



January 15, 2008

Ms. Helen Roller  
422 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Kirkland, WA 98033

Dear Ms. Roller:

Subject: Proposed Touchstone (Park Place) Development

Thank you for your recent e-mail concerning the Comprehensive Plan private amendment request for redevelopment of the Park Place site. Your correspondence expresses several issues about the proposal by Touchstone to amend the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning for the site. The Touchstone request includes a building height increase from 3-5 stories to 4-8 stories as measured from the grade of 6<sup>th</sup> Street and Central Way and allowance of taller buildings next to Central Way and 6<sup>th</sup> Street. It also includes a building setback reduction from 20 feet to 0 feet on Central Way and 6th Street, and possibly from 10 feet to 0 feet next to Peter Kirk Park. There may also be requests for flexibility in other regulations such as lot coverage. An explanation of the review process for the Touchstone PAR is included in this letter.

Every other year, the City accepts proposals from private property owners to amend the Comprehensive Plan. The City Council then decides which private amendment requests (PARs) will be studied further. The PARs that are to be studied go through a full analysis by the Planning Commission and a public review. The Planning Commission holds a public hearing and makes a recommendation to the City Council. The Council then reviews the recommendation and makes a final decision on whether any changes should be made to the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Code.

In July of 2007, the City Council reviewed the private request by Touchstone and directed staff and the Planning Commission to further study the Park Place PAR. At that time, the Council also passed a resolution which directed the Design Review Board (DRB) to play a role in advising the Planning Commission on this proposal. This was done to take advantage of the contribution that the design professionals on the DRB could make to the review process.

The typical role of the DRB is to review projects for consistency with the design guidelines in the Kirkland Municipal Code and the neighborhood plans and design principles in the Comprehensive Plan. In this case, the DRB will review and provide direction on conceptual development plans submitted by the applicant. The primary issues that the DRB will focus on will be the site layout and building massing.

An environmental impact statement (EIS) is being done for the Park Place proposal as well as for two other proposals located in the vicinity of the downtown (the Altom and Orni PARs). The EIS will analyze the potential impacts of the proposals on land use, aesthetics, transportation, public services, and water and sewer utilities. The end result will be a planned action EIS that is expected to be issued in June 2008. The EIS will be used by the Planning Commission and City Council to help in their decision making process. It is anticipated that the Council will make a decision on the proposal in August 2008.

The City Council appreciates you taking the time to express your concerns and ask questions. We encourage you to stay informed and involved as the Comprehensive Plan Amendments proceed through the required legislative process. We hope that you will attend meetings and address the City Council, Planning commission and DRB during the public comment periods provided at these meetings.

The City's website ([www.ci.kirkland.wa.us](http://www.ci.kirkland.wa.us)) is a good source of information regarding the Comprehensive Plan Amendments and this particular project. The Council, Planning Commission and DRB meeting agendas are posted to the site. You may want to subscribe to the e-mail bulletin to receive updates about this project.

On behalf of the City Council, thank you for your correspondence. Your e-mail and this response will be shared with the entire Council, the Planning Commission and the DRB. If you'd like to discuss your concerns further, please contact Angela Ruggeri, Project Planner at (425) 587-3256 or at [aruggeri@ci.kirkland.wa.us](mailto:aruggeri@ci.kirkland.wa.us)

Sincerely,

KIRKLAND CITY COUNCIL



By Jim Lauinger  
Mayor

cc: File #ZON07-00016