

HPC Comment Tracker as of 1/24/12

Staff responses to questions raised by the HPC at their 1/10/12 meeting re: Fairhaven Design Standards, Development Regulations and Design Review Process

#	Date	Page#	Name	HPC Comment	Staff Response	1/24/12 follow up
1	1/10/12	General Questions from Meeting	HPC	<p>Height:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Does the 'module' height actually allow for an additional floor? Clarify heights. Supply heights based on mean height above sidewalk within 5' of building. 	<p>Table .330 A, Note #7 states: "...A building may be divided into modules and stepped with height measured on a per module basis in response to topography on sloping property."</p> <p>Staff is in the midst of transforming all general height analyses to show the specific method that will be used to determine height in Fairhaven (distance above mean sidewalk elevation within 5' of the building.)</p>	
2	1/10/12	HPC – General Questions from Meeting	HPC	<p>Clarify how Design Review is used on Fairhaven single-family residential buildings:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> If they are on the Local Historic Register? If they are only on the National Historic Register? If they are used for non-single-family uses (for instance, eating establishments in RT-4)? Changes to single-family residential buildings that would remain single-family (additions, new porches, etc.)? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Single-family buildings listed on the Bellingham Local Historic Register (BLHR) will be reviewed using Bellingham Municipal Code 17.90 (Certificate of Alteration) with Chapter 5: Historic Building Rehabilitation. Single-family residential buildings on the National Register are RECOMMENDED to apply appropriate treatments out lined in Chapter 4: Historic Building Rehabilitation New uses for single-family buildings would be evaluated for compliance under Chapter 3: New Construction and Alterations, with recommendation to follow standards in Chapter 5, as appropriate. Single-family homes not on any historic register are exempt from Fairhaven Design Review. 	

3	1/10/12	General Questions from Meeting	HPC	<p>Text Additions/Changes/Explanations</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Include in text that National Register District status could be lost if National register buildings are lost. 2. Will alterations to industrial buildings that may be eligible for historic designation go to the HPC? 3. Note that the Industrial Influence area's emphasis is the pedestrian friendly street edge, and clarify how sidewalks will be required in the industrial area. 4. Do these standards CLEARLY allow parking off- site? 5. Clarify that ceiling height is not the same as use. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Staff will add language to this effect into FNUV Plan. 2. No – unless the Director determines that it is necessary. 3. Staff will add language to this effect into the Design Standards 4. Yes, see section 20.37.350 E. in the draft Development Regulations. 5. Correct, “ceiling height” in BMC 20.37 Figure .330 B is not intended to require a specific “use”. 	
4	1/13/12	P 28	Jim Talbot	<p>Distinction between Standards and Guidelines. You stated this was essentially the difference between “Shall” and “Should”. If so, the following examples of “Should” in the standards might be better in the guidelines, or don’t use that distinction:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Standard: Building materials in and directly adjacent to the HD DRA shall be primarily brick or stone. Stucco, wood and metal may be used in subordinate proportions to masonry. Brick should have a similar modular dimension to that or historic buildings. 	Staff will edit for clarity.	
5	1/13/12	P 36	Jim Talbot	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Standard: Low-profile or recessed mechanical units shall be used on rooftops, and should not be visible from adjacent sidewalks. 	Staff will edit for clarity.	
6	1/13/12	P 37	Jim Talbot	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Standard: Screen a service entrance with a wall, fence or planting. A service area screen should be in character with the building and site it serves. 	Staff will edit for clarity.	

