



## MINUTES

### PLANNING POLICY COMMISSION 6:30 p.m. – Thursday, October 17, 2024

---

#### 1. Call to Order

The hybrid meeting was called to order at 6:33 p.m. by CHAIR VOISS.

Commissioners Present: Chair Voiss, Vice-Chair Bader, Commissioners Patterson, and Zakharoff

Absent: Commissioners Kennedy, and Krass (Excused)

Staff Present: Minnie Dhaliwal, Director, Community P & D  
Caitlin Hepworth, Associate Planner  
Amanda Jackson, Meeting & Records Assistant  
Christen Leeson, Senior Planner  
Madelyn Nelson, Planning Intern  
Valerie Porter, Associate Planner

#### 2. Approval of Minutes

- a) Minutes of September 12, 2024  
There were no comments or corrections and the Minutes were approved.

#### 3. Public Comments (General)

- **Connie Marsh**, Squak Mountain, stated that Issaquah residents appear to believe that middle housing will be built regardless of community input. Much of Issaquah was built prior to critical area ordinances. The community should know that input is still needed and that middle housing parameters have not already been firmly decided.

#### 4. Regular Business (00:06)

- a) **Title 18 Code Update: Rooster and Chicken Husbandry (D)**  
*Presented by Caitlin Hepworth, Associate Planner*

Hepworth gave the presentation.

## 10-17-24 Planning Policy Commission Meeting Minutes

Hepworth asked the Commissioners if Issaquah should keep current code which adopts King County code by reference or readopt Issaquah only standards at the city level.

COMMISSIONER PATTERSON and VICE-CHAIR BADER stated leaning towards readopting Issaquah specific standards.

COMMISSIONER ZAKHAROFF asked for clarification regarding the maximum number of chickens within a specific square footage. Hepworth replied three chickens to a property of 6,000 square feet, and then a rate-based approach; for every additional 2,000 square feet there is allowed an additional chicken. The intention is for residential accessory uses and not a predominant use on the property. COMMISSIONER ZAKHAROFF stated agreement that Issaquah needs to adopt city-specific rules.

CHAIR VOISS stated that the older code served Issaquah well and asked for clarification regarding why a different code had been adopted. Hepworth replied that there had been a number of animal related residential codes in the past that were changed to King County, not only chickens and roosters. Honeybees and hives will be a topic at the next meeting. CHAIR VOISS stated liking a small permit and checks on the welfare of the chickens in regard to proper coops and runs, and in support of not allowing roosters. Hepworth replied that regulations by other cities have been researched and approximately half have a husbandry registration program. The registration portion was not included in the draft because there is not enough staffing to support a registration process in addition to other services provided by Community P & D. CHAIR VOISS asked if addressing staff resources can be put onto a wish list and Hepworth replied that the issue can be put on a housekeeping list for future consideration; in the interim, if there are issues such as rodents on properties with chickens, the public will be relied on to reach out to code enforcement.

COMMISSIONER PATTERSON asked if there has been community feedback regarding chickens, and Hepworth replied no, that there have been only a few complaints regarding roosters. COMMISSIONER PATTERSON asked if there is information from other communities with long standing code regarding any pushback. Hepworth replied that there has not been an opportunity to communicate with other cities but there can be communication prior to a Public Hearing in 2025.

VICE-CHAIR BADER asked if King County maintains a registry and Hepworth replied not believing so regarding residential, but that registration is required for a commercial operation. VICE-CHAIR BADER asked if chickens can be bred without a rooster present and Hepworth stated that the question will be researched. VICE-CHAIR BADER asked if two square feet is standard for a chicken and Hepworth replied that two square feet is the average across other cities; chicken coops for sale are larger.

COMMISSIONER PATTERSON stated supporting chicken ownership, but potential drawbacks are drawing predators and suggested defining and requiring a well-maintained chicken enclosure. Hepworth replied that requiring a weather-resistant, sturdy material-built coop implies a roof should be provided to protect chickens from weather, predators, and pests, and

## 10-17-24 Planning Policy Commission Meeting Minutes

that clarification can be added to draft code as well as defining *well-maintained*. A waste-free area is the assumption. Coops and chickens should be in the rear yard so that the only visual impact is to the chicken owners.

Hepworth asked Commissioners if the number of allowed chickens should be more aligned with adjacent city allowances.

VICE-CHAIR BADER asked for clarification regarding the number of chickens allowed to 6,000 square feet, and Hepworth replied that there had been a typing error, and that the draft should read that properties greater than 6,000 square feet can have at least one chicken and a maximum of three. Hepworth stated that the code can be amended for a greater allowance in the future if there is public comment supporting; there has been no feedback from residents to this point.

Hepworth asked Commissioners if there should be changes to law area or setback standards from chicken runs and not necessarily a coop. Past standards are adopted in the draft code.

VICE-CHAIR BADER asked for clarification regarding chicken runs, and Hepworth replied that runs are defined as outdoor, open area to be outside in. A fence and setback are required.

CHAIR VOISS stated that the setbacks appear to be reasonable.

