

**GRANDVIEW CITY COUNCIL
STUDY SESSION MINUTES
MAY 19, 2008**

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Norm Childress called the study session to order at 6:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers at City Hall.

Present were: Mayor Norm Childress and Councilmembers Mike Bren, Pam Horner, Jan McDonald, Bill Moore, Jesse Palacios and Joan Souders

Staff present were: City Administrator Scott Staples, City Attorney Jack Maxwell, City Clerk Anita Palacios, and Senior Planner Drew Miller of the Yakima Valley Conference of Governments

Planning Commissioners present were: Chairman Don Olmstead, Jr., John Hunting, Brad Shreeve, Kathy Gonzalez and Dennis Byam.

2. ZONING CODE REVIEW

City Administrator Staples explained that the Planning Commission was beginning the process of reviewing the zoning code, which was a major step to implementing the Land Use Element of the Comprehensive Plan. The purpose of the joint meeting was for Council to provide policy direction to staff and the Planning Commission in terms of the revisions to the zoning code.

Senior Planner Miller identified residential zoning as a key issue of the zoning code review. He explained that the Planning Commission spent considerable time at their last meeting reviewing residential zoning and discussing the need to create additional residential zones having different options available for developers. The Planning Commission felt that the current R-1 single-family residential zone needed to be diversified and have different options. Two new residential zone options discussed at length were:

1. Smaller lots that allow for increased site coverage to include additional off-street parking and communal open space with less landscaping to be maintained by homeowner.
2. Larger lots with larger homes (show homes). For this zone, the minimum floor area should be above 2,000 square feet to ensure larger homes were constructed. Develop incentive options or customized development regulations for high-end residential development within the City (i.e., narrower streets less than 60' standard with no sidewalks in appropriate low traffic residential zones, downsized water and sewer lines, etc.).

Mayor Childress questioned the definition of a small lot zone.

Senior Planner Miller explained that currently 7,000 square feet was the minimum R-1 single family residential lot size. Several comments were received from staff that the minimum lot size needed to be increased. Compared to similar communities, Grandview's minimum lot size was a little small, but the idea was to decrease the lot size smaller than 7,000. The key facet of a small lot zone was to increase the allowable site coverage and incorporate landscaping standards.

Commissioner Olmstead added that by decreasing the allowable site coverage in the small lot zone, the home would set further back on the lot creating additional off-street parking with less front and back yard. The zone would also require developers to build a communal park within the neighborhood.

Councilmember Horner liked the idea of creating smaller lots for retirees.

Mayor Childress cautioned that the setbacks need to be adequate enough to accommodate a fire truck.

Councilmember Palacios indicated the need to increase the minimum lot size of the R-1 single family residential zone from 7,000 square feet to a minimum of 8,000 square feet to have room for large families and additional vehicles.

Councilmember Bren expressed concern that by raising the minimum lot size above 7,000 square feet, the City would discourage development due to the expense of constructing infrastructure at current standards. He added that there was a need for smaller lot sizes for first time home buyers.

Commissioner Shreeve asked for Council's opinion regarding allowing incentives to developers to encourage large lot development such as a narrower street in an area with a community recreational area or other different concepts.

Commissioner Olmstead added that the idea was to create a large lot zone with narrower streets and no sidewalks that required three to four off-street parking spaces per lot and no on-street parking such as in a cul-de-sac neighborhood. Sidewalks would be required on feeder streets. The developer would also be allowed to downsize water and sewer lines due to less people per square foot. The City needed to figure out a way to allow development of a large lot zone that was affordable for purchasers and profitable for developers.

Mayor Childress expressed concern with customized development regulations such as narrower streets with no sidewalks and used the Westridge subdivision as an example of an area that was constructed with no sidewalks adjacent to a school. Eventually, the burden of constructing sidewalks shifts from the developer to the City, which then becomes an expense for the City and poses right-of-way issues, etc.

Councilmember Moore suggested the requirement of two-story homes in the small lot zone to accommodate a large family, additional parking, etc.

Councilmember McDonald liked the small and large lot zone concepts being proposed.

Commissioner Gonzalez stated that the goal should be to provide affordable housing for the community to keep our residents from moving away.

Councilmember Bren favored the small lot zone for either young couples or retirees as it was an opportunity for home ownership and felt the City needed more starter homes.

Mayor Childress concluded that if the Council encourages development of zones with starter homes, it was important the valuation of the home and lot break even with the cost to provide city services so that the rest of the community was not subsidizing that home.

Senior Planner Miller questioned the Council's desire to incorporate landscaping standards in the zoning code. He explained that landscaping requirements were typically a percentage of new development depending upon the zone. A commercial zone might be three or four percent.

Mayor Childress favored landscaping standards, but cautioned that they not be burdensome to stymie development.

Councilmembers Horner and McDonald also supported landscaping standards as it adds beauty and value to the whole community.

Commissioner Olmstead noted the importance of incorporating landscaping requirements in the smaller lot zone so that the developer creates a nice subdivision.

Councilmember Bren stated that developers should be required to install grass and underground sprinkler systems as a minimum standard.

Councilmember Souders indicated that landscaping standards need to be uniform in both the front and back yards.

Senior Planner Miller also recommended amending the zoning code to allow for wineries and mini-storage facilities in the commercial zone. He suggested that a table of permitted adjacent land uses be created to ensure adequate buffers were provided for different intensities of land uses.

Following discussion, staff was instructed to obtain zoning codes from other cities and research the positive approaches and negative ramifications that have occurred with their implementation of new zoning codes, including minimum lot sizes.

Staff was also instructed to research landscaping standards of other communities and the percentage requirement for the industrial, commercial and residential development.

3. ADJOURNMENT

The study session adjourned at 6:55 p.m.

Mayor Norm Childress

Anita Palacios, City Clerk

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