



CITY OF West Linn

PLANNING COMMISSION

WORK SESSION

Minutes of March 6, 2013

Members present: Vice Chair Christine Steel, Russell Axelrod, Lorie Griffith, Nancy King, and Holly Miller

Members absent: Chair Michael Babbitt and Robert Martin

Staff present: John Sonnen, Planning Director; Sara Javoronok, Associate Planner; and Megan Thornton, Assistant City Attorney

CALL TO ORDER

Vice Chair Steel called the meeting to order in the Council Chambers of City Hall at 6:32 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Alice Richmond, 3939 Parker Rd., commented that she appreciated the Commissioners' work.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Miller **moved** to approve the Minutes of January 16, 2013. Commissioner King **seconded** the motion and it **passed** 5:0. Commissioner Miller **moved** to approve the Minutes of February 6, 2013 with a correction by Commissioner King. Commissioner King **seconded** the motion and it **passed** 5:0.

WORK SESSION

Review public comments on proposed unrelated substantive code amendments and amend the draft as warranted.

The Commissioners looked at each set of proposed amendments as staff explained what was proposed to be changed and why. The Commissioners commented on and/or suggested changes to the following items.

Class B Notice requirements

The draft offered the Commission the options to expand the current 100-foot notice radius for small scale projects to 300 or 500 feet. A public comment suggested keeping the 100-foot requirement, but also requiring a sign. The SAB suggested 300 feet instead of 500 feet. The administration was concerned about the added cost of expanded notice. During the discussion staff advised there was no requirement for a property owner to notify tenants. A sign would alert non-property-owner passersby. Each of the Commissioners present seemed to support increasing the current radius for various reasons: 100-feet was not enough because people often remarked that they had not received notice; the city needed to do a better job of notifying people about changes in their neighborhood; a change an uphill neighbor made could cause water to flood one's basement, which would be very expensive. Vice Chair Steel and Commissioner Axelrod each specified they favored 500 feet plus signage.

Number of Dwellings Along Cul-de-sacs

The current code limited cul-de-sacs to 400 feet/12 dwelling units. A previous Planning Commission had suggested allowing more flexibility than the code allowed if there was no related traffic or fire access problem. Staff had incorporated Metro Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) thresholds into the proposed amendments: for sites larger than five acres the cul-de-sac was limited to 200 feet and it could not serve more than 25 dwelling units. The draft allowed exceptions: When there was no feasible physical through-street alternative; the design met emergency service provider standards; and the design adequately dealt with anticipated traffic. Neighborhood association presidents had suggested eliminating the 5 acre site size threshold.

The Commissioners discussed whether Metro's thresholds fit West Linn and its planned density. Mr. Sonnen suggested an alternative would be to not have thresholds and simply say cul-de-sacs were not allowed unless a through street was not possible and the design met the other two exceptions. Vice Chair Steel polled the Commissioners. She would delete the 5-acre standard; however, she favored the 200-foot limit because it was such a short street. The other Commissioners supported taking out all of the parameters. Commissioner Axelrod explained it would give Planning staff and the Commission more flexibility to see that the city had the kind of planned growth it wanted to see. Commissioner Miller was concerned about setting a threshold as high as 25 dwelling units.

In-lieu Fee of Required Improvement

Staff reported that no public comments had been received. Vice Chair Steel suggested modifying the language to clarify that when he was determining the fee the City Engineer would consider the cost of similar improvements in recent development projects, or require up to three estimates from the applicant.

Projecting Signs and Sports Field Signage

- **Sports Field Signage**

Staff clarified that these amendments were intended to address advertising banners on sports fields when the signs were visible from the right-of-way. They were currently unlawful. The School District had not submitted any comments. A resident had commented that she did not want to have sponsor banner signs in Fields Bridge Park. The Commission had discussed this issue in the past and suggested that the signs should be oriented towards spectators and not the right-of-way; and if they were visible from the right-of-way they should have a uniform and aesthetically-pleasing appearance. Staff advised there was no approval process for sign design and enforcement would be complaint driven. Commissioners' suggestions included putting a time limit on how long the banners could be up; distributing an educational flyer about sports field signage regulations; and not requiring uniform back sides if the signs were behind a screened fence.

- **Projecting Signs**

The Commissioners did not suggest any changes.

