



MINUTES

PLANNING POLICY COMMISSION 6:30 p.m. - Thursday, July 28, 2022

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:32 p.m. by CHAIR VOISS.

Commissioners Present: Chair Voiss, Vice-Chair Monahan, Commissioners Bader, and Lewis

Absence: Commissioner Milligan (Excused)

Staff Present: Minnie Dhaliwal, Director, CP&D
Christen Leeson, Senior Planner
Stephen Padua, Long Range Planning Manager
Valerie Porter, Associate Planner
Doug Yormick, Assistant Planner
Thomas Valdriz, Senior Transportation Planner

2. Approval of Minutes

Although Approval of Minutes from June 23, 2022 was on the agenda, the Minutes were not discussed.

3. Public Comments (General) (00:04)

- Victoria Hunt, Talus Neighborhood, stated serving on the Issaquah City Council and previously on the Planning Policy Commission. Hunt thanked the Commission for the work that is done. Hunt stated that any questions for Council from the Commission are appreciated.

4. Regular Business (00:06)

- a) Preliminary Recommendation on Proposed Amendments to Title 18 Zoning and Development Standards, (A)

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- Transfer of Development Rights (TDR)
- Affordable Housing
- Landmarks and Archaeological Resources
- Parking

Presented by:

Christen Leeson, Senior Planner

Valerie Porter, Associate Planner

Doug Yormick, Assistant Planner

Thomas Valdriz, Senior Transportation Planner

CHAIR VOISS stated that the topic was the Planning Policy Commission deliberation portion of the Public Hearing held July 20, 2022.

Leeson presented Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) and Affordable Housing.

Porter presented Landmarks and Archaeological Resources.

Valdriz presented Parking.

CHAIR VOISS opened deliberation on the first subject, TDRs. (00:24)

COMMISSIONER LEWIS thanked staff for work on TDRs and asked if more discussion internally with staff could occur, particularly regarding what maintenance costs will take away from the TDR fund. Dhaliwal replied that the proposal is a carry-over, a placeholder for now. The city can set up the programs with costs to manage and monitor if needed. There is a more complete response to comments submitted to staff on the topic in the Commissioner packet. There will be a correction to the map and language in the next round. COMMISSIONER LEWIS stated that language should support open space throughout park zoning. Staff will need to watch where costs come from and how the fund is impacted. COMMISSIONER LEWIS stated that there should be a balance of density between, in example, creek side properties versus other areas.

CHAIR VOISS stated that the TDR portion is well-written, and that staff has done a fantastic job on all four topics.

Dhaliwal replied that the interlocal agreement with King County is no longer in effect, having expired in 2014. A conversation will be initiated with Council regarding if the agreement needs to be renewed, added to a future update list.

CHAIR VOISS opened deliberations on the next subject, Affordable Housing. (00:32)

COMMISSIONER BADER stated that in general, updates are good, and that regarding a question from the last meeting, if there is any expansion to where exclusionary zoning applies,

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hoping that for the record the work will happen separately as understood. The code as written now will not keep the requirement in Central Issaquah to meet affordable housing targets.

COMMISSIONER LEWIS stated agreement with the comment of COMMISSIONER BADER and asked if the administration believes the number of units will support the housing goals. Progress has occurred in the last decade, but numbers will not maintain a pace to align with affordable housing goals and discussions within Boards, Commissions and the community should be held regarding incentives, a different situation from the Title 18 code update. Dhaliwal agreed and replied that there is a lot of work occurring at the regional level and King County to establish goals for affordable housing. Inclusionary zoning expansion is being looked at in addition to other possible tools that will come back to the Planning Policy Commission in 2023. COMMISSIONER LEWIS stated that a real time measure of double-checks should be an important part of the process for equity and intent.

CHAIR VOISS stated that goals and changes look good but stated that Issaquah is not encouraging to private developers although high standards are important. CHAIR VOISS asked why 30-year and not lifetime of property is being considered and asked for input from both banks in relation to financing and Developers.

CHAIR VOISS opened deliberations on Landmarks. (00:40)

COMMISSIONER LEWIS asked if there were more preservation landmark sites in Issaquah than on the list in the presentation. Porter replied that there may be a few that could be added but that the list was essentially complete. COMMISSIONER LEWIS asked staff why Board and Commission appointment term lengths are believed to be appropriate considering the time needed to become familiar with Landmark processes. The positions are important but with high turnover and little familiarity with Landmarks due to the small number of applications. CHAIR VOISS stated agreement.