7	1/13/12	P 42	Jim Talbot	4. Standard: Reconstruct the original element if adequate evidence exists. The design should be substantiated by physical or pictorial evidence to avoid creating a misrepresentation of the building's history.	Staff will edit for clarity.	
8	1/13/12	P 45	Jim Talbot	5. Standard: Muntins that divide a window into smaller panes of glass should be either genuine or simulated divided lights on key facades and other highly visible locations. Muntins should have a depth and shadow line similar to originals. 6. Standard: When a new door is needed, it should be in character with the building. This is especially important on primary facades. Do not change the position of an original front door.	Staff will edit for clarity.	
9	1/13/12	P 47	Jim Talbot	7. Standard: The balcony should appear mostly transparent. Achieve solid-to-void ratios with balusters and rails. Glass and plexiglass are not appropriate. 8. Standard: Balconies should be of simple design.	Staff will edit for clarity.	
10	1/13/12	P 52	Jim Talbot	9. Standard: When replacing a porch is necessary, it should be similar in character, design, scale and materials to those seen traditionally. The most important aspects of a replacement design are its location, scale and materials.	Staff will edit for clarity.	
11	1/13/12	P 16	Jim Talbot	The document gives the suggestion that eligible buildings be listed in the Historic Influence area, but not in the Historic District. See 5 on P16: "List eligible buildings on the National, State, and/or Local Historic Registers." Is that an oversight?	This language will be added to the Design Standards on pg. 16	
12	1/13/12	P 29	Jim Talbot	Standard: Imitation or synthetic materials, such as aluminum or vinyl siding, imitation brick or imitation stone and plastic, are inappropriate. But we approved a composite for the BNB	Staff will clarify this language and will provide more detailed guidance re appropriate materials.	

13	1/13/12	<i>General response to public comments</i>	Jim Talbot	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I'm sympathetic to their objections to height limits. I think the 4 storey limit is reasonable. 2. Parking will always be a problem, but can't we be more definite about the expansion of the urban village and define the required parking arrangements for that expansion? 3. There are repeated comments about the speed of the process. Is there a deadline, and if so, why? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Proposed limit is 4 stories along the sidewalk in the HD. In the HI and other areas, up to 5 stories would be allowed with the top (5th) floor having a 15' setback from the sidewalk; and up to 6 stories would be allowed with the 4th and 5th floors having a 15' setback from the sidewalk, and the 6th floor having a 30' setback from the sidewalk. The immediate impression to pedestrians would be to see the 3- or 4-story height at the sidewalk edge. HPC discussion requested on if the 15' and 30' setbacks in HI and other areas are sufficient to provide the 'feel' of Fairhaven. 2. Parking: The parking standards proposed in BMC 20.37.050 are similar to those used in other Urban Villages and are closer to the real parking need of real urban development. Policy language is included in the Draft Fairhaven Neighborhood & Urban Village Plan that addresses future parking demand as it arises. This plan is a Neighborhood and Urban Village Plan, not a parking management system. At the request of stakeholders, no specific management strategies are being imposed at the regulatory level for parking until conditions warrant such a change. Policy references were added to this Neighborhood and Urban Village Plan in regards to future efforts to address the Parking District. No changes to the Parking District are proposed at this time. Studies show parking is not a major problem in Fairhaven at this time. (See also Rod Burton question #45). 3. Staff anticipates final review by the City Council in July of 2012. 	
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14	1/17/12	20.25 P 2	Dave Christensen	2.b.(1), (a) should this be any <u>MAJOR</u> addition....? In item 1. On previous page you say minor additions are exempt.	Minor additions that “do not affect the architectural character of the building and will have minimal detrimental impact on adjacent uses” would be exempt.
15	1/17/12	20.25.030 Procedure P 2	Dave Christensen	A. 1. a Maybe add intent sentence for clarification: <u>The intent is to provide design guidance at the early stage of development prior to unnecessary document/exhibit expenditures to save time and expense for applicant.</u> B. refer to above statement when discussing applicants... <u>option</u> ...for a pre-app. This statement helps defer criticism to city, from applicants, who always say they have spent too much on consultants to be turned down... C. adddimensions, <u>product specifications</u> , or siting...	A. 1. a. Staff will clarify this language and provide more detailed guidance. B. Staff will add language to this effect. C. Staff will add language to this effect.
16	1/17/12	21.10.110 P 6	Dave Christensen	B.4. <u>Design review for projects in residential zones involving increases in lot coverage, density, height or bulk for an allowed residential land use.</u> The use of sf numbers is inviting unintended consequences of building that are 999 SF or 4999 SF. The intent is size and bulk...more form-based issues for the neighborhood. Use that kind of language. Delete any random and meaningless sf numbers. There are ways around these SF numbers to arrive at ugly results for the neighbors.	Staff recommends that no changes be made. Making changes here would affect how design review is conducted Citywide and is outside the scope of this project. However, staff makes note of this comment for any related future Code amendments. One of the primary purposes of thresholds is to provide predictability, and while it is true that additions are designed to be just below a threshold, it is very important to set thresholds at or below where a significant impact would occur.
17	1/17/12	20.37.330 P 10-11	Dave Christensen	B.1. A. 1) ADD: ... <u>for an occupied building</u> . (otherwise, plazas, etc. could not occur)	Staff will incorporate the suggested change with the omission of “occupied” so that unheated garages, storage areas and similar unoccupied spaces are built to the intended height.
18		20.37.330 P 10-11	Dave Christensen	B.1.c.2) a) this whole paragraph should change to match the required height for a residential building within 15’ of a property line. That could occur on adjacent parcel. Why should the standard be less than residential?	Staff recommends that no changes be made. The issue is building form as well as height – the long non-residential wall close to a residence. For example, Land Use Code restricts multi-family developments near single-family zones to 2 stories, which has worked

