

PLANNING COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Remote Participation

Wednesday, February 17, 2021

CALL TO ORDER: 6:09 pm by Chair Cronin

MEMBERS PRESENT: Jennifer Davis, Janice Huxford, John Cronin, Todd Welch, Linda Hoult, Mike Duerr and Vicki Oslund

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Community Development Director Russ Wright, Senior Planner Levitan and Clerk Jennie Fenrich

OTHERS PRESENT: Councilmembers Steve Ewing and Gary Petershagen

Chair Cronin called the meeting to order at 6:09 pm and led the pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call: All present.

Guest business: None

Approval of Minutes: Motion by Chair Cronin, to table the minutes for 02-03-2021, as he felt that there was discussion that warranted a more detailed summary in the minutes. Seconded by Commissioner Oslund (7-0-0-0).

Public Hearing on 2021 Comprehensive Plan Docket Ratification

Chair Cronin opened the hearing

Senior Planner Levitan gave a staff report on this years' docket proposal. There were no amendments initiated by the public this year, The Commission previously reviewed and discussed the proposed at their February 3 meeting and did not recommend any additions. Senior Planner also noted that the docket was introduced to the City Council at their February 9 meeting, and they did not propose any additions.

Chair Cronin opened the public comment portion of the hearing one citizen provided testimony. Anne Anderson expressed concerns about the city's buildable lands capacity and housing affordability. She felt there are inequities in where multi-family housing is allowed and asked why it is not permitted in the waterfront residential zone. Senior Planner Levitan explained that the city had increased its buildable lands capacity in early 2020 with the adoption of the Infill and Innovative Housing chapter of the Land Use Code, and that the city is currently participating in the county-led update to the Buildable Lands Report. He also noted that the Waterfront Residential Task Force had discussed expanding multifamily and infill housing opportunities in the waterfront residential zone, but the majority opinion was to maintain the current development regulations and permitted uses. Both the Planning Commission and City Council agreed with the task force's recommendation.

Commissioner Oslund moved and Commissioner Hoult seconded to close the public comment portion.

Commissioner discussion

Commissioner Huxford spoke to her involvement on the Waterfront Task Force and stated the primary reasons for the recommendation to not allow multi-family housing along the waterfront were related to the safety of the lake and traffic concerns.

Commissioner Huxford made a motion to approve the 2021 Docket to City Council as presented. Commissioner Welch seconded. Motion passed (7-0-0-0).

Commissioner Reports:

Commissioner Huxford commented that Chair Cronin is handling the hearing as a first time Chair great and how difficult it must be doing it on the Zoom platform. She reported that citizens are pleased with the under-dock lighting at the new North Cove docks. Commission Davis also complimented Chair Cronin on doing a good job on his first public hearing. She also thanked Anne Anderson for her comments during the hearing and said there has been a lot of work done prior to this meeting on density and affordable housing.

Director's Report:

Community Development Director Wright reported that the City Council held a workshop the night before (February 16) and they are pursuing a more stream-lined, efficient approach to housing and economic development that is supported by quantitative analysis. He noted that he had met with Councilperson Petershagen earlier in the day to discuss Council's feedback on the proposed SEPA thresholds that Planning Commission had reviewed and made a recommendation on at their January 20 meeting, and invited him to speak tonight if the Planning Commission desired.

Councilperson Petershagen provided additional context and history regarding SEPA, and that it pre-dated a number of environmental regulations that are now in place which have made the SEPA review process somewhat redundant and largely an administrative exercise. He noted Council inquired about the origin of the proposed thresholds that staff had presented to Planning Commission on January 20 and requested that staff provide additional analysis on the thresholds proposed by Council. Staff indicated that they would prepare that analysis and present it to the Planning Commission at their March 3 meeting.

MOTION: Moved by Commissioner Welch, seconded by Commissioner Hoult to adjourn the meeting at 6:57 p.m. The motion carried (7-0-0-0).



Jennie Fenrich, Planning Commission Clerk