

**CITY OF MONROE
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
Monday, August 14, 2017**

The regular meeting of the Monroe Planning Commission was held on **Monday, August 14, 2017 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 7:02 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Planning Commission Secretary Leigh Anne Barr called the roll.

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

Commissioners Excused: Commissioner Fisher

Staff Present: Community Development Director Ben Swanson and Secretary Leigh Anne Barr

COMMENTS FROM CITIZENS

NONE

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Stanger moved to accept the July 17, 2017 meeting minutes as written. Seconded by Commissioner Rousey. Motion carried 6/0.

Commissioner Duerksen moved to accept the July 24, 2017 meeting minutes as written. Seconded by Commissioner Bull. Motion carried 6/0.

PUBLIC HEARING

Continuation of Code Amendment CA2016-03 and SEPA 2016-012 – Critical Areas (MMC Chapter 20.05)

Chair Tuttle continued the Public Hearing at 7:05pm. Community Development Director Swanson reviewed where the public hearing was left off at the last Planning Commission meeting on July 24, 2017. Director Swanson presented that after conversations with the City attorney who described 20.05.050 subsection B as “unconstitutionally vague”, staff suggests that subsection B be removed rather than try to amend it.

Director Swanson explained the updated Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law that was added to the agenda packets for this meeting is incorrectly labeled as attachment 3. Director Swanson asked that Planning Commission consider this final version Findings of Fact and discuss adopting them after the Public Hearing is closed.

Chair Tuttle requested clarification on the changes proposed and if the changes would allow for more flexibility for previously developed areas. Director Swanson confirmed that existing structures would be allowed to continue with that encroachment under the proposed code amendment. That development would still need to provide mitigation to offset the encroachment on the buffer.

Commissioner Jensen expressed concern for Section 3.A.ii which allows for the same footprint of existing buildings but still requires mitigation for what has been existing development which he understood to ensure more costs to redevelop an existing site. Commissioner Jensen is concerned that this regulation will not encourage re-development of sites.

Director Swanson explained that the language used in this amendment was taken from another jurisdiction that had already been through the process with the Department of Ecology (DOE) which gave a good foundation rather than starting from scratch. DOE requires some give and take and compliance with best available science. In order for the DOE to sign off on an ordinance, an effort must be shown to mitigate for past encroachments otherwise the process of making the changes would continue to go back and forth. The proposed changes offer a benefit to the environment as well as the applicant.

Eastside Masonry was used as an example of how this will help developers in real life.

Chair Tuttle asked if there are other properties in Monroe that would be affected by this changes. Director Swanson confirmed that there are other properties that would benefit from this code change.

Public Testimony

Tom Ederer
2111 Broadmoor Dr E
Seattle, WA 98112

Mr. Ederer is the owner of the Eastside Masonry Site at 16524 Hwy 2, Monroe WA. Mr. Ederer is aware of the changes and is satisfied with the striking out of section 3B.

Commissioner Jensen made a motion to close the public testimony. Seconded by Commissioner Rousey. Motion carried 6/0.

Commissioner Rousey moved to close the public hearing. Commissioner Duerksen seconded the motion. Motion carried 6/0.

Commissioner Jensen made a motion to ADOPT the Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law contained in Attachment 4 to the Planning Commission agenda bill, AUTHORIZE the Planning Commission Chair to sign the Findings on behalf of the Commission, and recommend that the Monroe City Council APPROVE the proposed amendments to Chapter 20.05 of the Monroe Municipal Code. Seconded by Commissioner Bull. Motion carried 6/0.

OLD BUSINESS

NONE

NEW BUSINESS

1. Overview of Buildable Lands and Growth Targets

Director Swanson provided an overview of different tools that the city of Monroe uses to establish Buildable Lands. Snohomish County has developed methodology that the City of Monroe is now expanding on to establish buildable lands. ArcGIS is one such tool that allows different pieces of information to be quantified on layers then used together in equations to analyze buildable lands based on specific criteria.

