

MINUTES

I. **CALL TO ORDER:** Acting Chair Arthur Babitz called the meeting to order at 5:34 p.m.

PRESENT: Commissioners Arthur Babitz (Chair), Mark Frost, Sue Powers, Erika Price, Megan Ramey

ABSENT: Commissioners Bill Irving, Tina Lassen

STAFF: Planning Director Dustin Nilsen, Senior Planner Kevin Liburdy, Associate Planner Jennifer Kaden, Temporary Planning Assistant, Judy Christensen

II. **PLANNING DIRECTOR'S UPDATE:**

Planning Director Dustin Nilsen asked to present last.

III. **PUBLIC HEARINGS:**

A. **FILE NO.: 2019-22: Verizon Wireless - continuation of hearing from October 7, 2019.**

Chair Arthur Babitz opened the hearing, described the proposal, read the procedural script and asked the commissioners to disclose any ex-parte, bias or conflict of interest. No ex-parte contact, bias or conflict of interest were disclosed. Commissioner Ericka Price reviewed the record and is willing to participate. Commissioner Megan Ramey was absent from the hearing on October 7 but is prepared to participate. Babitz asked if any audience members would like to question any commissioner on any disclosure, bias, ex-parte, or conflict of interest. There were none. Babitz asked if any commissioner would like to make a motion to disqualify any other commissioner. There were none.

STAFF REPORT: Senior Planner Kevin Liburdy explained that, during the hearing on October 7, 2019, a motion was made to approve the application subject to elimination of the screening wall around the nine antennas as long as the antennas do not exceed the height approved in the original Site Plan permit of 56 feet, 5 inches. That motion was tabled until today. The record currently is closed and the commission can vote on the motion to approve.

Chair Babitz reminded the audience that the motion was tabled to allow the applicant to the chance to review the details of their project and determine if they should resubmit the application or change it in some way. The commission can ask the applicant if he wants to ask the commission to re-open the hearing so that he can make a change.

Babitz asked the applicant if he wished to re-open the record to submit additional testimony. Verizon consultant Patrick Evans asked for brief recess to consult with the Planning Department staff. Recess approved at 5:42 p.m. Babitz called the hearing back in order at 5:45 p.m.

Babitz explained that the applicant is not asking the commission to re-open the record and that there is a motion on the floor. Babitz asked staff to repeat the motion and Liburdy did so.

Commissioner Frost asked if the existing antennas are shorter or taller than the existing screening cylinders. Staff confirmed that 56 feet 5 inches is the height of the existing screening cylinders.

Commissioner Price asked if the motion to approve is based on integral screening of panel antennas. Staff confirmed that there is no finding suggesting panel antennas are considered integral screens.

Babitz called for any further discussion. There was none.

MOTION: Babitz called the question. The motion passed on a vote of 5 Yays, 0 Nays.

B. FILE NO.: 2018-17 – Westside Area Concept Plan Report, Zoning, and Comprehensive Plan Amendments – continuation of hearing from October 21, 2019.

Babitz opened the hearing, read the procedural script and asked the commissioners to disclose any ex-parte, bias or conflict of interest. There were none.

Babitz explained the Commission tabled the hearing on the Parks and Open Space Framework at the October 21st Planning Commission meeting to allow time for Commissioner Tina Lassen to make the changes to the recommendation memorandum originally drafted by Staff.

STAFF REPORT: Liburdy said the commission discussed the recommendations for the Westside Plan's Parks and Open Space Framework on October 21. The commission decided note to use the October 7 memorandum that was prepared by staff to explain the commission's recommendations to the city council. Commissioner Lassen drafted changes to the memo and staff updated formatting. The commission then recommended approval of Commissioner Lassen's revisions and tabled the hearing on October 21. Staff placed the issue back on this evening's agenda to provide an opportunity for the commission to review the revised memorandum and deliberate if necessary.

After a brief discussion between commissioners, Babitz explained that the commission had already taken testimony on the matter and the floor was open for deliberation. Babitz asked commissioners for comments. There were none.

