



CITY OF ELLENSBURG

Minutes of Planning Commission, Regular Meeting

Date of Meeting

September 28, 2023

Time of Meeting

5:45 PM

Place of Meeting

**Council Chambers
501 North Anderson Street
Ellensburg, WA 98926
And remotely via Zoom**

1. Call to Order and Roll Call of Members

Chair Padjen called the meeting to order at 5:47 p.m.

Roll call present: Delano Palmer, Ed Harrel, Sathy Rajendran, Fred Padjen

Others present: Jeremy Johnston-Community Development Planning Manager, Dan Carlson-Community Development Director, Kathy Boots-Planning Technician, three members of the public

Absent: Geraldine O'Mahone (excused), George Bottcher, Sigrid Davison

2. Approval of Agenda

Commissioner Palmer moved to Approve the Agenda as presented. **Motion Approved 4-0**

3. Approval of Minutes

Rajendran motioned to approve the August 10, 2023 PC minutes. The motion was amended to reflect Rajendran was not present at the August 10, 2023 meeting. The amended motion passed 4-0. Minutes amended. Motion to approve PC minutes from August 10, 2023 passed 4-0.

Rajendran motioned to approve the September 14, 2023 PC minutes. Motion passed 4-0.

4. New Business

2023 Land Development Code Amendments Public Hearing

Appearance of fairness reviewed. On August 29, 2023, the Department of Commerce was notified. Each individual proposal will be discussed, commented on, and voted on individually.

Item 23-01- This item was submitted by Steve Willard who proposes an amendment to Title 15.420.060 – Access, services, and utilities.

Staff report read. The current Ellensburg City Code and proposed code amendment were reviewed. Johnston explained that he spoke with Public Works and the Fire Marshal who expressed concerns about the proposed amendment. Staff recommend denial of the

proposed amendment based on Public Works and Fire Marshal concerns. Public comment opened. Steve Willard spoke about his proposal. Johnston stated that with more time to collaborate with Planning, Public Works, Fire Marshal, and Mr. Willard it may result in a resolution. Public comment closed. Rajendran motioned to remand the proposal back to staff for more discussion between the departments and Mr. Willard. Motion to remand amendment back to staff passed 4-0.

Item 23-02 – This item was submitted by Steve Willard proposing an amendment to Title 15.260.120(e) – Short subdivision plat – Review procedures and criteria. Staff report read. The current City Code expiring preliminary short plats in one year is inconsistent with the State RCW which has a five-year expiration schedule. The five-year expiration schedule is consistent with RCW 58.17.140(3)(a). Staff recommend approval. Public comment opened. Mr. Willard expressed concern that the consultant should have known that the one-year expiration is inconsistent with state law and he agrees that the code should be consistent with state law. Public comment closed. Rajendran motioned to approve Item 23-02 as presented. Motion passed 4-0.

Item 23-03 – This item was submitted by Susan Savage proposing an amendment to the permitted use table in Title 15.310.040 – Special Uses. Staff report read. The proposal would add "indoor recreation" to the Residential Office (R-O) zone and require a Conditional Use Permit where impacts would be mitigated. Staff recommend approval. Public comment opened. Susan Savage spoke about her proposal and a specific project she would like to do. Johnston reminded the Commissioners that this was a General Code change and not related to a specific project. The Conditional Use Permit will continue to be brought before the Planning Commission. Public comment closed. Harrell motioned to approve Item 23-03 as presented. Motion passed 4-0.

Item 23-04 – This amendment was submitted by Stephanie Ritter proposing an amendment to Title 4.14A.070(c)(3) and (4)- Sidewalk café permit. Staff report read. The current Ellensburg City Code was reviewed. The proposed amendment is consistent with the intent of Title 4.14A and allows flexibility for businesses that abut a wider sidewalk and maintain safety and sidewalk access standards. Sidewalk café permits are reviewed. Public comment opened. No public comment. Public comment closed. Palmer motioned to approve Item 23-04 as proposed. Motion passed 4-0.

Item 23-05 – This item was submitted by Community Development staff proposing seven code cleanup amendments to various sections within Title 15 to eliminate conflicts and ensure development regulations are consistent and clear. Staff report read. The seven proposed updates include revisions to sections; 15.310.040, 15.220.040 and 15.220.050, 4.14A.020, 15.540.020(D), ECC 15.220.110 and 15.250.035, 15.550.040(K)(1), 15.220.030 and 15.210.040(B). Revisions of sections were discussed in detail. Staff recommend approval. Public comment opened. No public comment. Public comment closed. Rajendran motioned to approve Item 23-05 as proposed. Motion passed 4-0.

