

**COLUMBIA CITY PLANNING COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING / WORKSHOP SESSION  
1840 SECOND STREET  
SEPTEMBER 17, 2024 - 6:30 P.M.**

**PLANNING**

**COMMISSIONERS:**

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

\*Denotes Commissioner absent

**STAFF:**

Lauren Scott, City Planner  
Helen Johnson, Planning Administrative Assistant

**OTHERS:**

None

**MEETING TO ORDER:**

Chair Barbara called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

None.

**CITIZEN INPUT AND REQUESTS:**

None.

**PUBLIC HEARING:**

None.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS/WORKSHOP SESSION:**

Lauren started with discussion of the Floodplain topic and reminded Commissioners from the last meeting, that she and Helen attended the FEMA webinar. She provided some history behind the reasons FEMA is requiring changes in floodplain management and protection endangered species.

She explained during the webinar it became clear Cities must select and implement one of three Pre-Implementation Compliance Measures (PICM) by December 1<sup>st</sup> of this year. Lauren explained this has created a lot of push back all over Oregon because of our land use laws and noticing requirements. The approaching deadline doesn't allow staff time to digest the information and present to Planning Commissions and City Councils.

Lauren reviewed the three options given, which were no development in flood hazard areas, implementation of FEMA's model code, which she stated was not available at the time of the webinar but was released mid-August, or require a habitat assessment on a permit by permit basis, which the property owner or their representative would have to provide to the City. FEMA also stated if cities didn't

provide a different PICM the default would be a permit by permit approach effective on the deadline date. Lauren expressed her concerns about who would have the qualifications to review a habitat assessment. She stated she isn't a biologist and would not be confident in reviewing the required assessment.

Lauren also said Oregon DLCD intends to issue an FAQ, but has not yet seen anything come through.

Barbara asked what happens if we don't have anything in place by the deadline, will there be fines issued. Lauren explained that it could jeopardize the City's status with the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP).

Lauren stated her initial review of the model code brought up concerns with wording and other adjustments would be needed. She felt the biggest concern was the reference to a riparian buffer zone outlined as 170 feet horizontally on each side of the body of water from the high water mark. Using this measurement would include the entire lot of most of our properties adjacent to the river.

Commissioners and staff discussed the different options at length and what should be the City's next step. It was agreed to recommend the City Council put a moratorium on any new development in the floodplain area for 6 months until the City has an opportunity to better understand the different options associated with the PICM.

IT WAS MOVED (BILL) AND SECONDED (CHRIS) TO RECOMMEND CITY COUNCIL PLACE A 180 DAY MORATORIUM FOR NEW DEVELOPMENT IN THE FLOOD HAZARD OVERLAY ZONE EFFECTIVE DECEMBER 1<sup>ST</sup>, 2024. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Commissioners and staff started to review and discuss the proposed Development Code amendments in red and the FEMA Model Ordinance changes for Floodplain in blue of City's Chapter 7.75 Flood Hazard Overlay. It was decided the blue changes coming from FEMA's model ordinance would not be addressed at this time. It was agreed to move forward with the proposed red changes to the Development Code as they adequately outline previously suggested changes.

Lauren discussed the proposed Development Code amendments for Chapters 7.10 Introduction through Chapter 7.35 Administration pointing out some discussion areas she and Helen worked on since our last meeting, including:

- Removing 7.10.030 History as it is outdated and not a necessary part of code
- Removing 7.10.060 Pre-existing Approvals as it is no longer applicable
- Removing 7.10.070 C. as it is duplicative and less comprehensive than as referenced in Chapter 7.35
- Removing 7.10.100 Exceptions for Existing Lots because there are many legally non-conforming developments within the city and are not just limited to lots created prior to May 17, 1978
- Correction to the word used in 7.10.120 B. from insure to ensure
- Multiple adjustments in the Definitions Chapter 7.25 were reviewed
- Adding RCE to 7.30.010 Abbreviated Designation for River Club Estates
- Updating 7.30.030 D. to correctly reflect process, as the ordinance numbers and initials of the City Administrator on not outlined on the face of the zoning map

Staff and Commissioners discussed that at the next meeting they would plan to present and review the remaining chapters of the proposed Code Development changes in a similar layout and format as this evening and hopefully be able to complete the review so that notice and public hearings could be scheduled.

With all Commissioners present, it was again discussed if they wanted to consider changing the regular meeting date for the Planning Commission. It was agreed to not make any changes at this time.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

Next meeting will be on Tuesday, October 15, 2024 at 6:30 p.m. to discuss the remaining chapters of the proposed Development Code changes.

November's meeting date was also discussed and the normally scheduled date of November 19<sup>th</sup> would not work as Helen will be on vacation. It was decided if a meeting is necessary, it would be on Tuesday, November 12, 2024 at 6:30 p.m.

The regular meeting date for December will be Tuesday, December 17, 2024 at 6:30 p.m. and the goal is to have the public hearing for the proposed Development Code changes that night. Then the City Council's public hearing of the proposed changes would be at their January 2025 meeting.

Mark asked if the Planning Commission would get involved in addressing concerns with homeless camps within the City, Helen stated she was aware of changes the City Council had made. She will send him the information by email as she was unable to recall the details.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

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Barbara Gordon  
Planning Commission Chair

Attest by:

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Helen K Johnson  
Planning Administrative Assistant