



Planning Commission Meeting Minutes for May 25, 2011

Members Present: Commissioners Marty Laumbattus, Bertis Rasco, Larry Nelson and Stuart Janke. Absent: Commissioners Laurie Gere, Clay Leming and Lin Folsom.

Staff Present: Ryan Larsen Director of Planning, Community & Economic Development and Libby Grage, Senior Planner

Commissioner Laumbattus called the meeting to order at approximately 7:00 P.M.

Minutes

The revised minutes of April 27, 2011 were approved.

Correspondence

No correspondence.

Old Business

There was no old business to discuss.

New Business

Stone Ridge 3 Lot Replat: Final Plat

Commissioner Laumbattus introduced the first item under New Business - Final Plat approval for a 3 Lot Replat.

Ms. Libby Grage, Senior Planner, presented the H Avenue LLC request for final plat approval of the 3 lot replat located on 32nd Street just west of H Avenue. Ms. Grage provided a history of the infrastructure improvements along with a previous short plat of the subject property. Staff has reviewed the conditions of preliminary approval and confirmed the applicant has complied with all of the conditions and recommends the Commission move to forward the request to City Council for final plat approval. Commissioner Laumbattus asked if there were any questions from the Planning Commissioners.

Commissioner Rasco asked for confirmation that this was a subdivision of lot 6 from one lot to 3 lots. This was confirmed by Ms. Grage. Mr. Rasco asked for clarification on the rules for a re-subdivide for a short plat that has been previously submitted. Ms. Grage stated that the subdivision code provides that if you apply to develop a short plat and then decide to re-subdivide any of the lots of the short plat within 5 years, then you are required to go through the formal subdivision process which the applicant has done in this process.

Commissioner Laumbattus called for any further questions to which there were none and called for a motion. Commissioner Nelson made motion to send this final plat on to City Council. Commissioner Janke seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

Public Hearing: 2011 Docket for Comprehensive Plan and Development Regulations

Commissioner Laumbattus introduced the public hearing for the 2011 Docket for Comprehensive Plan and Development Regulations.

Mr. Ryan Larsen, Director of Planning, Community & Economic Development, presented the purpose of the public hearing in consideration of the 2011 docket for Comprehensive Plan and Development Regulations. The Planning Commission is holding a public hearing to simply set the docket list. The Planning Commission will not approve or deny any of the amendments tonight; it is simply recommending consideration by City Council for further review. After tonight's meeting, and if the Planning Commission approves the docket and amendments be moved to City Council for their consideration, Council will hold their meeting on June 20. If Council approves the docket, they will pass a resolution and the resolution will set the list of the six development regulation amendments plus the 2 comprehensive plan amendments along with the proposed schedule.

Mr. Larsen began with the review of the amendment schedule, including the required environmental review. Mr. Larsen then reviewed each proposed amendment as follows:

AMC 16.12.020.E – a Council proposed amendment – a new section I which would require pedestrian connection to adjacent property and/or provide future connectivity.

AMC 17.34.050 – proposed by Council, would revise minimum lot sizes in the R3 zone to allow lots not to exceed 12,000 square feet and would allow an existing single family residential unit that has been on the property for at least 20 years to be subdivided and create an additional lot of at least 4,000 square feet. Mr. Larsen explained that if you have a lot that is 12,000 square feet and the house was older than 20 years, you could subdivide the lot to create one lot size of 4,000 square feet which would leave the other portion at 8,000 square feet. Also, it would be required to file a covenant against the property agreeing not to demolish the existing house on the site for 15 years.

AMC 17.34.060 – proposed by Council, would revise minimum set back requirements in the R3 zone which would allow single family residential units on lots of 60 feet of width to reduce both side yard set backs to 5 feet. This would allow them to reduce it up to 5 feet.

AMC 17.18.090 – submitted by Hal Rooks, would limit the height allowance to 35 feet in the LM zone, specifically along the Guemes Channel, and eliminate the ability of a property owner to build to the 50 feet as currently allowed by code.

