

CITY OF ISSAQUAH
City Council
Planning, Development & Environment Committee

6:30 PM
January 8, 2025

MINUTES

Council Chambers, 135 E.
Sunset Way, Issaquah WA

COUNCIL AND ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL PRESENT

Committee Members:

Victoria Hunt, Chair
Lindsey Walsh
Zach Hall

Administration/Staff:

Wally Bobkiewicz, City Administrator
Chris Grabowski, Deputy City Clerk

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Hunt called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

PUBLIC COMMENT

1. Connie Marsh – resident – Spoke about public comment process relating to items that come before the Council and standing committees.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

There were no minutes for approval.

AGENDA ITEMS

a) **COM 0086 - Title 18 Middle Housing Regulations**

Presented by:

Valerie Porter, Associate Planner

After the staff presentation, the following members of the public spoke:

1. Kim Infinger – resident – stated that she is opposed o increases in density but supports an increase the size of Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs).
2. Connie Marsh – resident – spoke about the Comprehensive Plan, making the City more pedestrian friendly, density, & transportation infrastructure.
3. Chris Reichley – resident – spoke in support of affordable housing.

Committee comments included the following:

1. Question 1: Should lot density be increased beyond the State's requirement of two dwelling units on one lot, or allow four dwelling units on one lot without the affordable housing requirement?
 - Increased density is a consideration as part of the larger picture.
 - Limited by Critical Areas. Lot coverage, impervious surface requirements, parking.
 - Five or six units with an affordable housing requirement may be something to consider.
 - City has had housing strategy plan since 2017 which calls for increasing diversity of housing options.
 - Some residents want to downsize and have options.
 - Currently the City is not seeing this kind of housing being built.
 - Increased density creates more flexibility.
 - State has created this pathway with affordable housing requirement.
 - Important conversation to have in the broader community.

- PPC needs to consider impacts on traffic, schools, and neighborhood character on a per lot basis.
 - There is a community need for affordable housing.
 - Middle Housing increases supply and prices may come down as a result.
 - PPC should also consider EcoNorthwest report.
 - Committee members encouraged PPC to go deep on this and the subject of affordability and consider something different than the State requirements.
2. Question 2: Should the maximum size of ADUs be increased from 1,000 sq. ft. to 1,250 sq. ft.?
- There are challenges to increasing the size.
 - Some committee members felt keeping to the 1,000 square feet and monitoring use cases was reasonable. Others felt increasing the size would increase flexibility for homeowners.
 - Sizes of ADUs in other jurisdictions vary significantly. What is the rationale other cities are using?
 - Some use scenarios may require a larger footprint.
 - Don't want people to work around the size in order to avoid impact fees.
 - Committee members felt that PPC should explore the idea further.
 - Would like community to weigh in on the issue.
 - City's goal in the past was to adopt regulations that would simplify creation of ADUs.
 - Only 29 have been built under current regulations. Increasing size may increase number being built.
3. Question 3: Is there anything else PPC should evaluate and provide a recommendation on?
- Committee members felt that PPC should look at utilities and impact fees.
 - It was noted that the Commission had already had a discussion around frontage improvements, but that this topic necessitates a larger discussion.
 - Goal is to make the process simpler in order to build more affordable units.
- Committee members thanked staff for their work on this topic.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Council President Walsh announced that this was Chair Hunt's last meeting, as she had been elected to the Washington State Legislature.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:25 PM.

Victoria Hunt, Chair

Chris Grabowski, Deputy City Clerk