

**CITY OF ISSAQUAH  
Planning Policy Commission**

6:30 PM  
December 10, 2020

Virtual Hearing

**MINUTES**

**COMMISSION AND ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL PRESENT**

*Commissioners Present:*

Joan Probala, Chair  
Ron Faul, Vice Chair  
Joy Lewis  
Janice Carle  
Jason Voiss

*Administration/Staff:*

Christen Leeson, Senior Planner  
Samantha Suter, Consultant  
Lucy Sloman, Land Dev. Manager  
Andrea Snyder, Deputy City Administrator

*Others Present:*

Richard Sowa, Development Commission  
Chair

**CALL TO ORDER**

PROBALA, Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:35 PM. Due to the Governor's recent proclamation prohibiting meetings that fall under the Open Public Meetings Act from being conducted in person, tonight's meeting will be held entirely remotely. An explanation for how members of the public can provide public comment was included in the meeting agenda.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

PROBALA asked for any objections to approving minutes of the November 12, 2020 PPC meeting and there were none. Minutes are approved.

**PUBLIC HEARING**

- a) **Recommendation on Proposed Amendments to Issaquah Municipal Code (IMC) 18.19.D Olde Town Architectural Standards for Single Family Duplex, (A)**

*Presented by:*

*Christen Leeson, Senior Planner*

Leeson displayed a presentation for the proposed new Olde Town Architectural Standards for Single Family Duplex, which is an updated draft from what PPC discussed in a joint meeting on October 7, 2020 with the Development Commission. She gave some background on the development of the Olde Town Subarea Plan, starting in 2018, including the objective of the plan. She noted that in July 2020, the City Council approved an amendment to limit buildings in Olde Town to no more than two stories or 25', whichever is lower. She continued with a timeline of reviews and actions taken in 2019 and 2020 on the Plan. Council action is anticipated in February 2021.

She continued with an overview of the draft standards and described changes made since the last review and in response to comments from the public, PPC, and the Development Commission.

**Public Comment**

PROBALA opened the public hearing for comment at 6:51 PM. While technical issues were being resolved so a member of the public who wished to speak could do so, the Commission began discussion of the proposed standards. PROBALA referred to comments emailed to PPC members in advance of the meeting, and briefly described those concerns. Leeson described two phone calls from members of the public she received in advance of the meeting.

FAUL asked would a black or very dark charcoal gray roof be prohibited under the proposed standards. He noted that the only “appropriate roof appearances” given in the standards are medium to dark earth tones; natural wood or slate; and materials with an appearance similar to natural materials. He also questioned whether garage door colors should be limited to “the same color as the body of the house or darker.” He gave examples of residences with garage doors that are stained wood, translucent glass, and/or painted an accent color, and said the appearance of these garage doors is pleasing. Sloman explained the goal generally was to draw more attention to the “people parts” of the building, and less attention to the garage. Front doors, for example, can be bright colors. She noted the proposed garage color standard is used for single family homes in Talus and the Highlands. She continued she agrees that exceptions could be made for natural wood or translucent garage doors, but a contrasting color on the garage would not be in keeping with the objective staff was given to emphasize the people part of the structure.

LEWIS asked whether having the glossary removed will create difficulty for community members trying to use this document. It could be awkward to have to shift back and forth between this plan and Title 18 for users, she noted. Sloman agreed it might not be as easy as we would like; definitions in Title 18 are likely to be revised in 2021, and the definitions in this plan draw from the Central Issaquah Plan as well. Members of the public can always ask staff for assistance if they have problems finding the definition they are seeking, she noted. Suter said she agrees that not having definitions in the plan is somewhat less user-friendly while Title 18 is being reviewed and revised. LEWIS said an interim solution might be to include definitions from Title 18 as an appendix to this document.

Cynthia Gotuzzo, phone caller, said she is the owner of a duplex at 290 SE Andrews Street and lives on Squak Mountain. She referred to comments she emailed to PPC in advance of the public hearing, which included the following. Consider five feet instead of four feet for the allowable depth of balconies; change “2” to a minimum of “3” in 1.2 (“at least 2 of the following elements...”); specify a minimum size for trim on windows and doors; omit all flat roofs as being inappropriate for this neighborhood; review the way color options for garage doors are described in 3.4, which are too restrictive; and consider adding a maximum measurement of six feet for a privacy fence in 5.3 and a maximum of 40 inches for a “low fence.”

Hearing no other requests to speak, PROBALA closed the public hearing at 7:22 PM.