Evergreen Islands submitted a proposed amendment that contains two phases - a Comprehensive Plan amendment and a proposed development regulation change. The amendment would add two goals to the Comprehensive Plan. The first goal would suggest redirecting funding to a more balanced transportation network. The second proposed goal suggests improving public health through opportunities for physical activity. In addition to the goals, the applicant suggests adding new ordinances in specified locations within the code which would implement these two goals.

The second submittal by Evergreen Islands is a Comprehensive Plan amendment in consideration of public participation. This amendment suggests adding community participation in quasi-judicial land use applications early on in the process. In addition to the goal, the applicant suggests adding a new ordinance in a specified location, which would implement the goals.

Mr. Larsen concluded that staff would recommend the Commission approve the docket for the proposed 2011 Comprehensive Plan amendments and development regulation amendments and the proposed schedule for City Council consideration. Mr. Larsen reiterated that the motion before the Commission tonight is not to approve or disapprove the amendments but just to approve moving the suggested amendments and schedule to City Council for their approval to move forward with consideration of the suggested amendments and schedule.

Mr. Larsen then offered the podium to the individuals who proposed amendments.

Mr. Hal Rooks, 1219 10th Street, provided that his reading of the existing code is perhaps slightly different than Mr. Larsen's and continued that he does not read this as saying a 50 foot building is allowed by code; it is allowed by a conditional use permit. Mr. Rooks believes that the residential zones surrounding the LM zone are restricted to a height limit of 35 feet while in the LM zone, particularly the section running along the Guemes Channel, the allowance is, by conditional use, to build up to 50 feet. This presents a problem in that a 5 story building could potentially block the views of the surrounding residential areas.

Mr. Rooks discussed a second issue of serious concern with the LM zone in that the Guemes Channel is designated a shoreline of statewide significance according to the Shoreline Management Act, the State and the Anacortes Shoreline Management Act. Mr. Rooks provided that this means the shoreline should be protected for the long-term interests of the people of the state, not just the local residents and local development. Mr. Rooks concluded that the 35 foot proposal eliminates ambiguity in the existing code and hopefully will reduce conflict between the local citizens who own homes in the surrounding areas and also give developers a chance to put up a 3 story building.

Mr. Tom Glade, 210 Mansfield Court, representing Evergreen Islands. Evergreen Islands submitted 2 changes to the Comprehensive Plan which will be reinforced by changes to the development code. Mr. Glade provided that his submittals are intended to provide public participation in quasi-judicial hearings on land use issues and to create a more walkable and bicycle friendly city. Mr. Glade explained that the public participation on the quasi-judicial hearings for land use would basically be a pre-meeting between the neighborhood and the project proponent to iron out any differences before the project is presented to the Planning Commission. Mr. Glade provided some model ordinances prepared by the American Planning Association regarding these issues and believes they are really applicable to the City of Anacortes.

Commissioner Laumbattus opened the meeting to any comments from the public.

Virginia E. Bunny Heiner, 804 K Avenue, speaking on behalf of her husband and herself, urged the Council to support Hal Rooks' submission and expressed concern over the proposal by Cynthia Richardson regarding the minimum lot size change in the R3 zone. Mrs. Heiner expressed concern that this proposal would undermine the intent of the Old Town Overlay put in place in 2008 and concluded that the Commission only consider adopting Cynthia Richardson's proposed amendment if it does not negate any of the zoning changes known as the Old Town Overlay.

Commissioner Laumbattus reminded the audience that this is just the beginning of this process and there will be several public hearings after tonight and reiterated the intent of this public hearing. Commissioner Laumbattus called for any further comments to which there were none and then closed the public hearing. Mr. Larsen provided a recommendation that the Commission make a motion to move these amendments forward for further consideration by the City Council along with the proposed schedule.

Commissioner Laumbattus called for a motion to which Commissioner Nelson made a motion to move all the amendments to the City Council for further consideration. Commissioner Janke seconded the motion and included that the docketing schedule be forwarded to Council. Vote was unanimous in favor of forwarding the amendments and the schedule to the City Council for further review.

Commissioner Laumbattus thanked all for attending and adjourned the meeting at approximately 7.23 p.m.