

CITY OF FIFE
PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES OF MEETING

Fife City Hall

April 6, 2009
7:00 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER –

The Planning Commission meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm with the following present:

Commissioners: Chairman Jim Call, Donald Alveshere, Doug Fagundes, Richard Garchow, Fred Thomas, and Shannon Thornhill

Excused Absence: Jeff Brown

Staff present: Planner 1 Chris Pasinetti, Code Enforcement Officer Chris Larson, and Senior Administrative Assistant Katie Bolam.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES –

Minutes of February 2, 2009, meeting: CEO Larson clarified the vote as recorded in the minutes regarding the Sign Code Recommendation, and read the code verbiage that the vote resulted in. Commissioners agreed that it met the intention of the commission. Commissioner Thomas moved to accept the minutes of Feb 2, 2009; Commissioner Call seconded. The vote passed 6-0.

Minutes of March 2, 2009 meeting: Commissioner Thomas moved, seconded by Commissioner Alveshere, to accept the minutes of Mar 2, 2009. The vote passed 6-0.

NEW BUSINESS

a. Abbreviated Short Course in Local Planning, with guest speaker, Phil Olbrechts

Planner Pasinetti introduced land attorney Phil Olbrechts. Mr. Olbrechts gave a presentation including the history of planning in the state of Washington, beginning with the subdivision code, the introduction of zoning laws, and the Appearance of Fairness doctrine. He explained the result of the open government legislations from the 1970's, including the Public Records Request, open public meetings, SEPA (and the importance of the EIS), and the SMP (Shoreline Mgmt Plan). Then, he showed that the zoning laws were still just optional until 1990, with the passing of the Growth Management Act, bringing a need for concurrency. This opened up a short discussion of Fife's Level of Service (LOS) standard, which is adopted as a 'D', for many intersections. GMA also brought Urban Growth Areas and the attempt to clarify the "Bright Line Rule", as well as the need for Critical Areas Ordinances, generally utilizing "Best Available Science". The Regulatory Reform Act of 1995 made way for the 120-day time period we work with today, and the allowance of only 1 public hearing.

Mr. Olbrechts then spoke on the importance of open public discourse any time there is a Quorum – including parking lot gatherings, phone call chains, and emails.

Commissioner Garchow asked what happens if a community doesn't follow the guidelines set for under the GMA. Mr. Olbrechts answered that the hearings board can invalidate any actions made by the city outside of those guidelines; they can withhold funding; and future funding may be made unavailable.

At 8:05, Chairman Call called for a break. The meeting reconvened at 8:17.

OLD BUSINESS

a. Development Design Standards for the CMU Zone

Planner Pasinetti presented the Development Design Standards reviewed in the past by the commission in list format, requesting one final review to determine the level of priority that the commission would like to assign to each item, in an effort to streamline the final code language. As he led them through the list, there was discussion, as well as some confusion as to the purpose at hand; Commissioner Thomas stated that we've already determined that we do want these things for the CMU zone and that the code is not too long or burdensome; Chairman Call agreed, stating that it is already straight forward. Planner Pasinetti explained by using a couple examples that the code could be interpreted as vague in places and that, before tightening it up and sending it to legal, staff wants to be sure and maintain the integrity of items of most importance to the commission. Discussion then ensued, resulting with three items determined to be best represented as an incentive; all other list items are considered high-priority items to be required by developers. Items to be incentivized are:

- Pedestrian amenities – decorative lighting features (standard lighting is a requirement); benches, trash cans, drinking fountains, etc.
- Window Design – likes the idea of encouraging variation, but stops short of wanting to force this
- Pedestrian art – commissioners would like to be a strong incentive, just shy of a requirement

STAFF REPORT

a. Council approval of Wapato Creek study

Planner Pasinetti pointed out the approval of City Council for a study of Wapato Creek, for the ultimate purpose of restoring the creek. Commissioner Thornhill asked about the wisdom of the decision at a time when the city is not hiring more police. Planner Pasinetti explained that there are different budgets and allocated funding for different items, such as public safety; also, this study, by Natural Design Systems, is only \$7,000.

Planner Pasinetti also made quick mention of the upcoming 2010 census, and the necessity of Fife to form a Complete Count Committee, a group of elected officials, staff and citizenry interested in encouraging residents to complete the census form and in a timely manner.

PROFESSIONAL INTEREST ITEMS

No discussion

ADJOURNMENT

Commissioner Thomas moved, seconded by Commissioner Fagundes, to adjourn the meeting at 9:57 p.m. Motion carried 6-0.