

Fountain District Urban Village – Meridian Street Meeting 10/8/2009

General Comments

Parking:

- It is currently a hassle for businesses to meet the parking requirements
- Once a building is built, the parking requirements make it difficult for the building use to change (for example, office to retail would require more parking spaces)
- On-street parking is currently well used.
- On-street parking makes visibility difficult and creates a safety issue when pulling out of a driveway
- How can we deal with commercial parking overflow to the residential areas? Could there be a Residential Parking Zone established (like the areas near WWU) ? Could we build a Residential Parking Zone into the plan if it becomes an issue?
- What about Residents using the business parking? Or other businesses using neighboring business parking lots?
- Lots of curb-cuts (driveways) currently exist that use up on-street parking spaces
- Trade-off of fewer curb-cuts means alley access and more alley traffic?
- On-Street parking is efficient
- Don't like businesses using lots in the Single Family areas as parking lots
- Can we "collect" parking somewhere? Haggen property? Have a "shared parking" space somewhere?
- What is the reality of shared parking and is structured parking a feasible option?
- On-street parking signs? Two hour limit? Meters? Would meters and time limits push the parking further into the non-restricted residential areas?
- Parking behind Fountain Drug Store is underutilized and could be a potential spot for "shared parking"
- The majority of people were in favor of having reduced parking requirements for new construction

Drive-Thru's:

- Don't want to see more drive-thru's
- Allow the existing drive-thru's to stay, but do not allow more
- Drive-thru's increase and encourage alley traffic and noise

Alley Traffic:

- How do we slow alley traffic? Speed bumps? One-ways?
- Right now they are used not only by cars, but also by a lot of pedestrians
- Buzz-thru Coffee has a nice wall barrier that helps reduce noise and provides a buffer. Just north of this between Buzz-thru and Magas, there is lots of pavement and there is no noise buffer.

- Corner alleys are difficult to provide a buffer for
- Don't think of alley as inevitable traffic area
- What about alley's as trails? Bike routes?

Height:

- Setbacks vs. "step" backs
- Veterinary is a good example of a "step" back. It is pleasant to look at from the alley and not overbearing to the residential side
- Step backs should also include some landscape and screening
- What about safety if you provide too much screening?
- Don't want a wall of green, but something to soften the edges/transition to residential
- Lot sizes are very constraining for building
- Can we make height limit less than 35'?
- Some people like the spaces between the buildings and do not want to see that go away. Don't want a continuous wall of building along a block
- Determine step backs and setbacks based on type of building you are next to
- We are already part of an "urban village," and the height limit now is 35'
- Some people were okay with heights over 35' in some areas, but want to emphasize that we need to look at not just the height, but the appropriate mass of a building
- A majority of the people at the meeting were okay with increasing height at the corners of Meridian and Broadway
- A majority of the people at the meeting were okay with increasing height at the Hagggen's site.
- A majority of the people at the meeting were okay with a bit of flexibility in height along the middle-core of Meridian Street

General Comments:

- Make Meridian Street more pedestrian friendly, safe and interesting!
- Create a business association. This would increase opportunity for conversations, connections and contacts. Create a business community
- Solutions are needed for the area as a whole...don't just look at individual parts.
- Some residents like the pedestrian traffic on their streets and don't want that to go away.
- What is the duration of the master planning period? 20 years? If it is 20 years, then we can encourage the type of things we see today that we like and keep the focus on existing lot sizes and patterns
- Need more visuals of what 35' building looks like
- What about low-income housing? Affordable housing bonus?