

**Sandy Planning Commission  
Regular Meeting  
Monday, January 13, 2025**

Chair Wegener called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

**1. MEETING FORMAT NOTICE: Instructions for electronic meeting**

**2. ROLL CALL**

Commissioner Crosby – Present  
Commissioner Poulin – Present  
Commissioner Zawaski – Present  
Commissioner Malone – Present  
Commissioner O’Leary – Present  
Vice Chair Lee – Present  
Chair Wegener – Present

Council Liaison Mayton – Present

Others present: Development Services Director Kelly O’Neill Jr., Executive Assistant Rebecca Markham, Senior Planner Patrick Depa, City Attorney Josh Soper

**3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – November 25, 2024**

Chair Wegener asked for any edits to the draft minutes. With no requested edits, Wegener declared the minutes approved.

**4. REQUESTS FROM THE FLOOR – CITIZEN COMMUNICATION ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS:**

None

**5. DIRECTOR’S REPORT**

Development Services Director Kelly O’Neill Jr. reminded the Commission of the next Planning Commission meeting on the 18th of February which will be a joint work session with the City Council on “mass timber”. O’Neill provided a brief background on mass timber and how the City secured a grant from DLCD to assist with recommended code modifications so that mass timber products can be constructed in Sandy.

O’Neill provided the code enforcement year-end report for 2024. He said that out of the 451 closed cases this last year one-third of them were for noxious vegetation. O’Neill completed his report by mentioning the two City projects the Planning Division is currently working on. The reservoir upgrade on Revenue Avenue is in the beginning stages with a pre-application meeting occurring in January and staff is currently reviewing the design review application for the new Deer Pointe Park.

Chair Wegener asked staff how the “electronic plan review” was working for the building permit submittals. O’Neill explained that it has only been a few weeks since the State’s requirement to allow for electronic plan review was implemented. He also explained it’s been quite so far but that the department is prepared for electronic plan review. The Building Division purchased an iPlan Table that allows the Building Official to review the plans in actual size and hired a consultant, SAFEbuilt, to help with electronic plan review.

## **6. CITY COUNCIL LIAISON REPORT**

City Council Liaison Chris Mayton said he'll find out at the next City Council meeting if he'll continue to be the City Council Liaison to the Planning Commission. He explained that the new Mayor will be completing the new liaison assignments.

## **7. SELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR**

Commissioner Lee nominated Chair Wegener as Chair and Commissioner Crosby as Vice Chair. Commissioner Malone seconded the motion. The new positions will take effect at the next Planning Commission meeting.

**Motion:** Motion to appoint Chair Wegener as Chair and Commissioner Crosby as Vice Chair.

Moved by: Commissioner Lee

Seconded by: Commissioner Malone

Yes votes: All Ayes

No votes: None

Abstentions: None

## **8. NEW BUSINESS:**

### **8.1. Land Use Training**

City Attorney Josh Soper conducted a Land Use training session which included an overview of land use basics, important issues, and he provided a brief history of land use law in Oregon over the last 50 years. Soper also explained the role of the State of Oregon and cities, the types of land use decisions, and the differences between legislative decisions and quasi-judicial decisions. He then explained "bias" by providing an overview of several court cases, explained ex-parte contacts, conflicts of interest, and other government ethics issues.

Lastly, Soper explained the 120-day rule, fixed goalpost rule, clear and objective requirements, constitutional issues, and recent legislation with Senate Bill 1537. O'Neill explained how City staff is currently working on submitting an exemption to DLCD for Senate Bill 1537.

### **8.2. Planning Commission Goals Discussion**

#### **Staff Report:**

O'Neill explained that due to the moratorium and having fewer big applications to review, he felt this was a good time to discuss goal setting with the Commission. O'Neill also mentioned that moving forward he would like to get more Commissioner input on code edits outside of Title 17.

O'Neill narrowed the focus of the discussion down to six thematic areas he felt the Commission and Planning Division could discuss and prioritize. Those six areas were "economic development", "housing choice and production", "transportation planning", "fire and natural hazards resiliency", "water conservation", and "wetland and urban forestry." O'Neill emphasized that "urban forestry" has been one of the more pressing issues for staff as they field questions related to trees regularly.

