

PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES
Monday, February 13, 2017
6:00 PM

Roll Call

Planning Commissioner present: Scott Anderson, Chris Ford, Shawn Van Pelt, Valerie Hoy-Rhodehamadel. Excused Absences: Karen Ashley

Staff present: Ben Shumaker

Community members present: Dave Bennett

Call to order 6:05 PM

Preliminary Matters

1. **Annual Selection of Chair and Vice Chair** ANDERSON commented he is willing to remain Chair, if no other Planning Commission member wants a turn. FORD nominated, VAN PELT seconded the nomination of Scott Anderson as Chair of the Planning Commission. Unanimously approved.

FORD nominated, VAN PELT seconded his nomination of ASHLEY as Vice Chair of the Planning Commission. Unanimously approved.

2. **Chair Selects Public Comment Option #1**
3. **Minutes:** November 14, 2016 and December 1, 2016 Joint Meeting Minutes were distributed for review and comment. FORD moved, ANDERSON seconded a motion to approve the November 14, 2016 and December 1, 2016 Joint Meeting Minutes, as submitted. Unanimously approved.
4. **Public Comment Period** (For items not located elsewhere on the agenda): None offered.

New Business

5. **Planned Unit Developments Kick-Off Report on ZON2017-01 (Residential Growth)**
Based on discussions during the December 1st Joint Meeting between the Planning Commission and City Council, SHUMAKER introduced Planned Unit Developments (PUD) and reviewed the information in the staff report. He discussed the general pros and cons of implementing a PUD program for the City, and for prospective developers. He noted a PUD program allows the City to identify and document what aspects and features the City wants to encourage in new development, such as parking, open spaces, affordable housing, viewshed protection and/or others, while also providing developers with a clear process and a list of deliverables the City would expect in new development proposals. He discussed the differences between the Process and Development Type components of an ordinance.

SHUMAKER went on to review guidance for Development Types as provided in the City's 2013 Comprehensive Plan and said establishing a PUD program will be a good chance to

implement the goals of the Comp Plan.

SHUMAKER briefly explained the processes identified in staff report and explained the more "quick and dirty" approach would be for the City to adopt a general process and evaluate individual applications with loose standards and on a point system, which would give weight to projects which specifically meet established development goals. He commented the downside of this approach is it leaves a lot of unknown factors which might lead to uncertainty that deters developers who are hesitant to invest pre-development costs if they don't know their proposals will be acceptable. He went on to say, establishing some clear standards will prevent those types of unknown scenarios because developers will have set criteria to evaluate their project's probability of success.

ANDERSON commented he wants the City to always maintain options to control development but also be flexible enough to accomplish the goals in the Comp Plan. SHUMAKER agreed development standards should be clear and developers should be able to know when they have checked off action items needed to be successful. There was general discussion about how flexibility may be defined and how to reach density goals.

BENNETT, a local land developer, was invited to speak about his experiences in project development and construction in the City of Stevenson. He discussed his background and experience working with PUD programs in North Bonneville, frustration with the lack of PUD options in Stevenson, and how the process should provide developers the ability to meet needs and goals of the City but also make projects fiscally feasible to undertake.

SHUMAKER asked the Planning Commission to establish a scope of work for the update and a reasonable public participation strategy. There was general discussion about how much additional public input is needed with the Comp Plan goals clearly giving the Planning Commission direction. ANDERSON commented he does not want the process to appear as though the Commission is avoiding public participation. He went on to say the Comp Plan process was lengthy, open to anyone who wanted to participate and the final document was fully vetted by the community. With that as the basis for development type, ANDERSON expressed his belief that the scope can focus on creating a clear and easy process.

HOY-RHODEHAMEL asked how projects would be evaluated and how criteria would be weighed against the Comp Plan, because someone might value wetlands more than affordable housing, and similar subjective viewpoints. SHUMAKER said he would propose different models of evaluation at a future meeting.

ANDERSON asked how lot sizes are evaluated and determined in a PUD. SHUMAKER commented it is a point which works itself out by establishing a density standard which says, no matter the design, the project may have "X" number of lots. Planning Commission reserves the right to indicate lot sizes may be smaller than "X" but no smaller than "X".

ANDERSON asked SHUMAKER if Commissioners had provided enough direction to get

started. After additional discussion, SHUMAKER confirmed his direction from the Commissioners is to make a clear path for Developers to be successful. HOY-RHODEHAMEL asked if developers come in to talk with City staff before submitting projects. SHUMAKER said it's not a requirement but staff definitely encourages pre-application meetings.

