

**CITY OF MONROE
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
Monday, April 23, 2018**

The regular meeting of the Monroe Planning Commission was held on **Monday, April 23, 2018 at 7:00 p.m.**, in the City Hall Council Chambers at 806 West Main Street, Monroe, WA 98272.

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Tuttle called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Planning Commission Secretary Leigh Anne Barr called the roll.

Commissioners Present: Chair Tuttle, Commissioner Bull, Commissioner Jensen, Commissioner Fisher and Commissioner Stanger

Commissioners Excused: Commissioner Rousey and Commissioner Duerksen

Staff Present: Principal Planner Shana Restall, Public Works Director Brad Feilberg, Division Manager Scott Peterson and Secretary Leigh Anne Barr

COMMENTS FROM CITIZENS

NONE

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Jensen moved to accept the April 16, 2018 meeting minutes with the discussed changes. Motion seconded by Commissioner Bull. Motion carried 5/0.

PUBLIC HEARING

CA2018-02 – Traffic Impact Fee Amendment to MMC Chapter 20.12

Chair Tuttle opened the public hearing.

Division Manager Scott Peterson gave an overview of the proposed traffic impact fees. Monroe Municipal Code (MMC) Chapter 20.12 establishes fees to be paid by new growth and development toward sharing the cost of improving the City's street infrastructure. The fees are adjusted every year in accordance with WSDOT's construction cost index, which looks at a 5 year rolling average. The change this year is a 0.46% increase.

Commissioner Bull thinks the calculations are fine for the traffic fees but stated that the Planning Commission believes that the fees can be a deterrent to new business. Commissioner Jensen asked Manager Peterson if impact fees apply to new construction as well as change of use. Manager Peterson explained that there is a 5 year timeframe for change of use, but longer gaps require the fees to be charged again. Director Feilberg noted that the MMC calls out a substantial change of use as the trigger for change of use fees. A substantial change of use requires getting a building permit with a value of the work more than 50% of the assessed value of the building prior to beginning the work.

Commissioner Jensen asked if this is a required update. Manager Peterson explained that MMC 20.12 states that it will be updated annually. Manager Peterson is unsure if pushing it back will have any ramifications.

Chair Tuttle opened the public testimony portion of the public hearing.

Commissioner Stanger moved to close the public testimony portion of the public hearing. Motion seconded by Commissioner Jensen. Motion carries 5/0.

Commissioner Stanger moved to close the public hearing. Motion seconded by Commissioner Bull. Motion carried 5/0.

Commissioner Jensen noted that last week Planning Commission was not in favor of supporting this update, however in light of this week's comments, he would be in favor of recommending approval. Commissioner Bull wants to make sure that Commission is cognizant of economic growth, especially in the downtown area. Commissioner Stanger is in favor of approval. Chair Tuttle asked staff to bring back findings of fact and recommendation for approval but with comments from Planning Commission as an attachment.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Unified Development Regulations (UDR) Annexations

Principal Planner Shana Restall reminded Planning Commission that a large part of these chapters are dictated by state law. Direction from previous Planning Commission meetings included updating wording on process timing and compiling the steps under a unified section.

Principal Planner Restall added that when the adopted future land use map can be used, it will dictate the zoning for the annexed area. Chair Tuttle clarified that the petition method is the preferred method for annexation. Principal Planner Restall said it is the most commonly used method. Other annexation processes are referenced in line 21 under section B should City Council decide to use a different method. Chair Tuttle asked why people want to get annexed. Principal Planner Restall explained there could be a variety of reasons including but not limited, to parks or access to utilities.

Principal Planner Restall noted that City staff gets a lot of inquiries about annexing areas outside the Urban Growth Area (UGA) into the City, but she went on to say that the City cannot consider properties outside the UGA for annexation per state law. In order to get added into the City's UGA, the applicant must file a request with Snohomish County. The next time the County will be looking at requests is in 2023. Community Development Director Ben Swanson has written a letter to Snohomish County with concerns about being in compliance with the UGA because of properties adjacent to the City being able to develop to the same density as those within City limits.

Commissioner Bull asked why water service is not restricted in the same way that sewer service is. Principal Planner Restall noted that our sewer service matches the City's UGA, whereas the water district does not. It is much harder to enforce a pre-annexation agreement when an area is not in the City's UGA.

Chair Tuttle asked what the County's incentive would be to release lands to the UGA. Commissioner Fisher noted that the Vision 2050 convention had a lot of talk about that exact issue. Commissioner Stanger thinks that the growth near our borders will help give a good argument for adding land to the UGA.

Planning Commission approves of the timeline as laid out in the revised chapter.

2. Unified Development Regulations (UDR) Development Agreements

Principal Planner Restall reminded Commission that the notes from last time included addressing the timeline for implementation, and giving Council the option to void the Development Agreement if appropriate progress has not been made. After doing more research into state law, Principal Planner Restall explained that the City doesn't have much discretion with regards to Development Agreements. Principal Planner Restall noted that Development Agreements may be terminated by either side at any time. Principal Planner Restall changed the timeline 10 years with the option to extend for an additional 5 years if 50% of the project is completed as requested, and explained that most cities have a 20 year timeline with an option for a 20 year extension.

Commissioner Jensen suggested that a definition of "large" projects be included to allow such projects to have a longer vesting time. Chair Tuttle is concerned that having large projects vested for longer periods of time will increase legal nonconforming lots within the city. Commissioner Bull is in favor of longer vesting periods to account for economic downturns.

Commissioner Jensen requested that the wording of the termination section be revised to include expired and extended agreements.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Unified Development Regulations (UDR) Tree canopy Retention

Principal Planner Restall noted that Monroe does not currently have any tree retention regulations and that Planning Commission gave direction at a meeting in September 2017 to move forward with a canopy retention approach versus an individual tree count. This chapter was drafted by BHC and does not currently match the formatting of the rest of the MMC. After much discussion, Principal Planner Restall decided to bring this chapter back to Planning Commission after a major overhaul. Concerns to be addressed include, purpose statement, tree protection measures, submittal requirements, definitions and how tree credits are calculated.

Commissioner Jensen moved to extend meeting past 9:00pm. Motion seconded by Commissioner Fisher. Motion carried 5/0.

DISCUSSION BY COMMISSIONERS AND STAFF

Principal Planner Restall reminded Planning Commission that there is a meeting scheduled for next week, April 30th. The code consultants, BHC, will be at the May 7th meeting to discuss the draft design guidelines.

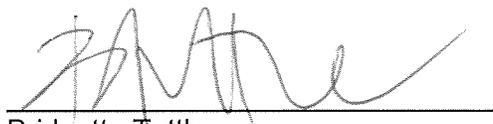
Commissioners requested that the sign chapter come back to Planning Commission soon. Commissioner Jensen would like Staff to check to see if there is a legal basis for classifying political signs as commercial.

Principal Planner Restall had no new information to report on East Monroe.

Principal Planner Restall noted that current planning has been really busy and long term planning has taken a back seat. Principal Planner Restall apologized for the delay to the code update schedule.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Jensen made a motion to adjourn at 9:40p.m. Motion seconded by Commissioner Bull. Motion carried 5/0.



Bridgette Tuttle
Chair



Leigh Anne Barr
Planning Commission Secretary