

NEWS

Kirkland City Council approves Parkplace zoning changes



Parkplace in downtown Kirkland — Image Credit: Reporter File Photo

by [TJ MARTINELL](#), Kirkland Reporter Reporter
Feb 18, 2015 at 11:32AM

Editors note: The Kirkland Reporter went to press prior to the Kirkland City Council meeting on Tuesday night. During that meeting the council approved the zoning changes recommended by the Planning Commission.

The Kirkland Planning Commission has voted to recommend to the City Council several changes to zoning at Parkplace and amend the Kirkland Parkplace Master Plan and Design Guidelines.

The commission's vote on Jan. 29 sent the proposals to the council, which took up the issue at a public hearing at their Feb. 17 meeting.

The new master plan, submitted in [October by Talon Private Capital](#), would require several zoning changes to allow for more residential space.

Right now, the zoning code limits residential development to 10 percent of the allowed gross floor area for the master plan, which Talon is asking to be increased to 30 percent. The plan is to build 300 units, 10 percent of which would be affordable housing.

This will be offset, they have said, by reducing the size of the overall site from the 2.75 million square feet permitted by zoning to 1.2 million. The new master plan reduces the overall size by 34 percent and the amount of office space by 50 percent from the original master plan. It also sets aside two acres of open space and plazas.

Another proposed change is to have the movie theater count as 20 percent of the total retail/restaurant use required instead of 10 percent. According to city of Kirkland Senior Planner Angela Ruggeri, they need to have 25 percent of office square footage, and many residents requested the change so that the developer would keep movie theater. Ruggeri said the revised master plan will have fewer but taller buildings, some of which will be up to eight stories, the maximum allowed by zoning (115 feet).

The other proposed change would permit a drive-thru facility to be built 6th Avenue. A drive-thru bank currently sits on Central Way but was grandfathered in after the zoning code was altered to prohibit it on the property, according to Ruggeri.

Ruggeri said the reduced size of the master plan means there will be less of a traffic impact than the previous version which is reflected in the new State Environmental Policy Act addendum (SEPA).

It is the first attempt at redevelopment of the site since 2010, when Touchstone's master plan was approved by the city. The project was ultimately stopped due to financial reasons and the property sold.

Jim Neal and Bill Pollard, the principals of Talon, said their new master plan is intended to complement the surrounding community, taking advantage of amenities already present while providing an urban center for people to live, work and play in the same area.

Pollard said that the master plan was deliberately designed not to maximize the total density allowed by zoning in order to create a more intimate feel and reserve open space for community events such as farmers markets.

Pollard said that with Peter Kirk Park adjacently located, the apartments will work well for young or small families. The plans also call for walkability in order to reduce parking and traffic issues, and the hope is to take advantage of the Cross Kirkland Corridor.

Although there will be less office space, both Pollard and Neal said the redevelopment would allow growing companies to take root in Kirkland rather than leave once they outgrow their space.

TJ MARTINELL, Kirkland Reporter Reporter
tmartinell@kirklandreporter.com or 425-822-9166

Find this article at:

<http://www.kirklandreporter.com/news/292432521.html>

Check the box to include the list of links referenced in the article.