

Planning Policy Commission—Special Meeting
11-15-18

**CITY OF ISSAQUAH
PLANNING POLICY COMMISSION—SPECIAL MEETING
MINUTES**

6:30 PM
November 15, 2018

Pickering Room, City Admin. Bldg.
1775 12th NW, Issaquah WA 98027

COMMISSION AND ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL PRESENT

<p>PPC Commissioners Present: Ron Faul, Vice Chair Troy Rahmig Bill Rinehart Jason Voiss, Alt. (Acting as Voting Member) Lindsey Walsh Commissioners Not Present (Excused): Joan Probala, Chair Joy Lewis AJ McGauley, Alt.</p>	<p>Administration/Staff Present: Trish Heinonen, Planning Policy Manager</p>
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1. CALL TO ORDER

FAUL, Vice Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:32 PM.

2. REGULAR BUSINESS

a. Continued Discussion from October 11, 2018—Proposed Amendments to Issaquah Municipal Code 18.07.480 Community Facilities Standards Regarding Institutional Buildings (R)

Presented by: Trish Heinonen, Planning Policy Manager

Heinonen made staff's presentation. She gave some background on the Commission's discussion on the proposed amendments in October and displayed updates staff has made to the proposed amendments based on that discussion. She described staff's proposal to include a mechanism for seeking a reduction in the minimum FAR (floor area ratio) by 50 percent, from .75 to .375, if needed for operational functions, at the discretion of the Planning Director. She asked for feedback from the Commission.

The Commission gave their comments on Table 18.07.480 (page 5 of 7), specifically footnote #7. WALSH asked would this table apply only to institutional buildings in any Community Facilities (CF) zone anywhere in the City. Heinonen replied yes. RINEHART asked how would the exception be made to allow for a .375 FAR. Heinonen explained how the applicant would need to present their site plans to the Planning Director, who would evaluate whether an operational necessity exists. RAHMIG said the words "operational functions" are important in terms of outlining the Director's discretion in making that kind of decision.

WALSH referred to examples of FAR provided in the agenda package, including the fire stations, City Hall, and the library. She said she is concerned about ensuring that public space is not sacrificed if the proposed amendment is implemented. RINEHART noted the intent is to start encouraging more density and building "up." Heinonen agreed. WALSH said the parcel lot size would also influence how FAR is calculated, and said if a lot is really large, property owners might be inclined to subdivide their property to meet the FAR requirement. RAHMIG said given the scarcity of land, and the fact that this pertains to institutional buildings, planning for new

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facilities will inevitably focus on the best use of the land available and how best to maximize the public investment.

VOISS said in looking at the example of Franklin High School on page 6 of 7, which has a FAR of 2.7, why would the City want to specify 2.0 as the maximum FAR in Table 18.07.480.

Heinonen said the 2.0 maximum was staff's estimate of what was realistic, and didn't think that a school or institutional building could likely have a FAR higher than 2.0, but it's a good point. Staff made a note to look into it. WALSH noted that Bellevue's City Hall has a FAR of 3.3 (page 5 of 7), but it is a much taller building than would currently be allowed in the City.

The Commission discussed whether sports fields should be included in the FAR calculation for schools. RINEHART said stadiums should be counted toward the FAR as they are used for curriculum on a daily basis. The Commissioners noted that sharing outdoor and sports facilities between adjacent schools is not always practical. RINEHART said another issue is whether portables should count toward the FAR.

After additional discussion, FAUL suggested that anywhere that classes are conducted, indoors or out, should count toward the FAR calculation. The other Commissioners agreed. Staff made a note of it. VOISS said another approach to maximizing the use of space is to use a single playfield for multiple purposes, and gave examples. RAHMIG spoke to including the footnote about reducing the FAR for "operational functions" for schools that included sports and outdoor facilities, and noted that even a .375 FAR would be an aggressive target for a school to meet. Heinonen agreed, and said future adjustments are possible if it proves unrealistic.

The Commissioners agreed to add Footnote 8 that would be specific to schools, along the lines of "areas used for curriculum, including outdoor facilities, are considered an operational function."

Heinonen continued her presentation of the proposed amendments. VOISS asked when this will next be updated and whether the code can be tweaked if needed. Heinonen said yes; PPC will be looking specifically at urban school regulations in 2019, and the City's code is reviewed and updated regularly.

WALSH asked what is required now if an institutional building was in development that did not meet the FAR requirements. Heinonen said staff has a variety of mechanisms and a process to help a project meet FAR, including lot line adjustments and establishing native growth easements to remove some of the parcel from a FAR calculation.

WALSH suggested changing the term "institutional buildings" to "public buildings" in the Definitions section and throughout the document. The other Commissioners agreed, and staff made a note to make the change.

Public Comment

None.

Commissioner Decision

MOVED BY WALSH, SECONDED BY RAHMIG that the Vice Chair sign the Findings of Fact to recommend approval of the amendments to IMC 18.02.110, Definitions, and IMC18.070.480, Community Facilities Standards Regarding Public Buildings, as presented and with the changes discussed at tonight's meeting. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY, 5-0.

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3. OTHER BUSINESS/ANNOUNCEMENTS/SCHEDULE

Heinonen gave an update on projects that PPC has reviewed in the last few months, including the Olde Town Subarea Plan Update, Table of Permitted Uses, and Destination Retail/Old Route 10 Rezoning. She noted all three of these will be discussed by the City Council at its meeting next Monday, November 19.

She also noted that the application and recruitment process for PPC membership will begin in January 2019.

She referred to the list of topics PPC will address in 2019 on page 28 of 28.

4. AUDIENCE COMMENTS

None.

5. ADJOURNMENT

The next PPC meeting will be held on December 13, 2018; the December 27, 2018 meeting is cancelled. With no additional business to conduct, FAUL adjourned the meeting at 7:12 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Lowe
Recording Secretary