

November 29, 2010
Ellensburg City Planning Commission – Public Meeting Minutes
City Council Chambers

Members Present: David Miller, Chair Bruce Simpson, Bob Hood
Members Absent: Jason Berthon-Koch, Sarah Bedsaul, Doug Mitchell
Also Present: Lance Bailey - Planning Supervisor

Public Meetings

Commission Chair opened the meeting at 7:10pm.

A) Land Development Code Update

Discussion was continued on the LDCU. Commission members were updated on the work the consultant has been doing and staff presented the agenda for the meeting.

Individual Summary of Comments

There was discussion about how the design and street front standards fit together. The Commission doesn't think the idea of doing some kind of theme is where this process should go. The focus on the conceptual discussion should be on the raw land that has yet to be developed. There was a desire expressed that a clear variance type of procedure be developed to deal with situations where the design standards cannot be met. There needs to be a certain amount of flexibility built into the code.

Transparency

Staff presented the slides on setbacks and transparency and explained how these relate to the street front standards. The Commission discussed how departures could be reviewed for transparency. Some uses, such as a theater, by its nature will have larger blank walls. What works in the downtown might not work along Canyon, which is exactly why the street frontage standards for these two areas need to be different. The Commission discussed the specific requirements of the Storefront standards. Transparency does not include faux windows. One intent of the transparency requirement is to create some visual consistency along the street. The Commission felt that the 15% transparency requirement in the non-storefront areas is appropriate.

Development Frontage

The Commission discussed the 3rd Avenue case study handout and how the 3 different street front standard types transition into each other. The street front classifications do not necessary follow the exact boundaries of the existing zoning districts, but for the most part they do. When you look at the aerial photos you can see that there is a natural transition between the commercial to residential areas. The proposed street front standards do not differ drastically from the existing development around the city.

Gateway Corridors

There are major differences between canyon and university way, mostly the fact that canyon is already developed with commercial use and university way has some development but also a lot of vacant land. The Commission agrees that the building orientation, setback and landscaping standards can work for both canyon and university way. Even a more industrial type of building that might be developed along university way could meet the standards and create the intended visual consistency along the street front. To create the visual consistency there needs to be both a min and max setback.

Campus Area – University Way

The city and CWU are both separately working on changing the signage for the gateway entrance areas. The current proposal in the LDCU is to designate the area along university way adjacent to CWU with the storefront classification.

CC Zones

The Commission supports the proposed requirements for the CC/downtown area. For the most part the downtown area is already developed in a way that meets the proposed requirements. One suggestion is to incorporate into the departures a fair amount of flexibility that relates to historic properties and the ability for a property owner to maintain historic integrity.

Next Meeting

If possible the Commission should probably meet twice in December in order to stay on schedule with the LDCU process. The tentative dates will be the 16th and 23rd.

The meeting was adjourned at

Respectfully submitted
Lance Bailey, Planning Supervisor