

**Stevenson Regular Planning Commission Meeting Minutes**  
**Monday, September 13, 2021**  
**6:00 PM**

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

Attending: Planning Commission Chair Valerie Hoy-Rhodehamel Valerie; Commissioners Jeff Breckel, Davy Ray, Mike Beck, Auguste Zettler and Community Development Director Ben Shumaker. Public participants included Mary Repar and others unidentified.

**Planning Commission Chair Valerie Hoy-Rhodehamel** opened the meeting at 6:12 p.m.

**A. Preliminary Matters**

1. Ceremonial Meeting Opening

**Planning Commission Chair Valerie Hoy-Rhodehamel** asked commission members if they had preferences on how to open the meeting. It was decided to discuss the matter further at the October 2021 Planning Commission meeting.

2. Public Comment Expectations:

**Planning Commission Chair Valerie Hoy-Rhodehamel** provided information on participating for remote attendees: Please raise hand to comment, and identify yourself for the record. Use the tools \*6 to mute/unmute & \*9 to raise hand. Individual comments should be limited to 3 minutes.

3. Minutes: July 12, 2021 & August 9, 2021 Meeting Minutes

**MOTION** to approve the minutes from July 12, 2021 as presented made by **Commissioner Breckel** seconded by **Commissioner Ray**. (It was determined there was no need to approve August 2021 minutes since the meeting was canceled.)

- **Voting aye: Commissioners Beck, Ray, Breckel**

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

> Mary Repar informed the Commission on upcoming events planned by the Stevenson Grange. On September 28<sup>th</sup> there will be a presentation from a planner from the Portland Planning Commission speaking on the 'doughnut' theory of economics and sustainability. It will be held at the Stevenson Community Library. She also announced there would be a garden swap event sponsored by the Grange in early November.

**B. New Business**

5. Planning Commission Bylaws: Conscientious Public Involvement Amendment (1st Review)

**Community Development Director Ben Shumaker** provided background information on the bylaw amendment. He explained it is a draft amendment and will need to be reviewed twice by the Planning Commission prior to adoption. The changes grew out of requests to Community Development staff for increased public involvement following the issue of residential building capacity.

The proposed amendment creates a new article in the bylaws specifically addressing public involvement and a detailed Appendix related to the topic with sample language.

Commissioners provided comments, expressing appreciation for the work and the visuals.

**Commissioner Beck** questioned the use of the word ‘change’ in the suggested flyer language and proposed it be replaced. He also asked if the Planning Commission was empowered to call for public referendum votes as detailed in Appendix B.

**Planning Commission Chair Valerie Hoy-Rhodehamel** asked a question regarding the order of speaking and how new materials could be introduced. It was explained by Shumaker that within the structure of public hearings opportunities for presenting information are provided, but at some point new submissions need to end. He noted if relevant new information was provided the hearing could be continued.

**Shumaker** reminded Commissioners the bylaws could be amended anytime with two months notice and review if further changes were needed. Time will tell how smooth the process will be. He highlighted the text of Exhibits B2 and B3 which allowed for more frequent changes as necessary.

#### **C. Old Business**

**None.**

#### **D. Discussion**

6. Thought of the Month:

Community Submission: Concerns about Vacation Rentals reemerge:

<https://survivingtomorrow.org/an-open-letter-to-airbnb-8b1b58b4ad33>

<https://www.npr.org/sections/money/2021/08/24/1030151330/a-unicorn-startup-is-turning-houses-into-corporations>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch>

<https://twitter.com/BourbonPlanner/status/1415041449553534988>

[Taxes developed by new dev vs services required](#)

**Community Development Director Ben Shumaker** verified the links work. Commissioners expressed appreciation for the links provided and noted interesting information was available through them regarding housing.

#### **7. Staff & Commission Reports:**

- Downtown Parking Analysis

**Community Development Director Shumaker** updated Commission members on the parking study in Stevenson being performed by Alex Ralston, the UW intern organizing the data/info/volunteers. He is inventorying all the parking spaces in the downtown area and creating a usage study. A gap analysis will also be developed to show where additional parking could be provided. The information will be provided to traffic consultants to help them determine costs of potential additions to the public

parking supply. The study overall will later be used to help in asses impacts of new developments on parking and how to establish a fee structure when addressing parking requirements. **Commissioner Beck** is working with the project and noted safety concerns were raised regarding parking on Second Street. Using the information from the survey may help guide future parking regulations.

- Columbia Avenue Realignment

The contract to finalize the consultant's work will be before the City Council at their next meeting. It is for initial services related to the Integrated Planning Grant received by the Department of Ecology to evaluate the concept of the Columbia Ave Realignment project brownfield sites.

The intent is to ascertain if the project will be viable, and will include additional soil testing, feasibility of soil remediation if contaminants are found, architectural/engineering drawings, and a market/cost benefit analysis to determine the potential return on investment for developers. The Scope of Work with DOE still needs to be developed.

- Increasing Residential Capacity

The proposed changes have been put on hold while the public involvement process work is finalized. **Commissioner Breckel** reported the sub-committee agreed to at the July PC meeting has not met yet. Discussions on who should be on the committee in order to increase/broaden representation is continuing. He noted a primary challenge is to define what the real problem is, and to build trust among those with different interests.

>Mary Repar commented it was important to ask if local residents would benefit from any increase in residential housing capacity or would it provide more housing stock for wealthier individuals with no vested interest in the community. **Commissioner Breckel** agreed and pointed out that speaks to the complexity of the problem. Mary then asked if people from other Skamania County communities should be asked to participate in the sub-committee.

- Utility Service Outside City Limits

**Community Development Director Shumaker** relayed the subject has been and will continue to be reviewed by the City Council. Commission members then held an extended discussion on the convoluted and contentious issue of providing adequate water to a growing population and how to address the problem. Water rights, linking building permits to water resources, increased capture and storage of water and recent legal decisions were all discussed. It was agreed the topic was pressing and solutions will be complicated.

- Feeley Short Plat

This was presented to the Planning Commission at the July 2021 meeting. Community Development staff reviewed and approved, and the property owner quickly met conditions. There are now 2 lots on upper Willard St where there was only one.

- Conditional Use Reviews

October is when conditional permits need to be reviewed. Additional conditions can be attached at that time if deemed necessary. **Community Development Director Shumaker** advised a new one may be possible, and if so, expect at a review at the October meeting.

- Shoreline Master Program

The approved Shoreline Master Program, submitted to the state for its approval in 2018, is nearing a point where the state will issue a set of recommended and required changes to the program. The Shoreline Advisory Committee and the Planning Commission will review the changes, and then send it on to the City Council for approval possibly in October or November 2021. An ordinance will be needed to adopt the revised SMP. Shumaker discussed suggestions to clean up text/typos and provide greater clarity and consistency.

#### **E. Adjournment**

Chair Valerie Hoy-Rhodehamel declared the meeting adjourned at 7:25

**Minutes prepared by Johanna Roe**