CHAIR VOISS opened deliberations on Parking. (00:43)

CHAIR VOISS read the first presentation question to Commissioners regarding if draft code supports the Commission direction to clarify long-term and short-term bicycle parking regulations and to elevate the bicycle amenity.

COMMISSIONER LEWIS replied an overarching yes. Draft code has addressed direct feedback by the Commission. Security issues and location could be adjusted to allow for more flexibility. Shower facilities needs more clarification in the next draft.

CHAIR VOISS replied that draft code supports short-term and long-term goals for a multi-modal city, but implementation needs clarification. Information on public shower usage in other cities should be gathered. The covered bicycle storage racks percentage is difficult to envision.

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COMMISSIONER LEWIS stated that there should be more discussion regarding materials and design of bicycle racks. There can be more of the term *should* in the code, not becoming overly prescriptive but allowing for more space. COMMISSIONER LEWIS asked, regarding public showers, if people will be bringing wet towels to work. Expectations and experiences from bicycle advocate groups should be investigated.

CHAIR VOISS stated again that the intent is good but there are particulars requiring further thought.

Regarding the second question, Shared Parking, COMMISSIONER LEWIS stated that the comments of Development COMMISSIONER MORGAN at the last joint meeting were very relevant, helpful, and encouraging. A review of current use would be helpful to track the success of the tool and to determine if there are any adverse effects such as oil spills or increased garbage not being accounted for. A mitigation process for contracts could be relevant.

CHAIR VOISS asked to understand how covenants work, in example during Village Theater events.

CHAIR VOISS read the next question, should the city consider raising the number of required Electric Vehicle Supply Equipment (EVSE) and Electric Vehicle (EV) ready parking stalls.

CHAIR VOISS asked for clarification that minor changes are being implemented due to State and Federal updated guidelines. Padua replied to meet more ICAP goals.

COMMISSIONER LEWIS replied yes, the cost of buildings being EV ready when built versus retroactively installed is high. The goal of Governor Inslee to have 100% of new car sales be zero emission vehicles by 2035 means the number of EV ready spaces must increase. The importance of the goal to residents is demonstrated in citizen polls. Technology is constantly changing so installing equipment may not be efficient but making appropriate voltage available is.

CHAIR VOISS replied that Washington State currently has at most 4% EV cars on the road, and the cost of requiring developers to install now will be absorbed by the consumer. The requirements can be revisited, on the docket annually. EV ready conduits are easier to accept currently than full EVSE parking spaces.

VICE CHAIR MONAHAN replied being in favor of more EV ready parking stalls. A mechanism to revisit the issue no more than once every two years due to the current number of electric cars would be sufficient.

COMMISSIONER BADER stated agreement for more EV ready stalls in order to move closer to the goal, and agreement with previous comments.

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COMMISSIONER LEWIS stated that the Commission does not appear to be ready to recommend a percentage at this time and asked staff how the Commission can be helpful otherwise. Padua replied that staff will bring more specific questions with the next draft.

b) Preliminary Recommendation on Proposed Amendments to Title 18 Subdivisions Chapter: Block Length and Zero Lot Line Requirements, (A)
(01:00)

Presented by:
Minnie Dhaliwal, Director, CP&D

CHAIR VOISS stated that the Planning, Development and Environmental Council Committee had asked staff to obtain further specific feedback from the Planning Policy Commission regarding subdivisions.

Dhaliwal presented the topic.

CHAIR VOISS asked for comments on the first of two questions, Block Length. **(01:07)**

CHAIR VOISS stated that long blocks are not desirable, and more interconnectivity of neighborhoods is. Shorter block lengths are better but the number, 250-feet, may need to be examined. Topography concerns are valid and different block lengths in different areas should be considered.

COMMISSIONER BADER stated that 250-feet should be further investigated and stated agreement with the comment of CHAIR VOISS regarding different block lengths in different areas.

Dhaliwal replied that the 250-foot block length is currently a standard in Central Issaquah and is also a standard for blocks in other cities. Padua replied that the number came from the Central plan to identify more walkable links. The most walkable areas with highest activity in other high-density cities employ the 250-foot requirement. Suburban neighborhoods tend towards less activity within the Land Use. More research will be conducted regarding different neighborhoods. Dhaliwal added that 250-feet versus in example 300-feet, the shape of a block and existing street patterns will be considered. There is not one number that will make the entire city more walkable and activated.

