

## Stevenson Planning Commission Meeting Draft Minutes 03-09-2020

### Attending:

Commissioners Mike Beck, Auguste Zettler, Valerie Hoy-Rhodehamel, Jeff Breckel

City Staff: Community Development Director Ben Shumaker

Public audience: Mary Repar, Brian McNamara, Barbara Robinson, Marilyn Bolles  
Melissa Reglin, David Wyatt

PC Chair Valerie Hoy-Rhodehamel called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m.

The chair selected option 2 regarding public comment.

**MOTION: Minutes** from the February 10th, 2020 PC meeting were approved on a motion by **Beck** with a second by **Zettler**. The motion passed unanimously.

**Shumaker** announced Commissioner **VanPelt** had submitted a letter of resignation from the Planning Commission. He will be advertising for a new Commissioner to replace him.

### New Business

- **Draft Downtown Plan:** Review draft document, determine PC involvement in recommendation process.

Commissioners broadly discussed issues presented by Community Development Director Ben Shumaker regarding the Stevenson Downtown Plan's Vision for Success and the Eight Big Ideas. The Commission considered suggestions and recommendations made by consultants and city staff, including design standards, possible zoning amendments, land use changes, traffic patterns and future business development. Shumaker provided comment sheets to the Commissioners and asked them to look further at the plan and provide comments on each section. Recommendations will be made to the Stevenson City Council at an upcoming meeting.

### Old Business

- **Zoning Code Amendment:** ZON2020-01 Related to Single Family Detached Dwellings in the C1 Commercial District, Murals, and recent Zoning Interpretations.

Commissioners reviewed a potential amendment to the City of Stevenson Zoning Code. The amendment proposed to prohibit new Single-Family Detached Dwellings,

Manufactured Homes, and Modular Homes in the C1 Commercial District, allow continued use and development rights of existing Single-Family Detached Dwellings, codify recent zoning interpretations involving Townhomes in the CR Commercial Recreation District and Cultural Attractions in the C1 District, allow Townhomes as principal uses in the C1 District, ease the permitting process for certain Murals, and establish minimum height expectations for new development in the C1 District. As it related to the prohibition of single-family detached dwellings, the timing of the amendment was intended to address the expiration of the current temporary moratorium on SFDD in the C1 District. Much of the initial discussion focused on the issue of buildings in the downtown area switching back and forth between residential use and business use. The overall informal consensus by Commission members was to not allow businesses to revert back to a residential setting once a business had been established. It was pointed out that variances exist if needed to fulfill a specific purpose.

A further discussion took place regarding regulation of murals. Additional options regarding the process of approving murals had been requested by the Commission to City staff at a past meeting.

**Shumaker** reviewed previously presented options, which included (1.) Having just City staff review mural applications proposed by the Stevenson Art Committee, SDA or other non-profit interested in Stevenson's downtown business community. These applications go through the currently approved sign permitting process. Murals proposed by other entities are reviewed by the Planning Commission.

The Commission had also asked for the ability to waive fees for murals proposed by non-profits. **Shumaker** indicated that option (2.) was now included on a new fee schedule (page 107). The City Community Development Director and the City Treasurer must approve the fee waiver, with any costs to the city deducted from the fees.(See A1-B).

Another option (3) that had been requested was to have a hybrid process whereby an application for a mural would have to provide public notice as if the Planning Commission intended to hold a public hearing for a conditional use purpose. City staff would take the public notice into account but continue to have individual decision-making authority on the application. Shumaker related he was not favoring that option as he felt it was too subjective in his opinion. He stated he preferred a collective decision making process.

**Breckel** questioned the necessity of language regarding a non-profit representing the business community. It was pointed out other entities may at some point wish to sponsor a mural, including the SBA and EDC.

A question was raised regarding combining applications and it was noted that the City was encouraging the practice to save time and costs. **Zettler** commented the language regarding a non-profit representing the business community was non-restrictive and allowed for different groups to participate.

A decision point for the Commission was to determine if the PC was satisfied with one of the three options presented. **Shumaker** said Options 1 and 3 can be paired, and Options 3 and 2 can be paired.

**Zettler** spoke in partial favor of Option 3 because it allowed public notice. He stated it was important for taxpayers to have a mechanism for input if taxpayer funds were being used to create a mural.

Following further discussion **Zettler** suggested staying with Option 2 but add a stipulation that any entity using public funds must substantiate public notice has been published two weeks prior as part of the permitting process. **Shumaker** then requested input regarding code language on how to verify public notice-notification of neighbors (TBD) or proof/affidavit of publication. **Zettler** stated proof of publication was preferable, particularly if public funds were being used. **Chair Hoy-Rhodehamel** asked Commission members regarding their preferences and Option 1 was selected, which he noted removed the public funds concern.

The Commission then moved into a discussion on building heights.

To address concerns over shipping containers in the downtown area, the Stevenson City Council had proposed requiring a minimum building height of 16' in the C1 district. Existing buildings would be allowed. **Shumaker** explained the general purpose for SFDD restriction and shipping containers is to add more vitality in the downtown area. Mary Repar asked about the difference between requiring 16' or requiring a two-story building.

**Zettler** asked if a moratorium would be more direct. **Chair Hoy-Rhodehamel** expressed a concern that the permit process was being circumvented. **Breckel** noted that temporary measures too often become long term.

