



MINUTES

PLANNING POLICY COMMISSION 6:30 p.m. – Thursday, December 12, 2024

1. Call to Order

The hybrid meeting was called to order at 6:31 p.m. by CHAIR VOISS.

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

Absent:

Staff Present: Minnie Dhaliwal, Director, Community P & D
Amanda Jackson, Meeting & Records Assistant
Madelyn Nelson, Planning Intern
Stephen Padua, Long Range Planning Manager

2. Approval of Minutes

a) Minutes of October 17, 2024

There being no corrections or comments, the Minutes were approved.

b) Minutes of October 24, 2024

There being no corrections or comments, the Minutes were approved.

3. Public Comments (General)

- **Chris Craven**, Old Town resident and Arts Commissioner, thanked Issaquah for acknowledging the importance of the Creative District and described benefits. If an appropriate process and collaboration is focused on rather than strict, restrictive requirements, there will be a much better outcome.
- **Rachel Wright**, Co-Chair of the Issaquah Arts Commission and member of the Creative District Advisory Board, described the goal of a Creative District and a recent history of businesses in the area.
- **Connie Marsh**, Squak Mountain, stated that there needs to be a path for art different from a sign, mentioning Jacob Two Trees and the Brown Bear Car Wash

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sign considered as art. Art should be put into the Use table. The Planning Policy Commission may not be the correct venue to address the issue and the problem to solve is unclear.

4. **Regular Business (00:08)**

a) **Title 18 Code Update: Creative District (D)**

Presented by

Madelyn Nelson, Planning Intern

Stephen Padua, Long Range Planning Manager

Nelson gave the presentation.

COMMISSIONER KRASS stated that there are two buckets, public and private development, agreement with the Arts Commission on verbiage *encouraged* versus *required*, and asked for clarification of the process. Nelson replied by explaining incentivization for art.

COMMISSIONER KRASS asked for the point of view of staff regarding whether art should be encouraged or required. Padua replied that the desired outcome to be determined by the Planning Policy and Arts Commissions are what will be considered. There is policy language that encourages art, but art is not incentivized. Encouragement does not belong in code unless there is incentive.

VICE-CHAIR BADER asked several questions regarding what the Arts amendment will achieve. Nelson replied to individual questions, in example, if Jacob Two Trees was damaged and required moving there would there be an art permit situation; the purpose of the District is to provide economic opportunities for artists. Regarding interacting with other regulations, Padua replied that in the case of the Brown Bear sign, sign code clearly defines a sign as an advertisement for a business; the proposed sculpture was a brown bear, the balancing act being that the animal is also the name of the business. A permit process for art is not clearly defined. Nelson replied that the purpose is to encourage the existence of expression in art.

COMMISSIONER KRASS asked for clarification between a current art permit versus any new ideas, regardless of whether encouraged or required. Nelson replied that there is not an art permit for private developments. Padua replied that there is currently no art permit for public developments either, why a sign permit had to be used for Jacob Two Trees.

COMMISSIONER KRASS asked if the Darigold wall mural is considered art, and Padua replied that a mural can be created on private property but must fall under sign code. CHAIR VOISS stated that other examples are Burgermaster, H & H Saloon, and Brown Bear.

COMMISSIONER KRASS asked if a goal is to have a permit process for art installations on private land. Nelson replied for the structural aspect of art; other cities have a permit process for, in example, murals, in order to protect the aesthetic. COMMISSIONER KRASS asked for further clarification and Padua replied that a building permit is looked at for structural and safety issues, and conflicts with other regulations.

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COMMISSIONER ZAKHAROFF stated that the Edmonds Arts District is state certified and asked if certification is the goal for Issaquah. Nelson replied that Issaquah is state certified under the ARCH Washington program.

CHAIR VOISS asked how boundaries were created for the Creative District. Nelson replied that the decision was made by Amy Dukes, head of the Arts Department and a size requirement was a factor. CHAIR VOISS asked if there is a comparable city, and Nelson replied that there is not.

COMMISSIONER KENNEDY asked for clarification that Issaquah is the only city with code in the arts realm. Padua replied that other cities provide guidance on art installation in a private development but no specific requirements; how to address the need for art are the conversations being held with the Arts Commission.

VICE-CHAIR BADER stated that size should be addressed by the Arts Commission.

COMMISSIONER KRASS asked if size requirements are for public or private property. Padua replied that what is proposed is for primarily private property. COMMISSIONER KRASS stated being in favor of not imposing requirements but rather providing incentives. CHAIR VOISS also stated being in favor of encouragement through incentivization, a Director for developers to work with, and no permit.

COMMISSIONER ZAKHAROFF stated that upon researching, the Edmonds Arts District is focused on encouraging creative businesses for job opportunities. Padua replied that the Arts Commission does work on helping to build creative businesses throughout the city, and the intent of the current proposal is to enhance city aesthetics.

COMMISSIONER PATTERSON stated being in favor of the city looking at the recommendations of the Arts Commission more thoroughly, applying to the next amendment draft, and that the differences between public and private permitting be made clear for the Planning Commission, creating a delineation from signage. The Arts Commission recommendations appear to be focused on public art permits.

Dhaliwal stated understanding that consensus was to use encouragement with incentives rather than requirements; a request for clearer delineation between public versus private art and signs versus art; and more flexibility in each situation, less prescriptive. COMMISSIONER KRASS stated that another run-through of five feasible options from staff perspective would be helpful. Dhaliwal stated that there will be a deeper look at design standards.

5. Reports

a) Council Update (00:45)

Padua stated that on December 2, 2024, Council adopted the Budget, Strategic Plan, and the Comprehensive Plan, and that Council had expressed appreciation to the Planning Policy Commission.

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6. Other Business/Announcements

a) Upcoming Schedule

Padua stated that the 2025 Work Plan was included in Commissioner packets. The first half of the year will include code updates, followed by the annual review of Municipal code and Title 18 housekeeping.

CHAIR VOISS stated that this meeting would be the last attended by VICE-CHAIR BADER

- *Motion by CHAIR VOISS for VICE-CHAIR BADER to assume the position of Chair for the remainder of the meeting. Motion seconded by COMMISSIONER KENNEDY.*

CHAIR VOISS thanked VICE-CHAIR BADER for hard work behind the scenes and for demeanor and perspective. The other Commissioners also thanked VICE-CHAIR BADER.

- *The Motion passed unanimously.*

CHAIR BADER thanked Commissioners and staff.

Padua and Dhaliwal thanked CHAIR BADER and the Commission on behalf of staff.

7. Adjournment

CHAIR BADER adjourned the meeting at 7:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn Garza, LLC
Recording Secretary