

DRAFT MINUTES
Stevenson Planning Commission
Monday, September 12, 2022
6:00 PM

In Person: Attendees at City Hall followed current CDC and State guidance regarding use of masks, social distancing, and attendance.

Planning Commission Chair Jeff Breckel called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Attending: City Development Director Ben Shumaker; Planning Commission Chair Jeff Breckel, Commissioners Auguste Zettler, Davy Ray, Anne Keesee. Commissioner Hales was not in attendance.

Public attendees: Kevin Freeman, Versari, Mary Repar, Pat Rice.

A. PRELIMINARY MATTERS

1. Public Comment Expectations:

Community Development Director Ben Shumaker advised participants must raise their hand and be acknowledged by the Chair. Individual comments may be limited to 3 minutes. He explained the tools to use for remote participants: *6 to mute/unmute & *9 to raise hand.

2. Public Comment Period: (For items not located elsewhere on the agenda)

>Mary Repar offered comments on new buildings and on-street parking.

>**Commissioner Ray** provided information on his research into Amtrak stations.

3. Minutes: August 8th, 2022 Planning Commission Meeting Minutes

MOTION to approve the minutes from the August 8th, 2022 Planning Commission meeting was made by **Commissioner Ray**, seconded by **Commissioner Zettler**.

- Voting aye: **Commissioners Zettler, Ray, Keesee, Breckel**.

B. NEW BUSINESS

4. Property Line Code: Community Development Director Shumaker explained the purpose of the agenda item. After reviewing draft ordinance 2022-1183 revising Stevenson Municipal Code Title 16 – Subdivisions presented at the August 2022 City Council meeting, the City Council referred the draft to the Planning Commission. The Council requested the PC expedite a review in response to advice from city administrators regarding amendments to Section 5 concerning Boundary Line Adjustments. Shumaker noted four other sections of Title 16 had been reviewed previously by the Planning Commission in anticipation of releasing a public draft once a full update of Title 16 was finalized. Sections 1, 2, 3, and 4 of the draft ordinance were included as part of the requested review.

Shumaker provided further details on the intent of Section 5. It was written with assistance from the City’s legal counsel. The purpose is to incorporate case law from other communities and to rely more on public works standards when reviewing applications.

Section 5 also looks to place ‘guard rails’ on proposals with more of an impact on neighborhoods than a typical boundary line adjustment. This would address frequent BLA’s, those that involve multiple lots, and those that create substantial changes to a neighborhood similar to a short plat or subdivision. It would provide a provision for denial and a process to direct proposals into the short plat/subdivision code.

Shumaker noted that the City Council had sought public input on the proposed ordinance, and through a SEPA (State Environmental Policy Act) analysis received a request from the Department of Fish & Wildlife to ensure future surveys show habitat areas. He also pointed to an amendment requiring monumenting (placing survey stakes as markers) when a BLA takes place.

Following **Shumaker’s** presentation, the Commissioners held an extensive discussion regarding the purpose of boundary line adjustments. It was agreed BLA’s were to be used generally for the purpose of minor administrative adjustments between two adjacent lots, not to create lots or cause broad-scale neighborhood change. Changes involving large parcels or multiple adjustments need to go through a more open process.

Commissioner Zettler observed several of the public comments received had a theme regarding large parcels of undeveloped land. He emphasized BLA’s are predominately used for established lots and stressed these regulations may not address the issues raised. **PC Chair Breckel** suggested the misconception came from property owners concerned that BLA’s could be used to circumvent existing land use regulations.

Prior to the motion, Commissioners specified the point be made that their recommendation to adopt the ordinance as presented was to ensure the ordinance was not intended for large undeveloped parcels and not a way to circumvent the subdivision process. Community Development Director Shumaker advised he would add a recital, a ‘Where as’ clauses, to explain the Commission’s support.

MOTION to recommend the Stevenson City Council adopt draft ordinance 2022-1183 as presented was made by **Commissioner Ray**, seconded by **Commissioner Keesee**.
Voting aye: **Commissioners Breckel, Keesee, Ray, Zettler**.

C. OLD BUSINESS

5. Public Hearing: Hear comments from the public on the Public Release Draft amendment issued in June 2022. Upon conclusion of the hearing a recommendation to City Council is possible.

The public hearing opened at 6:40 p.m.

Community Development Director Shumaker summarized the timeline and efforts, including public hearings and outreach activities, associated with amending the city’s Comprehensive Plan by incorporating a Capital Improvement Program into it.

The initial application to amend the Comprehensive Plan was submitted in 2019. Review of the proposal was initiated as part of the 2020 Biennial Amendment Cycle. Health guidelines imposed during the COVID-19 pandemic caused a delay in the review. The review was re-initiated as part of the 2022 Biennial Comprehensive Plan Amendment Cycle.

He explained much of the Capital Improvement Plan is intended to help plan and develop future public services and manage existing city infrastructure projects in a coordinated fashion. He pointed to the findings and conclusions the Planning Commission would need to accept and approve in their recommendation to the City Council.

> Mary Repar stated she appreciated all the work that went into the CIP. She provided additional comments on the Capital Improvement Plan, infrastructure usage and future costs of development.

The public hearing closed at 6:51.

MOTION relating the following findings was made by **Commissioner Zettler**, seconded by **Commissioner Keesee**:

1. The proposed amendment is consistent with state statute and internally with the remainder of the Comprehensive Plan;
2. The City has no interlocal planning agreements for this amendment to be (in)consistent with;
3. The proposal will serve the public interest, especially through its anticipated effect on City budgets, the provision of urban services, improvement of public health, safety and welfare, alignment with community values, and implementation of specific plan elements. Furthermore, the amendments are unlikely to negatively impact natural systems;
4. The proposal does not involve a comprehensive plan map change or specific real property.

Commissioner Ray stated the CONCLUSIONS OF LAW regarding the proposed amendment was consistent with SMC 17.11.070.

Planning Commission Chair Breckel clarified the action was to serve as a recommendation to the City Council to adopt the proposed amendment to the city's Comprehensive Plan (SMC 17.11.)

D. Discussion

6. Thought of the Month:

What's the Federal Reserve got to do with the cost of a house in Stevenson?

<https://shelterforce.org/2022/08/15/how-the-federal-reserves-monetary-policy-drives-housing-inequality/>

A discussion took place regarding corporate purchases of housing stock, the impact on private homeowners and renters, and affordable housing issues.

7. Staff & Commission Reports: Community Development Director Shumaker provided updates on the following items:

- Shoreline Public Access & Trail Plan: A consultant contract is being finalized.
- Downtown Parking: He is working on rewriting regulations regarding on street parking.

- Sewer Projects: Extension to Frank Johns is complete. Construction completion deadline has been extended for the collection system that provides added capacity. Major expansion of the WWTP is occurring.
- City Council Strategic Plan/Planning Commission Work Plan: He is waiting for direction from the City Council before initiating a work plan for the Planning Commission. Housing will be a main topic. He shared information from a Portland based organization detailing what goes into rent charges. Exploring potential changes to the subdivision process and forming local improvement districts to ease the buildable land shortage were suggested as future conversations.

>Mary Repar reported a rural suicide prevention seminar offered by the local Grange will take place at 4:30 p.m. on September 13th at the Stevenson Library.

Commissioner Zettler commented the presentation on September 8th regarding consent-building and informed consent was excellent.

E. Adjournment

PC Chair Breckel adjourned the meeting at 7:49 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Johanna Roe