



COUNCIL PUBLIC HEARING

Wednesday, April 07, 2021

APPROVED MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mayor Rick Scholl
Council President Doug Morten (arrived at 7:07 p.m.)
Councilor Stephen R. Topaz (arrived at 6:54 p.m.)
Councilor Patrick Birkle
Councilor Jessica Chilton

STAFF PRESENT

John Walsh, City Administrator
Matt Brown, Assistant City Administrator
Kathy Payne, City Recorder
Jacob Graichen, City Planner
Jenny Dimsho, Associate Planner (arrived at 6:18 p.m.)
Crystal King, Communications Officers (arrived at 6:56 p.m.)

OTHERS

Sean Edging, Oregon Department of Land Conservation & Development (DLCD)
SH Resident (arrived at 6:07 p.m.)
Autumn Oliver (arrived at 6:33 p.m.)
Shauna Stroup (arrived at 6:54 p.m.)

OPEN PUBLIC HEARING – 6:00 p.m.

TOPIC

1. Amendments to the St. Helens Community Development Code

City Planner Graichen covered preliminary matters and presented the staff report, a copy of which is included in the archive packet for this meeting. There were no ex-parte contacts, conflicts of interest, or bias in this matter. There were no objections from the audience for the Council to make a fair decision.

Sean Edging, representing DLCD, is in attendance and available to address any questions.

Graichen explained that many of these amendments are due to House Bill No. 2001, which was enacted in July of 2019, and predominantly focuses on allowing duplexes in all residential zones. There are also some housekeeping amendments being proposed. He reviewed the following:

- Zoning
- Residential Uses
- Attached and detached duplexes
- Distance between detached buildings proposed as:
 - R10 – 10 feet
 - R7 – 7 feet
 - R5 and AR – 6 feet
- Lot area coverage proposed as 40% for all zoning
- Porch, stairs, and landings are proposed to not be included in lot coverage

- Encroachment increased to four feet
- HB 2001 does not allow the City to require more than two parking spaces
 - Planning Commission recommends requiring two
 - Recommended parking flexibility options
 - Allow the improved area to be a minimum of 16 feet wide
 - Consider tandem parking when lots are 39 feet wide or less
 - Not eligible on flag lots
- Street Standards
 - Local "Skinny" Streets
 - Pavement width of 28 feet with eight-foot parking on one side
- Number of driveways allowed
 - Attached single-family dwelling
 - One access per lot
 - Corner lot
 - Duplex can have one access on each street
- Scenic Resource Review Rules
 - Planning Commission recommends including River Way
 - Label River Streets with "North" and "South"
- Discuss Middle Housing Affordability
 - Proposed amendments help with the following:
 - Makes auxiliary dwelling units easier
 - Increases lot coverage
 - Expanding yard encroachment
 - Relief for side-by-side parking
 - Tandem parking
 - Increasing driveway options
 - Provisions making it easier to convert accessory structures into a second dwelling
 - System Development Charge (SDC) payment plans
 - Allow shared water meters for duplexes and two detached dwellings on a lot
 - SDCs are based on meter size
 - Waived local fees for Habitat for Humanity homes
 - Reserved the sale of surplus property to affordable housing entities
 - Planning Commission expressed concerns about historic structures being removed for more intense housing. An incentive could be created to help dissuade removal.

Councilor Topaz arrived at 6:54 p.m.

PUBLIC COMMENTS - None

Council questions.

Councilor Topaz asked how much of the amendments are mandated by the State. Graichen responded that about 75% of the amendments are required.

Councilor Topaz asked what determines historic. Graichen explained that it has to go through a process and meet Code guidelines. Discussion ensued.

Mayor Scholl recognized the thorough job Graichen, and the Planning Commission did. He agreed with all of the recommendations.

Councilor Chilton asked how the zoning changes will affect property values. Graichen responded that property value is a finicky thing. They are opening opportunities to use your property to a greater degree.

Typically, that increases value. However, this is something that will be implemented over time. A lot of changes can happen over that time, including housing increase and decrease demands.

Councilor Topaz asked if his property value will be affected if the neighbors take advantage of the Code changes. Graichen said it could and that is a typical fear. He has not seen a study to show that.

Mayor Scholl would like staff to investigate cottage clusters. Graichen agreed. That will be part of the Planning Division quarterly report.

Council President Morten arrived at 7:07 p.m.

Sean Edging, DLCD, addressed affordable housing. The State is asking cities to consider the following:

- What do they do for SDCs, in relation to middle housing?
- Do they have a construction tax that would be used for affordable housing?
- Would they leverage property tax exemptions to incentivize the construction of middle housing?

Sean acknowledged that the City is addressing those considerations.

CLOSE PUBLIC HEARING – 7:09 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Lisa Scholl, Deputy City Recorder.

ATTEST:

/s/ Kathy Payne

Kathy Payne, City Recorder

/s/ Rick Scholl

Rick Scholl, Mayor