PLANNING COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING MINUTES
Community Center
1808 Main Street, Lake Stevens
Wednesday, April 4, 2018

CALL TO ORDER: 7:02 pm by Chair Janice Huxford

MEMBERS PRESENT: Jennifer Davis, Karim Ali, Vicki Oslund, Tracey Trout and Linda Hoult

MEMBERS ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Community Development Director Russ Wright and Senior Planner Josh Machen

OTHERS PRESENT: Councilmember McDaniel, Councilmember Petershagen arrived later in the meeting

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Excused Absence: None

Guest business. None

Action Items:

1. Commissioner Hoult made a motion Commissioner Ali seconded to approve the March 21, 2018 minutes. 6-0-0-0.

Public Hearing:

PC Chair Opens Meeting - Commissioner Huxford asked for a motion to open the public hearing for LUA2018-0007 Final Plat Authority.

Staff Presentation Senior Planner Machen gave a background on Final Plat Authority amendment. This will streamline the process of final plat approval, which is simply the implementation of the regulations and conditions reviewed at Preliminary Plat that was subject to a public hearing. This amendment is consistent with Senate Bill 5674 that has been passed.

Commissioner's questions for staff- Chairperson Huxford inquired on public process for noticing new developments. Senior Planner Machen explained standard process, including posting, publication, public meeting and mailing of postcards. Senior Planner Machen described the steps that happen next, City staff review as well as partner agencies. The City issues environmental review which may include a second public comment/appeal period. Additionally, there is a notice of Public Hearing.for the hearing before the Hearing Examiner. The Hearing Examiner makes the final determination on the preliminary plat, which is the appealable step in the process. Final Plat is an administrative function to ensure conditions of approval are met and construction is completed.
Commissioner Oslund asked what other cities are doing in regards to this, in which Senior Planner Machen that several cities are following this process.

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Commissioner Ali made a motion to open the Public Hearing and Commissioner Davis seconded.
Proponent's comments- none

Comments from the audience- Richard Todd asked the Commission to show some independence in their decision. This is taking out and important step in public process. He questions what this proposal is meant to do. Sally Jo Sebring is not in favor of this proposed change. She believes changes are made after preliminary decisions are made and we'd be denying an additional chance for public comment. She thinks there is political pressure to make decisions. If this goes into effect the Community Development Director and the Public Works Director will be making the final call. She said we don't have qualified Public Works staff to do reviews and determinations, as we don't have any Civil Engineers on staff. Ms. Sebring also states that by going from a Type V to a Type I permit, that there will be no comment period. Her final remark is that Snohomish County decided to change to administrative process but to keep the public comment portion of the process.

Angie Sievers is a proponent from the Master Builder Association. She stated the State legislature did not intend for there to be any reduction in public comment. Its goal is to streamline the final plat approval process. She stated that Lake Stevens is known through Snohomish and King County as being thorough in the public process as knowledgeable and efficient. She also clarified that after all the comment period are closed staff has 30 days to review and process with the City Council.

Michele Hampton stated her initial reaction was one of nervousness. Now she understands that all decisions have been approved, council can't change at Final Plat without liability. She wonders if there could be broader notification to the public, a larger understanding of what is happening.

Proponent rebuttal comments – none

Comments from the audience- Mr. Todd spoke about Westlake Crossing. He has lived in this area for 30 years. He stated the Hearing Examiner ignored the information that had been presented to the City in 2014 regarding the w. The Hearing Examiner is paid by the City as well as the staff, how can we ignore the local knowledge of the residents that live there?

Proponent rebuttal comments – none

Close public comments portion of hearing by motion- Commissioner Hoult made a motion to close the public portion. Commissioner Ali seconded. The motion carried 6-0-0-0.

Commission Comments- Commissioner Davis remarked that the City staff is dedicated and ethical as civil servants. She commented that they are professional and she doesn't believe they buckle to political pressure. Commissioner Davis thanked the staff and audience. Commissioner Ali concurs. Commissioner Hoult is in favor of this amendment and asks that the public notice procedures be expanded. Senior Planner Machen clarified that while there is currently an opportunity for Public comments at the Final Plat presentation before the City Council, the City Council may not take the comment into consideration because the Final Plat approval is to be based on the closed record of the Hearing Examiner. Chair Huxford asked for clarification on Type I and Type V. Senior Planner Machen explained Type V has public comment and Type I has no public comment. Chair Huxford has further studied the process and now in favor of this amendment.

Commission Action-Commissioner Hoult made a motion to forward the Planning Commission's recommendation to City Council to approve the Final Plat Authority amendment. Commissioner Oslund seconded it. The motion carried 6-0-0-0.

Briefing: Senior Planner Machen gave a briefing on LUA2018-0034, Temporary Encampment Ordinance. WCIA audit found we didn't have any regulations. City Council has asked for some regulations to set in place. Mr. Machen doesn't think this will happen in Lake Stevens as we don't have services that would be helpful to those living in encampments. Chair Huxford asked what Staff needed tonight. Senior Planner Machen said this is a discussion tonight. Commissioner Ali asked can this happen in subdivisions. Mr. Machen clarified that this would be typically take place at churches or non-profits sites. Chair Huxford shared that logistically there is no way to support encampments. Commissioner Hoult clarified that this a request of our insurance company that has asked for in case, if and when, this becomes an issue. Planning Commission would like to take this to hearing with a right to modify.

Commissioner Reports

Chair Huxford reported that she attended the City Council.

Planning Director Report: Community Development Director Wright requested that the Planning Commission be ready to hold the second meeting of the month as we need to have public comments in several of the upcoming projects. He also reported there were 147 dwelling units built last year which is down from the prior year, but explained there is a cycle of building and plat development stages. There are 1700 dwelling units in the hopper and building will certainly be on the upswing.

Future Agenda Items

Downtown Subarea Plan

Adjourn. Motion to adjourn by Commissioner Hoult, seconded by Commissioner Ali. Motion carried 6-0-0-0. Meeting adjourned.

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Janice Huxford, Chair

Jennie Fenrich, Clerk, Planning & Community Development