

Planning Commission
Meeting Minutes
July 19, 2016
Approved: kmd



Chair Chris Holland called the meeting to order. Commissioners in attendance: Greg Tisdel, Loren Sand, Richard Jordison, Michael Zelinski, and Alex Lark.

Commissioners Absent: Chris Adams, Kathryn Beck, and Megan Dunn

Staff Present: David Stalheim, Karen Stewart, and Kathy Davis

Meeting Minutes

Chair Holland stated that he would like his testimony on page 3, third sentence down after the close of the public hearing to read that he didn't support the administrative fee as proposed.

Motion: Commissioner Lark made a motion to approve the Jun 21, 2016 meeting minutes with Chair Holland's revision. Commissioner Tisdel seconded the motion.

Vote: Commissioner Lark, yes; Commissioner Zelinski, abstain; Commissioner Jordison, abstain; Commissioner Sand, yes; Commissioner Tisdel, yes; and Chair Holland, yes.

Motion Carried.

Commissioner Reports

None

Staff Comments

David Stalheim, Long Range Planning Manager, stated that there are no meetings in August and that the next meeting is scheduled on September 6. The agenda includes a presentation by Climate Solutions and a discussion regarding Metro Everett.

General Citizen Comments

None

Item 1: State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) Categorical Exemptions

Karen Stewart, Environmental Planner, reviewed her memo dated July 13, 2016 with Planning Commission which addressed categorical exemptions and responded to some of Commission's questions that were discussed at the workshop in May. The memo also addressed public notice and the city's authority to impose mitigation as a permit condition without a SEPA determination. She stated

that State law also allows the City to conduct a SEPA review if something comes up that triggers the need for a SEPA review process.

Commission Discussion

Commissioner Tisdell asked Ms. Stewart what would trigger the SEPA process. Ms. Stewart responded adverse environmental impacts such as noise, traffic, light and glare, and other environmental elements that would require further evaluation of a proposal.

Commissioner Sand asked if 750 cubic yards of fill proposed near a critical area would trigger SEPA. Ms. Stewart responded that if staff felt there wasn't enough information to evaluate the impacts or how the impact would be mitigated through the City's development regulations that would trigger SEPA. She added that typically setback requirements would regulate where the fill was placed in relation to the critical area.

Commissioner Zelinski asked if the decision to conduct a SEPA review for a project that is categorically exempt was a staff call. Ms. Stewart responded that the Planning Director has the authority to make that determination. Commissioner Zelinski asked if that determination was appealable. Ms. Stewart thought that it was.

Commissioner Tisdell asked Ms. Stewart if she knew the reason why the fill exemption threshold for the city of Edmonds was 500 cubic yards. Ms. Stewart stated that she did research the Department of Ecology website and found a letter from the City of Edmonds regarding concerns about fill that might exceed 500 cubic yards in relation to steep slopes and residential development. She added that the City of Edmonds was the only jurisdiction that she knew that had adopted the 500 cubic yards exemption threshold.

Citizen Comments

Angie Sievers, Master Builders Association for King and Snohomish Counties, thanked staff for their work in addressing the categorical exemptions. Ms. Sievers presented some statistics regarding the costs of construction. She stated that last year over 90,000 people moved to the area and only 36,000 new homes were built. Consequently, last year there was an increase of 19% unsheltered family living situations. In the last 5 years, the policy related costs of building a new home has increased 39%. The Master Builders Association is in support of the proposed maximum threshold limitations.

David Tyler, Boeing Company, asked if the proposed categorical exemptions would make any changes in the Planned Action areas. Ms. Stewart responded a SEPA analysis was already completed in the Planned Action area so nothing would change in those areas. The new standards would essentially apply citywide except in the mixed use overlay (MUO) zones along Evergreen Way. The Evergreen MUO zone provides for a residential SEPA exemption threshold at 100 units.

Laura Gurley, 120 West Marine View Drive, stated that the Port of Everett is in support of the categorical exemptions as proposed.

Motion: Commissioner Lark made a motion to close the public hearing. Commissioner Zelinski seconded the motion.

Vote: Commissioner Lark, yes; Commissioner Zelinski, yes; Commissioner Jordison, yes; Commissioner Sand, yes; Commissioner Tisdel, yes; and Chair Holland, yes.

Motion Carried.

Motion: Commissioner Lark made a motion to approve the resolution as presented by staff. Commissioner Tisdel seconded the motion.

Vote: Commissioner Lark, yes; Commissioner Zelinski, yes; Commissioner Jordison, yes; Commissioner Sand, yes; Commissioner Tisdel, yes; and Chair Holland, yes.

Motion Carried.

Item 2: 2016-2017 Comprehensive Plan Docket

Karen Stewart, City staff, reviewed the amendments to the Comprehensive Plan that will be considered during the next year which included two Comprehensive Plan map amendment and rezone requests and 4 Comprehensive Plan text amendments.

Commissioner Sand asked if the supportive housing project addition to the Capital Facilities Element was for a specific project. Mr. Stalheim responded that the funding through Snohomish County has been allocated to the project but it comes with the requirement that the project be included in the Capital Facilities Element. Currently, the funding is an allocation to the City for a project.

Commissioner Zelinski asked if the City can request changes to the Comprehensive Plan after the July 1 deadline. Mr. Stalheim stated that there is nothing in State rules regarding the deadline date. The City has had that deadline date in place so that requests can be processed on a timely basis.