Babitz noted the memorandum states that the commission supports an increase in SDCs rates to acquire land, and he asked if this was discussed. Commissioners Ramey and Frost did not recall. Babitz explained he does not support this because increases in SDC rates are in direct conflict with affordable housing and it is City Council's responsibility to decide between funding parks and keeping SDCs rates under control.

Commissioner Price noted that the Parks Director said the District is ratcheting up SDCs and there is a maximum cap, but the funds are not expected to be sufficient for needed land acquisition. Babitz thinks the argument is whether the SDCs are adequate for additional park needs resulting from additional development, and he thinks that's debatable. He does not think the commission's recommendation is appropriate given the priority of housing affordability.

Commissioner Frost thinks Hood River's property tax rates are low compared to other cities, and he thought the memo was saying that the commission supports the District's effort catch up with more appropriate funding for parks. Commissioner Erika Price suggested using parking fees to support

park development. Babitz said very few cities have as many system rates charges as Hood River has which certainly is not low overall. Babitz asked the other Commissioners if they are suggesting park development is more important than housing affordability. Powers suggested the Commission let City Council decide how to fund park development.

Babitz asked the Commissioners if their intent is to say they are not interested in parks that are connected. Powers replied no. Price said connecting parks should be priority, not a requirement. Ramey thinks connected parks will help to serve future transportation needs. Babitz said the recommendation makes it sound as though connecting all parks is mandatory. Frost said the Commission's "vision" is to create an Emerald Connector. Babitz said he agrees with the vision.

Babitz asked the Commission to explain the Terrace Concept. Liburdy said the Terrace Concept precludes development on slopes with a 25 percent or greater grade. Frost said the intent is to keep slopes of this nature undeveloped.

Babitz questioned the timing of the Commission's Park and Open Space Framework recommendation given the fact that the City Council is far along with the Parks Master Plan. Liburdy said the Commission's intent is to "influence" the Master Plan. The original Concept Plan called for three-acre parks; the Commission is requesting three- to four-acre parks which is a change. Babitz thinks park size should be prioritize in higher density areas and acreage should be based on a per capita basis and site location.

Ramey indicated that she would like to see a walking system with tree groves. Frosts said he supports boulevards with paths and trees. Liburdy said wider planter strips and greater green space is already planned for areas that connect neighborhoods and parks.

Liburdy read through the Commission's modifications to the recommendation memorandum.

MOTION: Price motioned to forward the memorandum to City Council with minor modifications; Powers seconded the motion. The motion passes unanimously (5 Yays/0 Nays).

C. FILE NO.: 2018-05 and 2018-06 – Amendments to the Hood River Municipal Code – continuation of hearing from October 21, 2019.

PROPOSAL: Amendments to the Hood River Municipal Code (HRMC) as follows: 1). Amend the Subdivision Ordinance Chapter 16.08.010 to include the approval process for Expedited Land Divisions pursuant to 197.360 of the Oregon Revised Statues, 2). Amend HRMC Chapter 17.01.060 Definitions for Dwelling Unit, Kitchen, Lawfully Established Unit of Land, Multifamily Dwelling, Non-Transient Rental, and Transient Rental, 3). Amend Chapter 17.03.040 0(G) Parking Regulations Office Residential Zone (C-1), Chapter 17.03.050 (H) Parking Regulations General Commercial Zone (C-2), Chapter 17.03.060 (G) Parking Regulations Light Industrial Zone (LI) to eliminate parking exemptions. 4). Amend Chapter 17.04.040 General Exceptions to Building Height, to allow and limit parapet and mechanical screen heights as permitted exemptions; 5). Amend Chapter 17.04.070 General Exceptions to Lot Area Requirements Limitations to allow legally established lots to be used for permitted uses, 6). Amend Chapter 17.04.120 Maximum Lot Coverage to clarify reductions in area calculations for pervious surfaces and rear and side loaded garages; 7). Amend Chapter 17.16.10 Site Plan Review and Applicability to include subdivisions and exclude minor site modifications and single lot partitions for townhomes, 8). Amend Chapter 17.23 Accessory Dwelling Units to eliminate

principal occupancy requirement, and 9). Amend Chapter 17.24 In Lieu Parking Fee to create a single calculation to determine required parking.

