

September 14th Stevenson Planning Commission Meeting Minutes
Monday, September 14, 2020
6:00 PM Held Remotely

Conference Call Info: (253) 215-8782 or (312) 626-6799 and PIN 845 5958 3385 #
Online: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84559583385>

Attending via remote access: Chair Valerie Hoy-Rhodehamel, Commissioners Auguste Zettler, Mike Beck, Jeff Breckel.

City Staff: Community Development Director Ben Shumaker

Other: David Ray

Public attendees: None

Planning Commission Vice-Chair Auguste Zettler opened the meeting at 6:03 p.m. (NOTE: Chair Valerie Hoy-Rhodehamel had intermittent connection problems throughout the meeting.)

1. Preliminary Matters

a. Chair Describes Public Comment Expectations for Remote Meeting

Vice Chair Auguste Zettler asked **Community Development Director Ben Shumaker** to explain the process for making public comments using the remote platform. Participants were asked to keep comments to 5 minutes or less. Use *9 to raise and lower hand to make comments, use *6 to mute/unmute the phone.

b. Approval of Minutes: August 10th, 2020 Regular Planning Commission Meeting
One correction on page 5 was noted: **Commissioner Beck** offered to *personally* help with the recently awarded street tree planning grant. He did not volunteer any county services.

MOTION to approve the minutes from the August 10th, 2020 Planning Commission Meeting with corrections was made by **Commissioner Breckel** with a second provided by **Commissioner Beck**.

- Voting aye: **Commissioners Auguste Zettler, Mike Beck, Jeff Breckel.**
- Voting nay: None

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

No comments were received.

2. New Business

a. Planning Commission Vacancy: Review Statements of Interest, Interview Candidates, & Recommend City Council Action

Community Development Director Ben Shumaker introduced David Ray, an applicant for the open position on the Planning Commission.

Vice Chair Auguste Zettler asked David Ray to provide information on his background. He stated he attended grad school in Oregon in public policy and planning and had been involved in some planning issues, including one in the Gorge.

Chair Valerie Hoy-Rhodehamel asked if he had attended any Stevenson Planning Commission or City Council meetings. He indicated he had attended in the past.

Commissioner Beck questioned Ray regarding what his current interest was in being a commissioner. Ray explained he had contacted Shumaker after a friend informed him of the opening. He related he was interested in transportation, environmental sustainability, land use planning, and new ways to encourage economic development. Shumaker read the written statement of interest allowed to assist discussion.

Commissioner Breckel asked him if he had been involved with workshops on downtown planning process, and Ray indicated he had not.

Community Development Director Ben Shumaker noted the Planning Commission had no authority to enter into an executive session to deliberate on the selection of an applicant. **Commissioner Breckel** suggested just holding the conversation and no Commissioners objected. Following several other questions, **Vice-Chair Zettler** asked the Commissioners to pass a recommendation on to Stevenson City Council regarding David Ray's application to the Planning Commission.

MOTION to recommend to Stevenson City Council to appoint David Ray to the Stevenson Planning Commission was made by **Commissioner Breckel** with a second by **Commissioner Beck**.

- Voting aye: **Commissioners Hoy-Rhodehamel Breckel, Beck, Zettler**
- Voting nay: **None**

b. Short Plat Review:

SP2020-02 Rick Pauly Short Plat Planning Commission Optional Review pg. 9/10

Community Development Director Ben Shumaker explained the Planning Department received a short plat application for a lot at the corner of Rock Creek Drive and Monda Road. The tax lot numbers for the properties are 02-07-01-2-0-0403. The vacant property in the R3 Multi-Family Residential District does not have an address. The proposal involves division of one ~1.2 acre property into 4 lots ranging between ~9,300sf to ~15,400sf.

Community Development Director Ben Shumaker reported who received the short plat application and pointed to information and graphics contained in the meeting packet. Per the city code, the Planning Commission is to be notified and given the opportunity to review the application. If the PC chooses to review, it will take place at the October 2020 Planning Commission meeting.

Shumaker recommended the Planning Commission bypass its review of the short plat and entrust the decision on the application to the Short Plat Administrator. No public comment is required, but is welcome. No comments have been received regarding the application.

The Commissioners agreed there was no need for a review, and the application could be handled by the Short Plat Administrator. **Commissioner Beck** observed a stream runs through the lot and suggested it be indicated on the survey.

