

PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES



HYBRID/REMOTE AND IN PERSON AT THE MILL

September 18, 2024

CALL TO ORDER: 6:00 PM by Vice-Chair Janice Huxford

MEMBERS PRESENT: Commissioner Bruce Morton, Commissioner Michael Duerr, Vice-Chair Janice Huxford, Commissioner Jennifer Davis, Council Liaison Ryan Donoghue

MEMBERS ABSENT: Commissioner Nathan Packard, Chair Connor Davis

STAFF PRESENT: Community Development Director Russ Wright, Senior Planner David Levitan, Planning Manager Christi Schmidt, Administrative Assistant Dawn Erickson

OTHERS PRESENT: Sally Jo Sebring, Robb Stanton

Vice-Chair Huxford called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call: Commissioner Packard and Chair Davis were unanimously excused from tonight's meeting.

Guest business: Ms. Sebring expressed concerns about some of the re-zone plans for multi-family residential (MFR) sites and access to some of them. She expressed particular concern about 20th St SE and 99th. She also noted that MFRs seem to have fewer restrictions and may not serve as lower-income housing as intended.

Approval of Minutes: Minutes of August 19, 2024 were approved as written. Commissioner Duerr made the motion and Commissioner Morton seconded (motion carried unanimously).

Discussion Items:

Senior Planner Levitan presented a Final Work Session in advance of the Comprehensive Plan public hearing scheduled for October 2, 2024. The Plan will then go before City Council on October 22, 2024. He reviewed the process used by city staff and the Planning Commission to this point. He also summarized comments received from various agencies, including Puget Sound Regional Council, Department of Natural Resources and Department of Commerce. Some of the comments highlighted land use capacity analysis, displacement risks, natural hazards mapping, climate change impacts on vulnerable populations, equity and environmental justice. He stated that these comments are considered and integrated into the updated public hearing draft. Map amendments were scaled back with regard to increasing single-family residences and middle housing because there wasn't a documented need in those income bands. He stated that the region has not been hugely successful in creating the types of housing needed by those income groups, so that will have to be an area of focus regionally in the coming years. Map amendments

were publicly noticed last week, directing people to a story map. He then reviewed the timeline up to October 2nd and opened the meeting to questions.

Commissioner Davis commented that the story map was great.

Commissioner Duerr asked if the public notices went out city-wide or only to affected property owners. Planner Levitan stated that notices were only sent to affected property owners, as well as those with property within 300 feet of an affected property (as required by the Municipal Code) due to costs. The city also uses social media and word of mouth to reach out to the population yet acknowledges the difficulties of reaching everyone.

Commissioner Morton referenced paragraph two of page five, stating he was surprised by the scaling back of the increase of single-family residences and middle housing from low-density zones. He feels it will drive up prices in the higher-density zones, defeating the purpose of re-zoning to accommodate affordable housing as it will cause the AMI to decrease continually. Director Wright and Planner Levitan described how the AMI starts as a regional number and is successively allocated to the counties, then to the city level, to develop a model that distributes the different units at different income levels. In Snohomish County, this is done through Snohomish County Tomorrow, where the city works with all the other jurisdictions. Lake Stevens has a large projected supply of residential capacity at 100-120% of AMI but not much at the other end of the spectrum.

Vice-Chair Huxford stated that she likes the changes.

Commissioner Davis asked about comment 4.2. by Fish & Wildlife and how it differs from the current policy. Planner Levitan stated that many of their comments went beyond policy and addressed issues that must be resolved through city ordinance, so that will be addressed outside of the Comprehensive Plan.

Vice-Chair Huxford reviewed the process the Commission used to review this Comprehensive plan. Commissioner Davis expressed appreciation for those citizens who provided public comment.

Director's Report

Director Wright wanted to check in with the Commission regarding the work plan for 2025. For the fourth quarter, the plan is to update streets and parking codes (tied to the Transportation element) and processes coming from state requirements. The Planning Department will be working on streamlining process reviews. After thoroughly analyzing other similar-sized jurisdictions, the department is also working with Parks and Public Works to address impact fees. Next year, as an outcome of new goals and policies in the Comprehensive Plan, we will revisit our housing development regulations. We will also address the Industrial Center to ensure effective regulations for that zone to spur economic development.

Vice-Chair Huxford asked if the streets and process codes are time-sensitive as we are closing in on year-end. Director Wright stated that the timeline is four to six months for decision-making.

Commissioner Duerr pointed out that, due to the limited number of meetings and the holiday season, it may be necessary to prioritize what the Commission plans to accomplish by the end of the year.

Vice-Chair Huxford issued a reminder of the 10/2/24 public comment meeting.

Commissioner Report:

Commissioner Davis asked about the empty seat on the Commission. Director Wright advised that there are currently three applicants; the Clerk's office is working on scheduling interviews.

Commissioner Morton stated he would be unable to attend the 10/2/24 meeting.

Director Wright provided an update on the City Council retreat, which largely focused on the 2025 budget.

Adjourn: Motion by Commissioner Duerr, seconded by Commissioner Davis, to adjourn the meeting at 6:50 PM. The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully,

Dawn Erickson, Planning Administrative Assistant