

**CITY OF MONROE  
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES  
October 15, 2012**

APPROVED

***UPDATED TEXT IN ITALICS***

The meeting of the Monroe Planning Commission was scheduled for October 15, 2012 at 7:00 p.m., in the City Hall Council Chambers at 806 West Main Street, Monroe, WA 98272.

**CALL TO ORDER**

**Vice Chairman Kristiansen** called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**ROLL CALL**

**Secretary Kim Shaw** called the roll. The following were:

**Present:** Commissioners Bill Kristiansen, Dave Demarest, Dian Duerksen, Wayne Rodland, Jeff Sherwood

**Staff Present:** Planning and Permitting Manager Paul Popelka, Public Works Director Brad Feilberg, Economic Development Manager Jeff Sax, Secretary Kim Shaw and Planning Technician David McConnell

**CITIZEN COMMENT**

None.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

April 9, 2012

**Commissioner Demarest** commented on a minor correction.

**Commissioner Rodland** made a motion to accept the draft April 9, 2012 minutes as corrected. Motion seconded by **Commissioner Duerksen**. Motion carried 5/0.

April 23, 2012

**Commissioner Sherwood** commented on a minor correction.

**Commissioner Demarest** moved to approve the April 23, 2012 minutes as corrected. Motion Seconded by **Commissioner Duerksen**. Motion carried 5/0.

**PUBLIC HEARING**

- A.** *CPA2013-D School Mitigation Fees*  
*ZCA2012-09 School Mitigation Fees*

**Commissioner Demarest** indicated for the record that he had recent discussions with school board members, school district officials, and community members.

**Manager Popelka** gave a brief summary of the amendments. The first adopts revised language and the Capital Facilities Plans for the Monroe and Snohomish School Districts into the City of

Monroe Comprehensive Plan. The second amendment revises Chapter 20 of the Monroe Municipal Code (MMC).

**Commissioner Demarest** questioned the fees.

**Ralph Yingling**, Director of Facilities for Monroe School District explained the shift in rate from single family to multi-family homes as there are more students in multi-family than single family homes.

***Public Testimony***

**Nancy Truitt-Pierce** 12003 Woods Creek Rd, Monroe, WA 98290

Ms. Truitt-Pierce is a Monroe School District Board member, but is testifying a private citizen and resident of the City. She created an impact fee modeling program to explore how changes would the school district. She offered to share this model and assumptions with the Planning Commission.

**Vicki Mullen** 10312 210th St SE, Snohomish, WA 98272

Ms. Mullen offered clarification between impact and mitigation fees. She was concerned with changing the dollar amount of impact fees because the school district has an official position against the change. Ms Mullen asserted that with a total look at all fees, the City of Monroe is competitive with other cities in Snohomish County.

**Jim Scott** 20227 50th Ave SE, Monroe, WA 98272

Mr. Scott is the Director and Vice President of Monroe School Board. The Planning Commission should have received copy of letter dated October 9, 2012 from School Board President John Mannix outlining reasons for the Monroe School District Board's opposition to changes in impact fees.

**Meredith Mechling** 13624 Chain Lake rd, Monroe, WA 98272

Ms. Mechling agrees with Jim Scott and stated that the City Comprehensive Plan should not be changed frequently and not without public input.

**Ralph Yingling** 23719 150th St SE, Monroe, WA 98272

Mr. Yingling suggested that the Planning Commission carefully investigate the timeline for spending the money and check the difference between 6 years in the MMC ordinance and 10 years in Washington state law.

**Commissioner Sherwood** asked Director Yingling how we got to this point.

*Director Yingling responded that while school enrolment is currently declining slightly, the Office of Financial Management (OFM) predicts that enrolments will soon be increasing and lead to un-housed students at both the middle school and high school level. The present situation is a long term, complex problem with years of decisions on school bonds, housing, and zoning decisions. The school district always has some portables; the use of portables for short term changes in enrollment is an educational decision, and the district has had to increasingly rely on*

*portables. Portable classrooms are used as an interim solution for housing students until new schools can be built and school mitigation fees are an integral part of the Monroe School District's plan to provide classrooms. For example, when the district built Fryelands Elementary, 1 million dollars in school mitigation fees was used for portable classrooms.*

*Commissioner Sherwood questioned the current balance in the school mitigation fee account. Monroe School Board President Scott indicated the balance was approximately \$400,000. Commissioner Sherwood discussed an example of a hypothetical subdivision with 216 houses and mitigation fees of \$3,000 per house for \$840,000*

*He questioned Director Yingling on the cost of permanent facilities. There was discussion of two separate bond issues and how the district could proceed in the future. The key question was if collecting mitigation fees is the best way to address school facilities needs.*

**Jennifer Anderson** 335 116th Ave SE, Bellevue, WA 98004

Ms. Anderson is the Manager of the South Snohomish Master Builders Association. She offered support on behalf of MBA members, encouraged a focus on local economic development and increasing competitiveness of the Monroe community. Ms Anderson also stated that mitigation and impact fees are for new building, not maintenance of existing facilities.

**Ryan McIrvin** 3201 Broadway Suite E, Everett, WA 98201

Mr. McIrvin offered his support of a Comprehensive Plan increase of the discount rate and stated that good schools and affordability are both key drivers of population growth and economic growth in the community.

**Emmett Lane** 215 105th St SE, Everett, WA 98208

Mr. Lane is a builder and understands importance of mitigation fees. He also believed low fees are important to builders to start new projects, and this is more important than supporting the schools. He offered examples to support his opinion.

**Steven Jensen** 17041 155th St SE, Monroe, WA 98272

Mr. Jensen asked what impact fees are and how a change in the discount rate will affect local schools. He also questioned why the City of Monroe and the rest of Snohomish County discount the rate charged for impact fees at all when no other Washington State counties do so.

