



MINUTES

PLANNING POLICY COMMISSION
6:30 p.m. - Thursday, May 11, 2023

1. Call to Order

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

Commissioners Present: Chair Voiss, Commissioners Altimore, Esemuede, Kennedy, Krass (Alt), Milligan, and Patterson

Absence: Vice-Chair Bader

Staff Present: Christen Leeson, Senior Planner
Thomas Valdriz, Senior Transportation Planner

2. Approval of Minutes

CHAIR VOISS asked for corrections regarding the March 23, 2023 meeting minutes and there were none. The minutes were approved.

3. Public Comments (General)

There were no requests to speak.

4. Regular Business (00:02)

a) Chair and Vice-Chair Elections, (A)

*Presented by:
Jason Voiss, Chair*

CHAIR VOISS explained election procedure and asked for nominations for the Chair position.

Leeson stated that the Commissioners had received an email from VICE-CHAIR BADER nominating CHAIR VOISS for the Chair position. There were no other nominations and CHAIR VOISS accepted Chair position.

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CHAIR VOISS asked for nominations for the Vice-Chair position.

CHAIR VOISS nominated VICE-CHAIR BADER for the Vice-Chair position. There were no other nominations and VICE-CHAIR BADER was presented the Vice-Chair position.

b) **Housing Strategy Work Plan, Strategy 8: Diversity of Housing, (D) (00:04)**

Presented by:

Christen Leeson, Senior Planner

Leeson stated that a Public Hearing and Commissioner recommendation will occur at the May 23, 2023 meeting and began the presentation.

COMMISSIONER MILLIGAN asked if new legislation this year regarding condominiums could be addressed. Leeson replied that changes made will not affect Issaquah.

Leeson continued the presentation.

COMMISSIONER ESEMUUDE asked if courtyard housing is more feasible in Issaquah than high-rise. Leeson replied that the zone and not the city is the focus. Multifamily-High density is more likely to be taller developments.

COMMISSIONER MILLIGAN asked for clarification regarding lot-sizes. Leeson replied that existing lot-sizes looked at were 18,000 square feet with a comparison lot of almost 12,000 square feet.

COMMISSIONER KRASS asked if lot-size is an output of parking and impervious coverage. Leeson replied that lot-size refers only to the piece of land. There must be a certain number of parking spots for each unit developed and each spot is expensive for the developer. When more impervious surface is employed, more units can be built.

COMMISSIONER ALTIMORE asked about a lower density solution in a Multifamily High zone with the potential for higher density. Leeson replied that Mixed-Use and Urban Core zones are not being recommended. Different uses need to be examined throughout the city, in the Housing Strategy Work Plan. Single Family Small lot and Duplex may be examined in the future. COMMISSIONER ALTIMORE stated that Multifamily-Medium could be a perfect match. Leeson replied that it could be, and that if development regulations change and land cost goes down, Multifamily-High density could work also, a balancing act that requires more information.

Leeson continued the presentation. (00:21)

COMMISSIONER MILLIGAN asked if there are examples of cottage housing. Leeson replied that cottage housing is not allowed, although existing only in the Issaquah Highlands due to a

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Development Agreement. COMMISSIONER MILLIGAN asked for clarification regarding courtyard housing, and Leeson replied that courtyard housing is allowed but not in code.

CHAIR VOISS asked if apartments in a specific area would be considered courtyard housing. Leeson displayed a rendering example of courtyard housing.

COMMISSIONER MILLIGAN asked for clarification regarding why courtyard housing is not being built. Leeson replied that in theory, if a developer fills the courtyard space with units, more money will be made.

Leeson concluded the presentation. (00:27)

COMMISSIONER MILLIGAN asked for clarification regarding parking requirements presented. Leeson replied that requirements in the presentation were recommendations from the Consultant and not for the Planning Policy Commission to work on at this point. At this time, definitions and permitted uses are being added only.

CHAIR VOISS stated hesitancy regarding the permitted uses table, as major changes require more time than discussion in a short meeting will allow. There are no micro units or cottage housing in the city. Leeson replied that micro units are currently allowed but not defined.

