TO: Mayor Marchione and City Council

FROM: Rob Odle, Director, Planning and Community Development, 425-556-2417

Colleen Kelly, Assistant Director, Community Planning, 425-556-2423

Lori Peckol, AICP, Policy Planning Manager, 425-556-2411

Jeff Churchill, AICP, Senior Planner, 425-556-2492 Thara Johnson, Associate Planner, 425-556-2470

DATE: September 17, 2013

SUBJECT: STAFF REPORT: 2013 REDMOND COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND

ZONING CODE MISCELLANEOUS AMENDMENTS

REQUESTED DIRECTION

This staff report summarizes recommended miscellaneous amendments to the Redmond Comprehensive Plan and Redmond Zoning Code. Staff requests that the Council provide direction regarding review of the recommended amendments, including any issues or questions.

BACKGROUND

The City of Redmond completed a rewrite of its development regulations in April 2011. These regulations are known as the Redmond Zoning Code (RZC). In December 2011 the City also completed a periodic update to its Comprehensive Plan. Since that time, City staff and customers have noted a number of errors or areas of ambiguity for correction or improvement. Staff has maintained a working list of items to address, and those items are what constitute this package of amendments.

PLANNING COMMISSION REVIEW

The Planning Commission reviewed this package of amendments during August 2013 and unanimously recommended approval of the entire package at its August 21, 2013, meeting. The Planning Commission Report dated September 11, 2013, was delivered to Council members separately.

The Planning Commission held a public hearing on August 21, 2013, during which two people testified. Tom Hinman, representing Sustainable Redmond, testified in support of a number of the amendments, and also requested consideration of other changes, such as to establish a tree advisory group and expand the notice radius. These topics are discussed below. Mike Fernandez, representing Washington Cathedral, asked about the nature of the proposed rezone on NE 124th Street. Staff confirmed that the rezone only affects right-of-way and not private property.

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During its deliberations the Planning Commission discussed the following issues:

Public Outreach Generally

Recognizing that the miscellaneous amendments touch on some notice procedures and improvements in community engagement, the Planning Commission expressed interest in discussing the issue of public outreach generally. In particular, the Commission is interested in community engagement that the Planning Department undertakes for development projects, neighborhood plan updates, and other long-range plan updates. To that end staff is working to assemble the information the Commission requested, such as typical outreach practices, in order to have a full discussion of planning-related outreach strategies. The Commission is particularly interested in ensuring that outreach happens in a systematic and proactive fashion.

Unit Lot Subdivision

The Commission recommended extending unit lot subdivision provisions indefinitely. During its discussion the Commission considered the history of the provisions and how they have been used. Unit lot subdivision provisions have been in effect for eight years, with the majority of projects using this code occurring in the last two years, largely in Downtown. The Commission considered recommending another time-limited extension, but ultimately supported staff's recommendation to extend the provisions without a sunset date.

Master Planned Development Neighborhood Meetings

The Commission supported staff's recommendation to require a second neighborhood meeting for Master Planned Developments (MPDs) that are reviewed under a Type V process. Currently, only one neighborhood meeting is required. The requirement would apply to MPDs larger than three acres in Overlake and larger than 10 acres in Downtown. There was some concern that new issues might still come to light late in the process, but the Commission concluded that the existing requirement for an early neighborhood meeting would allow most issues to be aired at a time when something might reasonably be done to resolve the issue. In addition, the Commission concurred that holding a second neighborhood meeting later in the process adds value by providing an additional participation opportunity in advance of the public hearing.

Community Advisory Group for Trees

In response to public testimony, the Planning Commission discussed the idea of instituting a "tree board." The Commission did not make a formal recommendation, recognizing that it is exclusively within the Mayor and Council's purview to establish boards and commissions. During its discussion the Commission asked about the need for such a board in Redmond, what role tree boards play in communities that have them, and how such boards function in the context of the Tree City USA program (which requires a tree board or department). In Redmond, which has been a Tree City USA city since 1999, the requirement for a tree board or department is fulfilled by the Parks Maintenance Division, which is responsible for the care of publicly-owned trees in Redmond. A complete staff response with examples from other communities can be found in the Planning Commission Report.

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Notice Radius

The Planning Commission discussed expanding the typical public notice radius to 800 feet. In the end, the Commission concluded that it would be better to consider the notice radius as part of a broader discussion about public outreach (described above). The Commission decided not to recommend changing the notice radius at this time.

These issues are described more fully in the Planning Commission Report delivered separately.

CITY COUNCIL REVIEW

City staff briefed the City Council Planning and Public Works Committee on this item at the committee's September 10, 2013, meeting. One key question for the committee was whether the committee desired to hold a study session on this package. The results of that briefing were not available at the time this memo was completed.

NEXT STEPS

If desired by the Council, staff will schedule a study session to review this amendment package. If a study session is not desired, staff will bring forward an ordinance for the Council's consideration at a future meeting.