**Deborah Kolrud**

Ms. Kolrud supported a 0% discount rate.

**Jim Scott** 20227 50th Ave SE, Monroe, WA 98272

Mr. Scott commented that home ownership is a great benefit to the community and school fees represent a very small portion of the fees charged with a new home purchase. He also stated that the school impact fee is the only fee without an on-going revenue as the school district has no ability to assess additional taxes and must rely on fees and bond issues to raise money. He urged the Planning Commission to protect the schools which are the heart of the community.

**Nancy Truitt-Pierce** 12003 Woods Creek Rd, Monroe, WA 98272

Ms. Truitt-Pierce commented that there are other fees, such as park mitigation fees, the City Council can lower.

**Steven Jensen** 17041 155th St SE, Monroe, WA 98272

Mr. Jensen questioned the effect of fees on monthly mortgage payments for homeowners and gave an example.

**Jim Scott**

Mr. Scott commented on the effects of growth on the schools and on how the impact fee rates are set.

**Commissioner Kristiansen** asked for a motion to close public testimony.

**Commissioner Rodland** made a motion to close the public testimony portion of the meeting. Motion seconded by Commissioner Sherwood. Motion carried 5/0.

The Commissioners and City Staff discussed the mitigation fee issues at length. Commissioner discussion:

**Commissioner Demarest** asked staff to generate a pro/con comparison on deciding whether to keep this amendment in the Comprehensive Plan or move it to the Monroe Municipal Code.

**Commissioner Kristiansen** asked for a motion to continue the public hearing.

**Commissioner Demarest** made a motion to continue the public hearing to October 22, 2012. Motion seconded by **Commissioner Rodland**. Motion carried 5/0.

**Commissioner Kristiansen** made a motion to extend the meeting past 9p.m. Motion seconded by **Commissioner Demarest**. Motion carried 5/0.

**B. ZCA2012-07 North Kelsey Design Guidelines**

**Manager Popelka** reviewed the proposed amendment for Design Guidelines adopted in 2003. He explained that development has not reflected the original North Kelsey Plan, and that plan is no longer relevant. The proposed changes update several sections and keep intact the Architecture/Building Design and Landscape Design sections. Sign guidelines will move to the sign code in the MMC.

**Manager Popelka** summarized the work completed to date, next steps for updating the Design Guidelines and asked for feedback on the proposed changes. The Commissioners provided specific feedback and asked questions on key points of the Design Guidelines.

**Commissioner Kristiansen** invited public comment from the audience.

**Vicki Mullen** 10312 210th St SE, Snohomish, WA 98272

Ms. Mullen asked about public testimony for this issue. Manager Popelka responded that there had been one earlier meeting that was not a formal public hearing. Ms. Mullen commented that other people wished to comment. She commented on connectivity between downtown and North Kelsey, and stated that the plan authors maintained connectivity between the two areas. Keeping this in the plan would ensure maintaining that connectivity. Ms. Mullen noted other proposed changes that should be reconsidered.

**Manager Popelka** discussed the sign code update and hiring a consultant. He explained that the changes and update of the sign code would not abandon the original intent from the Comprehensive Plan.

**Commissioner Kristiansen** asked for a motion to close public testimony.

**Commissioner Demarest** made a motion to close the public testimony portion of the hearing. Motion seconded by Commissioner Rodland. Motion carried 5/0.

**Manager Popelka** stated the Commission recommendations and feedback would be taken to the City Council tomorrow for their consideration. Council is scheduled to vote on the proposed changes on November 6, 2012. He also commented that some changes to the design code were necessary to allow the Nexcore project.

**Commissioner Demarest** questioned **Manager Sax** on the timing of changes to the design guidelines and sign code. **Manager Sax** responded that the first reading at Council is November 23, 2012 and the proper approach is a recommendation to Council for next week.

**Commissioner Kristiansen** asked **Manager Popelka** about more information for the Commission on the proposed sign code changes. He responded that the Commissioners can schedule the consultant to be first on the meeting agenda for a progress report.

**Commissioner Demarest** agreed. He commented on the connectivity language asked to preserve language on "small town feel" in the guidelines. He requested adding a sunset clause to the existing sign code so when the new ordinance is passed, the old code is repealed.

**Commissioner Sherwood** proposed minor edits for the next draft.

**Commissioner Kristiansen** asked for a motion to postpone discussion on code revisions until the next meeting.

**Commissioner Demarest** made a motion to continue the discussion on ZCA2012-07 North Kelsey Design Guidelines to the next meeting. Motion seconded by **Commissioner Rodland**. Motion carried 5/0.

## **WORKSHOP**

None.

**DISCUSSION BY COMMISSIONERS AND STAFF**

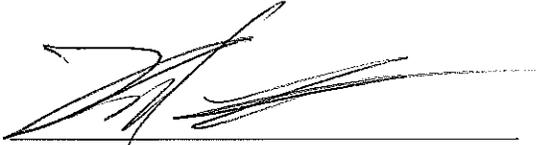
**Manager Popelka** indicated the City Council will be considering extending the life of short plats, Roosevelt Road Rezoning and School Mitigation Fees.

**Commissioner Demarest** asked about permit fees.

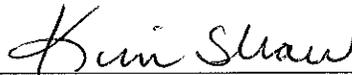
**ADJOURNMENT**

**Commissioner Rodland** made a motion that the October 15, 2012 Planning Commission meeting be adjourned. Motion seconded by **Commissioner Demarest**. Motion carried 5/0.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:53 p.m.



Paul Loots  
Chairman



Kim Shaw  
Planning Commission Secretary