



TOWN OF LA CONNER PLANNING COMMISSOIN

Meeting Notice

November 21, 2023, 6PM

104 Commercial Street, La Conner WA

And by Zoom

Information is below and on the Town Website

Skagit County Washington
Incorporated 1890
www.townoflaconner.org

Agenda

I. Convene

II. Public Comments (Topics not otherwise on the Agenda) – Time Limit 3 Minutes

III. Minutes: Approve Minutes from the November 7 2023 meeting.

IV. Old Business

1. Status Report – Talmon Development
2. Status Report – Public participation Program
3. Status Report – Transportation Element
4. Further discussion on Affordable Housing Regulations

V. New Business

1. Discussion of short-term rentals

VI. Closing Comments:

Join Zoom Meeting – This Meeting will be Recorded

<https://phadowud-online.zoom.us/j/86003765360?pwd=Z2pnaidGV1hIUmk3Q1hZcmJFR3ZoZz09>

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**TOWN OF LA CONNER
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
November 7, 2023**

The Planning Commission meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m.

Commissioners present: Carol Hedlin, Marna Hanneman, Bruce Bradburn, John Leaver, Sommer Holt

Commissioners absent: None

Staff: Michael Davolio, Ajah Eills

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Linda Talman distributed a piece of paper and stated that the town paper did not provide enough information about meetings. She also would like to know more about any action taken in regards to non-motorized transportation, and advocated for more support for non-motorized transportation.

MINUTES:

Commissioner Bradburn moved to approve the minutes from the October 3, 2023 meeting. Seconded by Commissioner Leaver. **Motion to approve minutes carried unanimously.**

Commissioner Bradburn moved to approve the minutes from the October 17 meeting. Seconded by Commissioner Hannaman. **Motion to approve the minutes carried unanimously.**

OLD BUSINESS:

Staff received the building permit application for the Talmon Development and noticed several discrepancies between the plans and the requirements placed on the development by the Town code and the Hearing Examiner. These included height, amount of short-term rental rooms, encumbered parking, lack of entrances, and setbacks. The plans are still under review.

Staff presented information about a community event which occurred on October 17th at the Garden Club, and was designed to solicit community input into Short Term Rental Regulations. It was well attended.

Staff stated that parking on 1st street would be the focus of the upcoming joint Planning Commission and Town Council meeting on November 28th.

NEW BUSINESS:

Staff discussed the recommendations about the climate element given by Western Washington University students in a collaboration with local municipalities. These recommendations will be discussed as the chapters relating to the recommendations come up.

Staff presented final text of Chapter 10, Essential Public Facilities, to the commission for final recommendation.

Commissioner Bradburn made a motion to recommend the text for Council approval. Commission Holt seconded. The motion was carried unanimously.

Planner Davolio thanked the commissioners for their time and work on researching affordable housing solutions. Currently, staff is thinking that an acceptable ratio of community space would be 1sqft of community space for 1sqft of housing.

Commissioner discussed the trip to Langley.

Commissioners and staff discussed the initial draft housing and population allocations provided by Skagit County.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS/STAFF COMMENTS:

There were no closing comments.

The next regular meeting of the Planning Commission will be held on November 21, 2023. There will be a joint meeting of the Planning Commission and Town Council held on November 28, 2023.

With no further business Commissioner Leaver moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:42 p.m. Seconded by Commissioner Bradburn. **Motion carried unanimously.**

Chair

Date

MEMORANDUM

TO: Planning Commission
FROM: Planning Staff
SUBJECT: Short-term rentals
DATE: November 17, 2023

We are grateful for the large turnout at last month's "community mingle" event. This event encouraged a broad conversation on the subject of short-term residential uses in the community. As you know, this subject was first raised by the staff in 2022, and was ultimately put off until this year based on public requests that the town would enable a wider discussion of the issue.

Our current regulations do not define the term, "short-term rental," and there are no provisions that allow such use in our residential zone except for the conditional use provisions for bed-and-breakfast uses. The regulations in our commercial zones are ambiguous, and would benefit from more accurate wording.

Throughout the discussion of this topic, the staff has encouraged a balance between protecting the quality of life in residential neighborhoods, and enabling the stability of local businesses in La Conner's tourism-based economy. After fully considering the arguments on all sides of this issue, we recommend that little change be made in our current regulations. This means that short-term rentals would continue to be prohibited in the town's residential zone, with the continuing exception for bed-and-breakfasts. Short-term rentals would continue to be permitted (with better definition) in the commercial zone. We understand that there are some short-term residential uses currently located within the residential zone. If these uses were legally initiated, they would be considered as grandfathered uses and they would be allowed to continue.

The following are definitions currently contained in the La Conner Municipal Code. We will be reviewing these definitions to ensure consistency with any additional proposed revisions.

15.10.125 Bed and breakfast.

"Bed and breakfast" means a use carried on in a structure designed for residential purposes which provides overnight accommodations plus breakfast and occasionally family-style meals for guests, in an owner-occupied home that provides up to three rooms for this purpose. The occupying owner(s) must own a majority interest in the residence or a majority interest in the entity that owns the residence upon which the bed and breakfast is located. The bed and breakfast is not allowed to be located in a detached building accessory to the primary structure designed for residential purposes.

15.10.140 Boarding house, rooming house.

"Boarding house, rooming house" means a building or part thereof other than a hotel, motel, or restaurant where meals and/or lodging are provided for compensation, for one or more unrelated persons where no cooking or dining facilities are provided in individual rooms.

15.10.503 Guesthouse or guest rental.

“Guesthouse” or “guest rental” means a commercial use of a single-family dwelling unit, residential unit or boat rented on a daily or weekly basis (i.e., less than monthly rental).

15.10.525 Hotel, motel, or apartment hotel.

“Hotel, motel, or apartment hotel” means any building containing six or more guest rooms intended or designed to be used, or which are used, rented or hired out to be occupied, or which are occupied for sleeping purposes by guests.

The staff suggests adding the following definition:

15.10.1032 Short-term rental.

“Short-term rental” is a furnished, self-contained dwelling unit that is rented for a period of thirty (30) days or less.

In addition, the staff will continue to review the regulations contained in our existing code, and specifically within those sections that define our residential and commercial zones, to provide clarity.