

CITY OF SEDRO-WOOLLEY
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
MINUTES
November 20, 2023

CALL TO ORDER: Planning Commission Chair, Joe Fattizzi, called the meeting to order at (6:32 pm).

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL:

- Present Commissioners: Danielle Freiburger, Paul Cocke, Eric Johnson, Joe Franett and Joe Fattizzi
- Absent Commissioners: Silas Maddox and Pat Huggins
- Present Staff: Nicole McGowan
- Members of public in attendance: 4

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA/MINUTES: Minutes from October 17, 2023, meeting was approved.

GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENTS: (Opened at 6:34 p.m.) There were no participants online. Staff also had not received any emails or mail to be entered into the record. The first public comment was made by Cassandra Sexson (901 Jameson Street). Cassandra applied for the open Planning Commission position and will be taking over for Commissioner, Eric Johnson in January 2024. She gave a brief introduction and overview of her background. The next public comment was from Paul Hieb (8643 Westerman Road). Mr. Hieb came tonight to discuss his land. He has 5 acres just inside the city limits that he would like to perform a 2-lot short subdivision on. He would like to section off a lot for the existing house, sell it, and keep the remaining land for farming. Due to cross-jurisdictional law he cannot apply for a Boundary Line Adjustment with the adjacent Skagit County property he owns directly north of the subject parcel. Public Comments closed at 6:41 p.m.

PUBLIC HEARING:

1. Possible amendments to Ch. 17.24 SWMC to add a minimum commercial/retail floor area requirement for the first-floor area facing primary street frontage in the CBD.

Assistant Planner, Nicole McGowan, gave a brief overview of this possible amendment. There are currently no regulations specifying a minimum floor area requirement for commercial or retail use in mixed-use buildings in the CBD. Commercial and retail spaces are shrinking due to being overtaken by residential space as remodels continue. To mitigate this issue, staff have proposed putting a requirement in place that 50% of the first-floor area facing primary street frontage must be designated for commercial and or retail use. Staff clarified that private garage space does not count towards commercial and or retail space. Parameters have been placed on the size and location of main entrances to multifamily residential units in the effort to prevent lobby areas from overtaking viable commercial space. The Planning Commission requested a

minor edit be made to clarify location requirements for the main entrance to residential units prior to the public hearing meeting. The following edit was made: “The main entrance to the residential units shall be located at the rear of the building. If rear access is not feasible, the main entrance may be incorporated into a maximum of 10% of the commercial and/or retail floor area facing the primary street frontage at the Planning Director’s discretion. If the building is located on a corner lot, the main entrance to the residential units shall be located on the side of the building facing the street with less commercial activity.” Staff recommends that the Planning Commission recommend that the city council approve the proposed amendments to Chapter 17.24 SWMC.

PUBLIC HEARING COMMENTS: (Opened at 6:44 p.m.) There were no participants online or in person. Public Comments closed at 6:45 p.m.

Commissioner, Paul Cocke, is pleased with the language and how well this was done. Commissioner, Eric Johnson, also agrees with how well this was completed and thinks it’s important to preserve commercial space in the CBD. Commissioner, Joe Franett, is pleased with the language of this amendment. Commissioner, Danielle Freiburger, had a comment about whether a maximum of 10% lobby entrance is enough space. Assistant Planner, Nicole McGowan states she spoke to the building inspector and 10% is enough space for the lobby entrance, elevator, and stairwell. Once clarified Commissioner, Danielle Freiburger, was pleased with the amendment. Chair Commissioner, Joe Fattizzi, states everyone did a really good job on this amendment. A motion to approve the amendments was made by Commissioner, Paul Cocke, and seconded by Commissioner, Eric Johnson. Motion carried in favor 5-0.

PLANNING COMMISSION DISCUSSION/INFORMATION ITEMS:

1. Consider circumstantial reductions of the minimum density requirement of four dwelling units per acre for subdivisions.

