

City of Hood River
Planning Commission
Public Meeting
October 19, 2020

Conducted via Zoom
Videoconference

5:30 p.m.

MINUTES

Meeting went live on Zoom at 5:31pm

I. CALL TO ORDER: Chair Arthur Babitz called the meeting to order at 5:31

PRESENT: Commissioners Arthur Babitz (Chair), Mark Frost, Bill Irving, Sue Powers, Tina Lassen, Megan Ramey

ABSENT: None.

STAFF: Planning Director Dustin Nilsen, Associate Planner Jennifer Kaden, GIS Analyst Jonathan Skloven-Gill

II. PLANNING DIRECTOR'S UPDATE:

Director Dustin Nilsen provided an update on housing items that were included in the 2020 work plan: SERA Architects is developing draft housing code provisions for review including duplex, triplex, quads, housing clusters & cottage standards with clear & objective standards.

Babitz asked about the parameters set by Council; Nilsen responded that they asked for duplex standards in the R-1 zone in line with HB 2001 which applies to cities with population 10,000 and more. It's not in the housing needs analysis but will likely be required by the state in the not too distant future. Babitz asked about the timing of a draft; Nilsen responded as soon as possible but no date certain.

Irving asked about items the PC has discussed previously as part of the Westside Concept Plan such as the R-1 lot size. Nilsen responded that other items are possible and fit under the HNA. Nilsen hopes to schedule discussions within about a month.

Babitz asked about upcoming quasi-judicial items; Nilsen responded there are none scheduled.

Irving asked why there haven't been legislative items on the agenda since March and asked when those will resume. Nilsen responded that there was a legislative item discussed in June regarding parking and that staff and consultants are working on items that and will be coming soon. Nilsen explained other items the Planning Department is working on including the TSP amendment and Rand Road development. Babitz noted that there is no staff dedicated to housing. Nilsen explained the impact on workload related to reduction of staff; operational pivots due to Covid-19; and a heavy current planning load. Babitz suggested the question be posed to Council if the pace of work on housing issues is acceptable and if not, how can it be improved. Irving noted his frustration with getting code updates done and agreed some communication to Council is warranted. Babitz suggested it's not reasonable to expect change with only 3 staff people.

Ramey asked about getting to the “colors on the map” from the Westside Concept Plan (zone changes). If we did colors on the map, the TSP amendment, and middle housing, that would be significant. Nilsen said “colors on the map” is shelved and the focus has turned to missing middle housing.

Frost asked about some other discussions about building height and definition of dwelling – will those be covered by missing middle housing. Nilsen responded that there will be some overlap.

Lassen asked about dates for items such as TSP amendment. Nilsen said the TSP includes work done by consultants and other departments which affect timing. Unpredicted quasi-judicial applications also affect timing. Commissioners continued discussion about how to get some of the priority legislative work done. Irving recommended getting back to one legislative meeting a month and one quasi-judicial meeting a month in order to make progress. Lassen agreed.

Babitz asked about dedicating planning staff to long-range, legislative projects. Irving said a schedule needs to accompany that. Nilsen explained that the work product isn’t ready for review yet on the TSP and the housing code whereas the Planning Commission was able to stick to a schedule on the Westside Concept Plan because they were reviewing a completed work product from a consultant.

Irving asked existing development standards and lot sizes are appropriate. Nilsen explained that SERA Architects is working on what each housing type looks like on a 5,000 sf lot. Irving asked about development the west side that is zoned for 7,000 sf lots. There was additional discussion between commissioners and Nilsen about the forthcoming work product from SERA Architects. Nilsen shared a sample table of standards for cluster housing. Nilsen also shared an example of a modified form-based standard. Nilsen expects aspects of the proposal to draw from the HNA, Westside Concept Plan, and state statute. In sum, these projects are in the works so they don’t need to be added to the work plan items for 2021.

Irving suggested a conversation about what housing types the community is interested in. Irving asked for a roadmap for the missing middle housing project. Babitz suggested the conversation transition to the next agenda item.

III. PRIORITY CITY PROJECT IDEAS for 2021

Irving suggested the request to Council is to allocate more resources for housing code updates. Babitz suggested we have a development department instead of a planning department and more resources are needed for planning. The lack of progress on the Westside Concept Plan Report reflects that. Nilsen suggested there is a need to get the code to a place where the development process is more straight forward. Babitz responded that we need more resources to get the code to that place.

