

**CITY OF SEQUIM
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
VIRTUAL MEETING
JULY 21, 2020**

1. CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL:

Present: Elizabeth A. Hall, Jeff Carter, Julianne Coonts, Karen Mahalick, Kathy Downer, Roger Wiseman

Absent: Olaf Protze

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: July 7, 2020

Carter stated that there was a typo in item 5 which reads "...we ADU regulations...", but should read "...while ADU regulations...".

Motion to approve the minutes of the July 7, 2020 Planning Commission meeting with typo corrected; moved by Mahalick and seconded by Coonts.

Carried Unanimously.

3. NEW BUSINESS

a. Manufactured Home Parks - Location Criteria

DCD Director Barry Berezowsky presented, stating that last year the Lavender Meadows application for 217 manufactured home (MFH) park sites was received; the Commission recommended approval to Council with concerns; neighbors also had concerns; on December 9th Council held a public hearing; on December 15th Council denied the project; the applicant's attorney requested that Council reconsider; on Feb. 10th Council reversed its decision and approved the project; in February Council passed a moratorium on new MFH parks; and, in March Council held a public hearing.

Berezowsky stated that on July 13th staff met with Council, to inquire whether the new council is interested in pursuing the agenda of the prior council; Council is interested in hearing from the Commission about MFH parks, and public and private streets; current MFH park code was written in 1997 and may be fine, may need a total rewrite, or something in between; per state law the City cannot prohibit a MFH on a lot where a site-built home is allowed; and, he is not sure whether that law extends to the possibility of placing restrictions on MFH parks.

Carter asked about the number of MFH parks built since 1997, and Berezowsky stated that Hendrickson's was probably the only one. Carter asked about the difference between MFHs and mobile homes, and Berezowsky stated he believes it was 1974 that the federal government changed the Housing Act to require all MFHs be called MFHs; there's no longer such a thing as a "mobile home"; construction standards were improved and MFHs

get L&I certification; the code says “mobile and manufactured home parks”, but by definition mobile homes no longer exist; and, you can still buy a “single-wide” manufactured home.

Mahalick asked about the public outcry regarding Lavender Meadows, and Berezowsky stated that neighbors did not want headlights to shine in their windows from an entrance off of Port Williams Road, and did not want their view to change. Mahalick stated that anyone can make such an argument, and asked, if we come up with location standards, where would we locate them?

Berezowsky stated that currently a MFH park can go in any residential zone; possible criteria could be related to proximity to primary roads, shopping, or lifestyle; Hendrickson’s park meets those type of standards; a floating zone could be created where if certain criteria are met, you could place a MFH park in the zone; additional districts could be created with specifications about the size of MFH park allowed; and, the Commission may be fine with what exists, may want to update regulations, or, may want to put MFH parks in strategic locations for reasons, and would need to come up with those reasons.

Carter stated that the Commission’s guiding directive is the Comprehensive Plan, and there’s not much direction other than to allow MFHs under the same regulations applied to site-built homes. Berezowsky stated that is consistent with changes in state law to treat MFHs like stick-built, but he does not know if that prohibits the City from doing something with MFH parks.

Coonts stated that MFHs work well with affordable housing options, asked if the Commission will be able to work toward diversified housing, and stated that there is a need for housing for workers, such as duplexes and small apartment complexes. Berezowsky stated that the Commission has discussed duplexes, triplexes, and fourplexes with a single-family character, that could be built in and around downtown to provide opportunity to perhaps own a condo; perhaps a housing authority or land trust could help develop housing oriented to workers; and, many people cannot establish equity so they move on. Coonts asked about fees, and Berezowsky stated that GFCs are based on cost of service, and building permits are cheaper for MFHs because fees for stick-built homes are based on valuation. Public Works Director David Garlington stated that a study compared fees in Sequim with the County, and they were close; the cost of a home is based on the market; and, when builders save money they don’t always reduce the price.

Downer asked if Lavender Meadows is zoned for MFHs, and if space for parking was required, and Berezowsky confirmed. Downer asked how private road issues affect MFH parks, and Berezowsky stated that the code allows private and/or public streets; MFH parks are often built so internal streets are private; and, in Hendrickson’s park people don’t drive in unless they live there or visit. Garlington stated that Lavender Meadows has private streets, and the City may want take over certain streets in the future so additional right-of-way was requested. Downer stated that this would be a good time to have MFH living in a separate zone, or in one zone, instead of in all zones. Berezowsky stated that areas could be carved out to allow for MFH parks in addition to regular housing, but he’s

not sure about creating a zone that is only for MFHs. Mahalick stated that some zoning areas along Washington with opportunity for foot traffic and shopping may be a good fit.

Berezowsky stated that staff could look for conceptual areas and return with findings. Carter asked, do we want to limit it to MFH parks, or can it also be townhomes, apartment buildings, etc., so the multiplicity of housing types in the Comprehensive Plan are there? Berezowsky stated that direction from Council is to look at MFH regulations, but the Commission could include a recommendation to look at a broader spectrum of housing types.

Motion to task staff with coming up with concept areas considered walkable to services and return to the Commission at their earliest convenience; moved by Mahalick and seconded by Hall.

Carried Unanimously.

