

**COLUMBIA CITY PLANNING COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING / WORKSHOP SESSION**  
1840 SECOND STREET AND VIA "ZOOM"  
DECEMBER 19, 2023 - 6:30 P.M.

**PLANNING**

**COMMISSIONERS:**

Barbara Gordon, Vice-Chair  
Coralee Aho  
Bill Amos  
Doug Calkins  
John Hansen  
Mark Stevens  
Chris Thurman\*

\*Denotes Commissioner absent

**STAFF:**

Lauren Scott, City Planner via Zoom  
Helen Johnson, Planning Administrative Assistant

**OTHERS:**

None

**MEETING TO ORDER:**

Vice-Chair Barbara called the meeting to order at 6:43 p.m.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

IT WAS MOVED (BILL) AND SECONDED (DOUG) TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 20, 2022 MEETING. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**CITIZEN INPUT AND REQUESTS:**

None.

**ELECTION OF OFFICERS:**

IT WAS MOVED (JOHN) AND SECONDED (CORALEE) TO APPOINT BARBARA GORDON AS PLANNING COMMISSION CHAIR. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

IT WAS MOVED (JOHN) AND SECONDED (CORALEE) TO APPOINT BILL AMOS AS PLANNING COMMISSION VICE-CHAIR. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

**PUBLIC HEARING:**

None.

**WELCOME NEW COMMISSIONERS:**

Each of the previous Commissioners introduced themselves and provided a brief history of themselves. New Commissioners John Hansen and Mark Stevens introduced themselves and expressed how they are looking forward to being able to give back to their community.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS/WORKSHOP SESSION:**

Barbara expressed concern about attendance by Planning Commissioners.

Barbara asked Lauren to introduce herself to the new Commissioners and then to start the review of her memo dated 12/14/2023 of proposed revisions to the Columbia City Development Code.

Lauren explained the proposed code changes being presented are things that staff has noticed over the past few year that need fixing, some areas of updates coming from State requirements and some areas we are asking for input on how to proceed.

The first discussion was related to the definition of alteration. This topic was discussed at length and decided we may need to do some additional research to help outline this a bit clearer, without adding too much detail. Barbara asked Lauren to bring some other examples to the next meeting.

The remaining definitions were discussed and approved.

The next main area discussed at length was the three current residential zones. It was discussed R-1 and R-2 zones are almost identical and both have a minimum lot size of 10,000 sq. ft. The R-1 zone lots are mostly at 10,000 sq. ft., where a lot of the older R-2 zoned lots especially in lower Columbia City were originally platted at 5,000 sq. ft., which results in a lot of non-conforming situations. And creates hardships for both staff and property owners looking to make alterations when they have a lot size standard that is double to what the lot actually is and makes it almost impossible to expand.

The Commission discussed at length the consideration of the different minimum lots sizes per zone and what changes to make if any. There was discussion about looking into or considering overlays to certain areas that would bring non-conforming situations at least to a conforming status. Also discussed was adding additional residential zone levels in-between the 10,000 and 2,500 sq. ft. minimums currently outlined. It was agreed to table this part of the review until our next meeting as additional review, research and discussion is needed. Barbara made the request to have the zone names potentially changed so that they coordinate with the lot size requirement making a clearer distinction between the different zones.

It was agreed that under the R-1 zone to add in the building height restriction, not to exceed twenty-four (24) feet. It had been accidentally eliminated in a previous code amendment.

It was also agreed to remove E. from under the R-1 zone section of development standards, which discusses accessory buildings. There is now Chapter 7.111 in the Development Code outlining the standards. It was supposed to have been removed in a previous code revision, but was missed.

The next meeting will begin review on page 5 with the R-2 Zoning section of Lauren's memo of proposed changes.

Lauren and Helen asked the Commission to make notes of any changes they suggest and/or come across when they are working in the code or talking with community members and send them to Helen in advance of the next meeting.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

The Commissioners discussed the concerns about trees and utilities lines and how they affect the views of property owners in Columbia City and how can we look at helping protect the views. Helen

encouraged Commissioners to research other communities and how they handle this concern. Lauren also stated she will talk with colleagues within her firm.

Helen stated the next scheduled date for the meeting is on Tuesday, January 16, 2024 at 6:30 p.m. and requested no longer doing meetings by Zoom.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Meeting adjourned at 8:39 p.m.

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Barbara Gordon  
Planning Commission Chair

Attest by:

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Helen K Johnson  
Planning Administrative Assistant