BENNETT commented the City can't flush out a PUD too much without removing some flexibility and suggested being clear about certain required items, noting parking as a general example. He suggested implementing a zero lot line ordinance to increase density and provide some flexibility. He discussed working towards a mix of single-family homes and townhouses with their own lot to meet the changing demands of a small town, now and through the coming growth. He suggested the goal should be to document project minimum standards, such as off street parking for example, which encourage developers to come to the City with their proposal and the City has the flexibility to work with them to reach an acceptable project for both parties.

ANDERSON commented he would like to see a list of desired criteria for a project, so developers know right away, what the City is looking for in new developments. Mr. Bennett agreed the PUD is the place to document those items the City and community values and gave examples of open spaces, preservation of viewsheds, blending into surrounding natural features and landscape and connectivity. As an example of the unintended consequences of PUD programs, Mr. Bennett discussed his knowledge of the Island Drive development in North Bonneville. He explained the developer had 32 lots setup for 15 townhouses, but ended up building only five and converted the rest of the lots to individual lots. Now he says a lot of otherwise buildable area is tied up in those green spaces required by the PUD, and now as the City grows, it is without space for new construction.

SHUMAKER commented he feels he has enough feedback from Commissioners to create a draft PUD ordinance. He went on to list the required and optional public involvement strategies presented in the staff report. SHUMAKER noted his duty is to provide enough info for PC to take another step in the process.

FORD commented on the sense of urgency to put a program in place, which makes a "quick and dirty" approach the more obvious path forward. He added the City needs to maintain options to be flexible with developers and communicate the City is being forward-thinking in working with developers. He noted, much of the public participation process was already done through the two years it took to develop, vet and adopt the City's Comp Plan. FORD wants to look at White Salmon and North Bonneville and asked how PUD programs have worked there. SHUMAKER reported he didn't know *how* those program work for those cities, only that they exist. FORD suggested input from those cities would be valuable and Stevenson could take what works, from each of their programs. SHUMAKER commented he has enough feedback to bring back examples of best practices from North Bonneville, Bingen and White Salmon and create a draft document for Commission members to review the general concept and to provide feedback and additional direction.

ANDERSON said he does want to see quick process but repeated, he does not want to sacrifice transparency. He also commented how important the City's narrative is, in presenting the PUD program concept and process to the community. He went on to agree with Mr. Bennett about too many hard rules removes flexibility needed to achieve the desired results. HOY-RHODEHAMEL commented, the formation of the PUD program is implementing the goals of the Comp Plan and doesn't see the need to go through a prolonged public process on this topic again.

BENNETT suggested bringing the public in on individual development proposals, where they can review actual proposals and give feedback which adds true value to the community development discussion.

HOY-RHODEHAMEL asked for legal/liability challenges of implementing a PUD. SHUMAKER commented the state requires the City to have a Comprehensive Plan and discussed a hypothetical case of a developer submitting a proposal meeting specific goals of the Comp Plan but is denied permits to move forward because the City lacked ordinances to allow for the type of construction envision in the Plan. The developer in this case could file a suit to claim the City isn't implementing their Comp Plan. He went on to explain the PUD is not the liability in the scenario but the failure of the City to implement its Comp Plan.

SHUMAKER asked if Commissioners want more public participation. ANDERSON stressed the importance of adequately illustrating how the City is attempting to meet the goals set out in Comp Plan and feels if the message is delivered clearly, opposition will be minimal.

SHUMAKER acknowledged the introduction of terms, cluster-housing development and zero lot lines and said he would bring more information on these new terms at a future Planning Commission meeting.

ANDERSON asked Mr. Bennett where he would vision workforce housing in Stevenson and noted as businesses are moving here and/or growing, there's nowhere for their employees to live. BENNETT noted there no R3 space left in the City. He also noted Skamania County is looking to review zoning in Carson because even with all of its' open space, it's out of buildable land. He said this is the challenge of the City and Planning Department.

