

# MINUTES

## PLANNING COMMISSION

Hybrid Meeting – In Person and Virtual

City Council Chambers: 321 E 5<sup>th</sup> Street, Port Angeles, Washington 98362

February 8, 2023 at 6:00 P.M.

REGULAR MEETING

### CALL TO ORDER

Chair Stanley opened the regular meeting at 6:05 P.M.

### ROLL CALL

**Commissioners Present:** Benjamin Stanley (*Chair*)  
Andrew Schwab (*Vice Chair*)  
Richie Ahuja  
Tammy Dziadek  
Marolee Smith  
James Taylor  
Colin Young

**Commissioners Absent:** None

**City Staff Present:** Patrick Bartholick (*Development Services Specialist*)  
Ben Braudrick (*Senior Planner*)  
Chris Cowgill (*Assistant City Attorney*)  
Holden Fleming (*Housing Coordinator*)  
Calvin Goings (*Assistant City Manager*)  
Norman Gollub (*Interim Director of Community and Economic Development*)  
Mike Sanders (*Fire Marshal*)  
Zach Trevino (*Assistant Planner*)  
Eric Walrath (*Engineering Project Supervisor*)

**Public Present:** Paul Beck, Pam Blakeman, Mike Doherty, Teresa Duval, Deborah Fuson, Jim Haguewood, Amy Hempel, Kelly Johnson, Richard Kendall, Steve Luxton, Jim McEntire, Amy McIntyre, Frank McPhee, Greg Money, Clara Nelson, Paula Obrebski, Annie O'Rourke, John Ralston, Brian Reid, Kevin Russell, John Worthington. Other individuals may have been present in the room without signing in.

### PUBLIC COMMENT

**Chair Stanley** opened the meeting to general public comment.

**John Worthington** provided comment regarding shipping emissions reduction, which he did not see considered in the Climate Resiliency Plan. He wants a chance to challenge APA policies.

**Chair Stanley** closed the meeting to public comment.

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

**Vice Chair Schwab** moved to approve the minutes from the January 11, 2023 regular meeting of the Planning Commission and the January 23, 2023 special meeting of the Planning Commission. The motion was seconded and passed by unanimous consent (7-0).

## **PUBLIC HEARING**

### **1. Pursuing Housing for All – Title 17 Port Angeles Municipal Code (PAMC) Amendment Process (PZ 23-01)**

**Chair Stanley** introduced the proposed Title 17 PAMC amendments, explaining that they are meant to increase housing supply by allowing for four units on one 7,000 square foot lot in the R7 zone, offer greater flexibility for the construction of missing middle housing, and provide a regulatory pathway for temporary and emergency housing. Before opening the public comment, he noted that the discussion and public hearing would be continued to February 22, 2023.

**Planners Braudrick and Fleming** introduced the item by providing an overview of Pursuing Housing for All using a slide show presentation. The presentation explained the background for the amendment process, six tenets that inform the amendments, the amendment procedure that has and will continue to occur, and the public comments received to date through various channels. Staff provided an overview of the changes proposed in each chapter of Title 17 PAMC and identified potential future actions following the completion of this process, including addressing short-term rentals, establishing a public development authority, and updating the block frontage standards. Planner Braudrick noted that a Determination of Non-significance was issued on February 1, 2023, with the appeal period ending on February 15, 2023 in accordance with WAC 197-11-340. The staff presentation ended with a recommendation for the Planning Commission to continue the public hearing to February 22, 2023 when the Commission would provide a recommendation on Municipal Code Amendment No. 23-01 to the City Council.

**Chair Stanley** opened the public hearing.

#### **The following individuals provided comment:**

- **Kevin Russell** asked the Planning Commission not to consider RVs as an emergency shelter or temporary housing option, citing concerns about septic system capacity, safety of electrical connections, and property values.
- **Jim McEntire**, speaking on behalf of the Port Angeles Business Association, urged the Planning Commission to consider changes based on the metric of the financial gap between residents making the area median income (AMI) and the cost of buying or renting a dwelling unit with a market value of approximately \$250,000. The regulations will be effective if builders and developers can profit while marketing houses to people at the AMI level.
- **Richard Kendall** expressed concern about the ability of traffic to turn around in a neighborhood that has no outlet and is zoned to accommodate additional density through the allowance of duplexes and multi-family housing. He also questioned the ability of solid waste disposal service to handle additional demand created by the construction of infill units.
- **John Worthington** suggested that temporary emergency housing be built in the flood zone rather than building it where services and parking spaces are unavailable.
- **Greg Money** encouraged each lot to be evaluated for development potential independently rather than changing zoning standards for whole areas of the City at one time. He expressed concern about adding additional demand to the sewer and water systems.