COMMISSIONER ESEMUEDE asked for clarification that definitions added now for zoning types not currently in existence will help to guide developers and citizens to pursue the means of housing. Leeson replied yes.

COMMISSIONER ALTIMORE asked for clarification that Single Family will be discussed later, but that at this time only Multifamily zones are being discussed. Leeson replied yes, and that State bills have been passed and will need to be incorporated.

COMMISSIONER MILLIGAN asked when utility service for cottage and courtyard housing will be discussed, as cost will be impacted. Leeson replied that the proposal does not exceed any densities already allowed. More units allowed in Single Family zones will impact utilities. Public Works is being consulted. COMMISSIONER MILLIGAN stated that cottage housing would require hooking up each home, and asked if condominium cottage would be a consideration. Leeson replied that the code is being changed to allow for fee-simple units. COMMISSIONER MILLIGAN asked if courtyard housing as seen in London urban settings could be feasible, and Leeson replied yes. The maximum height on Multifamily High is 40 feet or three stories, whichever is lower, and Multifamily Medium is lower.

COMMISSIONER KENNEDY asked if there will be a change to the required parking per unit, and for clarification regarding a parking study versus proposed amendments. Leeson replied that a reason for the parking study is Light Rail, and potentially developing a transit-oriented development neighborhood which generally have less or no parking. Valdriz replied that off-street parking requirements will be examined by Land Use type. COMMISSIONER KENNEDY stated that until Light Rail arrives, the proposal could be a problem. Leeson replied that there

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is Tier One and Tier Two parking. Needs need to be met now as well as considering long-range planning. A unit less than 500 square feet requires .7 parking spaces within a ¼ mile, while apodments with five pods are considered one unit because there is one kitchen.

COMMISSIONER MILLIGAN stated not understanding the ramifications of definitions in Permitted Use well enough to comment at this meeting, but that further research would occur prior to the next meeting. Parking requirements should be attached to the location of the property and not to the type of unit.

COMMISSIONER ALTIMORE stated having toured micro units in Kirkland and that residents are aware of inevitable parking challenges. Because density is needed, an open mind should be kept.

COMMISSIONER KRASS asked for clarification that if there are changes to the required parking per unit for new developments, if requirements would also change for existing developments, and if the issue needs to be addressed. Leeson replied that the issue would be researched with Long Range Planning.

Leeson stated that parking is not a part of the discussion for the Planning Policy Commission at this point.

COMMISSIONER MILLIGAN asked if a definition could be re-examined after a parking study.

COMMISSIONER ESEMUEDE asked how long-range the parking study will be. Valdriz replied that peer cities, proximity to transit and Land Uses will be studied regarding new developments. Leeson replied that capacities by zone are available up to 2044.

COMMISSIONER MILLIGAN asked for clarification regarding required parking by unit discussed earlier. Leeson explained the code. COMMISSIONER ESEMUEDE asked for clarification regarding the figure .7 spaces. Leeson replied that the figure is the number of spaces. COMMISSIONER MILLIGAN asked if a development near transit would be incentivized, and Leeson replied that one space required would be reduced to .75 spaces. And 1:1 for units above 500 square feet but depending on the zone. COMMISSIONER MILLIGAN asked if the benefit would be a 30% reduction if all units were built to 499 square feet. Leeson replied that the scenario is under the current code. COMMISSIONER MILLIGAN stated that outcomes with a definition for micro units need to be examined. COMMISSIONER ESEMUEDE stated that developers should be incentivized for larger family spaces as well.

COMMISSIONER MILLIGAN asked if micro units in a mixed development would receive the parking bonus. Leeson replied that micro units do not exist in Issaquah currently.

COMMISSIONER MILLIGAN asked what parking requirements a unit mix with micro units would receive, when eventually built in Issaquah. Leeson replied that the how spaces are assigned is often up to the developer.

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COMMISSIONER PATTERSON asked what the Public Hearing will focus on, and Leeson replied only the first point of the presentation.

COMMISSIONER KENNEDY asked if definitions need to be very clear without the term *often*, and Leeson replied yes, specifics only.