Director Swanson explained that buildable lands are being brought back not only to develop our code but to use data to better understand comprehensive plan.

Commissioner Duerksen asked for clarification on how specific pieces of land are determined to be likely to be redeveloped in the GIS system. Director Swanson described how feasibility of redevelopment is calculated into ArcGIS data and placed on a decimal system based on current development on each parcel.

Chair Tuttle asked where Snohomish County sees surplus land in Monroe. Director Swanson clarified that Monroe has more land than we need to reach our capacity according to Snohomish County.

2. Unified Development Regulations – Project review process

Director Swanson informed Commissioners that Council approved contract with consultant for code development in an amount of \$140,000.00.

Director Swanson explained that the permit process is covered under Monroe Municipal Code (MMC) Title 21. Currently the code is laid out in a large matrix. Staff is proposing to change it to a typing system to provide a central area in the code that will cover all permit types.

In addition to using a table to show which types of permits are covered under each permit type, the new code section will make clear requirement for pre-application meetings and noticing requirements and timelines that will help staff to follow the procedure set up in the code in order to avoid legal trouble further into a project. Applicants also like having a set place in the code to find out basics for the timelines of their projects.

Chair Tuttle asked about other types of systems used by different jurisdictions. Director Swanson is aware of two main systems. Previous Monroe codes followed the first type where each permit type has their own chapter. The second type of system is a type system. Monroe attempted to transition from one system to the other but ended up in an in-between system.

Chair Tuttle asked for clarification on the consultants roll in this particular section of code revisions. Director Swanson clarified that the consultants currently have a very narrow contract, as he only authorized known factors to help keep the project on budget. Right now the consultants will be proofing and coordinating public involvement.

Chair Tuttle asked about an electronic system to replace a paper process. Director Swanson presented an overview of the new Bluebeam software that will allow for digital plan submittal and review through an FTP site. This proposal to purchase new software and hardware to run it has been presented to Council. Chair Tuttle would like to see electronic plan review and submittal tied into code development.

Commissioner Jensen asked that all code changes come through Planning Commission before sections are turned over to the public. Director Swanson informed the Commission that every page of code change will come through Planning Commission before it is brought to the general public.

Chair Tuttle requested that Planning Commission know dates and times of workshops related to the code updates. Director Swanson explained that Planning Commission is essential to the interactions with the public during workshops because they are essentially serving as staff during those events in terms of helping the public to understand the process and why decisions have been made.

Commissioner Jensen expressed concerns over the table that started on page 2 was unclear. He suggested section 6 be moved in front of tables to have an introduction to the type system. Director Swanson will take suggestions and look into making it clearer for the public. Chair Tuttle requested that staff bring code back after it is cleaned up

DISCUSSION BY COMMISSIONERS AND STAFF

Commissioner Jensen asked about the building previously occupied by Haagen's. Director Swanson informed them that nothing official has come forward.

Commissioner Jensen asked about the McDonalds building and when it is expected to reopen. Director Swanson informed them that the timeline is completely up to the contractor.

Chair Tuttle asked about any other new businesses. Director Swanson informed them that a few are in the works but nothing official yet.

Commissioner Jensen asked about theatre changes. Director Swanson had no insight.

Chair Tuttle discussed local events including Wings and Wheels on Saturday and the farmers markets at Lake Tye are still continuing.

Director Swanson informed them that the new City Administrator Deborah Knight started today.

Commissioner Bull asked Director Swanson about increasing density and its relationship to buildable lands. Director Swanson clarified that those processes will go hand in hand.

Chair Tuttle asked about types of businesses wanting to come into downtown that are no longer allowed. Director Swanson said there are two businesses that he is aware of. Director Swanson will keep Planning Commissioners updated on any other issues if they arise.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Duerksen made a motion to adjourn at 8:45pm. Seconded by Commissioner Jensen.
Motion carried 6/0.



Bridgette Tuttle
Chair



Leigh Anne Barr
Planning Commission Secretary