

Memo

Normal Neighborhood Plan Working Group 9/04/2014

TO: Normal Neighborhood Plan Working Group

FROM: Brandon Goldman, Senior Planner
Brandon.Goldman@ashland.or.us

RE: Normal Neighborhood Plan
Housing Concentration Discussion.

Summary

On July 10, 2014, the Normal Neighborhood Plan working group began a discussion regarding the housing concentrations proposed within the plan and each member individually developed a map to identify potential plan alterations. The group requested that staff assemble a “joint” map, using these maps provided by the group. This joint map will allow the group to examine the impacts of such changes on properties within, and adjacent to, the plan area, evaluate changes in the number of housing units that could be accommodated, and further discuss the integration of transportation, land use, and open space within the neighborhood.

Staff has created a Working Group Alternative Discussion Draft map (dated 9/04/2014 -attached) which addresses the items of common interest as reflected in the July 10 working group minutes:

- **Transition from south to north in density (i.e. higher densities closer to Ashland Street and amenities)**

The plan’s highest density area initially designated as NN-03 (15 units per acre) has been reclassified as NN-2 which would be comparable to the City’s existing R-2 zoning (low-density multifamily at 13.5 units per acre) and has been relocated to be adjacent to the railroad tracks in the southern plan area.

The southwest corner of the plan area, the 13 acre -7-lot Greene Subdivision, has been retained as a single family residential zone given the prior development of the area as large lot single family homes. An evaluation of the future re-development potential of the Greene Subdivision area indicates that a density of 4.5 units per acre in this area could accommodate up to 35 additional lots without necessitating removal of existing residences, provided access issues were addressed through the installation of new local streets.

- **Maintaining the East Main Street view plain (i.e. lower densities along East Main Street)**

The originally proposed NN-03 (15 units per acre) for the East Main Street frontage of the Baptist Church property has been reduced to a 7.2 units per acre NN-1-3.5 zone in the Working



Group Alternative discussion draft map. This “suburban residential” zone, assigned to both this property and the Latter Day Saints church property to the east, is consistent with the property’s existing comprehensive plan designation. All other properties fronting on East Main Street have been classified as NN-1-5, which would be a single family zone consistent with the City’s existing R-1-5 zone.

- **Moderate density levels in the interior of the plan**

The Working Group Alternative discussion draft map shows the interior of the plan area zoned as NN-1-3.5, which would be comparable to the City’s R-1-3.5 zone with 7.2 units per acre as a base density. The draft Normal Plan’s NN-02 zone was established with a base density of 10 units per acre, therefore this density change would constitute a reduction in the number and type of housing units that could be achieved.

- **More grid-like streets for better connectivity**

The street network reflected in the joint discussion map establish a more rectilinear grid that the original “modified grid” shown in the original proposed map. The street grid presented is largely consistent with the map presented to the working group on August 21 for discussion purposes. Some key elements include:

- A reduction in meandering street paths
- Greater alignment of east-west local streets.
- Elimination of one shared street adjacent to the center wetlands
- Normal Ave to extend only to the Tempe Emek Shalom parking area, and would not connect to East Main St. A multi-use path for pedestrians and bicyclists is proposed to connect this street terminus to East Main Street.
- A newly proposed East/West connection from the existing Normal Ave. to the middle school in the south west corner of the plan area is included. Additionally north south road running along the eastern boundary of the middle school property has been presented for consideration.
 - These newly proposed roads would enable the future development of the large lot single family homes (Greene Subdivision) at single family densities consistent with the City’s existing R-1-5 zone.

- Members of the working group voiced concerns regarding an off-set presented in the street grid in the vicinity of this new east west connection.

In further evaluating these potential intersections there is a distance of 125’ between the centerlines of the two streets. An off-set of this distance is consistent with Ashland’s existing



minimum standards regarding street alignment (18.80.020.B2).

