7/22/20 Sequoia Norton Site Port Gardner Neighborhood Meeting

Agenda Items

1. Welcome from Fred Safstrom, Housing Hope CEO

Fred thanked everyone for attending and described how participants could ask questions. He noted that this meeting is being recorded.

2. Working Timeline

   a. Today, Housing Hope submitted an amendment to its Re-Zone and Consolidated Plan Amendment request to the City of Everett’s Planning Department. Fred noted that the plans and images viewed at this meeting are reflective of what the agency submitted to the City.
   b. Next, this development will be considered by the City’s Historical Commission. If approved:
   c. This development will be considered by the City’s Planning Commission. If approved:
   d. This development will be considered by the City Council. If approved:
   e. Housing Hope will begin assembling funding for construction, with a goal of completing financing in January 2022.
   f. Construction is projected to begin in summer 2022.
   g. Construction is anticipated to last approximately 12 months, with occupancy in summer 2023.

Fred noted that the Historical Commission, Planning Commission, and City Council will all be public meetings with ample opportunity for public comment. Approval by each body is required for this development to move forward. Fred noted that even though the application has been submitted, there are still many opportunities for design refinement and the feedback given here and in the future will be addressed as fully as possible.

3. Neighborhood Advisory Committee Process

Fred thanked the 13 members of the Neighborhood Advisory Committee, who have shaped this development. Housing Hope desired to co-create this development with the neighborhood, and this group of volunteers from the Port Gardner Neighborhood has met regularly since January to work with Housing Hope staff and Designs Northwest Architects to refine the site plan and building design. Fred noted that parking and traffic were of particular interest to the Committee, and the current design reflects an increased number of on-site parking spaces and also on-street parking stalls along Norton intended to discourage speeding on that block. The goal is for all residents to be parking on-site so that no cars spill out into the surrounding neighborhood. The Committee was also concerned that building design be consistent with the historic character of the neighborhood, which was also of prime importance to Designs Northwest Architects. Fred also noted that this design is retaining the mature trees along Norton.
4. **Presentation by Kim Williams, Designs Northwest Architects**

   a. **Site Plan**
      
      i. Site design includes seven single family homes, three multifamily buildings (5-12 units each), and one block of five attached townhomes with parking underneath. There are a total of 44 units (96 bedrooms) and 53 on-site parking spaces.
      
      ii. Kim noted that the single family lots will remain R-1 Zoning with the Historic Overlay and that Housing Hope is requesting that the easternmost two-thirds of the site be re-zoned to R-3 and that the Historic Overlay be removed from that area.
      
      iii. Vehicle access to the site is from Grand and flows up a sloped driveway to the parking lot at the center of the site. This driveway will also include an adjacent pedestrian access path.
      
      iv. There are multiple on-site recreation amenities, including a half-basketball court-sized sport court, youth play structure, and toddler play structure.
      
      v. There are two pedestrian paths from Norton to Grand on the north side of the site. One is a staircase for the public and the other is a ramp for residents to use with strollers, bikes, etc.
      
      vi. There is a public pocket park in the northwest corner of the site. The pocket park will include a picnic area and bench or two with specialty landscaping and lighting. There will also be a buffer fence to screen the public area from the residential area.
      
      vii. The pedestrian pathway near house #6 is also a view corridor with no buildings to preserve the view from Norton all the way through to the trees on the east side of the site.
      
      viii. Multifamily Building A includes a community room, offices, laundry, and other administrative space on the first floor.
      
      ix. The site also includes a service animal run area, smoking area, and trash recycling/enclosures.

   b. Kim presented four 3-D Renderings of the view of the development from Norton, beginning at the northwest corner of the site and walking south.
      
      i. The single family homes are designed to be consistent with the surrounding neighborhood. The architects studied the neighborhood and pulled commonly-occurring elements, such as hip roofs, gables roofs, porch shed roofs, shed and gable dormers, as well as front porches and rear door access. The single family homes will be staggered from the street, so they will not be all exactly in a line. These houses will also be architecturally unique; there will not be seven identical houses in a row. The design also breaks up the exteriors with windows and/or doors on all sides and the buildings have various features like outriggers/roof brackets and pergolas/trellises to further break up the massing of the buildings.
      
      ii. The single family homes will help to screen the multifamily buildings so those are more difficult to see from Norton. There will also be 6 ft. tall
solid wooden fencing between the single family homes to block the view of the parking lot.

iii. Kim highlighted the pedestrian pathway from Norton into the site in front of the townhomes. This area is not a designated park, but it would be wide and nicely landscaped to encourage pedestrian access and community. Based on Advisory Committee feedback, house #6 will also have a side porch along Norton so that façade will be more visually interesting.

iv. The single family homes will be raised up to the sidewalk level, and the existing four-foot drop will be pushed to the parking lot area to further sink the parking and multifamily buildings into the site.

c. Kim presented several 2-D Elevations of the exterior building designs.
   i. The same quality of construction and finishes will be carried around all four sides of the buildings.
   ii. Kim highlighted the design features that the team included to add historic character to all buildings, including window/door trim, siding, picket railings on porches and staircases, outriggers/roof brackets, broken gables, trellises/ pergolas, etc.
   iii. For the multi-family buildings, the design priority was breaking up the massing of the buildings, including the roof using gables, and making sure that there weren’t any bare walls. The staircases to access the upper floors also all face inward, so that the staircases will not be visible from either Norton or Grand.

