other Planners from Cities who do not have specific standards for Freeway frontage mentioned the use of SEPA to require larger buffer standards to help with mitigation for sound and visual impacts when needed.

Screening

- Few cities have required screening standards for property abutting the freeway
 - A typical standard is considered a "Visual Buffer", not completely screening the adjacent uses, but softening the visual impact
- Other cities' screening standards vary with the adjacent land use

- Any residential land use adjacent to the Freeway requires a “Dense Barrier”, occasionally also requiring fencing (brick or some other solid material) or sound wall
- Industrial uses typically require something that acts more as a “Visual Barrier”
- Commercial uses often have less stringent requirements and have screening that is considered to be a “Filtered Screen”

Feedback from Planners:

Cities with no specific freeway frontage also mentioned the use of SEPA to require a stricter screening standard for uses that had harsher noise and visual impacts.

Planners also commented that certain types of screening can create areas for nuisance behavior to occur, and that the biggest issue with vegetated screening is the upkeep and maintenance.

Materials

- Planting materials primarily consist of a range of Evergreens and Deciduous trees and shrubs
 - Some Cities have a requirement of 30-50% Deciduous trees
 - Each City has their own standard of planting height and maturity height
 - The use of Native and Drought Tolerant Plants is always recommended

Planting Patterns/Intervals

- Cities often require planting intervals ranging from 25-30 ft on center
- Few Cities specify having trees planted in triangular patterns to help give a natural look
- Staggered or offset patterns are also encouraged

Other

- Some cities have requirements for facades, signage, and building orientation directed towards the freeway
 - Building Design Guidelines require consistency with Architecture and building facade landscaping
 - The use of green walls, green roofs, rain gardens, and bioswales is encouraged in some locations with buildings adjacent to the freeway

Feedback from Planners:

Planners noted that it is important to keep in mind what the intended purpose is for screening and buffering. Often commercial uses are adjacent to the freeway and can be used as an visual attraction. One planner suggested that incorporating architectural and landscaping design standards for buildings that can be viewed from the freeway can help create a more inviting look.

Recommendations

Freeway Scapes

The land adjacent to the I-5 is currently zoned either Employment or General Commercial. The north west side of the freeway is currently undeveloped and has the potentiality of becoming an important landmark for Ridgefield.

Screening that will soften the impact of the adjacent uses but still allow for important features to be highlighted is important.

- This could range from a “Visual Buffer” which is not 100 percent sight-obscuring; or
- A “See-Through Buffer”, which is intended to provide visual separation from uses; and
- Additionally adding a requirement for architectural treatment along walls that can be viewed from the Freeway.

Having a standard buffer will help create consistency along the I-5 Corridor.

- Because there currently isn’t any zoning for residential uses, a larger buffer would be unnecessary
- After getting feedback from other planners, it seems that a 10- 15 ft buffer would be fine

Staying consistent with the landscaping materials used already:

- Use of native and drought tolerant trees and shrubs
- Mix of Evergreen and Deciduous trees
- Use of plants that will provide coverage year round

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Ridgefield Washington

Ridgefield, Washington, currently the fastest organically growing city in the state, is facing a large wave of new development. The population is expected to reach nearly 25,494 by 2035. With the influx of people moving to the city, changes are looming in the near future. A growing city will come with more robust needs, requiring more amenities, houses, and attractions. With the new development coming to the city of Ridgefield, new standards may be needed in order to assure that the character and charm of the city stays in place.

Ridgefield’s municipal code has no standards that specifically address land use adjacent to the Freeway. The purpose of this paper is to review other cities’ municipal codes across Washington State to identify their current policies pertaining to this topic.

This project analyzes other cities’ municipal codes for land use adjacent to the freeways. Of particular interest are the standards for buffers, including width, the kinds of screening used, particular planting

patterns, and suggested materials. In addition to looking into the landscaping and buffers, building facade design standards will be addressed. City planners will be invited to share their thoughts on the code.

Over 15 cities' municipal codes have been reviewed to seek both similar and unique standards that pertain to the two projects, regardless of the size, location and comparability to Ridgefield. They are adjacent to I-90 or I-5 and typically range in population from 20,000 to 100,000.

