

Planning Commission
March 19, 2007

Chairperson Cramer called the meeting to order at 7:05 PM.

The following members were present: Bill Dorn, Cindy Maas, James Montgomery, and Bridgett McNassar. Gordon Liebel was absent. Also in attendance were City Administrator Dave Schmidt and Mayor Pat Johnson.

Administrator Schmidt stated Mark Joplin has resigned from the planning commission due to a different job status.

Cramer stated she had one content change on the last page regarding the e-mail from Council member Boyle Barrett and the letter should state "we sent". Montgomery moved to approve the minutes of the March 5, 2007 commission meeting as corrected. Maas seconded the motion and the motion carried.

Update on City Planner Position:

Administrator Schmidt stated Michael Clugston called the Mayor and himself on Friday and declined the job. He took a job with the City of Edmonds. At this time, what we are looking at is going back and looking at the other is to go back to the pool of applicants that were interviewed and determine whether one of them would be acceptable under the planner status or re-advertise the job. This leads us into introducing Ed Davis, which the Mayor is going to do. One thing Mr. Davis has agreed to do as a consultant is stay on with us for 12 months and help train the person that is coming in so the experience isn't as critical as what it would have been for someone to come in and grab the reins. Mayor Johnson stated she has known Mr. Davis for a couple years. They both serve on the Rails-to-Trails board together so he is very passionate about trails and she knows this is something that the planning commission is also concerned about. Over the course of conversation she found out Ed was a planner and has been working part time for the City of Pacific. Mr. Davis stated he has worked with Hillier West one of Buckley's former planners. He is a pinch hitter; he has 40 years experience in planning. He will be available here for the City a day or two a week or a maximum of three days a week for 4 to 6 hours a day. When the city hires a planner, what Mr. Davis will be is that planners mentor. The new planner would continue to work on several items and Mr. Davis would still be here to be a resource to the city. Cramer asked how he sees his role as working with the planning commission. Mr. Davis stated as a resource person. If you have questions or concerns he can help find the answers. Administrator Schmidt stated Mr. Davis is going to help the planning commission with the subdivision regulations. Maas asked if we should e-mail Davis if we have questions. Mayor Johnson stated everything should be funneled through Devon.

Review/Edit Subdivision Regulations:

Cramer stated the first thing that needs to be done in the streets and alleys is changing the heading to meet what is in the comprehensive plan. They will be as follows: 18.40 Major (principal) arterials; 18.41 Minor (secondary) arterials; 18.42 Collector streets; 18.44

Local access streets; 18.45 Private access and 18.46 Alleys. Cramer asked where do we want to start, we have Dave's version which was to delete and cross out most of what we have in the streets and simply reference what is in the transportation element. Montgomery stated that is fine, but we talked about was changing some of the standards and actually amending the comprehensive plan to reflect that. Maas stated she cannot remember that we talked about that. Cramer stated that is why we went out and measured streets. Mayor Johnson asked why the commission wanted to change them. Cramer stated depending on the neighborhood, they looked at making the street widths smaller in terms of safety. Montgomery stated to also make the planting strip wider so you could plant a tree with a larger diameter so it would protect the infrastructure. Maas stated at the time we did the subdivision regulations regarding the streets, we didn't realize we already had standards in place. Montgomery stated that is not necessarily true. Maas stated she reviewed all the standards and most of the information is the same as we have in the subdivision regulations, however, there were a few differences, so maybe we should review each standard and see what the differences are. Mr. Davis stated a lot of the information in the subdivision regulations, should actually be in the public works design and construction standards that the public works committee should be working on. It is much easier to change things in those standards rather than in the subdivision regulations or the comprehensive plan. He appreciates the commission wanting to aesthetically improve the looks of the streets throughout the city but they have to work in a manner which provides you the basis in which when the developer comes in they know this is the adopted standard they have to go by. Mayor Johnson stated one thing the planning commission needs to look at is not make things so difficult that we can't fix the mistake. Montgomery stated they talked about that at the last meeting with Dave because right now we have street standards in three different places. They don't necessarily all have to be in the same place but they all need to be the same. Mr. Davis stated it appears you are trying to invent the wheel, when you already have a wheel. Montgomery stated the idea was we thought the standards in the transportation element were good, but they were not exactly what we want. Mayor Johnson stated maybe what the best thing to do will be having the street, sidewalk committee look at it. What you can do is send a message back to the Council that says we need the streets committee to come up with what they want for street widths, but send it along with the planning commissions recommendations and have someone from the planning commission be the liaison. Mr. Davis stated first of all the planning commission needs to know what the adopted public works standards are and then look at the comprehensive plan and then see what the planning commission wants and see where the changes need to be made. Dorn stated then you just reference the public work standards. Cramer stated as long as the standards reflect what we want, that is what we need to make sure. Maas asked if the current public works match the current comprehensive plan. Cramer stated that is what we need to look at. Mr. Davis stated he would go through the public works standards and have copies made of the issues that are specific to what the planning commission is looking at. Devon stated she would make the copies and mail them to the commission as soon as Mr. Davis lets her know what copies to make. Montgomery stated these subdivision regulations are for residential only. Mr. Davis stated where does that say that? Cramer stated it was always the intention of the planning commission that we were only working on the residential subdivision regulations. There was a brief discussion about amenities