Regarding cottage housing, COMMISSIONER MILLIGAN asked why cottage housing must be suitable for a single person or very small family only. Leeson replied that the purpose is to limit size, 1,200 to 1,700 square feet only. COMMISSIONER KENNEDY asked if literal size should be addressed rather than the vague definition of single person or small family. Leeson replied that research would be done on sizes listed in other codes. COMMISSIONER MILLIGAN asked for the parking requirements for Mixed Use, Multifamily - Medium and High. Leeson replied that Single Family houses, not by zone, are two spaces per house. COMMISSIONER MILLIGAN asked if the parking is off street and Leeson replied yes. COMMISSIONER MILLIGAN stated that parking shared in a courtyard would need to be stated. COMMISSIONER KENNEDY asked for clarification regarding condominium units in the description. Leeson replied that the units are called condominiums because there are several units on one undivided lot, detached or not, and confusing language can be simplified or not mentioned. The home is owned but not the property. COMMISSIONER KRASS asked if Single Family units can be townhouses, and Leeson replied that the intent is that there are no shared walls. The city wants more diverse options added and this kind of development is not allowed currently.

Regarding courtyard apartments, COMMISSIONER MILLIGAN asked if courtyard apartments would always be rentals. Leeson replied that *rented or owned* could be added, or not mentioned. COMMISSIONER KENNEDY asked if verbiage should be clearer regarding courtyard housing, and Leeson replied that the term *apartments* would be removed, covered under courtyard housing.

Regarding micro units, COMMISSIONER MILLIGAN asked why there is a minimum of 125 square feet, and Leeson replied that the figure is not a minimum but generally the size. The minimum size for livable size would be researched. COMMISSIONER MILLIGAN asked if there is another name for a unit without a bathroom or kitchen. Leeson replied Single Room Occupancy (SRO). COMMISSIONER MILLIGAN asked if a micro unit is the same as a bedroom with shared bathroom and kitchen. Leeson replied that SRO is usually a converted house and suggested the term *micro units also known as Single Room Occupancies*. COMMISSIONER KRASS asked for clarification regarding townhouses and Leeson suggested that the definition stop before the information regarding what often occurs, not a part of the definition. COMMISSIONER KENNEDY stated that definitions using the term *often* should be good information but not truly part of the definition. COMMISSIONER PATTERSON stated the previous definition was appreciated as the subject was defined without being put into a box. A definition should be clear and concise, but broad enough to cover all options. Leeson asked if square footage should be removed and no minimum listed unless a legal reason is found, only maximum. COMMISSIONER ESEMUEDE stated that referencing another code could be helpful. COMMISSIONER ALTIMORE stated agreement with COMMISSIONER ESEMUEDE that tying to code could help the public understand. COMMISSIONER MILLIGAN asked for

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clarification regarding listing square footage guidelines, and COMMISSIONER ALTIMORE replied with the preference to state that actual numbers will align with Issaquah code. Leeson agreed. COMMISSIONER MILLIGAN asked if congregate housing has a requirement for bathrooms or kitchens. Leeson replied believing building code would dictate, but typically one kitchen for every five units is required. A kitchenette is not considered a kitchen. COMMISSIONER ALTIMORE replied that congregate housing usually does not have bedrooms. CHAIR VOISS stated that to clean language, square footage should be kept per COMMISSIONER ESEMUEDE with reference to code, and that everything after community space be dropped per COMMISSIONER KENNEDY. Leeson replied that micro units would be referred to as Single Room Occupancies. Definitions will be compared for matches.

5. Reports (01:14)

a) Council Update

Leeson stated that the City Council adopted Title 18 on May 1, 2023, effective June 1, 2023. There is a party at Pickering Barn on May 31, 2023, for Commissioners and Staff who worked on Title 18.

6. Other Business/Announcements

a) Upcoming Schedule

CHAIR VOISS stated that there are ride-alongs scheduled in June to tour housing. Leeson asked that Commissioners fill out Doodle polls.

7. Adjournment

With no further business to conduct, CHAIR VOISS adjourned the meeting at 7:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn Garza, LLC
Recording Secretary