Docketing

Mr. Sonnen outlined the general procedure. He reported public comments were to ensure that community voices were heard and to clarify how neighborhood plans would be treated. Staff preferred to make the noticing procedure and the annual review administrative policies. They

suggested the code only require formal review by the Planning Commission. They would post notice on the City website. That would reduce cost and potential challenges based on procedural errors. If they had opportunity they would opt to send out other types of notices. They would involve other boards in the process informally. Vice Chair Steel suggested that language be added along the lines of: if time permits that notice be provided to neighborhood associations and others. Mr. Sonnen discussed three options in the draft related to when citizens could request amendments and to allocating resources to the Commission to initiate amendments outside of the docketing process. He pointed out that an exception provision allowed the Council to initiate amendments at any time. Vice Chair Steel observed the consensus was to leave all three options on the table for the public hearing and underscore Options 2 and 3 as being preferred by the Commission.

Residences in Commercial Districts

Mr. Sonnen asked if the Commissioners thought it would be appropriate to allow residences above some types of conditional uses as well as permitted uses. Commissioner Axelrod indicated he supported that.

Temporary Uses and Structures

Mr. Sonnen explained the proposed changes related to duration of temporary use approvals addressed the problem that some projects lasted so long the applicant had to seek a second temporary use approval for a staging area. That also required more staffing resources. Some neighborhood association presidents supported the concept of allowing construction trailers on sites approved for development. One had inquired about whether erosion control required temporary use approval. Mr. Sonnen advised that was already required by the code. The Commissioners suggested the provisions should make the applicant - not the property owner - responsible for getting the permit and removing unused or abandoned drop boxes. Ms. Thornton advised anyone could remove an abandoned box.

Design Review Submittal Requirements

Staff had consolidated all of the neighborhood meetings procedural requirements into Chapter 99 and reconciled their varied number-of-units thresholds for when a neighborhood meeting is required. The neighborhood associations had commented that 10 multifamily units (as drafted) was too many and the threshold should be three or four units. The Commissioners generally agreed to make the procedural requirements consistent with the definitions for 'Subdivision' and 'Multifamily' by setting the thresholds at three units for multifamily and four units for a subdivision.

Approval Standards – Class II Design Review

Commissioner Miller inquired about a public comment related to the appearance of play structures. Mr. Sonnen explained that would need to be addressed separately in design standards because it was more than just housekeeping.

Site Analysis / Site Plan

Commissioner Axelrod suggested several additional categories of natural features to list under these sections.

Stormwater Control on Single Family and Duplex Lots

Commissioner Axelrod suggested renaming Chapter 33, Stormwater Quality and Detention. He would call it Stormwater Management. Mr. Sonnen clarified that 'redevelopment' was placing more than 500 square feet of impervious surface. That did not currently require a permit and if the activity was not associated with some other permit the city would likely not be aware of it. The Commission recessed for ten minutes and reconvened at 8:45 p.m.

Review the draft amendments to the historic code (CDC Chapters 25 and 26) and finalize a public hearing draft.

Ms. Javoronok outlined the changes that were being proposed (see the March 1, 2013 Staff Memorandum). The Commissioners discussed and/or suggested changes to the following items. The Commissioners inquired whether the code would allow sports courts and swimming pools. Staff advised it did not currently require review of a pad. They noted the proposed CDC stormwater-related amendments would trigger a process for them. They clarified the historic code focused on ensuring that features that were visible from the public right-of-way fit the character of the area. In-ground pools were not subject to design review if they were in a rear yard. Lighting had to be in character with the neighborhood. They noted the district featured mostly small lots that might not be large enough to accommodate a sport court. Ms. Javoronok reported general support by residents who attended the public meeting. They perceived that infill was out of scale and/or character with the historic district. They asked that the code apply to Landmarks in the Willamette Falls Drive Commercial District. Staff had addressed both of those concerns in the proposed amendments. She clarified solar energy devices were exempt from HRB review if they were not visible from the public right-of-way. The HRB might lean toward approving them if they were only minimally visible. She clarified there were some archeological sites in West Linn. State officials preferred not to publicize where they were.

ITEMS OF INTEREST FROM THE PLANNING COMMISSION

Mr. Sonnen explained that a special meeting had been scheduled in March due to the workload. Vice Chair Steel asked staff to address the poor condition of the microphones.

ITEMS OF INTEREST FROM THE COMMISSION FOR CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT

None.

ITEMS OF INTEREST FROM STAFF

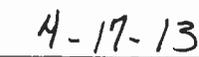
Mr. Sonnen planned to schedule time at a work session for the Commissioners to discuss what they wanted to talk about with the Council at the upcoming joint meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no other business, Vice Chair Steel adjourned the meeting at approximately 9:20 p.m.

APPROVED:


Christine Steel, Vice Chair


Date