



PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES NOVEMBER 16, 2016

CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Skone called the meeting to order at 6:07 PM in the Council Chambers at 9611 SE 36th Street, Mercer Island, Washington.

ROLL CALL:

Chair Suzanne Skone, Vice Chair Richard Weinman and Commissioners Bryan Cairns, Daniel Hubbell, Lucia Pirzio-Biroli, Tiffin Goodman, and Jennifer Mechem were present. City staff was represented by Scott Greenberg, Development Services Director, Alison Van Gorp, Administrative Services Manager/Ombudsman, Evan Maxim, Planning Manager, and Robin Proebsting, Senior Planner.

APPEARANCES:

Anne Fox, 2981 74th Ave SE encouraged the Commission to consider codes that allow for a diversity of housing types and sizes.

Vickie Carper, 9829 SE 42nd PI expressed concern about the size of some new homes.

Scott Wormser, 9827 SE 42nd PI expressed concern about the size of new homes and their compatibility with the character of existing homes.

Phyllis Chang 2988 74th Ave SE said that she lives in one of the big houses, and that she understands the concerns voiced by neighbors.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Commissioner Hubbel made a motion to approve the October 19, 2016 minutes without changes. Commissioner Weinman seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Hubbel made a motion to approve the November 2, 2016 minutes without changes. Commissioner Weinman seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

REGULAR BUSINESS:

Agenda Item #1: ZTR16-004: Residential Design Standards: Community Outreach Approach

Evan Maxim, Planning Manager introduced the new materials that were added to the Commissioners' binders and reviewed upcoming items in the Planning Commission's schedule.

Alison Van Gorp, Administrative Services Manager/Ombudsman reviewed the scope of the Community Engagement Plan approved by the City Council.

The Commission suggested some groups through which older residents might be engaged, and discussed possible methods of reaching people.

The Commission agreed that there should be one all-Island postcard mailing in January, then asked that a second mailing be evaluated.

The Commission agreed to the proposed community meeting schedule, and would like staff to look into the possibility of having a meeting on Saturday February 25th.

The Commission suggested looking into holding the March 15 public hearing at Northwood School.

Agenda Item #2: ZTR16-004: Residential Design Standards: Review of Site Design and Subdivision regulations and possible regulatory adjustments

Evan Maxim, Planning Manager presented several slides about regulatory tools pertaining to site design—those regulations that would apply to a new single family home on an existing lot.

Commission asked for help from staff with finding a term that would capture the idea the Commission was trying to describe with “roofline”, “massing”, and “daylight plane”. Staff will follow up during the second round of review.

Mr. Maxim asked the Commission for input on the questions: 1) Does the City have the right regulatory tools now? 2) Are the regulatory tools set up to achieve the effect MI desires?

Evan Maxim reviewed current SFR regulations, including setbacks, minimum lot width and depth, minimum lot area, and building pad. He also reviewed items discussed at the last meeting, saved for tonight’s meeting: Minimum open space or yard requirement, which would be larger than the minimum setback, as well as requiring landscaping along frontage and sides of property, street presence (e.g. porches, windows facing the street, and landscaping limits), site design for large lots (those large enough to be subdivided), neighborhood averaging approach (applying standards using an average of neighboring lots’ attributes).

The Commission directed staff to look into the concept of a solar plane as a tool for regulating for second and/or third stories of residences.

The Commission agreed that they did not want to look into landscaping and open space requirements as a tool at this time.

The Commission expressed a desire for regulations to anticipate situations where people could circumvent the rules, and on lots large enough to be subdivided in the future to have houses sited on them in a way that minimizes impact to future development potential.

The Commission would like to continue to look at using “Community Benefit” tracts, and lot diversity requirements.

The Commission asked to set aside discussion of Planning Unit Developments for a future conversation on alternative housing.

The Commission expressed a desire to discuss “Preferred Practices” (as used in the Municipal Code) when the Commission discusses tree retention.

OTHER BUSINESS:

The Commission agreed to meet at 6pm on both November 30th and on December 7th.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND COMMUNICATIONS:

None.

NEXT MEETING:

The next Planning Commission meeting is scheduled for November 30, 2016 at 6:00 p.m. at Mercer Island City Hall.

ADJOURNMENT:

Chair Skone adjourned the meeting at 9:33 PM.