



Planning Commission

June 18, 2018

Terri Phillips

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Roger Ensz called the meeting to order at 6:04 pm.

**ROLL CALL**

Commissioners: Chris Dorow, Brian Gentry, Kevin Gilbert, and Roger Ensz

Staff: Community Development Director Anne Henning and Planning Secretary Terri Phillips

Attendees: Sheena and John Sorensen from Sagehills Vet Clinic; Zeke Rodriguez for ADUs; Bob Carlson

Quorum Established.

**APPROVAL OF May 21, 2018 PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES**

It was voted to accept the minutes from May 21, 2018 M/S Chris Dorow / Brian Gentry

**PC TRAINING**

Commissioners were reminded that PC training was required and needs to be done every 4 years.

**LANDSCAPE ALTERATION – Sagehills Veterinary Services**

Dr. Sheena Sorensen has proposed a landscape plan for her new veterinary clinic that differs from the specific criteria in OMC 14.57, Landscaping. Per OMC 14.57.110, the Planning Commission may approve a requested alteration to landscape standards.

The commission was concerned about the clearview triangle at Broadway and Fir street. Ms. Henning explained it is a tree with a trunk and therefore it will not block the corner. It is also positioned far enough from the corner to see around it. The buffer on the eastside is mostly evergreens and makes it look fuller.

The project is moving forward, and the Planning Commission’s revision of the landscaping standards is not yet complete. Dr. Sorensen sent a letter and a proposed altered plan that is included in your packet. In her letter she believes that this proposed alteration is justified as it represents a superior result and is more efficient than a plan that would be under the current code. The proposed alteration features a 50% reduction in sod and a 45% reduction in trees, while increasing drought tolerant plants instead. Both of these reductions account for an approximate savings of 28,000 gallons per month in water. Reduction of the trees also allows for less crowding in their canopies, thus allowing them to flourish.

**Action:** Motion to approve the Landscape Alteration for Sagehills Veterinary Services was M/S Brian Gentry / Kevin Gilbert

Per OMC 14.57.110 the Commissioners made the following findings when approving the alteration:

- (a) The alteration would be in keeping with and preserve the intent of this chapter
- (b) The alteration would not be contrary to the public interest
- (c) The alteration is justified based on the following
  - (6) The proposed landscaping represents a superior result or is more effective than that which would be achieved by strictly following requirements of this section.

**Action:** Motion to approve the findings M/S Roger Ensz / Chris Dorow

### **ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS (ADUs)**

Many cities in Washington and elsewhere have a process to allow “accessory dwelling units”, a secondary unit on the same lot as a single-family dwelling. These units can be an apartment within the main house, or a detached small house in the back yard. While units like this may exist in Othello currently, they are not allowed by the zoning, other than through a conditional use permit process for the rental of an apartment appurtenant to a single-family residence in the R-2 and R-4 Zones.

The city has received an application to convert a garage into a house in the R-2 Zone and that is what triggered the discussion at this time. There have been many discussions in the past about people living in sheds. The police chief has said he is opposed to allowing new units like this. He feels it leads to more crime. This unit is in the alley but also has a side street because it is on the corner. The commission would need to make a recommendation to the council to change the code and the council would need to amend the ordinance before this unit could be approved.

Ms. Henning feels if the existing ones are going to be allowed to continue then why is there not a process where new ones can be established that meet the code. The existing ones are needing to comply with basic life/safety issues. But they are apparently being allowed to continue as non-conforming.

Othello has a housing shortage and the need is there. But it needs to be kept organized and done right.

The Commission has a list of concerns: parking spots, emergency access, separate address, separate utilities, access from the alley, can the alley support more traffic, square footage of building, square footage of lot, what happens when property sells, living space and does primary owner need to occupy the primary residence? You cannot divide the lot, it is one lot. The Commission felt that Alley access would be a nightmare. Interior lots would have a difficult time, because the house in the back would need to have a separate driveway from the main house. In the existing code there is a maximum lot coverage standard of 35% of the lot for buildings.

Landscaping for the second house should be required just like a new house. Setback from the side street would be 20 feet the same as the front house. Should there be a setback from the main house?

They decided additional restrictions on location or size weren't necessary since lot coverage should limit that.

Planning Commission would like to add maximum occupancy by square foot or per house to the code. Code enforcement is dealing with this problem now. Othello currently only allows one family but that includes being related by blood or marriage. And that can add up to a lot of people. Staff will look for examples in other cities to try to make it clear. In the building code there is some guidance and will look there to start.