Freewaysapes Research Project

As Ridgefield continues to grow, more employment and commercial opportunities will come. The freeway corridor is surrounded by commercial and employment zoning. Since most development will occur here, special attention needs to be given to the overall look of the area. Ridgefield currently does not have any standards that directly address the land adjacent to the freeway and its development. As the first look and impression that people get when they come to visit or are just driving by, the area and its landscaping should be inviting and attractive. Having standards that continue to reinforce Ridgefield's character and identity are important in preserving the small hometown essence.

Bellevue

Located to the east of Seattle, Bellevue, Washington has a population of over 140,000. Although far larger than Ridgefield, this booming city was once a farming community and still has many neighborhoods that maintain that small town character.

Bellevue has code that specifies what landscaping shall be done adjacent to freeway corridors.

1. Section 20.20.520.F Site Landscaping
2. Section 20.25L.040 Design Standards in OLB-OS Districts

Bellingham

Located just an hour South of the U.S border, Bellingham is a college town that has character. The city has a population of over 85,000. The city's love for nature can easily be spotted by just driving through the city. Bellingham does have standards for land use that is adjacent to the freeway.

1. Section 20.12.030.C.5, it states the Freeway trees must be planted every 25 feet along abutting property. This allows for decent screen cover.
- 2.

This was the only part in their landscaping code that pertained to the project. They also included code regarding freeway signs and what those standards are.

Brian Smart, a planner who works for the City of Bellingham gave some feedback regarding the code that relates to this. Brian stated that if it were up to him he would have design standards for architectural treatment along any 'blank walls', which can include materials, green-walls, accent lighting (no up-lighting) and landscaping. He also noted that maintenance is key, the wall of trees that is in place with the current code can become a nuisance over time. He also mentioned that it can become a target for nuisance behavior as well. He suggested using our local CPTED Officer to help with landscaping that

can be a deterrent to such behavior. Lastly, Brian suggested that when trying to write design standards for areas like this, the adage of “Pictures says 1,000 words” holds true, it’s better to show designers/architects/developers what you want rather than describe it.

Des Moines

This city is located south of Seattle, with the Puget Sound to the east. The body of water makes this comparable to Ridgefield in terms of geography. With a population just over 30,000, Des Moines might be similar when it comes to predicting what Ridgefield will look like in the future.

Des Moines currently has municipal codes that address land adjacent to the freeways.

1. Section 18.195.140, Landscaping adjacent to freeways requires a standard buffer of 25 feet within all zones with few exceptions, and a type II landscaping strip. The type II buffer isn’t 100 percent sight-obscuring. The details are provided in the code.
2. Section 18.125 H-C Highway Commercial zone; which has specific requirements for building setbacks and heights for structures located near the highway

Ellensburg

Located on I-90, Ellensburg is a smaller city with around 19,000 residents. With a population that is a little closer to what Ridgefield’s is currently, and what they might be experiencing here in just a few short years, Ellensburg is a good example of what Ridgefield may look like. The only difference that really separates the two cities is the geography of both. Ellensburg is typically faces more severe weather when it comes to heat in the summer and snowfall in the winter.

Ellensburg doesn’t have any code that clearly dictates what should be done with land adjacent to I-90.

Laura Wilson, a planner from the City of Ellensburg noted that any landscaping or building standards would depend on the zone and ultimate use of a property.

Everett

Located north of Seattle, Everett is a larger town with a population of over 100,000. While the size of the city might not be able to be comparable to Ridgefield’s, the location of the city and geography have similar aspects.

Everett is one of the few cities that explicitly has code that dictates what to do with land adjacent to the freeway. The standards require that there is a minimum 10 ft type II buffer. The type II buffer acts as a see-through buffer that is composed of a mix of evergreen and deciduous trees.

1. Section 19.35.090 Landscaping adjacent to freeways

Federal Way

Located south of Seattle and north of Tacoma, Federal Way is a mid-size city with a population of around 95,000. Ridgefield and Federal Way may not have many similar aspects (population, location between cities), but it is still important to look into what requirements this area has.

Federal Way doesn't have any code that specifically correlates with the land use adjacent to freeways. Depending on zoning, there are some requirements for landscape buffer and screen type. Generally there is a type III landscaping along all public rights of way and the buffer varies with use.

1. Section 19.125.050 Landscaping types
2. Section 19.125.060 Landscaping by zoning districts
- 3.

Becky Chapin, an Associate Planner for the city of Federal Way, noted that in general the City does not have specific codes for landscaping standards adjacent to freeways, however in past development projects they have required additional landscaping/trees and sound proofing for buildings using SEPA to mitigate for noise impacts.