SHUMAKER asked Mr. Bennett what he thought the market for Condominiums is. BENNETT noted the financing and banking regulations has recently made the condo market less appealing because of lack of ownership of the land. He also commented, if the City makes it possible, the market will guide what gets built. ANDERSON repeated his past rally cries for more workforce housing and relayed a story of a Skamania Lodge employee, who can afford rent but cannot find housing and is living in their car. HOY-RHODEHAMEL told a story about a neighbor who listed a small house in Stevenson for rent on Craigslist and received 35 calls and emails of interest in the first two hours. She said her neighbor hoped to rent the house to a local Stevenson/Carson resident but all of the inquiries were from Hood River, White Salmon, Bingen. She commented this

illustrates a clear lack of affordable rental housing throughout the Gorge.

SHUMAKER asked Mr. Bennett to gauge the market's desire for smaller sized lots. BENNETT again said that public agencies and developers need to work together to find common areas which will make development affordable and still meet the public's desire for various lot sizes whenever they change. Mr. Bennett commented in his real estate business, most of his clients are older people who are retiring and moving here from all over the country. He suggested, as growth continues, the City will need to be more flexible in meeting local housing needs, including Accessory Dwelling Units. SHUMAKER explained for Commissioners, Accessory Dwelling Units are separate living areas which are connected to a primary residence, and is required to be owner occupied. There was general discussion about Accessory Dwelling Units.

HOY-RHODEHAMEL asked SHUMAKER to include In-fill housing on a future meeting agenda. VAN PELT commented the City should really reevaluate its position on Accessory Dwelling units and added they are much easier to construct new, than to have added to existing structures. SHUMAKER discussed the difference between townhomes and condos and explained, currently, the City regulations allow condos but not townhouses because of required minimum lot sizes and setbacks. FORD commented bank financing is another problem with condos. FORD questioned if the City wants to spend much time on efforts which won't come to fruition in the future because of banking restrictions. He went on to comment, any new construction in White Salmon is being snapped up as soon as it becomes available by people working in nearby areas. SHUMAKER described an approved PUD (Wyer's) in White Salmon which had a lot of land owned a single property owner, which is less common in Stevenson where properties are smaller and owned by many different people, it would be nearly impossible for Stevenson to see the same outcome White Salmon has experienced.

FORD commented the City has buildable space along 1st and 2nd St/Hwy 14. VAN PELT commented on the makeup of buyers is different in White Salmon also, noting many in White Salmon are working for in higher paid careers and currently, Stevenson's workforce is primarily lower wage earners so the City's focus would need to be on rental units combined with some smaller, unique high-end homes for sale for those looking for ownership.

Old Business (1:13:00)

6. Zoning Code Reformat: Final Staff Draft

SHUMAKER introduced the staff memo, which included several specific decision points which he wanted the Planning Commission to address.

RE: Electric Vehicles, the Commission accepted Shumaker's removal of ownership and charging time as descriptive factors and a small change removing an electric vehicle type as a listed use in the R1 District.

RE: Home Occupations & Cottage Industries, the Commission agreed to remove Cottage Industry as a use category and add flexibility to Home Occupation.

RE: Wireless Telecommunication Facilities, the Commission agreed to simplify the different categories of facilities.

RE: Hazardous Waste, the Commission agreed to change the use category for hazardous waste in the MHR Mobile Home District to bring it in line with the way it is treated in other Residential Districts. Similarly, the Commission did not object staff's proposed changes to the use categories for hazardous waste in the Trade Districts.

RE: Canopies & Awnings, The Commission agreed to remove this form-based provision from the uses of the Zoning Code and rely on the right-of-way use permit process which didn't exist when this form/use was added to the Zoning Code.

RE: Public Hearing Notices, the Commission agreed to reduce the notice time to accommodate City Council meetings.

RE: Mobile Homes and Trailers, Whether used for Residential or Nonresidential Purposes, SHUMAKER discussed how trailers used to sell fireworks have been a downtown fixture every June and December for many years and now recently food carts have been allowed to operate under use standards listed elsewhere in the code. He described how, this provision seems to prohibit the use of trailers for food carts and seasonal fireworks sales. There was general discussion about unintended consequences of ruling in either way. VAN PELT commented food carts and fireworks trailers shouldn't be classified as recreational vehicles and asked if they could be recategorized. SHUMAKER says the current draft would treat food cart trailers the same as brick and mortar restaurants and VAN PELT commented he felt they should not be in the same category. SHUMAKER suggested that differentiation would be better during a future policy-based discussion and suggested there could be resistance to that action. ANDERSON asked if staff could remove the term 'non-residential' reference entirely, and maintain the spirit of the rule. SHUMAKER confirmed removing the entire provision would be in line with how City staff have already been interpreting the language. The Commission agrees to remove this provision from the C1 District.