#### **Commissioner Discussion (Continued)**

PROBALA asked whether the process of making minor changes, such as adding definitions to the proposed plan, can be done administratively, or would they have to be presented and reviewed by PPC again. Sloman replied restoring definitions would not require creating any new material and could be done without another review by PPC.

VOISS commented on 3.4 e, and said the limitations imposed by that regulation on the allowable colors for garage doors is not really in keeping with a “light touch.” Sloman clarified the options are to keep the proposed language as it is, add translucent and natural materials as allowable, or to remove it. LEWIS said she would favor allowing more flexibility for other materials. CARLE spoke in favor of removing 3.4 e, and said bright accent colors are already specified as allowable only on the front door. FAUL and VOISS indicated they also favor eliminating 3.4 e.

FAUL questioned whether the allowable colors for garage doors are too restrictive and asked whether an adjustment process was considered. Sloman replied the regulations were developed

to be in keeping with a “light touch,” so no adjustment process would be needed. She noted the purpose was to not restrict color choices but to limit florescent, high-intensity, metallic, and extremely bright colors, with some exceptions such as the front door and trim.

VOISS noted that 3.4 f states, “ADUs shall use colors that are similar to those of the primary structure.” Who decides whether a color is similar, and when does that get flagged if it’s not in compliance. Sloman replied we discussed how to ensure that the color of an ADU is similar to the main structure without demanding that it be an exact match, which could mean having to use the same brand of paint, for example. She also described the review process, starting with the ADU application, review, conditions, inspection, certificate of occupancy, and completed permit. Paint samples would be required when the ADU application is submitted, she added.

VOISS asked did staff consider specifying a percentage, rather than a fixed number, in 4.1, which pertains to windows on the façade-facing side of the building (“Area of glass shall total no less than eighteen (18) square feet.”). Sloman replied yes. After much discussion, it was staff’s thought that specifying a standard residential window size, 18 square feet, would cause the least confusion and allow the most flexibility for an owner who wants a configuration that is longer or narrower, if appropriate.

PROBALA noted no plan is perfect, and she likes the idea that minor tweaks can be made as the City gains more experience with the plan. Others agreed.

FAUL expressed concern that specifying medium to dark earth tones for roof colors in 2.5 would prohibit, say, a dark charcoal or black roof. The Commissioners discussed whether specifying “variegated” roofs would be useful. Staff indicated that it could be hard to evaluate whether a roof color was variegated. The general consensus was that colors darker than “medium to dark earth tones” would be acceptable. The Commissioners also discussed whether flat roofs should be prohibited. CARLE said it would be unusual to see a flat roof except on mid-century modern or contemporary houses, and she would favor retaining that flexibility. VOISS agreed, and said a craftsman or Tudor-style house, typical of this neighborhood, is unlikely to have a flat roof. The Commissioners agreed that flat roofs should be allowed.

MOVED BY VOISS, SECONDED BY FAUL that the Findings of Fact for the Olde Town Architectural Standards and Design Guidelines for Single Family Duplex be recommended to Council for approval, with the following changes:

- Remove 3.4 e on page 13 (“Garage doors shall be the same color as the body of the house or darker”);
- Change “impervious” to “pervious” in the caption on page 16;
- Add Title 18 definitions as an appendix to the plan;
- Add an image of a dark roof [and change the text in 2.5 a, page 11, to “a range of colors from medium to dark earth tones to black”];
- Eliminate second reference to “shingles” in caption on page 7.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY, 5-0.

### **OTHER BUSINESS / ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Leeson noted the next PPC meeting is scheduled for January 14, 2021. New PPC members will be in attendance, and the main topic for discussion will be potential new electric-vehicle charging stations. PROBALA asked whether new members will receive any orientation. Leeson replied yes; staff will be providing some orientation for the three new incoming members and will do so again in May for the entire Commission.

Leeson gave a report on Council's recent actions to approve Comp Plan amendments discussed by PPC over the last few months. Snyder gave more detailed information that was provided to Council about relocation provisions as part of the Century Link/RV Park rezone proposal. She noted it appears that no current residents will be displaced. Leeson added the presentation given to Council last Monday is available on the City's website.

**AUDIENCE COMMENTS**

None.

**ADJOURNMENT**

With no additional business to conduct, PROBALA adjourned the meeting at 8:23 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Lowe  
Recording Secretary

NOTE: Due to the Governor's recent proclamation related to the COVID-19 emergency and open public meetings, this meeting was held remotely. Participation and listening options were provided in the meeting agenda.