APPLICANT: City of Hood River

Babitz opened File No. 2018-5 and 2018-06 from October 21, 2019.

MOTION: Powers made a motion to move the hearing for File 2018-05 and 2018-06 to December 16, 2019. Ramey seconded the motion. Motion to continue the hearing on File 2018-05 and 2018-06 to December 16, 2019 passed unanimously (5 Yays/0 Nays).

IV. Downtown Parking and Transportation Study Update – Commissioner Ramey

Ramey said that she put together a summary of the seven white papers that make up the parking study to share with the Planning Commission. She said the crux of study suggests Hood River's on-street parking capacity is in the 70 percentiles during peak (peak was measured at two points in July and one in December). She said the study references an 85 Percent Rule which states that additional parking should be considered when parking levels are consistently above this threshold. Nilsen added, the consultant is referencing both publicly and privately held parking. Block faces have considerably higher rates and off-street parking that is privately held is grossly under-utilized. Frost said he has no doubt that off-street parking is a problem.

Ramey said the consultant's guiding principle is that the on-street system for customers, on-street system abutting downtown (i.e. Columbia, past 7th, etc.) is for residents and the off-street system is for employees. Nilsen added that the guiding principle is based on value judgement regarding the use of parking and who has priority. Downtown on-street parking is for quick turnarounds, Off-street is not as quick and emphasizes maximum utilization for residents or employees.

Ramey said with the consultant is projecting an 18 percent increase in parking; parking spaces are expected to increase from 258 stalls to 272 by 2040. Ramey added that the residential barrier assessment touched on why developers are not able to get anything going downtown which goes back to current zoning.

Ramey said she questions whether increasing parking is the right vision. Frost thinks there are a lot of people avoid downtown due to parking constraints and fears restaurants will struggle. He also thinks the burden is lifted the two weeks prior to Christmas when residents are not required to pay metered parking. He said during peak season there are also many non-residents that come to town who are not ready to abandon their vehicle which have their skis, mountain bikes and other sports equipment. Her said people are not going to move to Hood River if we restrict their mobility to public transportation.

Babitz said he would like to see more satellite parking. Frost said he agrees. Powers said she concurred. Price said she is all in with the idea of satellite parking. Babitz said he thinks the group would agree that they all prefer to see satellite parking vs. curb cuts in landmark lots.

Powers said she would like to see the elimination of parking near intersections. Ramey said that this is already being addressed in the parking study. Corner parking will be replaced with bike racks.

Nilsen said there will be an Open House on parking that the Commissioners can attend.

V. MINUTES:

Powers motioned to approve the minutes from October 7, 2019 as drafted; Price seconded the motion. Motion approved unanimously, 5-0.

VI. DIRECTOR’S UPDATE

Nilsen said Council requested project recommendations from its committees for its 2020 work plan. At last Planning Commission meeting he was asked to produce a short list of projects ideas that could be used as a catalyst for starters. Frost had mentioned a specific strategy for the development of Henderson Creek Trail. Commissioner Tina Lassen also leaned in on this idea and provided commentary. Nilsen said there were other suggestions that came out of discussions around the Westside Plan. Babitz suggested the Committee go through the list of ideas provided by Nilsen. There was much discussion regarding the scope of updates to the TSP plan and code amendments for multi-unit housing to support the needs identified in the 2015 Housing Study which Nilsen was asked to include in the proposal to City Council.

VI. ADJOURN

Babitz adjourned the meeting at 8:15 p.m.

Arthur Babitz, Chair Date

Dustin Nilsen, Planning Director Date (Approved)