**Zettler** suggested that a moratorium be enacted while design standards are taking place. If the point is not to have shipping containers then the Council should be more specific. **Shumaker** remarked he believed the point was to avoid low-investment structures downtown. He stated he heard the Commission was unwilling to accept the Council's direction. **Shumaker** advised the Council did not want to govern through moratorium. **Zettler** and **Breckel** spoke about the height restriction potentially blocking legitimate structures that don't rise to 16'.

It was pointed out false fronts could be installed on a container to meet the height requirement. **Shumaker** asked if requiring two stories rather than a height minimum was more acceptable. Other possible situations were considered.

**Breckel** advised waiting until design standards were in place and making decisions now could be counter-productive. Mary Repar suggested any future visioning take into account the historical buildings in Stevenson.

Following an extensive discussion **Shumaker** said he was hearing the Commission did not want to require two stories and that a 16' height restriction is inappropriate because stop-gap measures too often become permanent.

**Zettler** noted two containers stacked would circumvent the intention of the Council. **Breckel** stated he did not view the situation as a threat. He asked if a similar concern was being expressed about food trucks. **Chair Hoy-Rhodehamel** advised **Shumaker** to respond to the City Council with the Commission's

concerns and have them come back to the Commission with any additional information.

The next item considered was cultural attractions or museum type uses in the C1 district. Shumaker asked the Commission if continuing his authority to allow conditional use was acceptable or should these uses be allowed as a principal use and come before the Planning Commission. **Beck** stated he felt museums should remain as a conditional use within a certain district and staff review would be sufficient. Members of the Commission agreed.

Permitted use of Townhomes in the downtown district or allowed as a conditional use in the area surrounding Skamania Lodge was considered next. Condos and Townhouses are proposed to be treated the same in those districts. **Breckel** asked about manufactured homes or modular homes being crossed off in the use tables. **Shumaker** explained the MF homes are different than SFDD but if SFDD are allowed the state requires you have to allow MF. **Breckel** asked a question about the definition of multi-family dwellings on one lot. He was concerned that individual stand-alone structures could be constructed on a large lot and sold off as condos when in effect they are SFDD. He noted it seemed inconsistent.

**Zettler** asked about a local case whereby a number of mobile homes had been brought onto a lot. He shared it seemed to be allowed under the process currently under discussion, contrary to the restriction on SFDD in the downtown area. He thought the PC was working to plan situations like that out.

**Shumaker** added the discussion on SFDD was a stop-gap in advance of the pending expiration of the SFDD moratorium. The downtown plan addresses the density issue in the urban design. He stated it sounded like further clarification on maximum and minimum density of structures on a lot was needed. The Commission agreed to hold further discussion regarding the residential issue at the April PC meeting.

- **Property Line Alteration Code:** SUB2019-01 Ongoing Discussion, Land Division Code – Definitions, Application Procedures, Plat Vacations.

**Shumaker** pointed to four guidance points in the staff memo needing discussion. He noted that when the PC had created the kick-off report for public involvement no specific decisions had been determined. Areas that had been reviewed and agreed on will be set aside and promoted in a public release draft. He noted this was an ongoing review attempting to consolidate different land division codes where provisions that essentially say the same thing but apply to slightly different proposals need to be addressed. Most critical was roads. He pointed out where state statutes affect city and county definitions of roads versus streets. Existing city regulations use both definitions, most often used is roads. Instead of making changes to every section of code regarding the use of roads he asked the Commission to approve an overall definition to indicate where road is used, see street, and when defining street see the former description of road. Other definitions are descriptive and he included examples of what other codes used to replace.

Application procedures include other attempts by the PC to consolidate language and intent.

The Commission then reviewed combining three additional sections-the title report required for BLA, the section on the Plat Map eliminating a small exemption for surveyors, and a draft fee schedule with a built in refund policy modeled on North Bonneville's schedule.

The final three pages dealt with review of plat vacation standards. **Shumaker** provided a draft essentially using the RCW review criteria broken into six sections. He advised the Commission that plat amendments with road and lot lines moved at the same time, lot consolidations, and boundary line adjustments would follow the same templates. He noted it was very similar to the template for BLA already in place. **Chair Hoy-Rhodehamel** asked if a mechanism for plat vacation was in place. Shumaker replied there was one for a short plat but not for sub-divisions with a four-lot threshold.

The state statute does have sub-division vacations. He explained the city clarified a process for short plats vacations as being the same as state statutes. **Beck** explained it could provide vacation for an ancient subdivision with tiny lots and roads. **Beck** supported the changes in order to provide sub-division procedures to be consistent with state RCW's and property rights.

The final discussion consisted of the bi-annual Comp Plan amendments and the PC meeting planned for March 11. **Shumaker** described it as the red light/green light exercise. The format will consist of preparing for the public meeting/informational session regarding the Capital Facilities proposal to the Comprehensive Plan.

- **Staff & Commission Reports:** Russell Street Construction, Tree Plan, Housing Needs Analysis

Russell Street project starts soon. The bids received were lower than expected. The City received a tree grant from WA DNR to allow for inventory of street trees and those on public lands, tree maintenance and management, and visioning. The City is responding to complaints about past tree removal. Stevenson Carson School District may attend maintenance workshop. The public is welcome as well.

The Housing Needs Analysis and Buildable Lands Inventory is close to finalization.

## 9. Thought of the Month None

**PC Chair Valerie Hoy-Rhodehamel** declared the meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.