

**CITY OF MONROE
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
Monday, October 24, 2016**

The regular meeting of the Monroe Planning Commission was held on **Monday, October 24, 2016** at **7:00 p.m.**, in the City Hall Council Chambers at 806 West Main Street, Monroe, WA 98272.

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Kristiansen called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Secretary Stephanie Johnson called the roll.

Commissioners Present: **Chair Kristiansen**, Commissioner Duerksen, Commissioner Jensen, Commissioner Stanger, and Commissioner Bull

Commissioners Absent: Vice Chair Tuttle and Commissioner Fisher (both excused)

Staff Present: Community Development Director David Osaki, Public Works Director Brad Feilberg, and Planning Commission Secretary Stephanie Johnson

COMMENTS FROM CITIZENS

None

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- October 10, 2016 – **Commissioner Bull** moved to accept the October 10, 2016 Planning Commission Meeting minutes as submitted. **Commissioner Jensen** seconded. Commissioner Duerksen abstained because she was absent for the October 10, 2016 meeting (excused). Motion carried **4/0**.

PUBLIC HEARING

1. CA2016-04 - Low Impact Development and other Miscellaneous Code Amendments; continued from October 10, 2016.

Director Feilberg explained that the public comment period had been closed, and the SEPA appeal period had passed with no comments or appeals from citizens or public agencies. He provided the commissioners with a "Staff Report and Recommendation" handout with the recommendation that the Planning Commission forward a recommendation to the City Council to approve CA2016-04 Low Impact Development, as the proposal complies with the Monroe Municipal Code, the City of Monroe 2015-2035 Comprehensive Plan, and other State and Federal Regulations.

Chair Kristiansen opened deliberation with the Commissioners.

Commissioner Duerksen moved to close the public hearing, seconded by **Commissioner Jensen**. Carried **5/0**.

Commissioner Jensen moved to comply with the Staff recommendation to recommend CA2016-04 - Low Impact Development and other Miscellaneous Code Amendments to the Monroe City Council, seconded by **Commissioner Stanger**. Carried **5/0**.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Code Amendments – Downtown

Director Osaki continued discussion from the September 26, 2016 planning commission meeting regarding proposed code amendments to MMC Chapter 18.12 Downtown Commercial Zone, specifically focusing on density and height requirements for the Downtown Residential and Borlin Park (East Downtown) neighborhoods.

At the September 26, 2016 meeting, the Commission's recommendation was to increase density within the Borlin Park (East Downtown) neighborhood marginally (by 2-4 units per acre) as long as the buildings are required to use upper story setbacks. In the Downtown Residential neighborhood the Commission considered leaving the maximum allowable density "as-is" for now (to incentivize other areas in the Downtown to develop first) at 11 dwelling units per acre as well as an alternative of increasing the density up to 16 units per acre in the future.

The current proposed amendment provides for the following:

- Base Density - 20 units per acre
- Four story buildings w/ fourth story stepped back at least 10 feet - 22 units per acre.
- Five story building w/ fourth and five stories stepped back at least 10 feet - 24 dwelling units per acre

Under the current code, additional height over 35 feet is allowed up to 55 feet, provided the building is mixed use. This mixed use requirement is not proposed for change.

Director Osaki explained that the current proposal might give developers a loophole to get out of the setback requirement if they go with a 20 unit/acre density. He suggested requiring setbacks for any structure taller than 35 feet. **Director Osaki** asked the commission how they propose to incentivize developers to increase density. The commissioners speculated that the current proposal may not be enough and discussed

increasing the units per acre even more.

Commissioner Jensen asked if structured parking would be allowed in the downtown zone. **Director Osaki** said it would be, and that it would actually be a good sign for downtown if this happened. **Commissioner Jensen** inquired if it would be allowed for a developer to use part of their parking for their residential development as a paid accessory parking area. **Director Osaki** said it's not an unusual concept and he would encourage it, but it would require a conditional use permit.

Director Osaki said he would continue discussion regarding MMC 18.12 at the next planning commission meeting.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Future Planning Commission Agenda Items - Format

Director Osaki presented a draft format to tentatively identify future Planning Commission meeting agendas items that can be included in Planning Commission packets to identify upcoming agenda items over the next several months.

Commissioner Jensen suggested setting a specific forecast limit, i.e. 2-3 months. Also, he suggested to clearly identify special vs. regular meetings.

DISCUSSION BY COMMISSION AND STAFF

Director Osaki responded to Commission inquiry regarding plans to finish the Sign Code amendments. He told the Commission that he will provide for the commissioners supplemental information about a recent Supreme Court case regarding sign code enforcement. (Documents mailed 10/27/16)

Director Osaki suggested that there only be one meeting in December (no meeting 12/26/16). Also, he suggested that the first meeting in January be a re-cap of 2016 and include the Mayor.

Director Osaki mentioned that a juror from the Joint Awards program recognizing outstanding Planning performance will be scheduled to visit a City Council meeting to award the Planning Commission for their excellence in Citizen Involvement. Date to be announced.

Director Osaki stated that the City has budgeted \$130,000 to contract a consultant to catch the City up on the zoning code updates.

Director Osaki announced Senior Planner Kristi Kyle's resignation at the end of October

to become the new Planning Director at the City of Sultan.

Director Osaki made a follow-up statement regarding Just Serve, an app that was brought to the Commission's attention in September. Mike Farrell from the Parks Department has had a positive experience with citizens volunteering their time via the app.

Commissioner Duerksen asked about the old Del's property. **Director Osaki** reminded her that the L.I.D. code amendments that the Planning Commission has been discussing include an amendment that specifically includes changing the allowed uses for this property. **Commissioner Duerksen** also mentioned that there is a sign flashing like a strobe light by Tuscano's that needs to be investigated.

Commissioner Bull inquired about the new permit software that Director Osaki mentioned at the October 10, 2016 meeting. Director Osaki said it won't be in the 2017 budget. He said he would provide the Commission more information about mybuildingpermit.com, which is the direction the City would like to go in as far as standardizing permit applications and establishing cohesiveness with other jurisdictions. (Information mailed 10/27/16)

Chair Kristiansen mentioned that there is still not a STOP sign at the corner of 147th in the Industrial Park. **Director Osaki** said he would follow up with Director Feilberg.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Duerksen moved to adjourn the **October 24, 2016** Planning Commission meeting. Seconded by **Commissioner Bull**. Motion carried **5/0** and the meeting was adjourned at **8:06 p.m.**



Bill Kristiansen
Chair



Stephanie Johnson
Planning Commission Secretary