to include in the subdivision regulations. Mr. Davis stated when you have the smaller lots you need park amenities because when you don't have the big back yards you have to have some place for the children to play. There are no big back yards in developer's minds anymore because they are trying to get maximum yield out of the land they investing big money in. So if you can make the developer put in amenities that he knows he is going to profit by because he can sell the houses for more money then it is a win for the developer and a win for the city but if all you do is put regulations on the developer that makes him lose money and he hasn't got amenities. Putting in a trail along residential developments has become a proven fact that it increases the values of the homes by 15%18%. Mr. Davis stated he would go through the Design and Construction Standards and the subdivision regulations and have copies made and get them to the planning commission prior to the next meeting. Cramer stated regarding the alleys, we have never really decided what we want or don't want with alleys. Mayor Johnson gave her opinion on alleys. She stated there is a place for alleys and it gives the developer more flexibility for the smaller lots. Mr. Davis stated there are a lot of good things with alleys. There are a couple new developments in Sumner that have alleys and it was done very well, he suggested that everyone drive down there an take a look at them. Cramer stated we will review streets and alleys again at the next meeting after we get the additional information from Ed.

Update on Affordable Housing Workshops:

Maas gave an update to the commission about what she learned at the affordable housing workshop. The very low income social security has an income of \$39,500 per year and they can only afford rent of \$328 per month. The moderate income is \$45,000-\$64,000 and the most they could be able to afford is to buy a house for \$174,000. Affordable housing only does well in condominiums and multi-family. At the present time Buckley should have 128-133 affordable income housing. In a couple months, those numbers will be changed to meet new demands. The cities will be told by the PCRC how many affordable income houses we should have, it will be mandatory but there is nothing clear about the consequences if you don't meet that. There will be fewer allocations in the rural areas. The reason why housing is so expensive is because the cost of land has risen. One suggestion is to lower the impact fees. Another reason why it is so expensive is because the population is moving south. We need to find solutions for people that have lived here all there lives, not necessarily the immigrants that are coming in. The banking community can get on board. The county is at fault for allowing building outside the growth area at lower restrictions and when taking in by the cities it is costing too much to improve. The cost of building materials has risen. The municipalities take too long to facilitate permits which drive the cost of the home up because the builder/developer doesn't absorb that. There was a suggestion to allow housing to be two stories plus, even in flag lots. Adjust the setback amounts. One thing Orcas Island is doing is the city contacts a non-profit organization. The developer donates a piece a land that goes into a land bank and the builder promises to build low income housing with many of the restrictions removed. After the home is purchased, an stipulation can be put on the home never allowing that house to be made a profit off of. Some other ideas were to let the county take more burden. More accountability within the county. Reduce the requirements for curbs, gutters and sidewalks and allow the municipalities to extend their

GMA faster. Tie transportation, housing and jobs together. Delay the impact fees until the project is complete. Look into cottage housing. If people can't find affordable housing, they should move like they did in the old days. It is not the cities responsibility to make low income peoples problems go away. Dorn asked if they counted mobile homes as affordability. Maas stated they didn't address mobile homes. Dorn stated what Enumclaw allows is on a single large lot where there is already a home on; you can build a small home, no bigger than 800 square feet as long as it meets the setbacks. You are able to use the existing sewer and water hook ups, this would be affordable housing. Mayor Johnson stated we need to have the mechanism in place to encourage the developers to build some smaller homes intermingled in their developments.

Update on Stormwater Detention Workgroup:

Dorn stated all three of the committee members know what we want. He doesn't know who is going to write what we want and we think in the next three meetings, we should have it all summed up. The committee feels the way it should be written is fairly flexible. The other question they have is ownership of the ponds, maybe the regulations should be written with both and then have that addressed at a later date. If the detention ponds are owned by the city, and it is incorporated with the trail, it could then become a small park if and when the city gets a storm water treatment facility. Cramer stated she felt it would be beneficial for Ed to provide information regarding liability issues from what he knows about Pacific. Mr. Davis stated in Pacific, there is a lot larger staff and therefore the city owns all the storm water ponds in the residential areas. They have six foot fences around all the detention ponds because of the liability. Mr. Davis stated when we get a finished product, we need to have it looked at by the City Attorney.

With nothing further the meeting was adjourned at 9:10 PM.

The next meeting will be April 2, 2007 at 7:00 PM.

Lisa Cramer, Chairperson