Hepworth asked Commissioners if new regulations that go beyond minimum requirements of old code should move forward. There was no feedback given.

Leeson stated to COMMISSIONER PATTERSON that no permit is required and that unless there are complaints, residences with chickens will not be identified. Code details need to be clear for the public and for enforcement.

CHAIR VOISS asked if requirements would not be applied if only one chicken is owned, and Hepworth replied that the standards will be required for any number of chickens on the property.

CHAIR VOISS stated being in support of the standards.

COMMISSIONER ZAKHAROFF asked for clarification regarding identifying roosters in newly acquired chicks, adding that if roosters are not allowed, they will be abandoned or need to be transferred. Hepworth replied that the issue will be discussed further, and that an option could be that the age limit could be raised for how long a rooster is allowed as a chick, as male chickens do not produce loud, frequent noise until later, giving a more sufficient timeline for rehoming. COMMISSIONER ZAKHAROFF asked that not allowing abandonment be in the code and Hepworth replied that the issue can be added.

COMMISSIONER PATTERSON stated that definitions of a coop, run, and shelter would be helpful and Hepworth replied that definitions will be added

## 10-17-24 Planning Policy Commission Meeting Minutes

- b) **Title 18 Code Update: House Bill 1110 Middle Housing and House Bill 1337 Accessory Dwelling Units (D) (00:40)**  
*Presented by Valerie Porter, Associate Planner*

Porter gave the presentation.

COMMISSIONER ZAKHAROFF asked for clarification regarding whether rebuilding will require a middle housing unit. Porter replied that if an additional unit is desired, options are that the existing home can be converted to a duplex or two Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU) can be built. CHAIR VOISS asked for clarification that a large remodel can continue to be a single-family detached house and Porter replied yes. CHAIR VOISS asked if middle housing is allowable rather than required and Porter replied correct.

CHAIR VOISS stated that there are misconceptions about what middle-housing will do to existing neighborhoods and Porter replied correct, and that at the moment no zoning regulations are being changed. CHAIR VOISS stated that addressing fears will be important,

COMMISSIONER ZAKHAROFF stated that there are residents with large homes that fear there will be a requirement to divide to let more people in, and clarification is needed. The public comment at the beginning of the meeting was addressed in critical areas, some zones not allowing middle-housing. Porter replied that the Bill states that portions of lots that are encumbered by critical areas are exempt; there are a wide variety of critical areas and geo-technical reports identify any needed mitigation. Policy will be discussed at the next meeting.

VICE-CHAIR BADER gave an example of a possible unintended consequence, a developer who purchases a single-family lot and develops a higher priced home and two small ADUs. and Porter replied that multiple factors attract developers to a particular parcel including market rate and city regulations. Leeson replied that the situation is market-driven.

VICE-CHAIR BADER asked for clarification regarding cottage housing. Porter replied that cottage housing are detached homes smaller than typical, and there must be a minimum number to be considered cottage housing. VICE-CHAIR BADER asked for further clarification near transit centers and Porter replied that there are some larger lots throughout the single-family zones that could allow up to five units on one lot, but there are other factors to also consider such as critical area, tree and zoning code, and development standards.

CHAIR VOISS asked what some fallacies are regarding middle-housing. Porter replied that concerns listed in a middle-housing survey included loss of trees and a grab by developers to develop large buildings; adoption of regulations will allow modifications if needed. Leeson replied that the first step is that a property must be on the market. Porter replied that another fear is that a developer may utilize the maximum height, which could be done today, but is not.

## 10-17-24 Planning Policy Commission Meeting Minutes

CHAIR VOISS asked how much Issaquah can still shape the city with new laws. Porter replied that legislation is to treat middle-housing the same as single-family and the same regulations apply. New legislation is still being examined.

CHAIR VOISS asked for clarification that if the June 25 deadline is passed, Issaquah must revert to Department of Commerce (DOC) guidelines, and Porter replied correct.

VICE-CHAIR BADER asked if there are Airbnb regulations, and Porter replied no, there are regulations for Bed and Breakfasts but not for Airbnb. VICE-CHAIR BADER expressed concern that ADUs will create vacation rentals, not moving toward the goal of accessibility. Porter stated that short-term rentals are required to be allowed.

## 5. Reports

### a) Council Update (01:19)

Leeson stated that some changes were made to the Comprehensive Plan by the Planning, Development, & Environment Committee, going to the Council of the Whole with a recommendation of approval on November 14, 2024 and to the entire Council for action in December.

Dhaliwal stated that Leeson presented Housing to Council, and budget discussions are ongoing with an administration proposal to Council on October 28, 2024.

## 6. Other Business/Announcements

### a) Upcoming Schedule

CHAIR VOISS stated that Commissioner Milligan has resigned, having been a public servant for many years on various Boards and Commissions, and expressed thanks. Commissioner Krass has been appointed as a regular member. The next new Commissioner interviews will be in February, 2025. Any attendance issues should be reported to staff as soon as possible, weeks prior preferred, to ensure quorums.

## 7. Adjournment

CHAIR VOISS adjourned the meeting at 7:57 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn Garza, LLC  
Recording Secretary