

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY SERVICES
LAND USE PLANNING DIVISION
MULTNOMAH COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

MINUTES OF APRIL 1, 2024
Virtual Meeting/Zoom

This is not a full transcript. Time indicators reference the meeting recording, which is accessible at the following Dropbox link: <https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/xgit83si1o9lnb8qixi5f/April-1-2024-Planning-Commission-Zoom-Recording.mp4?rlkey=r7qns1xg36x1ur55m6o7uh5p4&st=65nvu42v&dl=0>

1. Call to Order

(00:00:10) Chair John Ingle calls the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m. on April 1, 2024.

2. Roll Call

(00:00:36) Chair Ingle conducts a role call and declares a quorum present.

- Present – John Ingle, Chris Foster, Stephanie Nystrom, Kari Egger, Tim Wood, Victoria Purvine, Barbara Alexander
- Absent – John Chen, Bill Kabeiseman

3. Approval of Meeting Minutes

(00:01:09) Minutes from the January 8, 2024 meeting are presented for adoption.

(00:01:27) A motion to approve is made by Commissioner Egger.

(00:01:33) The motion is seconded by Commissioner Foster.

(00:01:44) A roll call vote is held. The motion to approve minutes is passed unanimously.

4. Opportunity for Public Comment on Non-Agenda Items

(00:02:09) Chair Ingle asks to see if there is anyone from the public joining the meeting wanting to give public comment on non-agenda items. Scott Robison, Recording Secretary, lets him know that no one from the public registered for the meeting.

5. Work Session – Case number PC-2024-0001 – Proposed amendments to the Significant Environmental Concern code – reorganization and code clarifications

(00:02:44) Kevin Cook, Senior Planner, starts by introducing the project. Lisa Estrin and Chris Liu, Senior Planners in current planning, have been working on some amendments for the significant environmental concern code in our land use code, and that's an area that has a lot of permits. It's not a full rewrite, but just to improve it for the public and the planners working with the code.

(00:05:03) Lisa Estrin, Senior Planner, introduces herself and explains that overlays didn't contain any code provisions for an exception on houses that burned down or were destroyed by a tree falling on them,

as an example. This is an area of focus that Carol identified as Planning Director, and Lisa and Chris have been looking at ways to rework the code. She looked at the most recent code sections that have been worked on with ground disturbance, the erosion and sediment control permit, and the minimal impact project, and found that the way those were set up were fairly easy for customers to follow. The goal was to try to do the same kind of work for the significant environmental concern code.

(00:18:46) Kevin Cook, Senior Planner, lets everyone know that this is a work session. Lisa is presenting this work for the first time and is soliciting feedback so that we can come back to the planning commission for a hearing.

(00:19:36) Commissioner Alexander asks if there is a limit on the distance from the dwelling to the surrounding developing area, or how are we defining the developed area.

(00:20:03) Lisa Estrin, Senior Planner, explains the developed area would be that portion that contains the existing single family or the prior existing single family dwelling. Any other physical improvements, any yards, or other physical improvements associated with the house.

(00:22:17) Lisa Estrin, Senior Planner, continues her presentation highlighting what she thinks would be the most important changes to the code. We have significant environment concern for streams in the West Hills in the mid 1990's and has been unchanged since then. Then there is the water resources significant environmental concern for water resources that was adopted in 2003. Lisa has found customers who hire biologists or professionals to help them prepare their reports, oftentimes have difficulties understanding what the stream overlay is asking for, while the water resource overlay is much more defined. In response to this, we are proposing to point those SEC overlay properties at the water resource code criteria. We are trying to bring the two together by deleting the SEC code, and then direct them to use the WR code. This wouldn't be a complete rewrite of this section, as the we may be able to update the zoning code and do a full rewrite down the road. The hope is that the current changes we are looking at will make the permits easier to get, and cut down on printing so many pages when the decisions go out. Lisa would like any feedback on these changes or possible errors in the staff report from the Planning Commission and the corrections will be made before it goes to hearing.

(00:30:45) Commissioner Foster asks Lisa where would the removal of dead trees on private property by utility company would fall.

(00:32:40) Lisa Estrin, Senior Planner, says it would fall under 1B, the removal of dead decaying or other hazardous trees, provided the trees that are removed are replaced on a one on one basis. She believes the property owner would be the one responsible for replacing the dead trees.

(00:36:53) Commissioner Foster had a question on the issue of metal roofs, specifically the reflective surface of that roof. He wonders if we shouldn't add some clarity about them as the metal roof can be considered a maintenance item, if the reflectivity is low.

(00:39:21) Lisa Estrin, Senior Planner, answers that if someone calls us about putting on a metal roof, we would generally tell them we suggest that metal roof has a very low reflective surface. If they had built their house under a SEC for scenic views, and wanted to do an asphalt roof, and they wanted to change it to a metal roof, we would tell them you need to modify your permit or to use a metal roof that has a coating on that looks like asphalt. Lisa made note of Commissioner Foster's exception about the non-reflective metal.

(00:43:37) Chair Ingle had a couple of comments to add to the work session. Under affected areas 39.5505, the zoning overlay designations should be in the order that they appear in the document. He also pointed out a few typos in a few sections that would need to be fixed.

(00:44:18) Lisa Estrin, Senior Planner agrees with the mistakes that were found, and they will be fixed in the next revision.

(00:45:56) Commissioner Wood added that the structure makes a ton of sense to him as someone who works with this kind of stuff a lot in development codes.

(00:46:52) Commissioner Nystrom thanks the Senior Planners for the work they've done on this. It makes it much clearer the way they've refactored and cleaned everything up. She also pointed out a typo on page 24 and 25 that will have to be fixed.

(00:49:22) Commissioner Egger wonders if Lisa could give an example where she said the planners asked her to change, like code was embedded in something, and she'd explain a little bit better.

(00:49:46) Lisa Estrin, Senior Planner says that sometimes the approval criteria is hidden in the definition. As example was given in the West Sandy River we have limited rural service commercial uses, and in the Orient Commercial Industrial area, and it lists out a long title and code criteria, but nowhere in the OCI zone does it say that the use is limited to 5,000 square feet. The limitation is in the definition. Newer planners are learning where all these hidden criteria are found.

(00:55:16) Kevin Cook, Senior Planner, wants the commissioners to email Lisa if they find any more errors or issues to her. The target is to bring this back in June for a hearing.

6. Management and Schedule Updates

(00:56:51) Kevin Cook, Senior Planner, is giving the update as Adam is out of the office. Planning Director recruitment is ongoing and top candidates are being scheduled for interviews. We hope to have the position filled sooner rather than later. The Planning Commission recruitment closed on March 15th, and we have 7 applicants, including two of our current commissioners who are re-applying. Commissioner Nystrom has volunteered to be on a panel that will review the applications. Hybrid Planning Commission meetings are still in the planning stage, but that is something we will have although the dates are not finalized yet. We are still looking for resources for our code update, we're hopeful to get some money in the next budget and find other grants to cover the remaining costs. A Customer Service group is being formed by upper leadership with more details to come in the coming months.

(01:02:14) Commissioner Purvine asks when the front desk is going to be open again, so people can go in and get direct planner feedback.

(01:02:30) Kevin Cook, Senior Planner, explains that this is something that is being looked at with multiple remodels going on in the Yeon buildings and the Multnomah building. But, he doesn't know what the final outcome will be, and the Customer Service group will be part of that discussion. As soon as any decisions are made, it will be communicated to the Planning Commission.

(01:09:36) The meeting is adjourned at 7:13 p.m.

Recording Secretary,

Scott Robison