

DRAFT MINUTES
Stevenson Regular Planning Commission Meeting
Monday, December 13, 2021

6:00 PM

Webinar: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85637388112>

Conference Call: +1 253 215 8782

or +1 346 248 7799 ID #: 856 3738 8112

Attending: Planning Commission Chair Valerie Hoy-Rhodehamel; Commissioners Davy Ray, Mike Beck, Auguste Zettler, Community Development Director Ben Shumaker.

Public participants included Brandi Leverett, Caryl McMains, Tina Weaver, Colette Black, Kellie McGuire, John Prescott, Katie Simpson, Sherry Busby, Geri Crider, Tammy Braaten, Dennis Walker, Tracy Gratto, Mike Perry, S. Walter and others unidentified.

A. Preliminary Matters

1. Public Comment Expectations:

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

Planning Commission Chair Valerie Hoy-Rhodehamel opened the meeting at 6:02 p.m.

She requested remote participants to raise their hand to comment. Individual comments should be limited to 3 minutes. Tools: Use *6 to mute/unmute and *9 to raise hand.

2. Minutes: October 11, 2021 Meeting Minutes

MOTION to approve and accept minutes from October 11, 2021 Planning Commission meeting as presented was made by **Commissioner Beck**, seconded by **Commissioner Zettler**.

- Voting aye: **Commission Chair Hoy-Rhodehamel; Commissioners Beck, Zettler, Ray.**

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

>No comments were provided.

B. Old Business

4. Zoning Amendment: Public Hearing on Suburban Residential District Text Amendment Application: Setback Caveats

Community Development Director Shumaker related that as the proposal was for a legislative change, there was no Appearance of Fairness Doctrine required.

Shumaker explained that that in keeping with the recent community engagement process adopted by the Planning Commission, informational flyers had been sent out to property owners in the SR (Suburban Residential District) and those in adjacent areas to alert them to the issue and to invite their input. Over 200 flyers had been sent.

He stated the proposal to amend the zoning code text was initiated by an application from property owners in the Hidden Ridge development to revise current rear and sideyard setbacks in order to allow placement of sheds <200 ft. ² and <12' in height.

Several Commissioners commented it would have been helpful if the flyers had more specific information and/or links to the city website regarding the proposed zoning revision. **Commissioner Beck** suggested replacing the word 'change' in the text with another word that property owners would find less concerning.

The public hearing began at approximately 6:12.

A number of audience members were present in person and remotely. Due to difficult audio/visual quality, determining who individual participants were was not possible by the Minute Recorder. The discussion with comments and questions is summarized below.

Many attendees were unsure of the location of the area under consideration, and suggested a map be included to help make it easier to see. It was explained the amendment would affect all properties in the SR zone. **Chair Hoy-Rhodehamel** highlighted additional information in the meeting packet to provide further clarification of the reason for and history of the current zoning. (A 10 minute break was provided to allow for copying of portions of the packet for audience members.)

A number of audience members suggested that only the properties in the Hidden Ridge development should have their setbacks changed, questioning why the entire SR district would be affected. **Commissioner Beck** explained that would be considered 'spot zoning' and could be seen as giving some property owners preferential treatment. He noted the proposed revision would allow greater flexibility by providing the same setbacks as other residential districts, and would result in more uniform standards.

Several of the applicants who live in the Hidden Ridge development spoke of their reason for the proposal. They stated they were not aware the proposal would affect all the SR properties. None of the meeting participants spoke against the proposed zoning amendment.

Commissioner Zettler requested information on any CCR's (covenants, conditions, and restrictions) on properties in the Hidden Ridge development. He advised that CCR's are often more restrictive than zoning rules, and noted the Planning Commission cannot change any CCR's as they are usually recorded on the property deed or in the original plat.

He questioned if the homeowners in the Hidden Ridge Development were aware of any CCR's and several responded they had not been provided any information from their builder upon purchase of the property. He suggested variances for individual lots may be more appropriate than a blanket change. It was pointed out that even if any CCR's are found and amended or removed, it still leaves the issue of the zoning setbacks to be addressed. **Shumaker** noted that variances are typically granted if it can be determined there is a unique and unusual hardship created by the physical characteristics of the land.

All the Commissioners agreed to revisit the discussion at the January 2022 Planning Commission meeting. They requested another flyer be sent out with additional information and a map to help clarify and explain the proposed amendment and the areas affected. **Community Development Director Shumaker** will send the Commissioners any records of CCR's contained within deeds or within the subdivision plat for Hidden Ridge properties.

Following questions from audience members on the need for a further flyer and meeting, **Shumaker and Commissioner Beck** detailed the new public engagement process developed with input and recommendations from the public. It was created in response to public complaints there were not enough opportunities for residents and property owners to have their concerns addressed regarding land use in Stevenson. **Shumaker** also outlined the next steps in the process, as any recommendation by the Planning Commission on the issue will then go to the City Council for further action.

The public hearing closed at 7:18 p.m.

C. New Business

Planning Commission Chair Valerie Hoy-Rhodehamel was presented with a plaque thanked for her many years of public service. She is retiring from the Planning Commission and this meeting was her last.

D. Discussion

5. Thought of the Month: **Community Development Director Shumaker** provided additional information on the following items:

Strong Towns Organization: https://www.strongtowns.org/journal/2017/1/31/5-essential-strong-towns-articles?apcid=0060f5c4aeb5b5bba4857800&utm_campaign=general-onboarding&utm_content=&utm_medium=email&utm_source=autopilot

Wildland-Urban

Interface: <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/7016c437623a445997c072a05e26afbb>

This tool can be used to help define wildfire risk. It can be used by building officials, fire marshals, emergency responders and others to help in decision making.

A brief discussion was held following questions on annexation and how the comprehensive plan does not provide much guidance for the development patterns in various districts.

6. Staff & Commission Reports:

Community Development Director Shumaker provided updates on the following:

- Downtown Parking Study
The final report is underway, and will be presented to the parking advisory committee. **Shumaker** noted a lot of successful information was gathered, including data on parking usage at different points in time. He highlighted that 85% utilization of parking sites represents a maximum threshold for usage.

- Shoreline Public Access Plan

Community Development Director Shumaker provided a brief review on the status of the Shoreline Management Program and the Public Access portion. He noted the Department of Ecology should have the SMP returned shortly, and he plans to have it on the Planning Commission's agenda for January 2022.

He expects to hold a 'red light/green light' exercise to consider the changes the DOE may recommended or require. A grant has been awarded from DOE to support turning the public access decisions into a proactive program instead of a reactive regulatory discussion.

Commissioner Ray asked how the plan would affect the Iman Cemetery issue regarding access to Rock Creek Falls. Shumaker noted there is a city ROW adjacent to the public area but the issue will be revisited.

- Commissioner Updates
No discussion was held.

E. Adjournment

Commission Chair Valerie Hoy-Rhodehamel declared the meeting adjourned at 7:43 p.m.