



**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
501 North Anderson Street, Ellensburg WA 98926**

MINUTES OF ELLENSBURG CITY PLANNING COMMISSION

Date and Time: Planning Commission Meeting of September 2, 2021 at 5:45 p.m.

Place of Meeting: Hybrid - In Person at City Hall, 501 N. Anderson Street, and Virtual Zoom Meeting

Present (in Person): Fred Padjen

Present (Virtual): George Bottcher, Sigrid Davison Ed Harrell, Sathy Rajendran, Beverly Heckart and Geraldine O'Mahony

Absent:

Others Present: Planning Manager Jamey Ayling; Community Development Director Kirsten Sackett; David Pearson, member of the public

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Padjen called the meeting to order at 5:46 pm.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Commissioner Heckart asked for approval of the agenda as submitted. Commissioner Harrell seconded. All in favor, motion passed.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- a. Minutes of August 5, 2021 Planning Commission Meeting. Commissioner Heckert moved to accept the minutes with the change previously submitted. Commissioner Rajendran seconded. All in favor, motion passed
- b. Minutes of August 26, 2021 Planning Commission Meeting. Commissioner Harrell moved to accept the minutes with the change previously submitted. Commissioner Rajendran seconded. All in favor, motion passed.

4. NEW BUSINESS

- a. Public Hearing (Legislative) on proposed amendments to the Ellensburg City Code, pertaining to Frequently Flooded Areas Regulations in Title 15 – Land Development Code, Chapters 15.130, 15.210.050, 15.250.050, 15.600, 15.610, and 15.630

Director Sackett gave the staff report regarding the proposed changes to the Frequently flooded Areas section of the Land Development Code. She explained that this ordinance came about as a result of FEMA updating the flood plain maps for Kittitas County. The adoption of new FIRM maps necessitated a requirement to adopt a compliant floodplain management ordinance, which for Ellensburg is located in Title 15, Division VI of the Ellensburg City Code (ECC). Once the Letter of Final BFE Determination was issued by FEMA the City was given months to adopt the necessary regulations, with a deadline of September 24, 2021. This is a requirement in order to remain in good standing with the NFIP (National Flood Insurance Program), and this is important because it helps keep the flood insurance rates low for community members when the City is in

compliance. Director Sackett explained that the majority of the changes to the code came directly from the required language from Washington State's Model Flood Development Ordinance and the Federal Code of Regulations. Director Sackett shared her screen to show the FEMA GIS Story Map with slider tool which shows the changes to the flood plains. She then displayed the ordinance and shared screen for the commission to follow along as she explained each of the changes in chronological order.

After providing a summary of all the proposed code changes, Director Sackett noted that the decision criteria that Council must consider for a land development code amendment are set forth in ECC 15.250.100(C) as follows:

1. The amendment is in accordance with the comprehensive plan; and
2. The amendment will not adversely affect the public health, safety or general welfare; and
3. The amendment is not contrary to the best interest of the citizens and property owners of the city. [Ord. 4656 § 1 (Exh. O2), 2013.]

Sackett said that staff finds the modifications to the floodplain regulations to be in accordance with the three decision criteria above. In addition, as stated previously, City Staff have worked with staff from both the State Department of Ecology and FEMA to ensure that the modifications to the City Code also conform with the Code of Federal Regulations and the State Model Ordinance. Adoption of these updated standards will keep the City in good standing with the NFIP, and reduced insurance rates will continue to be provided to residents of Ellensburg. She said that the recommended next steps include the following:

1. Hold a legislative public hearing; and
2. Forward a recommendation to City Council to adopt the proposed revisions to Ellensburg City Code as presented.

Chair Padjen read the script, no one was present from the public. There were no further comments from the Staff. Commissioner Padjen asked about the wording of the Livestock Sanctuary Areas and whether that policy should be a requirement rather than just a recommendation. Director Sackett will review the FEMA and the State requirements to get clarification. Commissioner Bottcher asked about finding out where the flood zone information can be found. He asked if that information is available to property owners on the Kittitas County Assessors page. Planner Manager Ayling said that he will look into that. Commissioner Bottcher also asked how significant it would be if the City wasn't in compliance with the NFIP program. Director Sackett noted that everyone in a FEMA-designated floodplain needs to have the insurance and if the City isn't in compliance then the rates would rise for everyone in the floodplain areas.

Chair Padjen closed the public hearing. Commissioner Heckart made a motion that the Planning Commission recommend to the City Council to adopt the proposed revisions to Ellensburg City Code with the understanding that before they vote that any unanswered questions be clarified. Commissioner Bottcher seconded the motion. All in Favor. Motion passed.

5. OLD BUSINESS

6. CITIZEN COMMENT

No members of the public in attendance.

7. STAFF UPDATE

a. Housing Action Plan Update

Discussion was held about the timing of the next commission meeting, so that the draft Housing Action Plan can be reviewed by the commission and provide a recommendation before it has to go to City Council. It was determined that August 23rd is best for the meeting date, as several commissioners will be available. Commissioner Heckart said she would like to see the qualitative results from the public survey and asked if it would be possible to see the full responses. Director Sackett said she would send the full survey report to the commissioners for their review. Director Sackett also shared her screen to display the current draft of Appendix C of the HAP. This appendix provides a summary of the answers to the visual preference survey with the different housing options with pictures. The commission suggested that the next survey should be sent out without a registration requirement, to hopefully get more feedback from more people. There could be a question to provide an email if the respondent wants to be informed in future.

8. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Padjen adjourned the meeting at 7:15 pm.