4. Questions/feedback from attendees

   i. Is this plan on your web site?
      a. Yes, it is on our website at www.housinghope.org/eps

   ii. When will the additional parking on Norton be approved by the City?
      a. We do not know yet.

   iii. How does the provision of parking compare to Code Requirements?
      a. Code requires 34 spaces, and this design includes 53 spaces.

   iv. Will the smoking area be covered?
      a. Yes, it will be covered.

   v. Why the two fences on either side of the north public pedestrian pathway? Feedback to make the south fence more transparent so that people can be seen along that pathway for safety. There was also feedback to not have chain link fences if possible.
      a. This was designed in efforts to balance site security for the residents, safety of the sport court area, and clear boundaries so that the neighborhood spaces are for use by the public only. Designs Northwest appreciates the feedback on fencing materials.
vi. How many people would be able to live in the community?
   a. The best indicator of this is the number of bedrooms, which is 96.

vii. What are your plans for light shielding for surrounding homes?
   a. There are general standards in the industry to not have light pollution beyond the boundaries of the site. All the lights will be shielded to maintain safety and security while also minimizing light pollution for neighboring properties.

viii. What is staff’s responsibility?
   a. Housing Hope will have two sets of staff on site: Property Management and Family Support Coaches. Property Management staff will be responsible for lease-up of the site, maintenance, and maintaining a peaceful community by assisting in resolving any conflicts among residents or other neighbors. Family Support Coaches meet regularly with residents to address the issues that led to their poverty and homelessness. The agency also has specialty staff who assist with children and parenting support as well as Education, Employment, and Training staff who help parents achieve career pathway employment.

ix. What would the multi-purpose rooms be used for?
   a. Resident meetings, including the Resident Council that contributes to creating site rules and processes, in addition to classroom space for College of Hope adult life skills courses and a children’s play space for use during rainy weather and for childcare while parents are participating in College of Hope courses.

x. What are your plans for noise abatement from the public areas/sports courts/pocket parks? Will there be a “closing time” for those areas like we have at the public parks?
   a. Housing Hope is sensitive to noise complaints from both the residents of the development and surrounding neighbors. On-site Property Management staff are responsible for addressing those complaints. The public pocket park is designed to be a passive area, so we do not anticipate noise complaints originating there.

xi. Will there be a kitchen for cooking classes for the parents in the multi-purpose rooms?
   a. We have not talked about that yet, but Housing Hope has incorporated a teaching kitchen in its last two sites, so we anticipate that we will be able to include that here. Teaching cooking and healthy eating is very beneficial for our residents.

xii. Why are you requesting that the Historic Overlay be removed for part of the development?
   a. The current Historic Overlay requirements were designed only for single family homes. In order to construct multi-family buildings within the Historic Overlay, Housing Hope had two options: either work with the City to create new design standards for multi-family buildings in Historic Overlay Zones or ask that the Historic Overlay be removed from a portion of the site. The first option would have been a broader process that would have impacted all Historic Overlay Zones.
throughout the City. Housing Hope felt that this process would have been very difficult to do because the specific historic character of each overlay would have required individual consideration. Housing Hope chose to request that the Historic Overlay be lifted from the multi-family portion of the site and alongside that also impose a Development Agreement along with the Overlay Removal that would require the agency to maintain the historic architectural requirements as much as possible. The multi-family buildings will carry through many of the same historic design elements as the single family homes that will remain in the Historic Overlay Zone. So even though this proposal asks for the Historic Overlay to be lifted, it is not a blank check. The Development Agreement will ensure that Housing Hope adheres to historic design standards whenever possible. The City Historic Commission will need to approve this.

xiii. Will there be swales there [behind the single family homes]?
   a. Designs Northwest has not gotten to the storm water treatment plan for the site yet, but where will pursue opportunities for low-impact storm water treatment whenever possible.

xiv. Will the parking lot be impervious or porous asphalt?
   a. That is still to be determined, based on fire truck loading requirements. The technology is beginning to exist to achieve this, but there are a lot of factors in play.

xv. Is the landscaping maintained professionally?
   a. Yes, all Housing Hope sites have landscape maintenance contracts with professional companies.

