

**December 8, 2011**  
**Ellensburg City Planning Commission – Regular Meeting Minutes**  
**City Council Chambers**

Members Present: Chair Bruce Simpson, Vice Chair Sarah Bedsaul, Bill Beattie, Beverly Heckart, Fred Padjen, Gretchen Thatcher  
Members Absent: Bob Hood  
Others Present: Planning Supervisor Lance Bailey, David Miller, George Bottcher, Mary Morgan, Nate Sitton

Chair Bruce Simpson opened the meeting at 5:45p.m.

**Public Hearing**

**1) Daniel Bosancu Conditional Use application C11-17**

The quasi-judicial pre-hearing notice was read by Bruce Simpson

Planning Supervisor Bailey presented the staff report. Daniel Bosancu has submitted a conditional use permit application for a mechanic and welding shop in the Central Commercial (C-C) Zone at 205 East 2nd Avenue. The automotive shop will specialize in off-road vehicle repair, welding fabrication, metalwork, & building custom winch bumpers for retail sale. EMC 13.28.060 D allows production and manufacturing activity that uses power tools and equipment and results in the production of goods placed for retail sale as a conditional use in the C-C Zone if approved by the Planning Commission.

D & M Coffee operated its coffee roaster along with limited retail sales in that portion of the building from 2004 to 2010 under Conditional Use Permit 2004-04. Before D & M Coffee, C V Autoworks operated out of the space from 1992 to 2004. The lease space has been vacant since April 2010.

The building is separated into three lease spaces. There are no residential uses adjacent to the subject parcel. The garage space in the building is approximately 4,560 square feet. There are no parking requirements in the C-C Zone. The business will operate 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday by appointment only. Customer vehicles will be kept within the building.

Notice of the conditional use application and Public Hearing date was mailed to property owners within 300 feet of the proposed site and published in the legal section of the Daily Record. City Departments were routed the application with attachments for comment. As of the date of this report, the Gas Department has responded with no comments.

Conditional uses are governed by Chapter 13.50 which gives the Planning Commission authority to hear conditional uses; to decide such questions as are necessarily involved in determining whether a conditional use should be granted; and to grant conditional use permits with conditions and safeguards as are appropriate. The Planning Commission may prescribe appropriate conditions and safeguards in conformity with the zoning code and shall prescribe a time limit within which any conditional use shall commence or be complete, or both.

Daniel Bosancu spoke on behalf of the application. The Commission asked about the potential for noise. He responded that he didn't anticipate any noise problems with adjacent businesses. Staff responded that all surrounding property owners were sent notice of the application, and none of them had responded. The applicant testified that all vehicles would be stored inside the building. He is planning to install

The Commission discussed the issue of how many hives constitutes a commercial level of use. Mr. Sitton responded that he did not have an answer for that question, that he was only interested in bee keeping as a hobby. Staff pointed out that one of the code examples provided sets a threshold of 25 hives that differentiate between hobby and commercial uses. Mr. Sitton indicated that in a good season you might get 50lbs of honey from an individual hive. A hive is defined as a colony with one queen. Bees only live for about 3 weeks. One stack of boxes constitutes a single hive. In his letter to City Council, Mr. Sitton requested that the City consider allowing up to 6 hives per parcel. Bees will typically go no more than 3 miles from the hive. Raccoons and skunks are reported to eat bees.

Staff has not been able to find any documented negative consequences from communities that have adopted codes to specifically allow bee keeping.

Planning Commission did like the idea of limiting the number of hives at some threshold that makes sense in terms of hobby vs commercial scale use.

## 2) Discussion of Land Development Code Update – Article 5, Signage

15.56.020

Planning Commission agrees with the Landmarks and Design Commission that there should be a short statement here that clearly states that design review is required for all signs within the downtown historic district.

15.56.040 Sign Illumination

The numbered examples in figure 15.56.040(A)(1) need to be clearly referenced in the specific sections that refer to regulation of those types of signs. Planning Commission agrees with the Landmarks and Design Commission that some of the photo examples should be replaced with graphics that clearly show the elements that differentiate the different classification of signs.