				<p>B.1.c. (2) b): What is the intent? Similar scale to individual homes on adjacent lands? If so, it should be no less than ONE (not three elements). Delete horizontally, and with should be 4-0-50' to match house lot width. Required color changes prevent use of brick, doesn't it?</p>	<p>well, even though the single-family allows 35' tall buildings.</p> <p>Current Neighborhood Commercial zoning would allow a 35' tall building within 10' of a residentially zoned property "...provided an 8 foot high masonry wall is constructed adjacent to the property line which abuts the residential designated property."</p> <p>The 10' setback area mentioned above often becomes an area of neglect, graffiti, nefarious activity, and a drain on City resources that are called out to respond.</p> <p>The proposed 18' height limit would allow 1-story commercial development up to the property line that 1) is of residential scale in terms of height, 2) eliminates the potential problem area created by a required setback, and 3) allows reasonable light and air to the outdoor space of the abutting residential property.</p> <p>The intent is to provide something other than a flat "blank" wall facing residential uses. The HPC is asked to comment on this issue.</p> <p>Color change allows multiple colors of bricks to be used.</p>	
19		20.37.330 P 10-11	Dave Christensen	<p>B.2.a. (2), transparency should be higher...70% similar to downtown. If intent is to minimize blank walls and activate the pedestrian street environment.</p>	<p>This provision is limited to development in the Marine Influence (MI) and Industrial Influence (II) Areas where more design flexibility is intended.</p>	
20		20.37.330 P 10-11	Dave Christensen	<p>B.2.a. (5) What is minimum area for this use? Just the distance of the reduced setback area?</p>	<p>Correct, the criteria only apply to the wall section(s) that receive a reduced setback.</p>	

