

**MINUTES
OMAK PLANNING COMMISSION
ZOOM MEETING
JANUARY 4, 2022**

Call to Order:

Chairwoman Okland called the meeting of the Omak Planning Commission to order at 5:34PM and a quorum was established.

Commissioner & Administrative Personnel:

Stacey Okland, Chair	Kurt Danison, Contract Planner
Erin Mundinger	Tyler Wells, Building Official
Barry Hansen - absent	Connie Thomas, City Clerk
Anne Potter, Vice Chair	
Jack Schneider	

Elections:

Commissioner Mundinger moved, seconded by Commissioner Schneider to nominate Commissioner Okland as Chair and Commissioner Potter as Vice Chair for 2022. There was no discussion and, the Commission voted unanimously to approve the motion.

Approval of Minutes:

Commissioner Potter moved, seconded by Commissioner Mundinger to approve the minutes from October 5, 2021. As there were no comments, the Commissioners voted and unanimously approved the motion.

Commissioner Schneider moved, seconded by Commissioner Potter to approve minutes from December 7, 2021. Chairwoman Okland noted a grammatical correction, removing the word “that” in a sentence and confirming Commissioner Schneider said, “big toy” when referring to the playground at Meadow Point. As there were no additional comments or questions, the Commissioners voted and unanimously approved the motion with corrections.

Community & Economic Development Element

Contract Planner Kurt Danison shared his screen of the draft element. He explained that the important thing in the document is the vision statement and the goals and policies that go along with it. Commissioner Mundinger said that it was a good document and still applicable. Some of the items are outdated and she wondered if the goals set were achieved or implemented and questioned how those could be reflected in the document. There was discussion about incorporating tourism and agriculture into the vision statement. As the Commission reviewed each of the policies, updates were made to the draft document. There was discussion about the recent changes to law enforcement and the need to have a good mental health care system in our area. Policy 10 refers to the continued development of wood product industries. We no longer have wood industries but, Commissioner Mundinger said Zosel is still in operation and, the industry could occur in Omak in the future, so they left that in the policy. Policy 12 refers to promoting availability and skills of local workforce. Commissioner Schneider asked if the city reaches out to the school vocational department for job shadowing. Mr. Danison explained that it has happened in the past but relies on the school to initiate that. The city has participated in business week with Omak and Okanogan Schools. Commissioner Okland asked if there should be anything related to COVID or a pandemic. Emphasis was added to policy 8, as primary health care is important in our community. In policy 8. Additional policies were created for housing issues, infrastructure for internet, web consulting services, technology, and the

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expansion of broadband. Mr. Danison thanked the Commissioners for the great discussion, and he will update the draft with the changes discusses.

Cultural Preservation Element

Contract Planner, Kurt Danison asked the Commissioners to look over this element. He suggested a more in-depth conversation during the February 1, 2022, meeting.

Review & Discussion of Omak Municipal Code – Table 1, 18.16.020

In Table 1 of the Zoning Code, Contract Planner, Kurt Danison proposed amendments to the zoning code. One would be adding asterisks to the central and highway business districts. The asterisk reference, the requirement that residential development in these zoning districts would be the same as the RM zoning districts (e.g., setbacks, lower building height, lower lot coverage and density requirements).

The other proposed code change is having to do with duplexes in the single-family zone. He proposed a footnote, that duplexes are allowed outright on a lot with a certain number of square feet. He asked the Commissioners to think about the changes. If they have concerns about the impacts, he can determine how many lots will be affected. Commissioner Potter doesn't want to be so restrictive as to discourage mid-range housing in the community. Mr. Danison said he will prepare an analysis and have it available at the February meeting.

Mr. Wells explained about residential standards in a commercial zone. He said that property on Fourth Avenue is zoned highway business and there are no regulations for lot size. He would like to have minimum lot sizes in the code to reflect residential standards for residential developments.

Review & Discussion of Omak Municipal Code – Fences 18.16.100

Building Official Wells told the Planning Commission that, he receives questions about fences quite often. The Omak Municipal Code allows for a six-foot site obscuring fences limited to side and back yards. Most of the citizens have built their fences to code while there are others that have a six-foot fence along the front of their property. He explained that fencing may go up over a weekend and it's hard to request removal. He believes the main reason the code prohibits a six-foot fence in the front is because of emergency services. He said that it's important for emergency management services to see a situation they are coming into. He said the Municipal Code could potentially allow for a six-foot fence in the front yard with the approval of a variance. There was discussion amongst the Commissioners about a one time fine for a fence that was not built to code. Commission Schneider has a problem with a six-foot fence in front of a home. He expressed concerns about safety of law enforcement officers. There was also discussion about the aesthetics of a home with a six-foot fence and the potential to lower property values. Commission Schneider thought the enforcement of the code is the role of Code Enforcement. Commissioner Potter recalls the fence code was not drafted in a vacuum. The Planning Commission spent a lot of time looking at other cities policies and worked hard to draft the best code. The Commission asked if there would be support from Council if Code Enforcement requested the removal or modification of a fence that was not compliant. Commissioner Schneider said that he will support the city ordinance and stand by the ordinance as, the reasons outnumber the reasons of the citizens. The Planning Commission was unanimous that they adhere and uphold the ordinances and totally support Mr. Wells.

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Shorelines – Brief Update on Process

Contract Planner, Kurt Danison explained to the Commissioners that periodic updates of the Shoreline Master Program. There have been legislative changes since 2015 that effect the document and, the city has received grant funding to offset costs of the update. The Planning Commission will be reviewing the document, seeking community involvement using survey's, conducting workshops and eventually will hold a public hearing. The Planning Commission will be sending the Shoreline Master Program to City Council with a recommendation. He told the Commissioners that, the city has until June 2023 to complete this process.

Other Business:

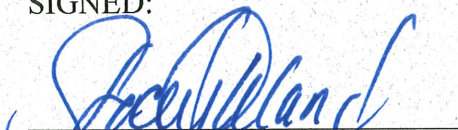
Discussion – Omak Municipal Code Interpretation – Use Classification

Building Official Wells explained to the Commissioners that there is interest in the facility at 715 Locust Street. This building has been vacant for about seven years and was formerly an assisted living facility. The property is zoned residential single family and a prohibits convalescent or nursing homes, retirement homes and allows a conditional use permit for a supported living facility. There was a long discussion about the current definitions in the Omak Municipal Code. All agreed the definitions were outdated. The Commissioner agreed that any form of assisted living in that building would not impact the neighborhood. The Commissioners agreed that definition of “Supported Living Arrangements” best fit the intended use and makes sense. They also agreed that, going through the conditional use process would allow the community and neighbors to weigh in and comment on the proposed use of the facility.

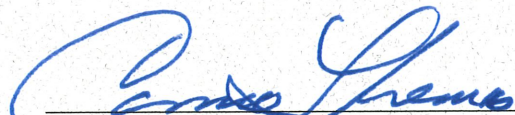
Mr. Wells brought to the Commissioner's attention an intent to annex property. This is a five-acre piece of land located on Jasmine Street. Council Committee and staff have discussed the application and have concerns as there is no sewer infrastructure in that area. He said the intent to annex may go to Council January 18th. Council will then decide to entertain the annexation petition or not. Once a formal petition to annex is submitted, the Planning Commission could be called upon to review and provide a recommendation to Council.

As there was no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:25 p.m.

SIGNED:



Stacey Okland, Chair



Connie Thomas, City Clerk