Chair Wegener asked each Commissioner to share their top priorities or interests out of the six thematic areas presented in the staff report.

Commissioner Crosby's top priorities were housing choice and production, fire and natural hazards resiliency, and wetland and urban forestry protections. Out of those three, his top priority is housing choice as he wants to see "truly" affordable homes that will help younger people build equity and stay in Sandy.

Vice Chair Lee's top priorities were housing choice and production, specifically affordable housing. Lee also prioritized fire and natural hazard resiliency and economic development. She stated that the City could explore discounts on permit fees for affordable housing and move forward with creating a Bell Street business development plan.

Commissioner Malone's top priority was economic development as she wants to see the City prioritize filling empty commercial spaces especially in the downtown. Malone also prioritized fire and natural hazards resiliency and urban forestry protections.

On a side note, Malone also asked staff about the "safe routes to school" program and what projects or gaps need filling to complete this. O'Neill explained that he applied for a facilities evaluation grant back in 2019 with the school district and was awarded the grant that identified about \$800,000 worth of prioritized projects. In 2021 the City and school district applied for an improvement grant, but narrowly missed the awarding of the grant. O'Neill said it will take a joint effort from the school district and the City Council to meet and come to a cost sharing agreement before applying for the improvement grant again.

Commissioner Zawaski's top priorities were fire and natural hazards resiliency, housing choice and production, and water conservation. Zawaski stated that he would like to see the City explore options on creating a new reservoir for treated effluent that could be used to fight wildfires.

Commissioner Poulin's top priorities were water conservation, housing choice and production, and fire and natural hazards resiliency. Poulin felt that water conservation was the most important.

The Commission then discussed different ideas, solutions, and challenges to water conservation efforts as well as ideas for incentivizing the conservation of water. Wegener suggested larger efforts at the subdivision level such as drought resistant plants that surround the subdivision. Poulin also asked if residents were allowed to harvest their own water in the city limits. O'Neill said that residents are allowed to use rain barrels with dripline systems for irrigation purposes. The Commission stated that they would like to see the City Council encourage and educate the community on harvesting water with rain barrels. O'Neill stated that as much as he thinks that water conservation efforts for new development is a great idea, it will be difficult as new homeowners can replace landscaping or low flow devices without checking with the City.

Commissioner O'Leary stated that he had nothing new to add as he's just listening and would like the more experienced commissioners to lead the goal setting efforts for 2025-2027.

Chair Wegener's top three priorities were economic development, fire and natural hazards resiliency, and housing choice and production. Wegener stated that he would like to see more ERU's for businesses and additional sewer solutions for commercial/industrial businesses that have available land. Wegener also expressed concern over the cities lack of trained and designated natural hazard assessment evaluators. If a natural disaster occurs, the City's lack of trained and designated building assessors will slow the process of getting help for our community. Wegener also agreed with the previous Commissioners in saying that the City needs to get creative in achieving affordable housing.

O'Neill noted that the top three goals from the Commissions comments were "fire and natural hazard resiliency", "housing choice and production", and "economic development". O'Neill also explained that there isn't a lot the City can do right now with affordable housing production due to the lack of ERUs, but said that there are strategies that the City Council could adopt now to

help preserve existing manufactured homes which are one of the few options remaining for affordable housing in Sandy.

Senior Planner Depa suggested that once mass timber becomes more affordable that could be another option to help keep the costs down and provide more affordable housing options. Malone also suggested that the City should be open to a subdivision of “tiny homes”.

Chair Wegener asked O’Neill what his top priority was from the staff report which O’Neill stated was fire and natural hazard resiliency.

Commissioner O’Leary asked staff how as a city we can encourage other businesses or builders to use mass timber. O’Neill said that the first step is to ensure our code is written in a way that allows for mass timber construction and the City could also consider avenues to incentivize mass timber construction. Depa also provided additional information on the benefits of using mass timber such as fire hardiness.

## **9. ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Wegener adjourned the meeting at 9:28 p.m.

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Chair Darren Wegener

Attest:

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Date signed:

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Kelly O’Neill Jr.,  
Development Services Director