

**STEVENSON PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES**  
**Monday, December 14, 2020 6:00 PM**  
**Held remotely**

Webinar: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87629933680>

Conference Call: +1 253 215 8782 or +1 346 248 7799 ID #: **873 299 33 680**

**Attending**

- Planning Commission Chair Valerie Hoy-Rhodehamel; Commissioners Mike Beck, Jeff Breckel and Davy Ray. Commissioner Auguste Zettler was absent.
- City Staff: Community Development Director Ben Shumaker
- Public attendees: Unnamed.

**Planning Commission Chair Valerie Hoy-Rhodehamel opened the meeting at 6:03 p.m.**

**A. Preliminary Matters**

1. Public Comment Expectations:

**PC Chair Hoy-Rhodehamel and Community Development Director Shumaker** explained how to access the online or phone-in tools to provide public comment.

2. Minutes: November 9th, 2020 Planning Commission Meeting Minutes

**MOTION** to adopt November 2020 Planning Commission meeting minutes as presented was made by **Commissioner Breckel** with a second by **Commissioner Beck**.

- Voting aye: **PC Chair Valerie Hoy-Rhodehamel, Commissioners Beck, Breckel, Ray**
- Voting no: None.

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

**Community Development Director Ben Shumaker** shared information for participants on how to provide comments and mute/unmute their phones or microphones.

**Commissioner Beck** requested the Planning Commission recommend the Stevenson City Council not abandon a road easement to Iman Cemetery Road in order to preserve access to Rock Creek. It was agreed to move the discussion to item 5a within the meeting agenda.

**PC Chair Hoy-Rhodehamel** called for other public comments. None were received.

**B. New Business**

4. Planning Commission Bylaws: General Overview

**Shumaker** provided a brief explanation regarding the agenda item. The Planning Commission last revised their bylaws in 2014. In light of an issues recently encountered by the City Council, he invited a discussion on meeting conduct in general.

It was noted the current Planning Commission bylaws do not address meeting conduct by individuals. Reviewing the by-laws in place with all new Commission members was seen as important. **Commissioner Beck** added the State of Washington offers training for all elected and appointed officials on Open Public Meeting laws. A Short Course on Local Planning was also viewed as a valuable resource. Municipal codes and procedures were seen as the nearest to a code of conduct. The ballot box was also recognized as a check on elected officials.

Working together as a team was agreed to by all as essential.

**PC Chair Hoy-Rhodehamel** asked Planning Commissioners to review the by the bylaws for potential amendments, noting the need for greater clarity regarding at-large membership from outside Stevenson City limits. **Shumaker** explained the amendment process and timeline. The Chair asked members to review provide requested amendments for review at the January meeting.

5. Planning Commission Minutes:

**Community Development Director Shumaker** related the Stevenson City Council had recently switched to action minutes. He asked the Planning Commission about their expectations for the style and detail of draft minutes for their meetings. Johanna Roe, Minute Taker provided information on the format currently in use.

Watching a recording or transcript of online meetings versus reading summary minutes was discussed. **Commissioner Breckel** suggested it might be easier to read a summary then review a full recording of a meeting. **Commissioner Beck** commented consistency between the Planning Commission and City Council minutes was something to consider. **Commissioner Ray** was unconvinced of a problem with the current format.

No decision was made, and the item was tabled.

a. Iman Cemetery Road Vacation

**Community Development Director Shumaker** provided background information regarding an upcoming public hearing by the City Council addressing vacation of a section of Iman Cemetery Road in Stevenson. **Commissioner Beck** requested the Planning Commission recommend the City Council consider preserving a road easement next to Iman Cemetery in order to allow public access to Rock Creek.

Commissioners discussed several options the city and or county could consider in providing ongoing access to Rock Creek. Key points included parking, trespassing, litter, liability, lack of sanitation facilities, landowner rights and safe alternative access.

The Commissioners agreed to **Shumaker's** suggestion that, rather than have the Planning Commission provide a formal motion, he would draft a letter from the Planning Commission to the City Council regarding the issue. The letter would address the importance of providing public access to Rock Creek and the Commission's willingness to participate in access planning, with **Commissioner Beck** serving to provide Commission input.

C. Old Business

6. Land Division Code Amendment: Reviewing Past Efforts and Future Expectations

**Shumaker** explained the scope of the current changes presented in the draft text. At the November 2019 kick-off meeting, the Planning Commission chose to establish public involvement opportunities at a later time. He anticipates public engagement will take place when all proposed changes are reviewed by the Planning Commission and approved by way of a single "Public Release Draft".

**Commissioner Beck** received confirmation the City Council had not acted on the recommendations made by the PC regarding changes to setbacks within the zoning code at the December 2020 Council meeting due to the setback issue needing further definition. **Beck** agreed clarity was needed to make it more understandable and easier for staff and the public to interpret. **Shumaker** pointed to several sections in the code where standards need to be aligned. Following comments from **Commissioner Beck, Shumaker** directed Commission members to Item #7 on the meeting agenda as it further addressed the issue.

**7. Zoning Amendment: Increasing Residential Building Capacity:** Reviewing Staff Suggestion Related to Pedestrian Visibility

Commission members considered several suggested revisions **Community Development Director Shumaker** proposed regarding the zoning code language concerning pedestrian safety near driveways. He included some definitions to help make it easier to interpret, and noted **Commissioners Beck** and **Zettler** had reviewed the changes previously. He advised the Commission the changes could be presented to City Council as a supplemental recommendation.

**MOTION** to recommend the City Council approve the zoning code language changes presented in Option B was made by **Commissioner Beck** with a second provided by **Commissioner Breckel**.

- Voting aye: **PC Chair Valerie Hoy-Rhodehamel, Commissioners Breckel, Ray and Beck.**
- Voting nay: None

**D. Discussion**

**8. Staff & Commission Reports: 1st Street Overlook/Columbia Street Realignment**

The Commission heard an update from Shumaker on the 1st Street overlook. The project engineers gave a short presentation at the December 2020 City Council meeting. Following the bid process, construction is anticipated to begin in the summer of 2021. A grant proposal submitted to WSDOT for full repaving of 1st Street was not awarded.

**Commissioner Ray** shared an anecdotal conversation he had with the local dentist whose business borders the area near 1st Street. He noted the dentist was amenable to mixed use for the area. **Shumaker** related additional funding proposals were being readied for further planning grants and site assessment work.

**Commissioner Breckel** asked about implementation of the downtown plan. **Shumaker** related there were negative responses towards implementation and progress is advancing in a piecemeal fashion. The working group has not been meeting regularly and interest has waned. **Commissioner Beck** has been working with Kelly O'Malley-O'Keefe on parking in the downtown area.

**Shumaker** shared information on water seepage reportedly arising from the former county dump along Rock Creek Drive. The City is preparing to conduct water quality rests to determine what the water contains and if a regulatory agency needs to be involved.

**9. Thought of the Month:** None

**E. Adjournment**

**Planning Commission Chair Valerie Hoy-Rhodehamel** adjourned the meeting at 7:12 p.m.

**Minutes prepared by Johanna Roe**