Assistant Planner, Nicole McGowan, states several Sedro-Woolley residents have come to her with requests to subdivide larger properties, typically with an acre or more. They are requesting subdividing into one or two smaller lots. Due to the requirements that subdivisions must have a minimum density of four units per acre, these requests can’t be processed. The four units per acre density is a framework that the GMA came up with to address the issue of urban sprawl. Cities are required to plan for reduction of urban sprawl, however, the GMA does not have the authority to make public policy decisions due to it being a quasi-judicial agency that serves a limited role. In short, cities are required to bear the ultimate responsibility of reducing urban sprawl under the GMA however they see fit in ways that best serve their communities. The four units per acre should not be entirely disposed of, however, there are creative ways to allow circumstantial reductions while also following the requirements of the GMA. For example, Mount Vernon has an R1 3.0 zone that allows for no more than 3.23 dwelling units per acre. They must show that there are physical constraints present on the property such as wetlands, critical areas, unique open space character, or sensitivity to environmental disturbances. The city of Mount Vernon chose properties that contained or were next to pre-existing neighborhoods. The zoning complied with the GMA because it protects the existing character of the existing neighborhoods, promotes a variety of residential densities and housing types, and encourages the

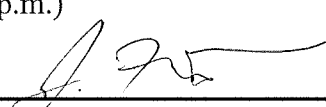
preservation of existing housing stock, all requirements of the GMA. Another creative option some jurisdictions have used is shadow platting. The shadow platting does not perform an actual subdivision, but instead shows on paper that a future subdivision that meets current zoning regulations, including the 4 units per acre density minimum, can be achieved in the future. The proposal is to allow people to apply for a short plat and submit a shadow plat along with it showing in the future it could meet a minimum of four units per acre and be developed in accordance with current development regulations. Chair Commissioner, Joe Fattizzi, pointed out things could get complicated especially for transferability if the owner in the future decided to keep one piece of property and sell the remaining property.

Commissioner, Danielle Freiburger, commented saying this is a great thing to look into and would satisfy both the GMA and applicant. Commissioner, Joe Franett, liked the idea of shadow platting and the opportunity for someone to have the option to sell one or two lots now and in the future build on the remaining land. Commissioner, Eric Johnson, likes the idea of this option and believes it's worth exploring. Commissioner, Paul Cocke, loves this idea and thinks flexibility needs to be considered, however it needs to be on a case-by-case basis due to the possibilities of estate battles. Assistant Planner, Nicole McGowan, spoke about Commissioner, Paul Cocke's, concerns of estate battles, stating shadow platting is not a formal subdivision, it shows the Planning Department on paper that the piece of land can be subdivided in the future according to current regulations. The short plat is the only thing that gets recorded therefore, estate battles probably would not be a cause of concern because there is nothing binding about the shadow plat. Chair Commissioner, Joe Fattizzi, had comments about applicants having to have the ability to have utilities through the property. This can cause financial burdens in the future for septic, sewer and water. Overall, this topic is worth a future discussion on. Assistant Planner, Nicole McGowan, states this would be something the developer would deal with in the future when development is taking place. Staff was tasked with drafting an amendment proposal for review and discussion at the next meeting.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS: None

ADJOURNMENT: (Time: 7:27 p.m.)

 2-21-2024

PLANNING COMMISSION CHAIRMAN

PLANNING COMMISSION SECRETARY

**CITY OF SEDRO-WOOLLEY
HISTORIC PRESERVATION MEETING
MINUTES
November 20, 2023**

CALL TO ORDER: Planning Commission Chair, Joe Fattizzi, called the meeting to order at (7:11 p.m.)

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

ROLL CALL:

- Present Commissioners: Danielle Freiburger, Paul Cocke, Eric Johnson, Joe Franett and Joe Fattizzi
- Absent Commissioners: Silas Maddox and Pat Huggins
- Present Staff: Nicole McGowan
- Members of public in attendance: 1 in person and 2 online

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA/MINUTES:

1. Approval of historic registry plaque for posting at 804 Ferry Street

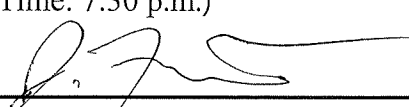
Jean Eagleston gave a brief overview of the possibility of a plaque being made and posted at her home at 804 Ferry Street for the Sedro-Woolley registry of historic places. Currently, she has two plaques posted at the property indicating what the home used to be known as and would like this additional plaque posted at her residence. She would like the plaque to read "This property has been placed on the Sedro-Woolley Register of Historic Places #1 by the Sedro-Woolley Historic Preservation Commission."

A motion was made to have such a plaque posted on the residence at 804 Ferry Street. Commissioner, Danielle Freiburger, motioned first and Commissioner, Paul Cocke, motioned second. The motion carried in favor 5-0.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: None

NEW BUSINESS: None

ADJOURNMENT (Time: 7:30 p.m.)



PLANNING COMMISSION CHAIRMAN

2-21-2024

PLANNING COMMISSION SECRETARY