



City of Columbia, Missouri

Meeting Minutes

Planning and Zoning Commission

Thursday, March 20, 2025

5:30 PM

Work Session

Columbia City Hall
Conference Rm 1A/1B
701 E Broadway

I. CALL TO ORDER

Present: 8 - Sara Loe, Anthony Stanton, Sharon Geuea Jones, Peggy Placier, Shannon Wilson, Robert Walters, McKenzie Ortiz and David Brodsky

Excused: 1 - Thomas Williams

II. INTRODUCTIONS

III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Meeting agenda adopted unanimously

Approve agenda as presented

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

March 6, 2025 Work Session

The March 6, 2025 work session minutes approved unanimously

Approve work session minutes as presented

V. OLD BUSINESS

A. UDC Text Amendment - Small Lot Use-Specific Standards

Mr. Zenner introduced the topic and provided an overview what the Commission discussed at the March 6 work session. He noted that following the meeting it was brought to his attention that the revisions the minimum number of lots at which point the proposed "Design Standards" would be triggered could be problematic given it was not a number divisible by 3. Mr. Zenner suggested that the threshold, 16 lots, could result in unnecessary calculation challenges for applicants and the staff leading to less use of the new provisions. He suggested that the threshold be modified to either 15 or 18 lots.

There was general Commission discussion on this issue. It was noted that there were several other factors that may impact the threshold being reached and it was noted that the discussion at the March 6 meeting did propose the threshold be established at 15 lots. After additional discussion it was concluded that lowering the threshold to 15 lots would be acceptable. Mr. Zenner noted that this was simplify the administration of proposed standards by reducing potential confusion amongst staff and applicants.

Having addressed this follow up issue, Mr. Zenner continued to summary the

proposed regulatory standards for the benefit of the newer Commissioners. There was discussion with respect to proposed verbiage within the “Architectural style” provisions of the regulations aimed at adding clarity to what constituted sufficient change in building materials to meet the proposed 20% requirement. Commission requested that the existing verbiage be changed to “Changes in material color or paint color alone shall be insufficient”.

There was general discussion with the remaining provisions that Commissioners had previously discussed ranging from parking exceptions and/or placement to expanding the applicability of “Neighborhood Protection Standards” to small lots created with less than the minimum lot area or width required within the R-1, R-2, and R-MF districts. As these provisions were explained, Commissioner’s expressed concern that it was difficult to understand how the modifications and new provisions would actually impact proposed small lot development without seeing them applied from a development plan.

Mr. Zenner acknowledged this concern and noted that the staff was working on a graphical exhibit that would hopefully show all the proposed standards working together. He noted that this graphic exhibit would provide an opportunity to see if certain standards would not work “practically” providing an opportunity for the Commission to make more critical decisions on the standards prior to them being submitted to the design community for them to “test”. He noted that staff needed to complete its preparation of the requested use-specific standards before it could move onto the evaluating the UDC subdivision standards to ensure the proposed new lot types could even be created without triggering multiple design adjustments. The preparation of the graphical exhibit would likely assist in identifying possible subdivision issues more readily.

Mr. Zenner then proceeded to present the final use-specific standard requested by the Commission which addressed sidewalks and street tree placement. He noted that sidewalk placement within new developments was already mandated by the UDC and under certain circumstances (i.e. development along arterial/collector roads); however, was also caveated under several other circumstances. Mr. Zenner further explained that as a result of the somewhat challenging provisions dealing with sidewalk installation for development he was not overly concerned about new “greenfield” projects, but was more concerned about “infill” development. As a result, the proposed provisions attempted to address this by providing an “exemption” to new subdivisions including small lots.

The exemption proposed would not require the installation of sidewalk in new developments creating 4 or fewer small lots. An exception to exemption was proposed that stated if any of the small lots proposed had frontage on a arterial/collector roadway that the sidewalk along that frontage would be required to be installed. Mr. Zenner noted that this provision, if acceptable, was really intended to be tailored to “infill” situations. He noted the provision would not require installation on sidewalk along most residential streets in locations within where continuous sidewalk systems my not exist and where there was a higher predominance of lots capable of being divided to accommodate the proposed small

lots through subdivision.

There was general Commission discussion on this proposal which expressed concern that it would undermine the concept of ensuring sidewalk networks would be established throughout the city providing safe routes for pedestrian movement. There was discussion suggesting that the provisions be modified to require sidewalk installation in locations where sidewalks on adjacent property or within a specific distance of a proposed small lot development/replat action may exist as a means of providing future connectivity options. Mr. Zenner sought clarity with respect to this proposed revision given in many situations there is sidewalk on one side of the street and not the other and there is no identified plan to construct new sidewalk on the opposite side of the street.

Commissioners acknowledge this point; however, did not provide any clarity on how they desired to the proposed revisions to be worked into the exemption being proposed. There was further discussed on the possible cost implications and production of small lots if sidewalk installation were simply required “just because” the new lots were being created following adoption of the UDC in 2017. It was noted that potentially this issue could be addressed as part of the city on-going evaluation of its “Complete Streets” policy.

Mr. Zenner stated he would work on a proposed revision to the standards presented to address the Commission’s concerns. He noted that having a process to exempt sidewalk installation would result in fewer requests for “design adjustments”, streamline the regulatory process to create small lots, and give greater certainty to individuals seeking to use the new standards.

Mr. Zenner noted that the last part of the use-specific standards to discuss was the topic of street tree placement. He noted that this topic was previously addressed in a prior text change to the UDC that concluded it was not appropriate to have street trees required on rights-of-way classified as a “residential street” - those rights-of-way 50-feet or narrower. As a result of this text change, and the likelihood that most small lot developments (greenfield or infill) would be created using this type of street it was staff’s position that nothing needed to be addressed.

If street tree installation standards were critical to create a “walkable” environment, provisions to require street tree placement were seen as a private development matter given they would not be in the public right-of-way. Mr. Zenner acknowledged the value of having street trees included in the development of small lots, but was having difficulty given past actions of the Commission and Council that just because of the type of lot being created there should be a “special” mandate that they be required.

There was general Commission discussion on the staff’s position and lack of including any provisions about street trees within small lot developments. Commissioners acknowledged that given prior actions that what was requested would be a private matter and that the city should not be responsible for street trees outside the public right-of-way. It was suggested that use of possible

“common areas” within a small lot development, when triggered, could be a location for street trees that were otherwise required. Mr. Zenner noted this recommendation could be considered and text prepared laying out specific performance criteria.

Having completed the discussion of the last use-specific standards, Mr. Zenner noted that staff was prepared to move forward with its analysis of the subdivision provisions of the UDC. He further stated that the staff would continue to work on the development of a graphical exhibit illustrating all the standards discussed into a single document. Mr. Zenner noted that the preparation of the graphic will take additional time to prepare and will not be presented at the upcoming work session. However, so as to not lose momentum on this project, staff would begin presenting potential subdivision standard changes at the next work session.

VI. NEXT MEETING DATE - April 10, 2025 @ 5:30 pm (tentative)

VII. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 7 pm

Move to adjourn