



Planning Commission

August 20, 2018

Anne Henning

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Roger Ensz called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

ROLL CALL

Commissioners: Chair Roger Ensz, Brian Gentry, Tari Perez

Absent: Chris Dorow, Kevin Gilbert

Staff: Community Development Director Anne Henning

Attendees: City Council member John Lallas; Todd McLaughlin, Avista; Jenn Stevenson, Old Hotel Art Gallery; Ethan Porter, Varela & Associates; Bob Carlson

Quorum Established.

APPROVAL OF JULY 16, 2018 PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

It was voted to accept the minutes from July 16, 2018 M/S Gentry/Ensz

OCHOA SHORT PLAT DEFERRAL REQUEST – RECOMMENDATION TO CITY COUNCIL

Avista Utilities applied for a 3-lot short plat at the corner of Lee Road and 7th Avenue. Because there will not be any development at this time, Avista has requested to defer the street and utility improvements required as part of the platting process, as allowed by OMC 16.40.

Commissioners were in agreement that the improvements were not necessary now, and that it made sense to build the street as one larger project sometime in the future when the improvements were needed, with the property owner paying their share as guaranteed by a covenant running with the land. The Commission found that the nature of the surrounding area, with incomplete development of abutting streets and utilities, made strict compliance with the improvement requirements of Title 16, Subdivisions, an unusual and unnecessary hardship on the developer. It will be a better outcome for the developer and the public to have the improvements constructed as part of a larger project, rather than half-street improvements now.

Action: Mr. Ensz moved to recommend to City Council to approve the street and utility deferral, with the condition that a covenant be attached guaranteeing the improvements in the future. Seconded by Mr. Gentry. Passed unanimously.

CREATING A LOCAL HISTORIC PROPERTIES LIST – CITIZEN REQUEST

Jenn Stevenson, Director of the Old Hotel Art Gallery, requested that the Planning Commission consider and adopt a local list of historic properties. Ms. Stevenson stated that many grants ask whether the property is on a local historic register. Currently, she has to answer “no” because there is no local list. Being able to check “yes” would improve her chances of acquiring grants for the property. She proposed that it be only a list, that there would not be any conditions, covenants, or restrictions related to being

on the list. Criteria for being on the list would be: More than 50 years old and having significance to the community.

Mr. Gentry asked if an owner could decline to be on the list. Ms. Stevenson said yes, but the owners would need to be notified their property was being considered for the list. Mr. Ensz asked if restrictions on the properties could be added after the list was created. Mrs. Stevenson said yes, but only the Planning Commission or Council could add conditions. Ms. Perez asked what would happen if a building on the list were changed. Ms. Stevenson gave the example of McCain Foods, which has many buildings built at different times. Being on the list only means there is at least one historic building on the site. She also mentioned that being on the State register put conditions on remodeling a property, and being on the national register put even more restrictions, but she didn't want the local register to put any restrictions on the properties. If a building were demolished, it would just be removed from the list. She said many people don't know the history of the various buildings, so it would be nice to have more information available. Eventually, maybe there could be a walking tour that would include some of the local historic buildings.

The Commission determined that each owner should be notified of possible inclusion in the local list. Ms. Stevenson was willing to send a letter to each of them, and will provide the responses received to the Building and Planning Department about once a month.

Mr. Ensz stated that 36 Larch Street, built in 1908, was missing from the list. There was consensus that it should be added. This led to discussion about how to add properties. The Commission determined Ms. Stevenson should come up with a process to add properties to the list.

Action: Mr. Gentry moved to approve the formation of a local list of historic properties, with no restrictions to be applied to properties on the list. Seconded by Mr. Ensz. Motion passed unanimously.

MUNICIPAL CODE CHANGES

Ms. Henning reported that there were a few minor errors in the Sign regulations, OMC 14.58, so those corrections will be considered by the Council at their next meeting.

Ms. Henning presented the Planning Commission's recommended Off-Street Parking amendments, OMC 17.61, at the last Council meeting. The Council requested some changes, which will be considered at the next Council meeting. Changes included adding a covenant if the parking lot was not required to be paved, not accepting a carport in place of a garage, adding language to address stormwater when the owner was allowed to connect to the City system, and increasing the size of a parking space to 25' when accessed from an alley. Mr. Ensz stated he felt a setback from the alley was more appropriate than increasing the length of a parking space. He suggested a setback of 8' to 10' from an alley.

Accessory Dwelling Units were also proposed to the City Council, but the Council was not in favor so those proposed regulations were not adopted. John Lallas, Councilmember, stated the Council wanted to see better enforcement of the existing non-conforming units before any new ones were allowed. He felt that ADUs were more appropriate in R-3 and R-4, rather than R-2.