Fife

Fife is a smaller town

They don't have any code that directly addresses the land adjacent to the freeway. They do have general zoning requirements and buffer requirements that can be applied. There are buffer requirements for certain categories with additional requirements regarding the type of material that is used, and spacing.

1. Section 19.64.120 Buffer Requirements

Issaquah

Issaquah's municipal code does not have a general standard landscaping adjacent to a freeway, however they have landscaping standards that correlate to the specific land use designation. Additionally, there is a section that requires any blank wall that faces a public right of way to be landscaped.

1. Section 18.12.135 Addition landscape requirements for blank walls abutting public right-of-way and retaining walls
2. Section 18.12.060 Schedule- Landscape by type and land use district

Lacey

Lacey, Washington, located north of Olympia and South of Tacoma, is a mid-size city, with a population nearing 48,000. Whereas size separates the two, analyzing their current municipal code provides insight into Ridgefield's potential future.

At the moment, Lacey doesn't have code that directly specifies what to do with the land adjacent to I-5.

1. Section 16.80.050 Types of landscaping
- 2.

Neil Tabor, an assistant planner for the City of Lacey said that there isn't additional landscaping requirements for freeway adjacent projects. The general standard used is an 8 foot type II buffer. He noted that the approach worked well with very few exceptions. It allows flexibility without taking up an additional stretch of land which could be suited for other uses. This landscaping is a mix of a moderate density of shrubs, conifers and sometimes deciduous trees that are used for a softening effect. He noted that some developers may choose closer to a type I buffer depending on the land use.

Lakewood

Lakewood, Washington, is located north of DuPont and south of Tacoma. The city itself is pretty large and holds around 60,000 residents. Surrounding a few bodies of water, this area has similar aspects that can be compared to Ridgefield.

Currently, Lakewood has some code that is related to the land use adjacent to the freeways.

1. Section 18A.50.241.16.(k) lists standards adjacent to the highways. This section doesn't specify certain buffers and materials, but rather it describes the general look that is desired.
2. Section 18A.50.420.A gives landscaping standards in subsection 16. It A minimum 15 foot wide buffer is required.
3. The type of landscaping buffer is determined by which zone the freeway is adjacent to, as described in section 18A.50.430.

Andrea Bell, an associate planner for the City of Lakewood, commented and said "I'm not sure if I agree with the purpose for an extra setback/increased landscape buffer for properties adjacent to the freeway. Typically there is already significant freeway right of way separating the freeway from the property line and thus it seems a little superfluous to require extra buffers 15 ft in width. I would probably change this and allow a smaller buffer 8-10 feet in width. Many times we let applicants reduce that buffer anyway."

Lynnwood

Lynnwood, Washington, is a mid-size city located north of Seattle. With around 38,000 residents, Lynnwood can be comparable to what the City of Ridgefield might look like in the future.

The City of Lynnwood doesn't have municipal code that directly addresses land use adjacent to the freeway. They don't have any specific landscaping standards either.

Marysville

Marysville sits north of Seattle with a population of 67,000. The geography of this city is pretty large, and might be able to be compared to Ridgefield's when it comes down to residents per acre. Residential density is comparable to that of Ridgefield.

Marysville's municipal code addresses SR-9 fencing and landscaping design options. Options for the properties that line SR-9 include first, a 10 foot wide landscape buffer with fence as well as a five foot deep 15 foot wide setback in the fence every 60 feet. The second option would be to have a 20 foot wide landscaping buffer with a dense vegetative screen.

1. Section 22C.120.150 SR 9 fence & Landscaping Design Options
2. Section 22C.120.120 Required landscape buffers
3. Section 22C.120.110 Descriptions of Screens and Landscape types

Moses Lake

Moses Lake, located off I-90, has a population of around 22,000. This smaller size city is more comparable to Ridgefield's in terms of its size, and being located around bodies of water. Moses Lake Municipal code tabulates specifically the type of landscaping and buffer to be used with certain zonings.

In general the landscaping ranges from type I to type III depending on if it's a more pedestrian friendly area or used for manufacturing of some sort. The buffers also range from 10'-20', also depending on the zoning. The landscaping screen required for each of these would either be a full screen or a filtered screen. The goal is to block incompatible uses.