xvi. There are number of folks in the neighborhood that are concerned with open space. I support this proposal and we have to have more empathy for people in need. How can we better pitch it to folks in the Port Gardner neighborhood that just want an open space?
   a. Housing Hope has also heard that concern and understands the value of open space. This particular site is not zoned as a park or open space, it is zoned for development. Early in this process, the City was offered the opportunity to acquire this land for use as a park and they declined. As Everett’s population increases, there is pressure to limit urban sprawl by creating housing within cities near workplaces and amenities, which reduces traffic and commute times while discouraging pushing residents out into the rural areas of the county. Doyle Park is not far from this location and local schools also have open undevelopable land. However, this particular site is zoned for development, and so there are benefits to building housing on those types of sites.

xvii. Feedback to keep the Neighborhood Advisory Committee going, even after the development is built, so the community can give feedback on the site’s operations.
Further feedback from another person that she would like to be involved to support the residents so these children can succeed in school.

a. Fred thanked the Committee and agreed that it will continue to exist for the foreseeable future. In fact, this Committee has been so successful and improved the site design so much that Housing Hope plans to replicate this in future developments.

xviii. Would all 44 units, including the seven homes in the Norton frontage, continue to be designated for homeless families with students in the Everett School District, or will the Norton houses be given a different goal? If it will continue to be for ESD families, how would Housing Hope determine who gets an individual unit versus who gets a house?

a. Yes. First priority will be for families with students at Sequoia High School, and Jackson Elementary will also be high priority. After that, units will be filled with students throughout the Everett School District, with neighboring districts’ students eligible if absolutely necessary. All the units will be treated the same. It’s natural that those families who are first on the list will choose the single family houses. Then when each individual unit turns over, it will be filled with a family that matches the unit size.

xix. One neighborhood rumbling is that with HUD rules this project could end up having no EPS students on site years down the road. Is this true?

a. No, that is not true.

xx. What the total cost of the development? What year would it be built if approved?

a. We don’t have the cost yet. Our approach is to design a project that is the best fit for this neighborhood location as possible, and then it is up to Housing Hope to raise the money to build it. The $1 per year lease on the land gives us significant up front savings and we anticipate that we will put the amount that we’re saving in the cost of the land back into the project design. Current goal is construction in 2022 with opening in summer 2023.

xxi. Will this project be built in phases — apartment units or houses first, or all simultaneously, once the money is raised?

a. No, the General Contractor will decide the sequencing of building, but none of the units will be occupied until all are complete.

xxii. What kind of on-site supervision will there be?

a. There will be 24-hour on-site supervision that takes different forms at different times. There will be heavier staffing during the day and we will have a Resident Manager who will be eyes and ears on the site 24-hours a day. This will give our residents a person to contact all the time and also be a person who can contact Housing Hope for support at any time.
xxiii. When Fred said the number of bedrooms would equal the number of the population, so does that mean parents have separate rooms or should we add at least 25-30 more people to the 96 number?
   a. We have not calculated that out, but we do not anticipate that the number of residents will not be far off from the number of bedrooms. Housing Hope will calculate the HUD maximum for the number of persons who can live on site, but the reality will be much lower.

xxiv. Would there be any transportation such as buses to drop people off for the multi-use buildings or is that just for residents?
   a. No, the services in the multi-purpose room are for residents of this development only. That is actually restricted by the zoning. This is not a commercial facility, so no one can come from off site to participate in services here. We have thought about school buses taking children to and from school, and we’re hoping to have those buses pick up and drop off on Grand.

xxv. Are there oversights in place to keep families from moving others into the units with them?
   a. Each lease will identify the occupants of the unit. They are allowed to have guests, as we all are in our own homes, but residents are not allowed to have unauthorized people living with them. We can and do enforce that regularly. Our Family Support Coaches frequently meet with families in their apartment, so our staff have a good idea of who is living in which unit and can enforce those rules.

xxvi. What happens to a family when it no longer has a student in school? Would they be forced to leave, especially if they would then become homeless?
   a. Housing Hope has an informal commitment from the Everett Housing Authority to provide Project-Based Vouchers for these units. These vouchers allow residents to pay 30% of their income in rent, and the Housing Authority pays the difference. After one year of residency, families can choose to receive an Exit Voucher, which would allow them to secure an apartment in the private marketplace and still only pay 30% of their income in rent. Our expectation is that once students graduate, that those families would choose to move to another location of their choice. That is very consistent with Housing Hope’s experience.

xxvii. I’d like a follow up on the max density question. Do you have an average family size for your developments and what would be the HUD maximum for this project?
   a. Housing Hope will provide these answers on the website.

xxviii. Do you think that single family homes should go to families with disabilities who have issues accessing other units with stairs? How many units will be available for people with physical disabilities?
a. There are two types of accessible units: Dedicated and Convertible. There is a Code requirement for a ratio of both two bedroom and three bedroom units. Designs Northwest is looking into which specific units would be most conducive to accessibility and the design will meet the Code requirements. There are also accessible paths of travel throughout the site.

xxix. Would the families be allowed to have pets?
   a. Not pets, but the families are permitted to have service animals. In Housing Hope’s experience this is not uncommon, so there is a service animal run area on site.