RE: Temporary Emergency, Construction or Repair Residences, SHUMAKER explained the City's inconsistent implementation, and described how the category could be clarified. The Commission agreed to only require a Conditional Use Permit for this category when a mobile home/trailer is still in place six months after the fire occurs or construction permit is issued.

FORD noted SHUMAKER plans to use the building permit to initiate the timeline but asked what if they don't apply for a building permit because they move away. VHR asked if an elderly couple wants to live in a travel trailer temporarily while they remodel their house to make accessibility improvements. SHUMAKER noted these scenarios are covered in other areas of the building code.

ANDERSON asked if "Tiny Homes" are considered mobile homes, under current code. SHUMAKER described the need for a permanent foundation if a Tiny Home is going to be permitted as a Modular Home. HOY-RHODEHAMEL commented Tiny Homes

are becoming a fast growing topic

RE: Statutory Requirements for Districts Allowing Single Family Homes, the Commission agreed to add several use categories to the C1 District because the Comp Plan is very clear that single family homes should be allowed there.

SHUMAKER provided a timeline for revisions and City Council review and adoption at their next meeting on February 16, 2017. The Planning Commission members praised SHUMAKER for his work on the reformatted zoning code document. |

HOY-RHODEHAMEL moved, ANDERSON seconded the motion to recommend approval by the City Council of the City of Stevenson Zoning Code Reformat, with the revisions as discussed. Unanimously approved.

Staff Reports

7.

Staff & Commission Reports:

SHUMAKER commented his work on the Critical Aquifer Recharge Areas, has become more involved than anticipated. He said, at a future meeting he will pitch how regulations can be made easier for applicants and staff to interpret and understand. He also noted the Frequently Flooded areas will be less complicated. He went on to say the critical areas which remain to be reviewed include, wetlands, habitat and geologically hazardous areas.

SHUMAKER announced the Gorge 2020 group is working to update the Gorge Commission Management Plan and said they are currently holding listening sessions in communities throughout the Gorge. SHUMAKER reported he attended one of the listening sessions in North Bonneville and noted the meeting was well attended. He commented most of the issues being talked about are the same issues the Planning Commission grapples with and it was valuable to hear the public thoughts on development in the area.

SHUMAKER gave an update on the progress of the Old Hegewald Mill Site Visioning project. He reported the project received an EPA grant and the EDC is working with Rock Cove. He reported one visioning session has already taken place with another planned for the Thursday, March 2, 2017. He reported the County is working towards removing development barriers of the site and that the completed Phase II Environmental Assessment determined there is no ground contamination on the site. SHUMAKER encouraged Planning Commissioners to attend the next session.

SHUMAKER reported the City was not selected for any projects with Smart Growth America Workshop for a Parking Audit, and the City's partnership with North Bonneville and Friends of the Gorge on trail planning was not selected for as PSU Graduate Workshop.

SHUMAKER reported the City Council voted to pay Planning Commissioners at a rate of \$75.00 per meeting and no more than \$150.00 per month. He told Commissioners to look for an email for tax reporting forms. SHUMAKER also noted Commissioners may

elect to accept, reject or donate their pay to a City fund.

SHUMAKER reported the City Sewer Plan update is in progress. He also reported the City received notice the plant is still operating at levels over what the plant is permitted for. He continued, the Department of Ecology wants a proposed timeline of correction, and for the City to meet those goals, or it may impose a moratorium on new commercial/industrial hookups to the city sewer system, until the expansion is complete, estimated in 2020/21.

ANDERSON commented SHUMAKER and ANDERSON started Rural Development Initiative training which is a great opportunity to encourage local leaders in the community. ANDERSON discussed how there are other small groups of active community volunteers who are now able to pool their knowledge and resources and make valuable community connections. He discussed the recent presentation was about building community vitality. SHUMAKER added he is also very excited to be taking part in the program and was encouraged by the exercises which took the focus off of the "it's so hard to develop here" and "we don't have X, Y, or Z" into "Look at what we DO have to offer".

HOY-RHODEHAMEL asked if Planning Commission will be setting goals for the upcoming year and SHUMAKER confirmed yes, but at an upcoming meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 8:07 PM

Approved _____; Approved with revisions _____

Scott Anderson, Chair Date
Minutes by: Jennifer Anderson