1. Section 18.57.040 Specific Requirements
2. Section 18.57.050 Landscape Buffers - Types and Descriptions

Mt. Vernon

Mt. Vernon treats the freeway scape like any other street frontage, and there is no specific standards for Freeways. The buffer varies with what land use the street is adjacent to and can range from 15 ft to 5 ft. Trees shall be planted at maximum 30 ft apart, with 60 % coverage in two years, and ground coverage no less than 40 %.

1. Section 17.93.020 General Site Landscaping

Olympia

Olympia, Washington's Capital, has a population of just over 51,000. The city itself is fairly dense, but still has some unique characteristics that can be compared to Ridgefield.

Olympia's Municipal code has standards that directly relates to the landscaping adjacent to the freeway corridor. The code describe a 10 foot minimum landscaping buffer with a specific combination of trees. The section did not explicitly state what kind of screening, but this is determined by the zone.

1. Section 18.145.020 Landscape Adjacent to freeways
2. Section 18.36 landscaping and Screening
- 3.

Nicole Flloyd, a Planner for the City of Olympia discussed the code as being hard to read, but didn't address if it worked well or not.

SeaTac

SeaTac, population of nearly 29,000 is a city that will be comparable as Ridgefield grows. Landscaping adjacent to Freeway rights-of-way dictates that the residential and commercial development will have different standards. Residential will have a buffer of 25 feet with type I landscaping, but the buffer can be reduced to 10 feet with the installation of a sound wall. For commercial development, there will be a minimum buffer of 10 feet and type I landscaping. Industrial zoning isn't specifically addressed, possibly because there is no industrial zoning next to the freeway.

1. Section 15.445.120 General Landscape requirements
2. Section 15.445.110 Types of Landscaping
3. Section 15.445.260 Landscaping adjacent to Freeway rights-of-way

Tukwila

Tukwila's municipal code does not have any standards that are directly related to land use adjacent to the freeway. However, they do have landscaping standards that are dependent on what zone they are in.

1. Section 18.52.030 Perimeter and Parking Lot landscaping Requirements by Zoning District

Tumwater

Tumwater is located South of Olympia and has a population around 22,000.

Tumwater did not have code that specifically related to land use adjacent to the freeway.

After speaking with David Ginther, a long range planner for the City of Tumwater, he confirmed that they don't have any specific code regarding the land use adjacent to the freeways. However he did mention that they generally require the most dense landscaping buffer between incompatible uses. He also mentioned that there was a potential use of SEPA to require more of a landscaping buffer and that it would have to have a supporting reason.

Vancouver

Vancouver does not have a specific standard for the land adjacent to the freeways. Landscape buffers are dependent on adjacent land uses.

1. Section 20.925.030 Minimum landscaping and Buffer Setback Standards

**CITY OF RIDGEFIELD
PLANNING COMMISSION**

MEETING DATE: August 01, 2018

ITEM:

AGENDA ITEM TITLE: Boat and RV Storage Standards

SUMMARY/BACKGROUND:

One item on the Community Development work program for 2018 is the development and implementation of design standards for Boat and RV storage uses. Staff has extensively researched options and opportunities within Washington and other jurisdictions to determine what might be appropriate for Ridgefield. Staff is presenting this research to facilitate discussion regarding appropriate standards for these types of uses.

STAFF CONTACT: Jeff Niten, Community Development Director

ATTACHMENTS: RV and Boat Storage Facilities_research (PDF)

General Findings

Summary of various standards used for the land adjacent to the freeway and RV and Boat Storage Facility. These results are from reviewing municipal code from over fifteen various cities.

RV and Boat Storage Facilities

Buffers

- Buffers for storage could vary with adjacent land uses
 - Most cities have a minimum 5ft buffer paired with dense 100% sight obscuring screening (especially for outdoor storage)
 - If storage is adjacent to Residential uses that buffer increases, sometimes up to 15 ft

Screening

- Any outdoor storage requires a dense screening barrier
 - Often fencing is included with a minimum height of 6 ft

Feedback From Planner:

One planner noted that there is a challenge with vegetated screening fulfilling the 100% screening requirement. There were issues with the trees and shrubs not showing sufficient growth to establish the desired 100 % visual barrier with required buffer.