Chair Holland asked if aerials and descriptions of the adjacent properties with possible impacts to those properties could be provided at the next meeting. Ms. Stewart stated yes. Mr. Stalheim reminded commissioners that site specific proposals were quasi-judicial matters so there are no discussions outside of Commission meetings on the site specific proposals.

Commissioner Jordison asked if all the amendments were requested by private developers. Mr. Stalheim responded that the first two amendments were requested by private developers. The text amendments were initiated by the City.

Citizen Comments

Slawek Porowski, Interurban Architects, Seattle, stated that he was representing a local landlord who is interested in upgrading his properties. He appreciated that Everett recognized the need to build taller structures to accommodate growth. He is preparing a site specific request; however, the building that was located on the southwest corner of Oakes and Hewitt was historic which limits the ability to build something that is more modern. There are no incentives to build something different than what was there previously because of the historic nature of the previous building. He stated that he will present conceptual drawings at the next meeting.

Chair Holland asked Mr. Stalheim if he was aware of any development restrictions in that area. Mr. Stalheim responded that the property is located in an historic district in the B-3 zone which provides a number of development incentives.

Item 3: Detached Accessory Dwelling Units

Mr. Stalheim, Long Range Planning Manager, reviewed the staff report with Commissioners. The request is to initiate the code amendment to consider detached accessory dwelling units in Everett's single family zones. He reviewed the questions for consideration, the existing regulations, and images of detached Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU's) with Commission.

Commissioner Sand asked if the images were located in Everett. Mr. Stalheim responded no.

Mr. Stalheim also presented some possible design plans and information on the historic overlay zones where infill dwellings are permitted.

Commissioner Sand stated that some of the pictures presented were well designed and fit into the neighborhoods. He asked if Commission could get a copy of the previous recommendation that City Council considered before Commission initiates the request. Mr. Stalheim responded yes.

Commissioner Jordison stated that he was neutral about the construction of accessory dwelling units but understood the concerns about those types of uses locating in established residential neighborhoods. Home buyers purchase their homes in single family neighborhoods with the expectation that the neighborhood will remain the same. However, there are very nice examples of accessory dwelling units in the historic overlay zone that are well maintained and are designed to fit into the historic character of the neighborhood.

Commissioner Lark stated that he felt millennials have had the roughest time finding affordable housing. The proposed regulations would provide an opportunity for a family to build an accessory dwelling unit to accommodate a college student returning back home. He stated that allowing for detached accessory dwelling units would provide options to create living spaces that would empower family members by providing them autonomy and flexibility. He stated that Commission should consider the code

amendment given the trends and changes to how people live. Commissioner Lark stated that this was a great opportunity to look into the concept.

Commissioner Sand stated that the proposed code amendment would apply to all single family residential zones throughout the City and the consequences of that maybe completely different than the intent.

Commissioner Jordison stated that there are very stately examples of carriage houses and old Victorian servant quarters which are very well done. The sensitivity is in the changing character of a residential neighborhood. He is in support of initiating the amendment to study this further.

Commissioner Lark stated that when he lived in Washington DC there were a lot of accessory dwelling units located where he lived which created richness and depth to the urban streetscape. That type of development also created a passive policing of alleyways. He was excited to start the conversation.

Commissioner Zelinski stated that allowing accessory dwelling units would be a good tool in meeting the objectives of the Growth Management Act (GMA) while still being sensitive to the character of single family neighborhoods. He supported consideration of the amendment.

Chair Holland stated that there are design regulations that could be adopted for accessory dwelling units that could help that type of use blend in nicely with established neighborhoods. He would also support allowing these types of uses in back yard locations without alley access. He supported consideration of the amendment.

Commissioner Sand stated that he wouldn't support initiating until Commission had the opportunity to review the previous information that City Council had considered and tabled.

Commissioner Tisdell stated that he also wanted to review the previous proposal; however, he didn't want to hold the matter up.

Citizen Comments

Mr. Dimas, 2126 Wetmore Avenue, stated that his house was built in 1901. The garage and shop was built in 1998. He has a disabled brother and he would like to add a room above the detached garage and shop; however, the City only allows attached accessory dwelling units in his neighborhood. The addition would maintain the character of the house.

Motion: Commissioner Zelinski made a motion to initiate consideration of the accessory dwelling unit code amendment. Commissioner Lark seconded the motion.

Commission Discussion

Commissioner Tisdel stated that in response to Commissioner Sand's concerns, he would like to begin the process with a discussion about the previous proposal that was before City Council.

Vote: Commissioner Lark, yes; Commissioner Zelinski, yes; Commissioner Jordison, yes; Commissioner Sand, no; Commissioner Tisdel, yes; and Chair Holland, yes.

Motion Carried.

Commissioner Tisdel stated that he would like to have a housing 101 presentation by industry experts regarding Everett's land availability and housing trends. Mr. Stalheim stated that if there are presenters that Commissioner Tisdel would like to hear from, to let staff know so they can arrange. Commissioner Zelinski stated that it probably would be beneficial to have someone or some information from the City of Vancouver regarding their experiences with accessory dwelling units.

ADJOURNED



Planning Commission Secretary

9-7-16

Date



Kathy Davis, Administrative Assistant

9-6-16

Date