

**May 12, 2011**  
**Ellensburg City Planning Commission – Regular Meeting Minutes**  
**City Council Chambers**

Members Present: Beverly Heckart, Fred Padjen, Gretchen Thatcher  
Members Absent: Chair Bruce Simpson, Sarah Bedsaul, Bob Hood  
Others Present: Planning Supervisor Lance Bailey, Mayor Bruce Tabb

The meeting was opened at 5:50pm

It was suggested that we have gotten to the point where the Planning Commission should consider making specific recommendations on the draft LDCU language. Staff responded that we had approached the project to this point at the concept level, making sure that no ideas are left off the table, as would occur when recommendations are made and a majority vote made. It is expected at the upcoming May 23<sup>rd</sup> joint PC/CC meeting that more detailed discussion will occur, particularly on the issues where there isn't agreement.

Concern was expressed that we might be going through this too slowly and will be pressed for time to adopt the new code language by the end of the year.

Staff asked the Planning Commission if the street standards in Article 5 accurately reflect what was recommended through the NMT process and the concept meetings we had on the street front design standards. It was pointed out that the current draft code eliminates the minimum street frontage requirement (60ft) from the City's current code.

What affect would eliminating the minimum street frontage requirement have on potential commercial development? The ensuing discussion determined there would be no negative effect, in fact it would create more flexibility to plat lots in the commercial zones. There was support among the Planning Commission to eliminate the minimum street frontage requirement. Staff pointed out that the CC and CCII zones have no minimum lot size, and therefore no minimum street frontage requirement.

We need to be careful about adding things because parts of the existing code are the result of years of discussion and compromise, and those elements need to be carefully considered and not just thrown out without a full understanding and consideration of the history of why they are in the current code.

We need to look carefully at the language in the draft code where it refers to "Director's discretion." Staff asked the Planning Commission to point out the places in the draft code where they feel this language should be taken out.

**Article 5, p. 13-14:**

If we don't want to have parking in front, then the standard should prohibit parking to the side, as illustrated in Figure 15.51.050(A).

Staff pointed out that its possible some properties would not have any access if parking wasn't allowed on the side. Ideally multiple properties would be able to use shared access, but that might not always work.

The current draft code shows that parking in the rear is the preferred option, but allows parking on the side under circumstances where parking in the rear isn't possible.

### **Level 1-3 improvements**

Article 5 establishes three different thresholds for building additions, remodels and site improvements. The thresholds depend on actions that commence within a 3 year period and affect the exterior appearance and/or increase a building's footprint by a certain percentage.

"as determined by Director" can be eliminated from the language in the first paragraph of the Level II Improvement section.

"as determined by Director" can be eliminated from paragraph 2 of 15.50.020.

We are trying to make long term changes in the community, and unfortunately the easiest path is what currently prevails. If we really want to make changes, then there should be as little discretion as possible written into the code. Its not feasible to eliminate every reference to "as determined by Director".

How would building a 2<sup>nd</sup> story affect the threshold determination? The language in the draft code only refers to increasing the building footprint.

There was general support for the Level 1-3 improvements concept. The way its written, if its found not to be working it can be easily changed in the future. There was support for the thresholds as they are currently written into the draft code.

Some liked the thresholds based on footprint and not square footage, while there was also concern expressed that the way the draft is currently written it doesn't consider adding stories to an existing building.

### **Secondary Street 2**

This is a new classification within the Street Frontage Type. There are areas within the existing commercial zones that are more industrial than commercial. The consultants have suggested adding this category for these areas. The only difference between Secondary Street and Secondary Street 2 is there is no restriction on the location of parking along the street (allows parking in front).

There was support for creating the Secondary Street 2 and applying it as illustrated on Figures 15.51.040(A) and 15.51.040(B), but not in the area identified in Figure 15.51.040(C).

There was support for extending the Storefront Street designation up to University Way along Pearl St, as identified in Figure 15.51.040(B).

### **Departures**

The language for departures needs to be developed. It was suggested that diagrams be used to illustrate departures whenever possible.

Do we need departures for transparency, and parking? There is concern on the Commission that departures will result in site/building designs that are well below the standards we are trying to set in the new code. Rite Aid was used as an existing example.

### **Building Setbacks**

If we really want to have buildings built up along the street, then a maximum setback could be adopted. This would create build-to lines.

There was general support for maximum setbacks along Secondary Streets.

### **Open Space**

We need to illustrate what the difference is between the proposed open space requirements are and how they compare to our existing requirements.

For pedestrian oriented space, wind protection needs to always be a consideration.

P 25, 3(c)

P 26, 1(g)

P. 30 1(a) – can eliminate “as approved by the Director”

Language referring to the new Dark Sky Ordinance needs to be incorporated into the draft code.

### **15.53 Building Design**

Language referring to the Landmarks and Design Commission needs to be incorporated into the draft code.

P.40, section 2 – how do we define corporate/franchise architecture.

### **Conditional Uses**

There is support to maintain decision making authority with the Planning Commission for conditional uses

### **15.54 Housing Type Standards**

There was support for setting back the garages more than a minimum of 20ft. 25ft was suggested as a minimum setback for garages.

It was suggested to look at having a maximum setback for the garage and house, creating build-to lines as discussed for buildings along secondary streets. Creating a difference between the house and garage setback gets you to a site design as reflected in Figure 15.54.020.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:46pm