There is the requirement for covered parking, should we require that? Many houses currently do not have covered parking. The existing house should have two off street parking but do not have to cover them. It does not matter if it is side-by-side or single aisle. The parking space needs to be 9x20 per car, that would make it 40 feet long. If there is a second house in the rear on an interior lot the driveway would be between 40 to 60 feet and needs to be separate from the main house driveway.

Each unit needs to be self-sufficient and have its own address, water, utilities and its own parking. Limit this to R-2, R-3 and R-4. Does not want this type of housing in R-1.

Condensed housing also increases traffic in the streets. Is this something that needs to be addressed? It needs to have off street parking for these new units.

Height restrictions in the Residential Zone are 2 stories and 28 feet. The Commission wanted it limited to 1 story for ADUs.

Because there is an application for an accessory dwelling unit, Planning Commission needs to have a special meeting to move through this item faster than if we waited until next month to further discuss this issue. Staff will decide in a week if we need a special meeting to discuss possible regulations.

#### **MUNICIPAL CODE UPDATE – Parking Code – OMC 17.61**

The Commissioners will proceed with the amendments to the parking regulations. It is for both residential and commercial

Parking – residential lots 17.61.015, no vehicle shall be allowed to park on lawn or landscaped areas of the front yard. The previous ordinance adopted existing gravel in the front yard was proposed to be allowed only for residences that were established prior to July 25, 2011. The Commission felt that hard surfaces are ideal but would rather see cars parked on gravel instead of dirt. When a residence has 2 hard surfaces and gravels a third it has been allowed.

Parking spaces required 17.61.020 –

(1) Single family dwellings. The Commission again discussed whether a carport is comparable to a garage, as previously decided. They considered requiring a garage but not a carport in R-1, but eventually decided that a carport could substituted for a garage in any residential zone.

(2) Two-family dwellings in R-2, R-3 or R-4 zones. The Commission discussed the altered language eliminating the need for a garage and felt it was acceptable.

(17) As directed by the Commission last meeting, the schools were updated to one space for every six seats in the auditorium or assembly room, from one per 12 seats. In addition, high schools shall provide one space for each 6 students.

(23) As discussed by the Commission at the last meeting, parking for retail and service shops is proposed to be based on number of spaces per square foot of building, rather than total parking area compared to building area.

(25) Restaurants, taverns or bars: one space for each 100 square feet of gross floor area. That would include the food prep area. This would apply to any new construction or new occupancy use. The figure of one space per 100 square feet is found in multiple other codes, including Wenatchee, Richland, Pasco, and West Richland. Almost all codes reviewed were based on area, rather than number of chairs.

(26) Has rules for determining parking for new uses within existing buildings, as decided by the Planning Commission. The Commission had previously requested staff to review whether this decision in other communities was made by staff or the Planning Commission. Kennewick, Moses Lake, Spokane, Spokane Valley, and Yakima all have staff that makes this determination. The Planning Commission determined that the Community Development Director should make the determination, and that any that are too difficult or that are appealed can be brought to the Planning Commission.

Required loading space 17.61.080 was updated from ten-foot-by-twenty-five-foot loading space to twelve-foot-by-forty-foot. Loading space currently is too small for semi-trucks. On Broadway trucks park in the middle of the street and dolly the product across the street. Anything existing cannot be changed but for any new business they will have to increase their loading area.

Many codes include dimensional standards for the access aisle. This can prevent arguments with the developers or parking lots that are difficult for customers to use. Ms. Henning included an example from Spokane Valley. The Commission was in favor of including dimensions for access aisles in the parking code.

In residential areas, the Commissioners agreed it is more important to have off-street parking than to have a minimum area of the front yard landscaped.

**Action:** The motion to forward the changes made tonight, June 18, 2018 M/S Chris Dorow / Kevin Gilbert.

Next meeting will work on the ADU's. The commission would like to have the Police Chief and possibly the Fire Chief to help with the ADU's.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Having no other business at hand a motion was carried to adjourn the meeting at 8:04 pm M/S Kevin Gilbert / Brian Gentry

The next regular meeting is scheduled for July 16, 2018 at 6:00 pm.

By: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Terri Phillips, Planning Secretary

NOTE: These are abbreviated minutes that contain all motions and business conducted. These meetings are taped; a complete record of the minutes may be obtained by contacting the Planning Commission Office or a verbatim copy of these minutes can be ordered at the requestor's expense.