- At the time of annexation and development of a property the relocation of streets and paths to accommodate physical constraints, design efficiency, access management, and engineering recommendations is anticipated and permitted in the draft Normal Neighborhood Plan land use code. Refining a road's location by less than 50' in any direction requires no amendment to the plan, however if the relocation is greater than 50' then a minor amendment would be necessary. The removal of a multi-use path or street would trigger a major amendment to the plan so the issues of access and connectivity could be examined fully.

- **Use of zoning language more typical of the rest of the city's zoning labels**

As noted in the sections above the joint discussion map presents zoning classifications that have densities comparable to existing City zones (NN-1-5 = R-1-5; NN-1-3.5 = R-1-3.5; NN-2 = R-2). However, Staff suggests retention of the "NN" preface designation to explicitly identify properties within the district. The draft Normal Neighborhood Plan overlay district land use code coordinates the land uses, street framework, conservation areas, building types, and general design standards for the area. Staff believes that recognition of the district within the zoning labels is essential to ensure development occurs in accordance with the Normal Neighborhood Plan which sets clear expectations for housing types, storm water management, and existing policy objectives.

- **Neighborhood Serving commercial uses.**

A market analysis of the plan area completed by Leland Consulting Group showed that it is a weak location for retail. Traffic volumes in the area are currently low and the projections based upon the plan indicate that traffic volumes will continue to be low – even when the neighborhood is fully developed. The draft plan shows the potential for approximately 500 dwelling units so small scale retail and commercial space, such as a coffee shop, corner store, daycare center, or growers market will eventually be feasible. Such neighborhood serving businesses would be located within a limited commercial overlay area.



In the event neighborhood serving commercial uses are to be incorporated into the district staff believes an overlay zone adjacent to East Main Street and the new Normal Collector is preferred to provide the visibility, traffic volumes, and ready access needed for such mixed-use development. For consideration the Working Group Alternative map includes such an overlay for discussion purposes.

- **Maintaining of open space**

This item was discussed by the working group on July 24th. The discussion map presented has retained the Open space/Conservation Areas originally identified in the proposed plan based upon the 2007 Local Wetland Inventory (LWI), FEMA 100 year floodplain, Ashland Floodplain, and associated riparian and wetland protection buffer areas.

- Following the development of the original plan, in the last month the City has received two wetland delineation reports that indicate the extent of wetlands on the covered properties is not as extensive as was identified in the 2007 LWI. These full technical reports are available online at www.ashland.or.us/normalplan, and the summary information provided in these reports is provided as an attachment.

Plan Alternatives, housing unit comparisons

The gross estimates of potential housing units in the table below are intended to provide an “apples to apples” comparison to help the Working Group evaluate differences between the alternatives. These estimates are calculated using the “base density” of the underlying zone only, and do not factor in reductions due to pre-existing developments, or added density potential through application of eligible density bonuses.

	Existing Comprehensive Plan 1989			Proposed Normal Plan 3/11/2014			Working Group Alternative 9/04/2014		
	Zone	Gross acreage	Base units	Zone	Gross acreage	Base units	Zone	Gross acreage	Base units
Single Family Residential	R-1-5 (4.5 du/acre)	51.5	231	NN-01 (5 du/acre)	31.2	156	NN-1-5 (4.5 du/acre)	26	117
Suburban Residential	R-1-3.5 (7.2 du/acre)	42.4	305	NN-02 (10 du/acre)	31	310	NN-1-3.5 (7.2 du/acre)	36	259
Multi-family Residential	NA	NA	NA	NN-03 (15 du/acre)	5.3	80	NN-2 (13.5 du/acre)	5.5	74
Open space Areas	NA	NA	NA	various	26.4	0	various	26.4	0
Gross housing unit potential	536			546			450		

ATTACHMENTS:

- Working Group Alternative Discussion Draft map dated 9/4/2014
- Working Group Members individual concept maps (presented 7/04/2014)
- Wetland Report summary – Mahar Homes
- Wetland Report summary – Magnolia Homes
- Future Traffic Report summary (SJC Alliance dated 11/19/2013)