Item 23-06 -This item is being proposed by Community Development staff to address a deficiency in Title 3.12.260 that restricts all off-premises signs. This amendment would create an exception to this prohibition for directional, warning, regulatory, or public

information signs or structures required or authorized by law or government authority. Staff report read. A need for this amendment was recognized when the City began contemplating the placement of an informational sign to address the requirement to call 811 before digging. Due to this restriction, the City was unable to place the sign in high traffic areas, where the information could be disseminated effectively. Sign permits would still be reviewed as applicable and this exemption does not include election signs. Staff recommend approval. Public comment opened. No public comment. Public comment closed. Harrell motioned to approve Item 23-06 as proposed. The Commission deliberated. Padjen opposes this amendment. Harrell motioned to approve Item 23-06 as proposed. Motion passed 3-1 (Padjen opposed).

Item 23-07 - Community Development Staff seeks an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan annual docket amendment timelines established in ECC 15.250.090. Staff report read. Many unsuccessful attempts to meet this schedule in past years demonstrate a need for revisions. Staff proposed this amendment to allow for a more realistic review window for docket amendment proposals. Additionally, this amendment would remove the unnecessary rigid timelines for several steps in the process, while maintaining a requirement to complete the process within the year of each docket cycle. The proposal would change the submittal deadline for proposed amendments from June 30th of each year to March 31st of each year and eliminate the January 1st date that initiates the current amendment submittal cycle. As a result, staff, public officials, and the public would have a full 12-month window to submit docket items (March 31 – March 31) instead of the current restriction of 6 months (January 1 – June 30th). By initiating the process earlier in the year and allowing for a larger submittal window, proposed docket items can undergo a more thorough review and consideration window from staff and the public. Staff recommend approval. Public comment opened. No public comment. Public comment closed. Rajendran motioned to approve item 23-07 as proposed. Motion passed 4-0.

Item 23-08 – This item was submitted by Community Development staff to address the use of recreational vehicles for habitation purposes. Staff report read. This amendment would clarify in ECC 15.340.040(N) that recreational vehicles can only be used as a primary residence within a manufactured home park. This amendment would also introduce sub-item "M" to address location restrictions on trailers and manufactured home locations. Use of recreational vehicles for habitation purposes creates the potential for various health and safety issues. The purpose of this item is to address a gap in our regulations regarding the utilization of recreational vehicles for non-recreational habitation purposes. This issue has been brought to the attention of staff from the police department and code enforcement. Staff recommend approval. Public comment opened. No public comment. Public comment closed. The Commissioners deliberated. Commissioners would like the word "only" removed from the proposed amendment to ECC 15.340.040(N). Rajendran motioned to amend Item 23-08 to strike the word "only" from ECC 15.340.040(N). Motion passed 4-0. Rajendran motioned to approve amended Item 23-08 with the word "only" stricken from the proposal. Motion passed 4-0.

Item 23-09 – This amendment is being proposed to create a departure option for pre-existing roadways developed under previous standards to allow continuity in streetscape designs for new roadways intended to connect to these pre-existing roadways. Staff report read. On April 4, 2022, City Council conducted a study session to review this

item. The item was intended to address local access roadway connections for existing plats and allow for a departure option to assure continuity with existing connection points. The Community Development Staff presented this proposal which would create a departure option for the continuation of an existing roadway into future phases of development. Approval of this item would require an applicant to meet any applicable departure standards as outlined in ECC 15.210.060. Additionally, the connection allowances under this code section would provide a prohibition on road widths that would be inconsistent with the current Fire Code. This would apply in any zone. This would not apply to new developments that are creating roadways. This would only apply to older development to remain consistent. Public comment opened. No public comment. Public comment closed. Delano motioned to approve Item 23-09 as proposed. Motion passed 4-0.

5. Unfinished Business

None

6. Citizen Comment

None

7. Staff Update/Discussion Items

Johnston stated the October 12, 2023 meeting had been canceled due to staff going to training. Land Development code changes are being proposed and will be sent to the Department of Commerce. Staff will send out an email asking if the Commission would like to meet on October 26th, 2023 for a study session. A Housing and Grant Administrator job description was created, posted, and is now closed. Interviews have taken place. The next Planning Commission meeting is scheduled for November 9, 2023.

8. Commission Representative Update

The Historic district demolition ordinance was presented to the City Council.

9. Adjournment

Adjourned at 7:26 p.m.