Location

- Where they are permitted
 - Certain Commercial Areas (typically where there is less foot traffic)
 - Often permitted as an accessory use
 - Often required to be indoors
 - Industrial/Manufacturing Areas
 - Outdoor storage areas are often permitted
 - Can be indoor or outdoor
- Any storage area, if it exists, is typically required to be located in the back of the property away from public viewing.

Other Standards

- Many Cities require that the building associated with the storage facility be consistent with the Community Design Guidelines and Architectural Standards to make it more pleasant looking

Other Notes:

- Very few cities have specific requirements for RV and Boat storage facilities, rarely are they defined in the listed definitions or listed under permitted uses. They are often categorized as self-storage facilities, mini-storage facilities, or warehousing

Feedback from Planners:

Planners often noted that any storage facility was not much of a nuisance, and with the right landscaping and architecture blend into the setting. Certain standards for lighting (no up-lighting, maximum wattage) help to make them less of a nuisance.

Recommendations

RV and Boat Storage Facilities

- Define what RV and Boat Storage Facilities are
 - Either provide a section on where they are permitted; or
 - Include them in other parts of definitions such as outdoor storage
- Create Outdoor Storage Standards
 - A dense barrier with fence 6' high
 - 5 - 10 ft buffer (increase if adjacent to residential area)
- Indoor Storage Standards and building standards
 - Building Architecture Standards consistent with Design Guidelines already in place
 - Perimeter buffer for building could be 5- 10 ft
 - Visual Buffer, not 100% sight-obscuring
- Lighting
 - Stay consistent with Ridgefield's lightening standards - no up-lighting; only shielded lightning, Limited or no lighting during evening hours
- Location
 - Permitted only in Employment Zone

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Ridgefield Washington

Ridgefield, Washington, currently the fastest organically growing city in the state, is facing a large wave of new development. The population is expected to reach nearly 25,494 by 2035. With the influx of people moving to the city, changes are looming in the near future. A growing city will come with larger needs, requiring more amenities, houses, and attractions. With the new development coming to the city

of Ridgefield, new standards may be needed in order to assure that the character and charm of the city stays in place.

Ridgefield's municipal code has no standards that specifically address land use for RV and boat storage facilities. The purpose of this paper is to review other cities' municipal codes across Washington State to identify their current policies pertaining to this topic.

This research project analyzes other cities' municipal codes for particular standards regarding land use with respect to RV and boat storage facilities. Questions will involve categorization as something other than RV and boating storage, screening and buffering standards, requirements for being either fully enclosed or outdoors, and requirements for facility location. City planners are asked to share their thoughts on the code and how well it works, what doesn't work about it, and what changes they would make.

Over 15 cities' municipal codes have been reviewed to seek both similar and unique standards that pertain to the two projects, regardless of the size, location and comparability to Ridgefield. They are adjacent to I-90 or I-5 and typically range in population from 20,000 to 100,000.

RV and Boat Storage Research Project

Bellevue

Bellevue's standards for code that might pertain to RV and boat storage are vague. Although not explicitly stated categorically, land use charts indicate that such facilities can be permitted in the Light Industry and General Commercial areas (20.10.440). The general landscaping section states that if the storage is outside, screening from public right-of-way with type 1 screening on all sides is required.

Bellingham

RV and Boat storage isn't specifically defined, but where it would be permitted there are certain requirements. Outdoor storage adjacent to residential property must be screened, and not visible. Where it is permitted there are a few regulations listed in the zoning table, they require a dense barrier, and lighting that is facing downwards.

1. Section 20.00.130 Puget Neighborhood table of zoning Regulations

Des Moines

Des Moines' code doesn't address RV and boat storage facilities directly, they do have outdoor screening standards and specify where such activity could occur.

1. Section 18.195.060 Landscaping of storage areas
2. Section 18.195.360 Landscaping of parking facilities
3. Section 18.195.400 Type III buffer description

Outdoor storage must be screened by building or fence, with a type III landscaping. Each zone also has specific landscaping required. These kinds of buildings are permitted in PR-C, T-C, and H-C zone for Des Moines. The standards may vary slightly for each zone, but are consistent with requiring high quality materials, and maintaining a similar architectural pattern with adjacent uses.

Ellensburg

Ellensburg does not have a specific definition for how an RV and Boat Storage Facility would be categorized. Their current code mentions that mini-warehousing (mini-storage), light industry, and heavy industry could potentially include this type of storage facility and is permitted in certain industrial areas and community centers (must be fully enclosed). A type C buffer with 6 foot depth is required for parking areas, but there was no other mention of outdoor storage areas.