21		20.37.330 P 10-11	Dave Christensen	B.3.a. (2) Delete 2000 SF area and replace with an area to not exceed adjacent residential zoned density, height, bulk, etc. The 2000 SF area is too arbitrary and has no meaning.	The intent of this statement is to: 1) preserve the existing residential character by provide incentives to preserve/reuse existing housing stock in this area, thereby reducing tear-downs, and 2) minimize the possibility for large franchise development at the gateway to Fairhaven. NOTE: 2,000 SF is larger than most of the single-family residences in this area.	
22		20.37.330 P 10-11	Dave Christensen	B.3.a. (2) b. Ditto above re: the open space requirement. Should be same as adjacent, or no less.	The proposed 10% open space is consistent with how it is applied citywide in Residential-Multiple zones where office development is allowed.	
23	1/17/12	20.37.330 P12	Dave Christensen	C. 1.b.(3) ; add... <u>unless yard is reduced by Planning Director to meet Optional Setback Regulations.</u>	The Optional Setback Regulations in Draft BMC 20.37.330 B.2. do not apply Residential Transition Area 4 (RT-4). They only apply in the Industrial Influence (II) and Marine Influence (MI) areas.	
24		20.37.330 P 12	Dave Christensen	C. 1.c.(1) (c) -- Why? This guideline should be deleted. Or changed, to allow for flush alignment, that makes sense, and looks better. What is it is ion a sidewalk edge?	This provision would require additions that join 2 or more buildings to be subordinate to those buildings being joined. This is in keeping with the intent to preserve the existing residential character in this area. Please note that this is a Guideline, and other designs that meet the Intent and Standard can be allowed.	
25		20.37.330 P 12	Dave Christensen	C. 1.c.(2) (d) add... <u>or provide an approved equal.</u>	Please note that this is a Guideline, and other designs that meet the Intent and Standard can be allowed.	
26		20.37.330 P 12	Dave Christensen	C. 1.c.(2) (d) This may not always be preferred.	Please note that this is a Guideline, and other designs that meet the Intent and Standard can be allowed.	
27	1/17/12	20.37.340 P 13	Dave Christensen	B. Change to 50% or more of the building area. Using 50% off the assessed value based on valuation is always a difficult, arbitrary and, frankly, faked number. Use something definitive and easy. The building area.	This is standard language in our UV plans. Additional research would be necessary to see if there are more accurate and viable measures of change used by other jurisdictions.	

28		20.37.350 P 14	Dave Christensen	C. 2. ADD.... <u>unless property is in an approved parking waiver district...?...</u>	This does not preclude use of the Fairhaven Parking District or the 10 th Street Parking District as carried over from the current code. (See BMC 20.37.350 A.2.)	
29		20.37.350 P 14	Dave Christensen	C.7. Where does this 10% number come from? We should encourage expansion and/or reuse of historic structures, and make it more economical...change this to 50%, just like the building code.	This is the same code as used downtown. This supports minor interior remodels to add floor area and small additions. Larger changes should supply parking as required by the underlying code. Most of our historic buildings do not have room on their lots for additions, and we have not seen public support for upper floor additions to historic buildings.	
30		20.37.350 P 14	Dave Christensen	E.2.b. Add <u>meet accepted shared parking standards from other organizations...</u>	Staff will revise language for clarity.	
31	1/17/12	20.37.350 P 14	Dave Christensen	G.1. Add.... <u>unless yard is reduced by Planning Director to meet Optional Setback Regulations.</u>	Staff recommends no change. The Optional Setback Regulations in Draft BMC 20.37.330 B.2. are intended for commercial buildings and industrial buildings that are designed with non-industrial uses (office) at the street edge. They are not intended to reduce the setback for parking.	
32		20.37.350 Page 15	Dave Christensen	2.a. Change 2,500 SF to 3000 SF, which is more common retail area maximum that only requires one exit door. Larger requires two.	Staff recommends no change. Proposed language is from Portland Municipal Code 33.266.210 B.1.	
33		20.37.350 Page 15	Dave Christensen	2.b. Why? Delete senior housing. Old people and visitors and staff ride bikes too.	Staff will request consideration by the Transportation Commission .	
34	1/17/12	20.37.350 P 15	Dave Christensen	3.a.(2)(c) ..change ..the main... To <u>...an...</u> (Should be close to any entrance.)	Short term bike parking is intended for visitors. Other entries may be locked/secured and not intended for visitors.	
35	1/17/12	20.37.360 P 17	Dave Christensen	B.3.a.; add.....for every 20 square feet of landscaped area, <u>with a minimum dimension of 36"</u> , and 1 shrub....	Staff will add language to this effect. Five feet (5') is a standard minimum width for a required landscape bed.	

