



PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES JULY 20, 2016

CALL TO ORDER:

Vice-Chair Weinman called the regular meeting to order at 7:01 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, Tiffin Goodman, Jennifer Mechem and Lucia Pirzio-Biroli were present. Commissioner Daniel Hubbell was absent. City staff was represented by Scott Greenberg, Development Services Director, Christina Schuck, Assistant City Attorney, Alison Van Gorp, Administrative Services Manager/Ombudsman, Evan Maxim, Planning Manager and Will Piro, Planner.

APPEARANCES:

Tom Acker, 2427 84th Ave SE, addressed the Commission regarding construction in the Town Center and residential neighborhoods, and enforcement of codes and agreements.

Molly Mahoney, 3024 60th Ave. SE, spoke about a large house in the East Seattle neighborhood; in particular how the character of the neighborhood is being ruined.

Cheryl Schumacher, 3040 60th Ave SE, lives across from the street from the new building that Molly Mahoney discussed and shares the same concerns.

Lynn Hagerman, 3058 61st Ave. SE, lives across the street from the Proctor Land Trust development. She was concerned about the combination of 5 parcels to allow the development, a soil removal deviation, notices sent out during the winter holidays in legal speak, and the need for time constraints for construction projects.

Ka Anderson, 6004 SE 32nd St, addressed the Commission regarding single family development.

Carolyn Boatsman, 3201 74th Ave. SE, applauded the City Council for supporting residents' requests to review residential development standards and providing the staff to do the work. She requested that the Planning Commission add review of deviations for impervious surface and fence height to the scope of work. Deviations are too easy to get. The proposed code should allow flexibility in unusual situations without compromising the intent of the code.

Steve Marshall, Emmanuel Lutheran Church, addressed the Commission on religious institutions codes. He recommended treating religious institutions similar to schools. A rectory is low income housing, allowing the religious leader to live on Mercer Island.

Hunt Priest, Emmanuel Lutheran Church, had to move 4 times due to increasing rents. There is a community value to religious institutions.

Alan Reed Sr., Emmanuel Lutheran Church, supported the proposed framework for church zoning.

Marianne Bond, 3014 60th Ave. SE, discussed impacts of a new house across from her house, especially when investors build the house and don't live there.

MINUTES:

Commissioner Goodman moved to approve the minutes from July 6, 2016. Commissioner Pirzio-Biroli seconded the motion. The minutes were unanimously approved (6-0).

REGULAR BUSINESS:

Agenda Item #1: Public Hearing on ZTR16-003 Zoning Code Text Amendment related to Comprehensive Plan amendment procedures

Scott Greenberg, Development Services Director presented the proposed code text amendment. He explained that the proposed process would split the Comprehensive Plan amendment process into two phases: a preliminary docket and a final docket. Notification of the annual amendment cycle would be disseminated by September 1 and the deadline for proposing amendment requests would be October 1. The Planning Commission would review the preliminary docket of all amendment requests and make a recommendation to City Council on a final docket of amendments to be considered the following calendar year. The City Council would consider the Planning Commission's recommendation at the same time as consideration of the City's budget, to better align planning resource needs with the City's budget.

Vice-Chair Weinman opened the public hearing at 7:45 pm.

Tom Acker, 2427 84th Ave SE, said that the Comprehensive Plan needs to be handled with care as it has a significant impact across other city planning and development related actions. Mercer Island is a special place, please do the right thing to preserve it for generations to come.

Lynn Hagerman, 3058 61st Ave SE, asked the Commission to zone for certain types of construction in certain areas to protect neighborhoods.

Vice-Chair Weinman closed the public hearing at 7:51 pm.

The Commission discussed the proposed amendments. Commissioner Pirzio-Biroli asked how conflicts between proposed amendments and the existing Plan would be addressed. Mr. Greenberg stated that staff would identify any conflicts in the staff report and the Commission would decide how to act.

Vice Chair Weinman found the decision criteria to be confusing – do all criteria need to be met or just one? Mr. Greenberg said that criteria b and d should apply to all amendments and will make that change.

Commissioner Goodman moved to recommend that the City Council approve the request for an amendment to Mercer Island City Code (MICC) Title 19, as detailed in Exhibit 1, provided the proposal shall be modified as discussed 19.15.020(G) – (decision criteria). The motion was seconded by Commissioner Mechem. The motion passed unanimously.

Chair Skone left the meeting at 8:02 pm.

Agenda Item #2: ZTR16-004: Zoning Code Text Amendment related to single-family residential development standards

Evan Maxim, Planning Manager presented the proposed scope of work. He suggested the Commission use a policy-based approach to provide a framework for consideration and evaluation of options for addressing issues. Alison Van Gorp described the proposed public engagement plan.

Suggestions from the Commission included expanding the schedule an extra month, maybe two; have presentations at small groups; consider conflicts with major school events (curriculum nights, etc.); give Commissioners the option to attend the small group presentations, and have some study sessions without public comment.

The Commission asked to consider construction impacts (noise, trucks, etc.) and review processes as part of the scope of work.

Agenda Item #3: Planning Commission Bylaws

Will Piro, Planner presented the proposed Planning Commission bylaws. Commissioner Mechem moved to approve the bylaws as written with the possible addition of an additional section on subcommittees based on staff research. Commissioner Pirzio-Biroli seconded the motion. The bylaws were unanimously approved (5-0).

STAFF COMMENTS:

None.

PLANNED ABSENCES FOR FUTURE MEETINGS:

Commissioner Skone will be absent on August 3, 2016. Commissioner Jennifer Mechem will be absent on August 17, 2016.

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND COMMUNICATIONS:

None.

NEXT MEETING:

The next Planning Commission meeting is scheduled for August 3, 2016 at 7:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT:

Vice-Chair Weinman adjourned the meeting at 10:14 PM.