1. Section 15.310.040 Permitted uses
2. Section 15.320.040 Form and Intensity Standards table for non-residential
3. Section 15.570.040 Landscaping Types
4. Section 15.570.050 Landscaping Site Design Standards
- 5.

Laura Wilson, a planner from the City of Ellensburg mentioned that the code for this type of project would vary on where it is permitted. Any building and landscaping requirements would be dependent on which zone it is located in, and what specific kind of use. She noted that for this use the buffer would most likely range from 10-15 ft.

Everett

RV and boat storage is permitted only in the Business and commercial district. For display areas, internal parking lots do not need to follow the standards that are usually required, but this must be clarified with planner. The outdoor screening can vary depending on what use is adjacent to it, but the standard is a 10 ft buffer with type III screening (unless located next to residential area).

1. Section 19.41.100 Outdoor use, Activity and Storage
2. Section 19.06 Development standards (17)(21)(24)
3. Section 19.35.050 Landscaping type and definitions
4. 19.35.080 Outdoor display and off-street parking area landscape requirements

Federal Way

RV and Boat storage wasn't explicitly defined in Federal Way's code, however the did provide information regarding parking facilities. These areas could only be located in the Commercial Enterprise areas. A 5 ft buffer of type I landscaping screening is required for any outdoor storage areas, and there are certain restrictions on buffers when located to certain zones, and where the storage area may be located.

1. Section 19.125.060 Landscape requirements by zoning district
2. Section 19.125.070 Parking lot landscaping
3. Section 19.125.170 Commercial and Industrial Uses
4. Section 19.240.020 Warehouse - Distribution- Storage facilities - Truck stops= automotive - emissions testing standards

Fife

Fife's municipal code states that a mini-storage facility may provide for recreational vehicle storage, and additional standards for that kind of facility are listed in the code.

1. Section 19.68.055 Mini-storage Facility
2. Section 19.48.060 Performance Standards in Industrial District
3. Section 19.64.120 Buffering Requirements

Issaquah

RV and Boating storage isn't explicitly defined, this could potentially be categorized as self-storage.

1. Section 18.07.527 Self-storage facility standards
2. Section 18.12.060 Schedule - Landscape types by land use district
3. Section 18.12.070 Schedule - General requirements by landscape type
4. Section 18.12.110 Additional landscape requirements for outdoor storage

Lacey

Lacey's municipal code regarding RV and boat storage can be complicated, with a number of steps.

1. 16.40 Light Industrial
2. 16.43 Industrial District

Neil Tabor noted that RV and Boat storage standards would depend on the zone that would allow that use, however generally they would need a 8 ft buffer with type II landscaping along the site perimeter and 5' buffer of type II along the building walls at a minimum. If the site was located next to a residential district the buffer would increase to 15 ft and type I landscaping. He noted that where self-storage is allowed there is no outdoor storage permitted.

He mentioned that their current standards push self-storage out of zoning districts with a pedestrian influence or that should be set aside for much more important uses, rather than being used up as essentially dead space with limited vehicular traffic, no pedestrian traffic, little positive effect on surrounding properties and little economic benefit to cities. Our aesthetic standards for districts that do permit RV and Boat storage do a good job of requiring them to occupy internal spaces and coupled with our commercial design standards prevent rows of parked vehicles on open lots and seek to add some architectural character from prevent the any town usa commercial strip aesthetic.

Lakewood

Lakewood's municipal code allows RV and boat storage in Commercial districts (C-2 zoning, C-1 as a conditional use) that specifically permit it, this would be considered level 2 storage. It is also permitted in Industrial areas (I-1, as a level 1 storage facility. All of which promote consistent architectural design standards and landscaping standards, following the community design standards that are set forth.

1. Section 18A.50.170 Outdoor storage and Commercial Yard Surfacing Standards
2. Section 18A.50.420 Landscaping Standards
3. Section 18A.30.560 Development Standards - Commercial Zoning Districts
4. Section 18A.30.660 Development Standards - Industrial Zoning Districts

Feedback from planner: Andrea Bell : Overall, I think our code section pertaining to the RV/Boat Storage and Commercial yard surfacing is fairly solid. The paving requirements assist us with protecting against pollution discharge into the group and assist in implementing development standards that may not otherwise be implemented. Additionally, the landscaping section which discusses the solid barrier landscaping for storage areas works well because it helps prevent blight but it also flexible for the applicants. The only thing I would change about this code section (commercial yard surfacing section) would be to place it in a different section of our code because sometimes it gets overlooked where its located. I may also add in some additional details regarding screening alternatives as well as expand the definition to include a wider array of commercial/industrial storage use types.