Powers suggested the communication to Council include a request for a timeline for the SERA Architects project. Irving suggested: 1) dedicate alternate meetings to legislative matters; 2) establish a schedule for legislative items; and 3) adequately staff the planning department to support long-range planning. Powers questioned whether that was the PC role – to recommend staffing levels. Babitz explained the work plan feeds into the budget process. Irving suggested development of a legislative calendar is a project to add to the list.

Commissioners discussed the desire to finish projects on the 2020 list. Irving suggested administrative development applications could be sent to a contractor.

Nilsen asked what items they want on 12 legislative meetings. Lassen said the TSP. Irving suggested identifying desired housing types. Babitz suggested several meetings on the TSP – at least one on vehicles and one on bike/ped. Frost asked about the miscellaneous items previously discussed. Nilsen said the omnibus code update has been put to rest. Nilsen asked about Henderson Creek. Frost about adding Henderson Creek as a Goal 5 resource. Nilsen said the trail will be in the TSP amendment but a an implementation strategy needs to be developed.

(6:45) Irving listed items from Housing Strategy 1: lot sizes, colors on the map. There was discussion about which is first – the colors or the elements in the colors. Nilsen agreed the work should be on what the ‘colors’ mean – e.g. what is allowed in each zone. Irving and others suggested the ‘colors’ are a lower priority.

Babitz asked about working from a draft list of projects and coming back to discuss at another meeting.

Irving offered the items in the HNA Strategy 1 list:

- 1.1 rezone land for higher density SFD and MF – not done
- 1.2 townhouses - done
- 1.3 & 1.4 – reduce lot sizes – have not addressed
- 1.5 Revise PUD – not now; PC suggested shuffling to the bottom of the list
- 1.6 Develop Cottage Code – included in SERA Architect work
- 1.7 Revise ADU ordinance – done
- 1.8 Revise manufactured home park standards – not discussed
- 1.9 Revise building height methodology on sloped sites – Irving wants to discuss
- 1.10 Evaluate increasing building height allowance for MF housing in C-2 – Not yet addressed

Irving suggested for list of meetings – examining how building height is measured. Ramey agreed and added viewshed preservation. Irving also suggested evaluating development standards by zone.

Nilsen said he could prepare a list from this discussion for review and discussion again on November 2nd.

Ramey asked about the Cascade work would start soon and asked for an explanation. Nilsen explained he referenced the Rand Road property. Ramey listed her other items of interest: safe routes to schools and understands ODOT will likely award a planning grant; the Heights Urban Renewal plan and the relationship to PC; parking minimums; inclusionary zoning. Babitz suggested a discussion about parking philosophy.

Lassen is the PC liason on urban renewal and will update the PC about the heights project when it gets going. Babitz discussed the history of the Urban Renewal Advisory Committee and the overlap with PC duties. Babitz suggested a need to clarify roles of the two.

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

(approx. 7:20 pm) Lassen asked about the legal requirement to approve minutes. Babitz said minutes are required but statute only requires limited information such as motions and actions taken. Lassen requested going forward that the minutes from each meeting are included on the following agenda. Babitz suggested we follow ORS 192 to include only required items. Lassen suggested hiring an outside service to type minutes at meetings. Babitz is ok with omitting that level of detail. Powers desires

something in between. Price asked if it could be deadline driven. Nilsen mentioned the audio recordings are posted quickly and explained that the Planning Department assistant role is not staffed currently. Babitz said the minutes are needed as an index of the audio. Frost also liked the idea of simpler minutes. Ramey asked for time stamps in the minutes. Commissioners discussed how this is reflective of the planning department resources and the need to communicate the issue to City Council.

MOTION: Powers made a motion to accept the minutes prepared for 1/22/2019; 2/19/2019; 3/18/2019; 4/1/2019; 4/15/2019; 5/20/2019; 6/3/2019; 6/17/2019. Frost seconded the motion. Babitz pointed out some areas where notes were included and need to be removed. Commissioners agreed. Motion passed 7-0 with a request for minor edits.

Babitz requested that the November 2 meeting agenda include a discussion of officers.

V. ADJOURN

Babitz adjourned the hearing at **7:31 p.m.**

 August 11, 2021

Mark Frost, Chair Date

 August 11th, 2021

Dustin Nilsen, Planning Director Date (Approved)