

CITY OF ELLENSBURG

Minutes of Council Meeting, Special Session

Date of Meeting

February 1, 2011

Time of Meeting

8:30 a.m.

Place of Meeting

Council Chambers, 501 North Anderson Street

---

Councilmembers Present: Arango; Bassett, Bottcher, Lillquist, and Mayor Tabb

Councilmembers Absent/Excused: Elliott

Others present were City Manager Barkley; Energy Service Director Titus; Community Development Director Smith; City Attorney Pidduck; Planning Supervisor Bailey; City Engineer Lyyski; Deputy Clerk Keno; Planning Commission Members Miller and Bedsaul and one member of the audience.

Also present were consultants Bob Bengford and Rachel Miller of Makers, and Yvonne Kraus of O'Brien & Co.

Mayor Tabb called the special meeting to order 8:40 a.m.

**Review and Discuss the Outcomes of the January 31, 2011 Community Meeting Relating to the Land Development Code Update Project, the Non-Motorized Transportation Plan Implementation, and the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Strategy.**

The purpose of the special meeting is a debriefing from last evening's community meeting. The consultant is requesting feedback and direction from Council. A little over 100 people attended the community meeting and the consultant and staff were pleased with the turnout. The consultants distributed preliminary tabulations on the public's input for discussion and direction before it starts drafting code.

Some developers attending the community meeting indicated they have wanted the city to implement some of the things proposed for a long time, but the City Code has prevented them from doing so. Director Smith explained the development history and the developer's distrust of city government. Over the years the City has heard from the developers that they would like more options in housing with consistent standards.

The Visual Preference Survey results indicate design is more important to people than the number of units. The Commercial Neighborhood (C-N) zone was discussed, including the fact that it has not worked well in the past. Some councilmembers would like to see incentives for developers to encourage building to higher densities. Transfer of Development Rights (TDRs) were discussed. The consultant TDRs can be very hard to implement, rely on good market conditions and are complicated. Council pointed out the County has adopted a TDR process. The consultant recommends using all other tools first. The consultant stressed the big issue with TDRs is having receiving sites. Ways to achieve higher density were discussed. The consultant will look at options to make this work in a small community with a rural County. Director Titus noted energy efficiency is best incorporated into projects that go up versus projects that expand out.

**Non-Motorized Transportation.** Community members did not care for the ¼ mile block length for vehicle circulation. This was the proposal from the Non-Motorized Transportation Committee. Some councilmembers want the opportunity to not have auto traffic every 400 feet. The biggest concern is pedestrian walkability. City street standards were reviewed and more discussions will be needed with the Non-Motorized Transportation Committee. Consensus was no one likes the long block and part of the reason for that is connectivity and pedestrian access.

Comments on local street design options were mixed. Options will match the type of development. Clear criteria is needed. There needs to be provision for off street parking on 20 foot streets. A number of survey participants indicated off street parking requirements are too high.

With regard to planting strips and street trees, the majority of respondents would like to see trees on both sides of the street. Provision for street trees is important. The maintenance issues involved with boulevards were discussed. Council will weigh the various options. Current strip provisions on new subdivisions are going forward.

**Development Frontages (how it looks from the street).** While response numbers were smaller, what staff heard was fairly positive. Consensus was to keep moving forward and fine tune current City standards. The street frontages are on the City's website. Ways to deal with the gateway areas and the area on campus were discussed. The standards are not necessarily defined. It was noted University Way and Canyon Road are two very different areas of the city. The consultants should review a copy of the CWU Master Plan for review. The comprehensive plan language will be reviewed for discussion of gateways.

**Commercial & Multi-Family Zones.** Planning Commission members indicated responses received were consistent with comments heard during the comprehensive plan update process. Council discussed the Commercial Tourist (C-T) and Commercial Highway (C-H) zones, their history and whether the zones should be combined or strictly limited uses maintained. The consultant will craft variations on the current theme.

Council took a ten minute break at 10:40 a.m. and reconvened at 10:55 a.m

The consultants will take a stab at trying to revise the language and work with the Planning Commission. Council is not interested in drastic changes such as totally opening the Light Industrial (I-L), C-H, and C-T zones.

Respondents were supportive of building height limitations for the downtown (CC) zone and options for parking. Council is interested in language for the Central Commercial-I (CC-I) zone where the parking burden is on the applicant to show an analysis of need. Clear direction on signage was evident in the survey responses.

**Single Family Zones & Subdivisions.** Respondents want more diversity in subdivisions and density bonuses are good ideas. Fences are not popular either. People want stricter standards with fences. Height is only one of the issues with fences.

Respondents want stronger approaches for garages which is a contrast from the prior survey. The challenge at the community meeting was not being able to see visuals. Alley or garage setback options were discussed. Alleys are currently allowed by code if the developer chooses to do them; however, the code does not require them. Ways to incentivize and push for alleys were discussed along with maintenance issues. Currently, the city does not pave or snowplow alleys. Council requested the discussion of alleys be placed on the retreat agenda.

Street standards should not preclude a common square concept. Some councilmembers liked the option of a zero lot line. The Non-Motorized Transportation Committee did not make a specific recommendation on alleys.

Staff may be proposing the residential suburban area (R-S) as appropriate for other residential zones through the rezone process. This would mean the option of going beyond residential multi-family (R-M).

**Schedule.** Consensus was the Planning Commission and Council will meet again on the first draft of the update before it goes back to the public for comment. Director Smith advised the goal is to have the final land development code ready for adoption by late summer with a draft ready by late May. The draft will be available to the public on the City's website along with the displays. Another public meeting-hearing type event will be held, followed by a pulse check and debriefing. June will be the target date for the public forum.

Council expressed appreciation to the consultants for the work done to date.

---

Council discussed and revised the draft agenda for the February 4, 2011 Planning Retreat.

ADJOURN Motion to adjourn at 12:02 p.m.

Lillquist  
Approved

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
City Clerk