Lynnwood

Lynnwood's municipal code doesn't directly address RV and Boat storage, however it does address self-storage facilities which may include RV/Boat storage. This type of use is permitted on General Commercial Zoning and Industrial, which each have their own development standards. In general, this storage must be enclosed, and if it was outdoor storage where permitted it must be fully screened.

1. Section 21.46.119 Limitation on Uses
2. Section 21.46.210 Additional Development standards
3. Section 21.50.150 Performance Standards
4. Section 21.50.210 Additional Development standards

Marysville

Marysville has some code that is specific to storage areas, however RV and boating storage facilities weren't defined. No specific description for a use such as this makes it difficult to find out where it is permitted, and if this type of use must be completely, partially, or not enclosed.

1. Section 22C.120.160 Screening and impact abatement
- 2.

Angela Gemmer mentioned that RV and boat storage facilities where permitted would be subject to the screening standards listed above and mentioned that one of the challenges is getting sufficiently tall vegetation to adequately screen whatever is stored. Another challenge is finding vegetation that can grow both tall and dense while fitting within a 5 foot area. An aspect that is nice about the existing buffers is that they don't generally take up a lot of land. If she were to change one thing it would be in MMC Section [22C.120.160](#), Screening and impact abatement, is to require a 6-foot tall fence when there is a Type L1 landscape buffer to enhance screening from grade level to 6 feet (presently the code only requires it for the Type L2 buffers).

Moses Lake

RV and Boat storage is not defined or categorized, so reading between the lines has to be done when trying to find development standards. In certain commercial zone (C-2, C-1A) storage is permitted, certain Industrial zones (L-I, H-I, MLIP)

1. Section 18.30.030 Allowed Uses Commercial
2. Section 18.30.050 Development Standards Commercial

3. Section 18.30.110 Outside Storage Commercial
4. Section 18.40.030 Allowed Uses Industrial
5. Section 18.40.050 Development Standards Industrial
6. Section 18.40.110 Outside Storage Industrial

Mt. Vernon

RV and Boating facilities don't have any specific code, however according to the city planner they would be permitted in light industrial and manufacturing areas. Code in this area requires that 10% of the gross site be landscape, with a landscape strip abutting all street frontages (either 5 or 10 ft wide depending on zone). All outdoor storage must be screened as well.

1. Section 17.60.050 Storage Yard Requirements

Olympia

Olympia does not directly define how RV and boating storage facilities would be categorized, however when speaking with a city planner from the City of Olympia, they said the storage facilities would be outdoor and require screening, which could vary with the different kinds of adjacent uses.

1. Section 18.36.060 General Requirements
2. Section 18.36.160 Commercial Landscape requirements
3. Section 18.40.060 General Standards

SeaTac

RV and boat storage was not specifically defined in their municipal code, it could fall under self service storage, which is permitted in some commercial and Industrial areas (CB, CB-C, RBX, I). Which all have specific building and design standards, and design requirements with the intent that there is a consistency in architecture, and high quality buildings and landscaping that is visually pleasing.

1. Section 15.445.210 Landscaping standards chart
2. Section 14.445.110 types of landscaping

Tukwila

Tukwila's municipal code does not specifically address what RV and Boat Storage Facilities standards. There are some standards for Screening of outdoor storage. In the table of permitted uses self-storage facilities (must be indoor), outdoor storage, and vehicle storage, which are permitted in industrial (light and heavy), and some commercial areas.

1. Section 18.52.040 Screening and Visibility
2. Section 18.52.030 Perimeter and Parking Lot Landscaping Requirements by Zone District

Tumwater

Tumwater does not specifically address what RV and Boat Storage facilities would be. They do have general standards for outdoor storage buffers, which would apply to where RV and Boat storage would be permitted.

1. Section 18.47.050 Types of Landscaping

Vancouver

RV and Boat storage isn't specifically outlined in Vancouver's municipal code. However when speaking to a city planner they said it would fall under Self-Service storage.

1. Section 20.9255.070 Buffering, Screening and Open Storage