

TOWN OF LA CONNER
PLANNING COMMISSION ZOOM MEETING
September 15, 2020

The Planning Commission meeting was called to order at 6:03 p.m.

Present via Zoom were commissioners Bruce Bradburn, Marna Hanneman, Carol Hedlin, Linda Talman, Liz Theaker, and Planning Director Marianne Manville-Ailles.

Members of the public: Marylee Chamberlain, Bill Reynolds (La Conner Weekly News).

PUBLIC COMMENT:

None.

MINUTES:

The August 18, 2020 minutes required corrections and approval was tabled until the October 20th Planning Commission meeting.

OLD BUSINESS:

- *None.*

NEW BUSINESS:

- *Public Hearing 2020 Amendments to Title 15 Land Use Code*

Planner Marianne Manville-Ailles gave an overview of the code changes in Title 15 of the the La Conner Municipal Code. The commission has been working on these changes since the start of the year, starting with accessory dwelling units, then multifamily in the residential zone, and adding provisions to residential in the commercial zone. They then looked at code cleanup, making the Fences section match the current building code, making setbacks consistent with the direction from Council, and doing general housekeeping. Corrections were made in the landscaping section and clarifications in the section between the planning commission versus the hearing examiner on who has what authority to sign documents. The permit classifications table was updated to match the updated the shoreline code and the subdivisions were updated to show the proper people who provide signatures. The Bed and Breakfast code was clarified to say that they are not allowed to be in a detached building but must be located in the primary residence. A clarification was also made to lots of record. Finally, the fire sprinkler code was repealed from Title 15.

The code changes were sent to the Department of Commerce on July 30th and a response was received on August 3rd. Expedited 2-week review was granted on Sept. 14th so that is

completed. The State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) Determination of Non-Significance was published on August 19th and the comment period ended on September 1st. There were no comments. Notice of Application was sent out on August 14th and published August 19th. There were no comments. Notice of Hearing was issued on August 14th and published on August 19th. It was also published as part of the Planning Commission meeting notice on September 9th. The Planning Commission packet includes all of the code changes that have been on the website since the beginning of September.

Staff recommended that the Planning Commission make a recommendation to Council to approve the code changes. An ordinance will be drafted up and ready for council as soon as possible.

Public comment opened at 6:17 PM. There was a comment letter from Maggie Wilder in support of the code changes. No other public comments. Public comment closed at 6:18 PM.

A motion was made by Commissioner Hanneman to recommend approval of the Title 15 Land Use Code amendments to Council. Seconded by Commissioner Talman. Motion carried 5-0.

The code changes will now go to Council for approval. This will be a closed record hearing and if it is approved, the ordinance will go to Code Publishing which typically updates once a year. The ordinance will be available online so that people know changes have been made that may not be reflected in the online version of the code. The earliest it will go to Council is the first meeting in October.

CLOSING COMMENTS:

The consultant for the shoreline update has talked with both of the Department of Ecology people that will be working with the Town. DOE wants the update to address some of the critical areas issues for shorelines, primarily wetlands. With the exception of a small amount up at the Port of Skagit, the Town of La Conner does not have any wetlands within the shoreline and it is unlikely that the code regulations DOE is talking about would ever be used. However, the Town will do what they need to in order to satisfy DOE. Once the critical areas ordinance is updated the Town can do a minor amendment to the shoreline plan and include it as an appendix to replace what the consultant will temporarily put in for the shoreline update. The consultant should be finishing up in the next week or so, and as soon as Marianne has a draft she will send it to the commission as they will be discussing it at the next commission meeting.

The transportation update may also be discussed at the next meeting, depending on the results of the streets committee meeting. If not in October, it will definitely be discussed in November. If there is a meeting in December, the commission will discuss the density changes that will be done in lieu of the Planned Unit Residential Development, otherwise, this will be discussed in January. Marianne anticipates that the Commission will continue to meet via Zoom through the end of the year.

Commissioner Talman asked about what council was looking into regarding streets. Marianne said that she and Scott will be presenting at one of the next council meetings but that it's still getting figured out. They have some ideas for changes to address speeding that will be included in the transportation element. Prior to that, the streets committee will be meeting to discuss the speeding issues and also the First Street connection to Caledonia, which might have an impact on the shoreline. This will also be taken to council. Commissioner Talman mentioned some concerns she has regarding crosswalks throughout town. She used an example of a crosswalk on Third Street that is or has been "erased". She is concerned that other similar crosswalks throughout Town may also be "erased" and she would not like to see that happen. Since streets are being discussed with the transportation element update, she wanted to bring it up so it can be addressed. Marianne will discuss it with Brian and bring back a report to the commission.

With no further business Commissioner Hedlin moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:30 p.m. Seconded by Commissioner Bradburn. Motion carried unanimously.

Chair

Date