COMMISSIONER LEWIS stated that there is a concern regarding neighborhood character and whether the tool is right for all neighborhoods. The number is very applicable for Central, Highlands and possibly Talus, but city-wide is not feasible. The city has a vast topography and retail is sparse in areas. COMMISSIONER LEWIS stated support for the original recommendation, restricted and not city-wide.

CHAIR VOISS stated agreement with the comments of COMMISSIONER LEWIS, and that there are unique neighborhoods in Issaquah with unique characteristics.

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CHAIR VOISS asked if staff had received sufficient feedback and Dhaliwal replied yes.

CHAIR VOISS asked for comments regarding Zero Lot Lines. (01:16)

COMMISSIONER BADER stated support for Zero Lot Lines, particularly regarding affordability for families, and to be allowed but not required.

VICE CHAIR MONAHAN stated agreement with the comment of COMMISSIONER BADER.

COMMISSIONER LEWIS stated that Zero Lot Lines should be a tool used to achieve a purpose and not necessarily available city-wide. There are privacy issues that result in more fences. Zero Lot Lines are applicable in Central Issaquah, affordable housing and good for tree retention, but should not be allowed in all neighborhoods regardless of the lot situation.

CHAIR VOISS stated not personally supporting Zero Lot Lines due to emergence of blank walls but understanding the city goal for densification. The tool is useful to achieve the city goal. The tool should not be used city-wide, however, concentrating only in certain areas where densification is intended, and not as a requirement.

CHAIR VOISS asked staff if sufficient feedback had been received and Dhaliwal replied yes, that recommendations would be brought back to the Council Committee. COMMISSIONER LEWIS stated agreeing with the staff position broadly, but that the tool should be used to achieve a particular end and only in particular areas. Dhaliwal asked if the three neighborhoods, Central, Talus and Highlands, and single-family small lot with a density of 7.26 were agreed upon. COMMISSIONER LEWIS replied only agreeing for the neighborhoods specified and not for all single-family small lots city-wide. CHAIR VOISS asked for clarification that COMMISSIONER LEWIS did not support the density of 7.26 throughout the city. COMMISSIONER LEWIS replied no, not in support, unless the city is using the tool to achieve other goals in housing in an area, middle column. COMMISSIONER BADER stated supporting Zero Lot Lines on small lot development city-wide. VICE CHAIR MONAHAN stated agreement with COMMISSIONER BADER. CHAIR VOISS stated support of density of 7.26 as not a requirement but as a tool in a Critical Area or for tree retention, column three. COMMISSIONER BADER stated that in Talus, there are small lots with space between with vegetation, landscaped and hedged. Design will be aesthetic. COMMISSIONER LEWIS stated that there could be a design standard in code specifying expectations. Dhaliwal replied that a section in draft addressing privacy wall requirements could be less prescriptive. CHAIR VOISS stated being more concerned regarding community aesthetics but in support of the goal. Dhaliwal stated that Zero Lot Line design considerations and goals would be further researched.

5. Reports

a) Council Update (01:30)

Presented by:

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Stephen Padua, Long Range Planning Manager

Padua stated that the Council Committee will address the Future Updates list, formerly known as the White Board, for Title 18, as well as zoning and development standards on August 4, 2022. COMMISSIONER LEWIS asked if the Planning Policy Commission would have an opportunity to discuss the Future Updates list, and Padua replied yes.

6. Other Business/Announcements

a) Upcoming Schedule (01:31)

Padua stated that the Title 18 calendar has been adjusted to allow for testing of the code and for the Planning Policy Commission to discuss the Future Updates list in August 2022.

Padua stated that the meeting would be the last for VICE CHAIR MONAHAN and thanked the Commissioner for hard work and contributions. VICE CHAIR MONAHAN replied that a move to the East Coast is necessary due to personal and professional changes and thanked staff and Commissioners for hard work and dedication.

CHAIR VOISS stated being happy to be back in Chambers after 28 months. The next meeting is August 11, 2022.

7. Adjournment

With no further business to conduct, CHAIR VOISS adjourned the meeting at 8:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn Garza, LLC
Recording Secretary