

**WOODBURN PLANNING COMMISSION WORKSHOP/MEETING
MINUTES
March 8, 2012**

CONVENED: The Planning Commission met in a public workshop/meeting session at 7 p.m. in the City Hall Council Chambers, with Chair Jennings presiding.

ROLL CALL:

Chair	Jennings	Present
Vice-Chair	Bandelow	Present
Commissioner	Corning	Absent
Commissioner	Grigorieff	Present
Commissioner	Piper	Absent
Commissioner	Ellsworth	Present
Commissioner	Lima	Present

Staff Present: Jim Hendryx, Economic & Development Services Director
Jon Stuart, Assistant City Attorney
Don Dolenc, Associate Planner
Vicki Musser, Recording Secretary

Chair Jennings opened the workshop/meeting at 7 pm, and then led the Commissioners in the flag salute.

Minutes

The September 8, 2011 minutes were unanimously approved.

Business from the Audience

There was none.

Workshop – WDO, Section 3 – Landscaping General Standards

Director Jim Hendryx opened the workshop, reminding the Commissioners that a Woodburn Development Ordinance (WDO) survey was taken 2 ½ years ago. The survey showed that the public felt there were major issues dealing with clarity and ease of use with the WDO, as it was originally written. A lengthy review is being undertaken by the WDO Focus Committee, and as they have suggestions for change, they present them through staff to the Planning Commission. Since the Planning Commission’s last meeting 6 months ago, staff has been busy working with the Focus Committee on suggested revisions to Sections 2 and 3 of the WDO.

Director Jim Hendryx went over the present standards for landscaping in Section 3. The Focus Committee looked at the specific standards for landscaping, irrigation plans and types of plants for property owners in commercial and industrial areas and asked themselves if those standards met the ordinance’s intent, and whether each standard had a

specified purpose. When they looked at the standards regarding street trees, they noted that at present, a mixture of tree types are allowed in the public right of way. This could be an issue if the planter strips are too narrow, or if certain types of trees would uproot the sidewalks. The Focus Committee suggested that the tree species used should be dependent on street classification; that minor streets have only small-sized trees and major arteries be planted with large trees, keeping the trees proportional to the street size. A standard two trees per every 100 feet overall might be a better standard than the present 4 small, 3 medium or 2 large trees per 100 feet standard. They further suggested giving the Director the authority to modify the standards when physical circumstances dictate a change; for instance, if a utility pole is in the way, the Director could allow less trees to be planted than the standard requires, thus avoiding the complexity and expense of a variance application.

Present standards for landscaping in the front yards in the Commercial General (CG), Commercial Office (CO), Industrial (I) and Light Industrial (IL) zones can be complex. Based upon building placement, the number of plant units (PU's) required can be extensive, and may even encourage property owners to locate buildings immediately adjacent to the right of way. Director Hendryx noted that the Highway 99E Corridor Plan currently being considered would encourage parking on the side or in the rear of businesses. The Commission would like this topic discussed further in future.

It was noted that when extensive plantings are required, they can result in overgrowth a year or two later. With modification of the present standards, there could be a decrease in the amount of PU's in the setback area, and thus less actual density and the resulting overgrowth.

In the CO and CG zones, the standard is that all parking areas abutting a street shall provide a 42 –inch vertical visual screen from the street. This is a typical standard in many jurisdictions. The intent is to screen the parking lot from the street. The Commissioners noted that nighttime glare from cars in the parking lot can be annoying and dangerous.

The question of wall height along Hwy 214 when ODOT ultimately makes changes was raised, and Director Hendryx will attempt to get more information as to what ODOT is proposing in regards to wall height, and the reasoning behind their standard.

Parking lot tree standards were discussed, as the Focus Committee had recommended that the standards be changed to require fewer trees to be planted per number of parking spaces, in or along the perimeter of parking lots. The Commission disagreed with this recommendation, as trees are considered the most cost-effective form of landscaping in the long term.

Commissioner Bandelow asked about enforcement provisions to keep the landscaping in good shape. Director Hendryx noted that such enforcement exists when a complaint (or trigger to investigate) is made.

The Planning Commission raised the following topics for further discussion:

1. How to best deal with narrow planter strips
2. What provision should be made for trees on narrow lots
3. Ways to best deal with nighttime glare from cars in parking lots
4. Encouraging business owners to put parking lots on the side or in the rear of businesses, rather than in front of the building
5. The Focus Committee's reasoning for reducing the standards for parking lot trees
6. The wall standard for ODOT improvements on Hwy 214, and how those standards are determined

Election of Officers

The first meeting of the year calls for the election of new Commission Chair and Vice-Chair. In view of the fact that there were so few Planning Commission meetings in 2011, Commissioner Ellsworth made a motion that the present Chair (Jennings) and Vice-Chair (Bandelow) should retain their positions during 2012. Commissioner Lima seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Joint Workshop (City Council/Planning Commission):

The draft 99E Highway Corridor Plan will be discussed at the upcoming special joint CC/PC workshop on Monday, March 26th. The intent of the workshop is to make the Council and Commission fully aware of all the 99E corridor vision developments before public hearings are scheduled. Chair Jennings raised concern that a one hour time limit might not be long enough to address any issues that might arise during the workshop.

Further Planning Commission Meetings:

It was decided to hold the 2 regularly scheduled Planning Commission meetings in April (4/12/12 and 4/26/12) to discuss further WDO revisions.

Planning Commission Training:

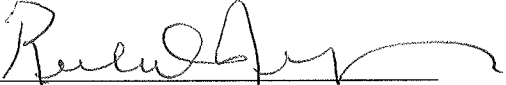
Director Hendryx requested feedback from the Commission regarding training, since there are 3 relatively new Planning Commission members. Suggestions included going over commonly used terms and acronyms, detailing what can and cannot be discussed with the public and going over basic standards and procedures. Chair Jennings felt regular twice-a-month meetings should be held. Commissioner Lima asked that everyone be reminded to turn off their cell phones.


Moment of Silence: Chair Jennings brought up the topic of prayer before meetings, and indicated that many meetings observe a moment of silence before beginning. After some discussion as to whether this would be applicable to Commission meetings, it was decided to discuss this again when all members of the Planning Commission are present.

Adjournment

Chair Jennings made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Bandelow seconded the motion, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:45 pm.

The next Planning Commission meeting is scheduled for Thursday, March 22, 2012.

APPROVED  3-22-12
Richard Jennings, CHAIR Date

ATTEST  3/23/12
James N.P. Hendryx Date
Economic & Development Services Director
City of Woodburn, Oregon