3. Old Business

a. Zoning Amendment: Increasing Residential Building Capacity: Reviewing Policy Questions and Public Engagement Efforts

Community Development Director Ben Shumaker explained the purpose of the update on the proposed Zoning Amendments. He pointed to the public involvement activities associated with the potential Zoning Code and Map amendments under consideration and briefly described the 7 policy questions generated.

He asked the Commission to consider the information and determine what would be the best course of action to engage residents and the public in the process. He went over some additional points being considered, including setbacks, elimination of the lot coverage standard, and impervious surface coverage affecting stormwater quality/quantity.

He has reached out to all affected property owners regarding the potential changes and described communication opportunities provided to residents and property owners, including links on the city's Facebook page and a new website

<http://ci.stevenson.wa.us/letsbuild/> with questionnaires. One property on Monda Road split by different zoning districts has requested to be zoned only under one-SR Suburban Residential.

Shumaker related Commission discussion would take place beginning at the October 2020 Planning Commission meeting. By then he anticipates having public feedback to use in decision-making.

Commissioner Beck suggested mobile home zoning not be eliminated. He encouraged flexibility in affordable housing opportunities with tiny houses as an option.

b. Housing Needs Analysis: Discussing Report Methods, Conclusions, & Recommendations

The Commission discussed the recently completed Skamania County Housing Needs Analysis. **Commissioner Breckel** expressed a number of concerns regarding the report. He observed it treated Skamania County as homogenous, without accounting for the differences in the east and west ends of the county. He questioned the lack of detailed demographics and information on what is driving development in the area, noting there was no consideration of water supplies necessary to sustain 4,000 additional housing units the report suggests are possible over the next 20 years.

Other Commissioners offered similar concerns. **Commissioner Zettler** related the analysis did not appear to have information on what jobs would be available to support new residents. **Commissioner Beck** described the report as being coarse grained, but that it did offer some valuable recommendations regarding zoning. He noted it encouraged enlarging the Accessory Dwelling Units by 100sf.

Shumaker expressed appreciation to the Economic Development Council for doing the analysis. Local businesses can't recruit talent due to limited housing availability. He pointed out 80% of the buildable lands are currently constrained by current zoning.

Commissioner Zettler remarked the report showed the need for more property and suggested annexation would open more buildable lands. Infrastructure is limiting growth.

Additional discussion focused on projected population increases, planning forecasts, possible utility expansion and changes to the comprehensive plan. **Commissioner**

Breckel asked what economics are driving affordable housing and questioned why so few multiple family homes are being constructed. He asked how incentives and flexibility could be offered to encourage more construction. **Community Development Director Shumaker** explained lot sizes, state statutes, zoning requirements, developer interest and lender policies all affect the housing supply. He noted specific questions on the subject were included in the recent survey that went out, and one developer has responded so far. **Commissioner Beck** related the state might change tax incentives to encourage multi-family housing. He reiterated having flexible options for landowners could be a future incentive for more housing. **Commissioner Breckel** suggested talking with banks and lenders to learn their views on the lack of construction of multi-family dwellings. He highlighted the immediate need for housing.

4. Discussion

a. Staff & Commission Reports

Community Development Director Shumaker provided updates on the following:

- **Shoreline Management Program**
He reported having a long discussion with Department of Ecology staff regarding their review of the proposed Stevenson Shoreline Management Program. He anticipates their final recommendations by the end of 2020. He will bring the recommendations to the Planning Commission, City Council and Shoreline Management Committee if requested.
- **Columbia Street & 1st Street Overlook Projects**
The City has received 50% design of the project. A separate consultant is handling the relocation of Columbia. 1st Street funding is being used for the overlook, extension and guardrail work. More fund requests have been submitted to the state for further improvements.
- **Rock Cove Hospitality**
He relayed the City Council did act on the recommendations provided by the Planning Commission. He noted he was unable to coordinate with the minute taker to provide the Council with the details regarding minimum width of easements, but Commissioner Beck was in attendance and conveyed the recommendation to not reduce the width to less than 15'. The project is moving forward.

b. Thought of the Month:

Hope the air clears!

5. Adjournment was declared at 7:13 p.m.

Minutes recorded by Johanna Roe