

**CITY OF MONROE
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
Monday, May 14, 2018**

The regular meeting of the Monroe Planning Commission was held on **Monday, May 14, 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

Linda Driscoll
122 Charles St Monroe, WA 98272

Ms. Driscoll is the owner of Premier Polaris, a destination business here in Monroe. Ms. Driscoll explained that their business is growing and they need more space. Ms. Driscoll went on to explain that the zone in which their business is located has been rezoned making their business a legal non-confirming use, meaning they cannot expand their business. Ms. Driscoll's requests include, making motor vehicle sales an allowed use in the East Downtown Neighborhood, an investigation into this particular zone change and a better understanding of the changes made to the downtown area since 2013.

Cosmin Popa
111 S Ann St Monroe, WA 98272

Mr. Popa recently purchased property that he plans on redeveloping into a mixed use building. Mr. Popa would like to see the first floor height restriction lowered to accommodate 3 story buildings within the 35' height limit. Mr. Popa would also like to see the density for residential housing raised in the downtown area.

Community Development Director Ben Swanson explained that with the 2008 adoption of the Downtown Master Plan, it changed some of the zoning in that area from industrial to retail and residential with the goal of making downtown one cohesive zone. At a later date, additional concessions were made to allow motor vehicle sales in the roads and rails area of downtown.

Director Swanson also explained that the current legal non-confirming chapter is very strict. Chair Tuttle requested that the notes from tonight's comments be included when the legal non-confirming chapter is brought to Planning Commission as part of the UDR update. Director Swanson reminded Commissioners that the Public Hearings for the UDR update will happen after all the chapters have brought through Planning Commission in the workshop format.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The April 30, 2018 meeting minutes will be brought back to the next Planning Commission meeting for approval with the discussed changes.

PUBLIC HEARING

NONE

OLD BUSINESS

1. CA2018-02 –Traffic Impact Fee Amendment to MMC Chapter 20.12 – Findings of Fact

Principal Planner Shana Restall condensed the comments from Planning Commission on the traffic impact fees into both the motion itself and the text of the code.

Commissioner Duerksen moved that the Planning Commission **RECOMMENDS** that the City Council **ADOPT** the Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law contained in Attachment 1 to the Planning Commission agenda bill; **AUTHORIZE** the Planning Commission Chair to sign the Findings on behalf of the Commission; **RECOMMEND** that the Monroe City Council **APPROVE** the proposed amendments to Monroe Municipal Code (MMC) section 20.12.130; and **ENCOURAGE** the Monroe City Council to authorize revisions to MMC Chapter 20.12 to diminish the financial hardship on small business owners and to boost economic development within existing buildings. Motion seconded by Commissioner Jensen. Motion carried 7/0.

NEW BUSINESS

1. CA2018-01 –Temporary Dwelling - Security Guard to MMC Chapters 18.02 and 18.10

Director Swanson described the problems property owners were having with theft and vandalism on construction sites. One owner in particular requested that a security guard be allowed to stay on site to add a presence onsite. Over the years, the City has tightened its temporary dwelling code language making this code amendment necessary to allow the security guard to stay onsite. The code amendment has already been through City Council as an emergency amendment, and now the code amendment is going through the full process including Planning Commission. Director Swanson explained that the code amendment has strict guidelines for the temporary dwelling to keep the change from becoming a problem. One such restriction is a one month permit with the option to renew.

Commissioner Bull asked if the Police have been consulted. Director Swanson said they have run reports that show there is a problem on construction sites, and the former Deputy Chief liked the idea.

Commissioner Jensen asked if there should be different conditions for larger developments that would allow for more than one dwelling unit onsite. Suggestions to determine the number of allowed temporary dwelling units included a per unit basis or a per entrance count.

Director Swanson noted that the temporary structure section in the new code will address many structures such as the ones in this proposed code section including job trailers, Christmas tree farms and firework stands. Chair Tuttle inquired what happens if the dwelling unit is not moved within the required timeline. Director Swanson said it will follow the normal code enforcement action.

2. Unified Development Regulations (UDR) Zoning Code Amendments Chapter

Principal Planner Restall explained the zoning code amendment chapter covers both code amendments and rezones. The content is similar to how the code is currently written. Principal Planner Restall pointed out that the limitations section requires the comprehensive plan amendment, if required, to run first or concurrently with the code amendment. The section in the current code that limiting spot zoning to parcels over 1 acre, will be removed as the context of a site is more important than its size determining spot zoning.

Director Swanson clarified the difference between quasi-judicial and legislative actions. If it benefits an individual or a groups of individuals with a common interest, than it is typically quasi-judicial, whereas legislative has an impact on the entire community.

Commissioner Jensen questioned allowing comprehensive plan amendment and code amendments to be run concurrently. Director Swanson explained it is best to run them together so the zoning code is not out of compliance with the comprehensive plan between the two processes. Director Swanson suggested that City Council be the only group with the ability to initiate a comprehensive plan amendment. Commissioner Duerksen is concerned about the time frame if the two amendments are not allowed to be run concurrently and Commissioner Bull and Commissioner Fisher agreed.

Director Swanson suggested a requirement that the applicant have an argument as to why the requested change is helpful to the City as a whole. Chair Tuttle liked the idea of moving the burden of proof to the applicant and away from the City.

DISCUSSION BY COMMISSIONERS AND STAFF

Director Swanson will be giving a Community Development staff report at City Council tomorrow night. He also informed Commission that City Council would like to move forward with a code amendment to allow multi-family in the North Kelsey area. Director Swanson also gave an update on the East Monroe property.

Principal Planner Restall noted that BHC will have design guidelines ready for the next Planning Commission meeting.

Commissioner Rousey attended a short course on local planning and Director Swanson informed Planning Commission that there is another course coming up in North Bend on June 14th at 6pm.

Chair Tuttle asked if other cities incentivize legal non conforming businesses to move into a proper location. Director Swanson is not aware of any incentive programs. Monroe's code is less restrictive on single family residences but because legal nonconforming status is a way to get businesses out of certain areas, it is tough to find that middle ground. Chair Tuttle suggested an incentive like waving permit fees to give non conforming businesses a chance to move to conforming lots. Commissioner Bull

asked to wave traffic impact fees but Director Swanson said the City can't wave those, the City would have to pay the fees themselves.

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Jensen made a motion to adjourn at 8:52p.m. Motion seconded by Commissioner Bull. Motion carried 7/0.



Bridgette Tuttle
Chair



Leigh Anne Barr
Planning Commission Secretary