

**CITY OF MONROE
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
Monday, May 21, 2018**

The regular meeting of the Monroe Planning Commission was held on **Monday, May 21, 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 7:01 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Planning Commission Secretary Leigh Anne Barr called the roll.

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

Staff Present: Community Development Director Ben Swanson, Principal Planner Shana Restall and Secretary Leigh Anne Barr

COMMENTS FROM CITIZENS

NONE

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Jensen moved to accept the April 30, 2018 meeting minutes as written. Motion seconded by Commissioner Rousey. Motion carried 7/0.

Commissioner Bull moved to accept the May 14, 2018 meeting minutes with the discussed changes. Motion seconded by Commissioner Duerksen. Motion carried 7/0.

PUBLIC HEARING

CA2018-01 – Temporary Dwelling – Security Guard - MMC Chapter 18.02 & 18.10

Chair Tuttle opened the public hearing.

Community Development Director Ben Swanson reminded Planning Commission that this code amendment was approved as an emergency amendment through City Council. The code amendment is now going through the standard process within the required 6 month timeline.

Director Swanson asked for input on the number of allowed dwelling units per job site. Options discussed for determining the number of allowed uses included access points, units per acre or a combination of the two, whichever is greater. The final consensus was 2 dwelling units per 5 acres. Director Swanson will add a table to the code amendment using the 2 units per 5 acres and capping the total number of allowed units per project at 5 units. Director Swanson suggested that the Public Hearing be left open to give the public the chance to comment on the table at the next Planning Commission Meeting.

Commissioner Jensen made a motion to continue the Public Hearing to the June 4th Planning Commission Special Meeting at City Hall. Motion seconded by Commissioner Bull. Motion carried 7/0.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Unified Development Regulations (UDR) Design Standards

Principal Planner Shana Restall explained that this chapter was provided by the consultant. There is a lot more information in this chapter than was anticipated and Director Swanson and Principal Planner Restall will be going through the chapter to tighten it up. Principal Planner Restall asked Planning Commission for direction.

Chair Tuttle would like to start with the experienced opinion of Director Swanson. Director Swanson likes generally how the chapter is laid out. Director Swanson would like the use of the word "should" limited to a definition that requires a solution to be equal to or better than the standard laid out in the chapter. Chair Tuttle asked if it is easy to enforce. Director Swanson explained that with creativity comes complexity, but it will ultimately create a better product in the end.

Commissioner Jensen expressed a dislike for the graphics within the design standards. Director Swanson explained that the graphics are part of a separate work order so money is not wasted on improved graphics before it is decided if we like the concept of the graphics.

Director Swanson is concerned that the design standards go into too much detail on some topics and start to cross over into the engineering standards. Keeping steep slopes to a useable slope and with appropriate plantings is important in the design standards

Commissioner Jensen pointed out that the City's Comprehensive Plan went to great lengths to avoid using the "small-town" wording, so it should be removed from the connectivity section. Director Swanson would like this section to be much longer.

Parking and lighting will be removed from the design standards as they will have their own chapter elsewhere in the code. Director Swanson asked for direction on parking standards and Planning Commission asked for some time to think the topic over and have it brought back at a later meeting.

Director Swanson asked Planning Commission for direction on open space requirements. Most open space requirements result in smaller park areas such as trails and small kids play equipment areas. Chair Tuttle asked what the goal is for requiring open space. Director Swanson explained that it's nice for the residents of each development to have a local gathering place and that they are not meant to become large City maintained parks. Commissioner Bull noted that requiring open spaces decreases affordability. Planning Commission requested that open space return at a later date so they can have a chance to think about the options.

Director Swanson doesn't like compatibility design standards as they are currently written. Chair Tuttle would like to have bare minimum standards with room for the applicant to prove why their proposed option is better for the City. Director Swanson suggested this might be a good place to use should vs. shall in the standards. Principal Planner Restall gave the following definition from the City of Mercer Island's code. When a standard uses the word shall then the standard is mandatory. When the standard uses the word should the standard is mandatory unless the applicant can demonstrate to the satisfaction of the code official an equal or better means of satisfying the standard's objective.

Planning Commission would like to require underground utilities. Chair Tuttle mentioned that the Economic Development Board is very interested in requiring underground utilities as well. Commissioner Rousey described how the City of Ellensburg has all their utilities in the downtown area running through the alleys, which might be a more affordable option for downtown Monroe.

Commissioner Duerksen believes this chapter is too long that it should be cut down for easier reading.

Director Swanson would like to further break down the architectural design elements by type of development. Chair Tuttle believes this section is an important area for creating design standards.

Commissioner Fisher pointed out that the City of Redmond has standards to beautify drainage including good rain garden graphics. Director Swanson looks at rain gardens as above and beyond for drainage.

Commissioner Jensen moved to extend meeting past 9:00pm at 8:57 pm. Motion seconded by Commissioner Rousey. Motion carried 7/0.

NEW BUSINESS

1. North Kelsey Multi-Family Introduction

Director Swanson explained that the consultants hired to sell the North Kelsey property said it needs to allow multifamily development in order to sell. The code amendment will allow multifamily development in a mixed use fashion that will allow for both vertical and horizontal mixed use across a single parcel or several parcels with the same owner. The requirement must be recorded against the plat to keep developers from getting around horizontal mixed use requirements. Director Swanson noted that allowing multifamily mixed use development in the North Kelsey area would serve as a trial run for allowing it elsewhere in the City in the future.

In order to help future projects pencil out, the parking requirements will be dropped from 2 to 1.5 spaces and the building height will be raised to 65 feet. The City has also hired a traffic consultant to understand if allowing residential in the North Kelsey will require additional mitigation than what was originally planned for with a fully commercial area. SEPA has not yet been done for this project.

Commissioner Jensen would prefer to only allow vertical mixed use and allow for taller buildings. Commissioner Bull noted that vertical mixed use is going out of fashion and horizontal mixed use caters to the types of businesses that can survive in today's online shopping world. Director Swanson explained that the goal is to attract new businesses to this area and not cannibalize businesses from other areas of town leaving more vacant spaces.

DISCUSSION BY COMMISSIONERS AND STAFF

Planning Commission Secretary Leigh Anne Barr reminded Commissioners that the next Planning Commission meeting on 5/28/18 has been cancelled for Memorial Day.

Commissioner Stanger gave an update from the Parks Board. The Sky River park playground update is almost completed. The Lake Tye synthetic turf fields have a state grant in. One third of the of cost for the fields is already available, the state grant would cover a third and then the City will just pay the final third. Summer 2020 is currently the goal for completion. Commissioner Stanger also mentioned the City of Snohomish as a successful example of a heritage tree program.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Duerksen made a motion to adjourn at 9:32p.m. Motion seconded by Commissioner Rousey. Motion carried 7/0.



Bridgette Tuttle
Chair



Leigh Anne Barr
Planning Commission Secretary