(A)(3) Back-lit awning signs

The main issue is with the brightness of the sign. The emphasis should be on the message of the sign, and to the largest degree possible reduce the amount of the “extra” in the sign – the brightness, area of the sign not necessary to identify the business. ***There was not unanimous agreement on prohibiting back-lit awning signs.***

15.56.010(E)

The statement in the Purpose section to “minimize light and glare on surrounding areas” applies to all signs in the city. This will cover some of the issues regarding the impacts of lighted signs. Planning Commission is in strong support of this language.

There was comment from the public that the sign code does not seem to address billboards, and particularly the lighting on billboards. All lighting on billboards should be downward facing, not pointed upwards. 15.56.040(7) seems to address the concern regarding upwards, non-shielded light. It was suggested to consider adding the term billboard in this section to make those types of signs are covered by this language.

There was public comment that the City needs to be careful not to regulate signage to such a degree that a business isn't able to use their logo on a sign.

There was public comment about whether there would be any kinds of departures included in the chapter on signage? Is there enough flexibility in the code as it is currently written? The statement “Other types of sign lighting not mentioned above are prohibited” would seem to be quite restrictive.

A member of the Arts Commission addressed the Planning Commission to indicate that they intended to submit some suggestions regarding allowing density bonuses for providing public art. The Art Commission expects to submit their proposal to the Planning Commission for their next meeting.

There was public comment to consider requiring that lighted signs have the ability to be turned on and off, or possibly the use of a timer so the lights aren't on all night long. Especially in the R-O zone.

#### 15.56.050 Monument Signs

Should possibly consider prohibiting lighted signs in the R-O zone. There was public comment that having some kind of light in front of a business, such as in the R-O zone can provide some protection against vandalism and theft.

#### 15.56.060 Pole Signs

##### (C) Maximum Height

The proposed maximum height of 35ft is a lot more restrictive than the current allowed maximum of 100ft. The existing ½ mile radius from an interchange was originally adopted because it seemed a reasonable distance for businesses that are intended to attract freeway customers.

***There was support among the Planning Commission to restrict all pole signs to a maximum of 35ft.***

#### 15.56.070 Wall Signs

Sections C, D and E are confusing. There was a discussion on whether the size of the signs allowed in sections D and E are out of scale for Ellensburg. There was public comment suggesting to eliminate the language in "D" allowing "1 square foot for each lineal foot of the façade" and just rely on the maximum wall sign up to 100 square foot. ***There was not unanimous agreement on this issue.***

#### 15.56.080 Projecting and banner signs

(A)(4) Current code allows a maximum size of 25 square feet. Landmarks and Design Commission recommends a maximum of 15 square feet. For vertically oriented signs LDC also recommends limiting the amount of projection from the building to 2 feet with a maximum height of 6 feet. Wider than 2 ft extends over the sidewalk too far, especially in the CBD where sidewalks are 10 feet wide. The 6ft maximum height is more appropriate for two story buildings.

***There was not unanimous agreement among the Planning Commission on this issue.***

There was public comment that the two diagrams in Figure 15.56.080(A) are not to scale with each other.

#### 15.56.120 A Frame and Standing Signs

(E) Landmarks and Design Commission recommends limiting the size of A-frame signs to the current standard of 6 square feet per side in the CC and C-II zones. There is conflicting language in this section regarding standing signs, it states the maximum size as both 10 and 4 square feet.

***The Planning Commission recommends making the maximum the same for A-frame and standing signs.***

#### 15.56.130 Service Station Signs

(E) Staff recommendation to allow electronic signs for gas price display only. The City has recently received a number of inquiries to allow these types of signs. If allowed, these signs could not be used for any kind of advertising other than to display the current price of fuel.

***The Planning Commission was in agreement with this recommendation.***

#### 15.56.180 Temporary Special signs

R-H zone should be added to Sections A, B and D.

#### 15.56.180(E)

Delete "may be supported on those steel strain poles in 2 locations in the public right-of-way which were

constructed for that purpose”

15.56.180(F)

There was a suggestion to revise this section to deal with the potential of food carts.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:05pm

Respectfully submitted

Lance Bailey, Planning Supervisor