

**GRANDVIEW CITY COUNCIL
STUDY SESSION MINUTES
MAY 17, 2010**

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 Childress and Councilmembers Mike Bren, Pam Horner, Diana Jennings, Bill Moore, Jesse Palacios and Javier Rodriguez. Councilmember Joan Souders was absent.

Staff present were: Interim City Administrator Cus Arteaga, City Attorney Jack Maxwell and City Clerk Anita Palacios.

Also present was Shawn Conrad, Senior Planner with the Yakima Valley Conference of Governments.

2. GMC TITLE 17 ZONING CODE UPDATE

Senior Planner Conrad presented the following staff report regarding consideration of Title 17 Zoning Code updates:

Background

On May 3, 2010, City Council considered updates to the Title 17 Zoning Code. Discussion of the proposed updates resulted in Council recommendations for further revisions by staff. In addition, Council requested that staff research the potential implications of an increased minimum lot size for the R-1 (Low Density Residential District) zone.

Zoning Code Revisions

Requested revisions, which were addressed in the current Title 17 draft, included:

- Correct references to the R-3 zone, which should read “high density” rather than “medium density.”
- Revise the definition of “Family” (Section 17.12.195) to include reference to building and housing code regulation of the number of people per unit area allowed in a dwelling.
- Revise the definition of “Group Home” (Section 17.12.215) to explicitly include boarding homes and adult family homes.
- Add a “reasonable accommodations process” to ensure that group homes falling under the purview of fair housing laws have a process by which they may petition to have more than five unrelated individuals in a licensed group home or other Title 17 exceptions.

Additional revisions being proposed by staff at this time included:

- Adding a special permit requirement for all adult use businesses.
- Various revisions for document consistency and clarity.

Consideration of Increased Minimum Lot Size: R-1 District

The R-1 minimum lot size in the current Grandview Title 17 was 7,000 square feet (0.16 acres). The revised R-1 minimum lot size as part of the Title 17 update was proposed as 7,200 square feet (0.17 acres) to bring it in line with the minimum area requirements of similar zones in surrounding jurisdictions. Concerns were raised about the desirability of lots this size given the

tendency toward large families and overcrowding in Grandview. Staff was asked to research the potential implications of an increased minimum lot size for the R-1 district.

According to the Grandview Comprehensive Plan, the R-1 district was by far the largest existing zone in the City, with approximately 545 developed and 76 undeveloped acres. The Comprehensive Plan also projected the City would require another 264 acres of new R-1 zoned residential development by 2025. Therefore, any changes to the minimum lot size in the R-1 district would affect a very large amount of future residential development.

The primary consideration of a modest increase in minimum lot size in the R-1 district (for example, to 8,000 square feet, or .18 acres), was residential affordability; and related to that, housing vacancy rates. Currently, according to the Grandview Comprehensive Plan, 40% of Grandview households were considered unaffordable as of the 2000 Census, pointing to a need for housing that was affordable to a larger percentage of the population. Larger minimum lot sizes would cost more and could price some buyers out of the market. Larger minimum lot sizes could also reduce the financial feasibility of subdivision development by decreasing density. In addition, as of the 2000 Census, the Grandview vacancy rates for homes was 5.8%. However, for for-sale homes, the vacancy rate was only 2.3%. Housing studies indicate that a vacancy rate of 4.2% to 5% was desirable to provide both free movement in the market and adequate housing maintenance practices. A very low vacancy rate for for-sale homes means that competition in the marketplace would result in higher home prices. This could prevent some residents from moving out of multifamily dwellings and into single-family dwellings, or it could discourage residents desiring single-family homes from moving into Grandview.

Overcrowding was also a concern in Grandview. The Comprehensive Plan cites Census statistics showing that overcrowding in Grandview was almost double the rate found Countywide, and more than four and a half times the rate found statewide. Overcrowding in Grandview increased from 8.3% in 1980 to 22% as of the 2000 Census. Overcrowding generally results from economic conditions and a lack of affordable housing. With Grandview's very low vacancy rate for for-sale homes, increasing the minimum lot size in the R-1 district could have the effect of exacerbating overcrowding rather than relieving it. Efforts to increase the vacancy rate through a larger supply of for-sale homes, which would reduce market competition, combined with provisions or incentives that make housing affordable to a larger percentage of the Grandview population, would likely go further to relieve overcrowded conditions.

Review Process

After completing its review of the Title 17 Zoning Code amendments, the Grandview City Council would conduct a formal public hearing on the proposed zoning code amendments. The official zoning map of the City would also need to be amended to reflect zoning district reclassifications; this may be done concurrently with the Title 17 zoning code text amendments or may be tabled to a later date. Prior to adoption of code amendment, both environmental SEPA review and 60-day state review by the Washington State Department of Commerce were required.

Findings & Conclusions

1. The Title 17 Zoning Code amendments adequately incorporate changes made to the adopted 2006 City of Grandview Comprehensive Plan.
2. The City of Grandview has sufficient water, sewer and street capacity for the proposed Title 17 Zoning Code amendments.

3. The City of Grandview would initiate official zoning map changes to reflect zoning district reclassifications and administrative rezones.
4. Environmental SEPA review as required by RCW 43.21C would be conducted prior to official adoption of any Title 17 Zoning Code amendments.
5. Mandatory 60-day state review by the Washington State Department of Commerce would be conducted prior to official adoption of any Title 17 Zoning Code amendments.
6. The public use and interest would be served by adopting the proposed 2009 Title 17 Zoning Code amendments.

Recommendation

The Yakima Valley Conference of Governments, acting as staff for the City of Grandview, recommended that the Grandview City Council adopt the findings of fact and recommended the proposed Title 17 Zoning Code update for adoption by the Grandview City Council subsequent to a formal public hearing.

Discussion

- Amend Off-Street Parking Section 17.78.030(4) to read “The parking area in the single family residential district may be used for off-street parking for not more than four (4) cars.”
- Include definition of modular home in Chapter 17.12 Definitions.
- Obtain input from local developers regarding the consideration to increase minimum lot size in the R-1 District from 7,000 square feet to 7,500 square feet.

3. ADJOURNMENT

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

Mayor Norm Childress

Anita Palacios, City Clerk