

CITY OF SEATAC
PLANNING COMMISSION
Minutes of December 3, 2013
Regular Meeting

Members Present: Daryl Tapio, Roxie Chapin, Tom Dantzler, Jim Adamack, Jim Todd
Members Absent: None

Staff present: Joe Scorcio, CED Director; Steve Pilcher, Planning Manager

1. Call to Order

Chairman Tapio called the meeting to order at 5:36 p.m.

2. Approve minutes of November 5, 2013 Meeting

Moved and seconded to approve the minutes as presented. Approved 5-0.

3. Public Hearing on Miscellaneous Code Amendments

Planning Manager Steve Pilcher presented the staff report, noting there were four separate code amendments under consideration: 1) raising SEPA categorical exemption thresholds; 2) eliminating a need for a biennial report regarding Accessory Dwelling Unit permitting activity; 3) altering public notification procedures; and 4) extending an allowance for the use of “economic stimulus signs.” He reviewed the required processes that had been used to notify both the general public and State agencies of these proposals. Mr. Pilcher then summarized each of the proposals.

Mr. Pilcher presented the Commission with three items of correspondence that were received regarding raising SEPA categorical exemption levels. A letter from the King County MasterBuilders recommended the City consider adopting the highest thresholds allowed by the State guidelines. A letter from the State Dept. of Transportation questioned whether the City had performed sufficient analysis to raise the thresholds, in terms of addressing potential traffic impacts to state facilities. In response, Public Works Director Tom Gut prepared a memorandum, indicating the changes would result in minimal changes during the critical PM peak hour travel period.

Chairman Tapio opened the hearing to public testimony at 5:42 p.m.

Earl Gipson testified that the City should at least produce one report regarding Accessory Dwelling Unit construction before the requirement is eliminated. He indicated this would be useful to determine issues of number of occupants, whether an owner still lived in the primary home, etc.

Mr. Gipson also testified that the Dept. of Transportation should not be intruding into City activities.

Jacklyn Sample of SeaTac, spoke in favor of increasing SEPA thresholds to the maximum allowed by the State guidelines. She also related a recent encounter with City Permit Center staff regarding obtaining a list of plumbers licensed to operate within the city limits.

Chairman Tapio closed the hearing to further public testimony at 5:50 p.m.

Commissioner Todd noted that Mr. Gipson's comments deserved consideration. In response, CED Director Scorcio noted that staff had done a quick query of the City's permit system and determined it is relatively easy to determine how many ADU permits have been issued. Planning Manager Pilcher noted that State law requires local jurisdictions to allow ADUs, so the amount of permits issued would primarily be for informational purposes only.

Moved and seconded to adopt the staff recommendation and eliminate the need for a biennial report on accessory dwelling unit permit activity. Passed 5-0.

The Commission then discussed economic stimulus signs. Commissioner Dantzler noted that the City should do what it can to stimulate economic activity.

Moved and seconded to adopt the staff recommendation to extend the time period in which economic stimulus signs may be used until December 31, 2015. Passed 5-0.

The Commission briefly discussed the proposed changes regarding public notification procedures.

Moved and seconded to adopt the staff recommendation concerning reducing the size of notification districts, notice boards, etc. Passed 5-0.

The Commission then discussed raising SEPA Categorical Exemption thresholds. Chairman Tapio inquired how the City might address the concerns raised by the State Department of Transportation.

CED Director Scorcio replied that it would be unusual for projects of the size under consideration to ever result in the need to collection of funds for transference to the State to mitigate impacts to the State highway system. Planning Manager Pilcher commented that in his previous work for the cities of Puyallup and Auburn (both with controlled access highways passing through their jurisdiction), he could not recall an instance of either city transferring impact fee revenues to the State.

Mr. Scorcio commented on the letter received from the MasterBuilders, noting that they typically favor higher thresholds.

Moved and seconded to adopt the higher categorical exemption thresholds as recommended by staff. Passed 5-0.

4. Planning Commission Reports.

None.

5. CED Director's Report

CED Director Scorcio reported that at the November 26th City Council meeting, the Council adopted the Interim Angle Lake Station Area Standards. They will go into effect on January 1, 2014. He also reported that the Comprehensive Plan amendments will be on the Council's December 10th consent agenda.

Mr. Scorcio noted that an amendment to the budget for 2014 will include funding for an online inspection module to be added to the City's permit system. If the Commission is interested, the staff can provide a demonstration of the TRAKiT system at an upcoming meeting.

6. Planning Commission Comments

The Commission discussed whether to meet on December 17th. Mr. Scorcio noted that in addition to a demonstration of TRAKiT, staff could also begin discussion of the recreational marijuana issue. The Commission agreed to meet in two weeks.

7. Adjournment

Moved and seconded to adjourn the meeting at 6:22 p.m. Passed 5-0.

.....