36	1/17/12	20.37.360 P 18	Dave Christensen	C.5. What else is there? The identification sign or cornerstone, has ALWAYS traditionally shown a business, name, date or logo. This should be allowed.	The intent is not to penalize cornerstones and building identification signs that are not intended for commercial use, such as "Waldron". Such signs are proposed to be allowed in addition to any allowed commercial signage.	
37	1/17/12	20.37.360 P 18	Dave Christensen	D.2. Add.... <i>The sign area is the cumulative area of sign that is not transparent to the building face beyond. For example, a channel-letter type sign would include the individual letters only. A flat face, or box-type sign, would include the entire polygonal shape area.</i>	Standard policy applicable citywide is that sign size is determined by boxing out the words and the logos.	
38	1/17/12	20.37.360 P 18	Dave Christensen	D.3. Clarify -- <i>The area is the sign structure face only, not include architectural support feature elements that have no graphics or logos.</i> (Look at new Lakeway center signs)	Yes, see above.	
39	1/17/12	20.37.360 P 18	Dave Christensen	D.8.c. Delete .. <i>"horizontal"....</i> This should be irrelevant and totally dependent on the building design, and sign style.	Staff will revise the language to this effect.	
40	1/17/12	20.37.360 P 18	Dave Christensen	D.8.e. Add.... <i>unless an approved synthetic material matches the aesthetic characteristics of traditional materials.</i>	Staff will clarify this language and will provide more detailed guidance re appropriate materials.	
41	1/17/12	20.37.360 P 18	Dave Christensen	D.8.f. Why can't halo signs be used? <i>Lighting should have "indirect" illumination. For example, the public should see the effect of light, not the source.</i>	The issue here is the modern appearance of the signs in the Historic District. HPC discussion requested.	
42	1/17/12	20.37.380 P 19	Dave Christensen	C.2. <i>Lighting design should meet intent of CPTED guidelines and minimize light pollution with shielded light fixture, while providing safe lighting for pedestrians.</i> Again, the intent is for the public should see the effect of light, not the source.	Staff will edit for clarity.	
43	1/17/12	20.37.380 P 19	Dave Christensen	C.5. This is poorly worded. This prevents indirect uplighting of metal canopies. The intent is to disallow backlit vinyl canopies, so say that: <i>Translucent canopy materials shall not be internally illuminated. For example, backlit , translucent vinyl awnings are not allowed.</i>	Staff will reword and add language to this effect.	

44	1/17/12	<i>General comment re: letters from public</i>	Dave Christensen	Also – re: letters from public --- I do agree with this fellows opinion of the step back. We should not have it in Fairhaven so we match other buildings and maintain the overall density goals in the beginning of this document. But not about the overall height. I better look at that.	<p>Proposed limit is 4 stories along the sidewalk in the HD. In the HI and other areas, up to 5 stories would be allowed with the top (5th) floor having a 15' setback from the sidewalk; and up to 6 stories would be allowed with the 4th and 5th floors having a 15' setback from the sidewalk, and the 6th floor having a 30' setback from the sidewalk. The immediate impression to pedestrians looking up would be a 3 or 4 story height at the sidewalk edge.</p> <p>Staff requests the HPC discuss if the 15' and 30' setbacks are sufficient to provide for the 'feel' of Fairhaven.</p>	
45	1/19/12	<i>General comment re: Fairhaven Design Review</i>	Rod Burton	<p>After reading the comment letters, I think it might be useful to have a map of the Fairhaven Historic District and Influence areas that show the heights of the existing buildings and the undeveloped areas where buildings might be built to the new maximum height limits. Showing the step backs for these hypothetical new buildings would also be useful.</p> <p>Can we get some expert feedback on the energy and parking issues that were raised?</p>	<p>Energy: All buildings are required to comply with the Washington State Energy Code. Higher ceilings were built into Fairhaven buildings to allow more light and air into buildings, and emulate the physical appearance of taller historic floor-to-floor heights in Fairhaven. This issue may change due to discussion of floor-to-floor height.</p> <p>Parking: See Jim Talbot question #13.</p>	