RESIDENTIAL ZONE UPDATE

Since it seems likely that residential zoning will soon be a topic for discussion, the Planning Commission is continuing their review of the Municipal Code by addressing the residential zones next. Staff provided a draft with all residential zones in one chapter, to reduce duplication of repeated elements across

zones, and provide better consistency of uses and standards between zones. Currently, there are inconsistencies, conflicts, and illogical differences between the various residential zones. The Commission had the following comments on the draft OMC 17.20 Residential Zones that was provided:

- R-M Residential-Medical and S-1 Suburban have very limited applicability. Maybe these zones can be eliminated to simplify the code.
- The Commissioners proposed that the existing 3 houses along 14th Avenue currently zoned R-M be rezoned to R-1. The remaining medical and care facilities should not be rezoned Commercial, since that would open it up to any commercial use. The Commission will come back to this issue later.
- Ms. Henning will try to find out the history of the S-1 Zone to help in determining whether the S-1 Zone can be deleted.
- The R-3 Zone currently restricts one-family dwellings to no more than one story, although they are allowed to be two-story in R-1, R-2, and R-4. The Commission did not think there should be a difference.
- All zones had a provision allowing “zero lot line construction (two lots, two homes)”. This provision has not been used, and seems unlikely in the near future. If this development pattern becomes useful in the future, it can be added back into the code then.
- R-2 and R-3 currently specify a one-hour fire wall for duplexes, but R-4 doesn’t. This requirement is in the building code (International Residential Code) anyway so doesn’t need to be duplicated in the zoning code.
- Currently, duplex, triplex, four-plex, and multi-family all specify that they shall not be offered for rental on a shorter than month-to-month basis. No one knew the history of the requirement.
- The Commission discussed adopting vacation rental standards in the future.
- Rental of an apartment appurtenant to a single-family residence is currently a conditional use in R-2 and R-4, but unmentioned in R-3. For consistency, it will be added to R-3.
- The R-4 zone currently lists the following under one provision as allowed: boardinghouse, bed and breakfast, group home, bunk house, hostel, dormitory, licensed care facility, resort, timeshare condominium, and lodging house (provided no more than 50% of available accommodations, whether rooms or beds in any of these residential uses shall be occupied on a rental term of monthly or longer at any time). The Commission felt that “licensed care facility” did not fit with the other uses, and is already addressed under the provision for nursing home, convalescent homes, etc.
- The Commission thought that golf courses and mini-golf were no longer appropriate in residential zones. The amount of residential land available is very limited, so it should be conserved for residential uses.
- A library is currently listed as an allowed use in R-4, and therefore a conditional use in R-3. The feeling was that Othello is small enough that there will only be one library, and it is in a commercial zone.
- A museum was felt to be slightly different from other commercial uses, since there might be places or homes with historical significance in the future, such as if someone who later became famous was born in Othello. For that reason, the Commission wanted a museum to be a conditional use in any of the residential zones.
- R-M and R-4 had different statements relating to nursing homes, etc. The R-M statement was more concise so will be used for both.
- The R-4 zone currently allows the office of a physician, dentist, or other licensed health care professional in his or her dwelling. The Commission was not aware of any home medical offices currently existing in Othello, and found it unlikely that there would be in the future. This seems

a dated regulation that will be removed. Ms. Perez brought up licensed massage therapy, which is sometimes run out of the therapist's home. However, massage therapy is specifically allowed in the home occupation chapter, so does not need a line item in the residential zones.

- Currently, churches, schools, and municipal buildings are listed as allowed uses, rather than conditional uses, but require a public hearing and approval by the Planning Commission and Council. The Commission agreed that conditional use made the most sense for these uses.
- Parks and playgrounds were listed in some zones as allowed, in some as conditional, and were not mentioned in other zones. The Commission felt they should be conditional uses in all residential zones.
- The Commission had some concerns about the agricultural uses allowed in the S-1 Zone. They will review these, especially the livestock provisions, in their later review of this new chapter.
- Although nurseries and greenhouses are specifically prohibited in the current R-4 Zone, the Commission felt it did not need to be a line item on the use table.
- The Commission felt that the current provision allowing "private clubs and facilities, not including those that furnish alcohol nor those whose chief activity is a service customarily carried on as a business" seemed dated and inapplicable.
- Rather than prohibiting all signage, the Commission thought a small amount of signage should be allowed for day care facilities for more than 12 children were being operated out of homes. The Commission wondered how many such facilities currently exist. Staff will research.
- The Commission will review the rest of the chapter, starting with Table 2: Development Standards, next time.

PARKING STANDARDS

Jenn Stevenson asked about the changes for parking for a high school. She stated that it would not be appropriate to require an increase based on both the size of an auditorium and the number of students, since non-school activities in the auditorium would only be after school. There would not be an overlap, so there wouldn't need to be parking for both uses at the same time. She also asked what level of improvement to a building would trigger improvement of a parking lot. Staff will try to clarify this in the regulations going to Council next week.

ADJOURNMENT

Having no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:10 pm. Next scheduled meeting is September 17, 2018.

By: _____ Date: _____
Anne Henning, Community Development Director