Berezowsky stated that staff could bring something back by the second meeting in August. Carter asked about language in the code regarding private and public streets, and Berezowsky stated that it could need revision. Carter stated that the code says MFH park means “real property under single ownership”; single ownership usually refers to a person, not a corporation; and, MFH parks are usually corporate entities.

b. Zoning - Allowed Uses on Ground Level in Downtown Zones

Berezowsky stated that the zoning code requires, in DMU, DMU-1 and DMU-2, that for any multifamily structure the developer must build commercial space on the ground floor; it is an unnecessary cost when there's no demand for commercial space; many storefronts are vacant and with COVID we may lose more businesses; and, staff recommends to request Council to remove that requirement and allow multifamily residential in the downtown core, except along Washington Street, without providing commercial space on the ground floor. There was consensus to add this topic to unfinished business for staff to come back with a proposed amendment.

c. Streets - Public and Private

Garlington stated that private and public streets have been discussed in the context of MFH parks; in the future if private streets connect to other grid patterns there is potential to turn them into public streets; the concept of connectivity is in the Comprehensive Plan and Transportation Plan; a grid or modified grid gives more connectivity and has value in emergencies; the code allows private streets only in MFH parks and gated communities; many private streets were built before code limited private streets to those two instances; some HOAs want the City to take over private streets to get cleaning and snow removal services; many subdivisions were designed with cul-de-sacs and dead ends; when streets do not contribute to the overall City network or greater community he's less inclined to want to place the cost of maintenance and rebuilding on the City; many private streets were not well-built, although code requires that they be built to City standards; there is a more robust inspection program now; he recommends revising code to include criteria for when a street should be public, and when it should be private; when it provides no benefit

to the rest of the community, that would be a private street criteria; public notification is important so that buyers are aware; laws requiring HOAs to have reserve funds are often ignored; the City has plowed private streets in emergencies; and, while some HOAs have snow removal firms or have their own equipment, a number do not.

Downer stated that she lives on a private road, there is a fund for streets and a contract for snow removal, but a couple years ago they did not have a snow removal and there was heavy snow. Hall asked how access to underground utilities is handled, and Garlington stated that there are easements. Carter asked what percentage of streets are private, and Garlington stated that about 25% are. Carter asked whether, when a private street turns public, is it just money out, or is it also money in. Garlington stated that Council made a commitment to take over private streets in Eagle Crest; HOA and development lawyers got involved; construction is not up to par so the City said that if certain things are done, the City would take over the streets; and, those streets may not receive repair for several years but at that point the costs will be borne by the City.

Garlington stated that perhaps there should be more instances of private streets than code allows and that staff could come up with potential criteria, or, if the Commission believes the code is fine, staff will leave it alone. Mahalick stated that there was a case where a subdivision didn't want to give access through private streets to land to be developed; unless there is some delineating factor, anyone with a lot that has to go through a private area is locked out; and, it is a good idea to look at criteria. Consensus was expressed by the Commission. Garlington stated he would work on potential criteria and return in two months. Carter asked Hasbrouck to add it to unfinished business.

4. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

a. Planning Commission By-Laws and Rules of Procedure

Hasbrouck stated that in January the Commission asked for changes to the document, and that several sections did not agree with Sequim Municipal Code. Carter stated that there were issues he wanted to discuss later. Hasbrouck described the proposed changes. Downer asked about the number of Commissioners that can live outside of City limits, and Hasbrouck stated that per code three can live outside if within the County portion of the school district. Downer asked, do you want it to be three...only one vote away from the majority? Hasbrouck stated that proposed changes would align the document with the code, and anything beyond would need to go to Council. Downer asked if anyone had talked about it, and Berezowsky stated that for a number of years the City was unable to fill seats, so Council decided to expand it, not only to fill seats but also to get more regional perspective.

Motion to amend, as corrected, the Planning Commission By-Laws and Rules of Procedure; moved by Downer and seconded by Mahalick.

Carried Unanimously.

Carter stated that he would like discuss aligning Commission rules more with Council rules and clarifying procedures. Hasbrouck stated that it would be convenient for the

clerks if rules were similar, or the same, for both groups. Mahalick asked for a copy of the Council rules to be included with the next agenda. There was consensus to include the topic in “unfinished business”.

5. DIRECTOR’S REPORT

Berezowsky stated that, regarding COVID, plans for Phase 3 include working remotely; building occupancy cannot be more than 50%; you cannot have a group of more than 10 in Phase 3; remote meetings will get smoother, and probably be more comfortable than wearing a mask; precautions include plexiglass barriers for Finance and Police, sanitation stations, checking temperature and logging in when entering the building, and wearing masks; DCD has worked with customers virtually for over three months; meetings will be by appointment; and, the world is changing and probably will never be quite as it was before January.

Regarding the MAT clinic, Berezowsky stated that S.O.S. and Parkwood Mobile Home Park requested a temporary restraining order and injunction against further progress; the judge denied their request and dismissed the case; and, appeals will go to a Hearing Examiner and may end up in Superior Court under LUPA.

Berezowsky stated that development continues to move forward; DCD accepts applications and issues permits electronically; and, customers adapted quickly; upcoming topics for the Planning Commission include code revisions, grading ordinance, housing options, and temporary encampments.

6. GOOD OF THE ORDER

Carter thanked Berezowsky, Hasbrouck, and Martin for their work.

7. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn; moved by Hall and seconded by Downer, at 7:47 pm.
Carried Unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,



Alisa Hasbrouck
Secretary to the Planning Commission



Jeff Carter
Chair

Minutes approved at a regular Planning Commission meeting on August 4, 2020.