



PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES DECEMBER 7, 2016

CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Skone called the meeting to order at 6:02 PM in the Council Chambers at 9611 SE 36th Street, Mercer Island, Washington.

ROLL CALL:

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

APPEARANCES:

Carolyn Boatman, 3201 74th Ave SE, provided comment regarding potential policy goals for tree retention regulations.

Mark Coen, 3220 73rd Ave SE, spoke regarding a recent Washington Court of Appeals case pertaining to tree roots that cross property lines, as well as work done by the City of Bellevue to track and monitor tree canopy.

Sue Stewart, 3205 84th Ave SE, spoke about tree loss on the Coval property and provided suggestions for future tree retention standards.

Lynn Hagerman, 3058 61st Ave SE, spoke to the importance of trees for public health, suggested that there be a study to track tree canopy over time, and expressed concern about the Proctor property.

Dan Grausz, 3215 74th PI SE, expressed concern about the current code standards pertaining to trees, and voiced a desire for tree retention to be prioritized during construction, plus to establish consequences for unauthorized tree removal.

Ira Appleman, 9039 E Shorewood Dr, spoke to the history of development and tree loss on Mercer Island.

Phyllis Chang, 2988 74th Ave SE, spoke about her experience with removing trees on her property, and noted the need for oversight for developers to ensure trees designated for retention are adequately protected during construction activities.

REGULAR BUSINESS:

Agenda Item #1: Residential Design Standards: Review of Tree Retention and permit regulations and possible regulatory adjustments

Scott Greenberg noted that he and Evan met with about 20 residents Tuesday (Dec. 6, 2016) morning about tree retention, the development review process, and the Planning Commission's process.

Evan Maxim introduced new materials added to the Planning Commissioners' binders, and presented an overview of the meetings' topics, which included: 1) obtaining guidance from the Planning Commission on the problem statement to be addressed by code changes, 2) introducing the idea of requiring high quality landscaping for new single family homes, 3) introducing potential regulatory tools for inclusion in future code, and 4) obtaining confirmation on a purpose statement for future code.

The Commission asked some clarifying questions about the scope of the code revision.

The Commission reviewed the draft purpose statement contained in the staff memo to the Commission, and offered feedback to staff.

The Commission reviewed the elements of the problem statement as listed in the staff presentation, and discussed possible changes to the parameters of which trees the code protects, as well as code changes to incentivize tree retention and protection.

The Commission discussed the idea of high quality landscaping and the possibility of substituting that for performance standards, and discussing quality and continuity of trees and tree cover and also providing definitions.

OTHER BUSINESS:

Evan Maxim went over the next steps for the Planning Commission's review of the Residential Development Standards, which include meetings on Dec. 12, 2016 for a first review of process, and Jan. 4, 2017 for the start of the second review of project topics.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND COMMUNICATIONS:

None.

NEXT MEETING:

The next Planning Commission meeting is scheduled for December 12, 2016 at 6:00 p.m. at Mercer Island City Hall.

ADJOURNMENT: Chair Skone adjourned the meeting at 7:52pm.