- **Frank McPhee** stated that the City should not be in the business of providing welfare and should limit its involvement to “streets, sewers, and safety,” with additional areas of involvement such as parks being acceptable.
- **Jim Haguewood**, past president of the Port Angeles Association of Realtors, supports the creation of temporary housing and alley-street lot subdivisions but opposes the proposal to allow single-wide manufactured homes. He recommends that the City undertake a capacity analysis for sewer and wastewater.
- **Annie O’Rourke** of the Peninsula Housing Authority (PHA) noted that inconsistencies and errors abound in proposed Title 17 PAMC amendments. She emphasized that it is problematic to address housing without addressing the transportation network and walkability simultaneously. Four units on one R7 lot should be limited to the central core of the City. The PHA cannot use Section 8 vouchers for temporary housing. The City should not relegate the poor to RVs while requiring new multi-family housing to meet stringent design standards.
- **Steve Luxton** expressed support for the proposed amendments and explained that people who work at service industries in Port Angeles, including the hospital, cannot afford to live in the City. Every person has dignity and the right to an affordable home. Port Angeles has a median age of approximately 38 and this demographic needs to be considered in a discussion of housing.
- **Amy Hempel** expressed a need for adequate infrastructure to support new proposed housing. She noted that additional strain on infrastructure will result in higher maintenance costs.
- **Susan Blake** expressed concern about the safety of occupied RVs in neighborhoods zoned R7, a need for a citywide assessment of existing RVs and undeveloped lots, and drug use in RVs. She called for enforceable standards and safety requirements.

**Chair Stanley** did not close the public hearing, noting that it may be continued to February 22, 2023.

Following public comment, the Commission began discussing the proposed draft code amendments. The following suggestions, observations, and opinions were expressed by Commissioners during the discussion:

- Regulating RVs as temporary uses will allow the City to enforce safety standards where none currently exist. There are other communities that have attempted to handle allowing RVs, but few have been successful. The Commission needs assurances that waste is handled properly and fire safety is accounted for.
- The City is a complaint-based jurisdiction so will only take Code Enforcement action when a complaint is made. It was noted that the Commission voted against allowing temporary habitation of RVs in the past due to a lack of enforcement capacity.
- The process is moving too quickly. In response, staff noted that the Planning Commission wanted to enact changes as soon as possible in August but staff wanted to complete a public process. The current process follows Commission direction and state law identifying April 1<sup>st</sup> as the deadline for changes.
- Allowing infill development does not solve the problem of maintaining alleys, many of which are in need of repair.
- The impact on City services due to increased density is one of the primary concerns of the public. Engineering staff responded by assuring the Commission that accurate modelling of the water and wastewater system exists.
- During discussion of the City’s sewer system capacity, it was remarked that the original intent of the wastewater system was to serve single-household dwellings. Average household size may have been different at the time the system was originally planned. This

means that the system could still have capacity due to a reduction in average household size from what was originally anticipated when infrastructure was constructed.

- The City already faces the challenge of updating utility infrastructure due to natural system aging and to protect it from climate change impacts. Therefore, it makes sense to update infrastructure with growth in mind to enable future economic development.
- Development causes an increase in tax revenue, which allows infrastructure to be paid for. Increasing allowable density has the potential to result in an increase in tax revenue.
- The difference between bed and breakfasts, short term rentals, and hostels needs to be clarified in Chapter 17.08 PAMC.
- During the Commission's discussion of Chapter 17.13 PAMC, staff was asked how many standard trailers can fit in a 1.5-acre trailer park developed using RTP zone standards. Staff responded that an answer would be provided in the comment matrix.
- A domestic hobby use should be better distinguished from a home occupation.
- The waiting period of one year for conversion of a ground-floor use from commercial to residential in the CBD should not be required. The waiting period is unnecessary for existing construction but new construction in the CBD should be required to comply with it to ensure that new commercial uses are established on the ground floor.
- A comparison was made between temporary RV dwelling units and temporary electrical service. When either is taken away, people become upset because they have become accustomed to the arrangement.
- Staff noted that City staff responsible for utility billing could complete an initial inventory of existing RVs used as dwelling units, allowing staff to contact the property owner and pursue compliance with temporary use regulations.

The Commission's discussion of the proposed amendments ended with a request for staff to prioritize Section 17.96.075 PAMC ahead of the next meeting in preparation for a lengthier discussion of standards for temporary housing and RV occupancy.

**Commissioner Young moved to continue the public hearing to February 22, 2023 and to direct staff to produce an updated draft code reflecting the Planning Commission's requested changes. The motion was seconded and passed by unanimous consent (7-0).**

### **STAFF UPDATES**

City staff did not provide any updates.

### **REPORTS OF COMMISSION MEMBERS**

**Chair Stanley** welcomed Commissioner Ahuja back to the Commission following his absence.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

**Chair Stanley moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded and passed unanimously (7-0).**

**The meeting adjourned at 9:09 P.M.**

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Zach Trevino, Secretary

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Ben Stanley, Chair