

**Planning and Zoning Commission Work Session Minutes
May 6, 2021
Conference Room 1A & 1B - 1st Floor City Hall**

I. Call to Order

Commissioners Present – Burns, Carroll, Stanton, Loe, MacMann, Rushing, Russell, and Toohey
Commissioners Absent – Geuea-Jones
Staff Present – Smith, Palmer, Smith, Teddy, Thompson, and Zenner.

II. Introductions

III. Approval of Agenda

Meeting Agenda adopted as presented unanimously.

IV. Approval of Minutes

April 22, 2021 work session minutes adopted as presented unanimously.

V. New Business

Obstacles to Small Lot Development- Discussion

Mr. Smith said this topic was desired by Ms. Loe. Before he turned the discussion over to her, he asked to review a few PPT slides on common housing types vs. housing terms within the zoning code so that everyone would be coming from a place of common understanding on how housing was regulated and the housing model types permitted by zone. There was general discussion on how this discussion related to a presentation in early 2020 on the “missing middle” housing types.

Mr. Smith brought up materials prepared by Ms. Loe and attached to the agenda for this item. Ms. Loe reviewed her research and discussed the different factors inherent to net density, lot coverage and lot size. She provided information on zoning categories from other similar sized communities in terms of what housing types and lot coverages were permitted. She noted many communities had more options than the City of Columbia’s code in terms of different densities. She said that some of the concerns they often saw may be better addressed by zoning that yielded development types that were clearer in outcome.

There was discussion on how certain options that were permitted in the code were not sought because they were politically difficult to achieve. Specifically, the ability to have smaller lots for single family homes in the R-2 zone was not often chosen because the R-2 zone would allow duplexes (on large enough lots) even if the desire was for single family. There were “truth in advertising” issues all around. There was perhaps a need for more intermediate zoning districts in terms of lot size and zoning that actually matched what is typically seen in single-family development—e.g. ¼ acre lots was the predominate actual buildout in the R-1 zone though the zone itself permits 6.2 dwelling units per acre. There was also discussion on how PD zoning was

used when there were options for a desired development in the straight zones because of a multi-step or political process. There was discussion on the highest and best use of PDs. While diversity of lots sizes may be desired, PDs were not really seen as the best tool to get there. It would be good to have straight residential zoning that could accomplish housing goals.

There was discussion by staff on the process. The Commission's review and input on housing types and strategies was helpful, and there would ideally be direction on additional study and review. The Council would need to be engaged and informed if there was a desire to work on text amendments of this nature so that the Council could formally direct the item become part of the Commission's work program. The Commission's work program had briefly been discussed in February, but no formal requests had been provided to the Council.

Ms. Loe presented additional information from her notes on lot coverage. She discussed recent projects interested in the cottage R-2 zoning adjacent to R-1 zoning. She noted they were not seeing a lot of desire to use 5,000 square foot lots for single family permitted the code. She discussed the three models for single family permitted by the code, R-1 lots of 7,000 sq. ft.; R-2 lots with a single home on 5,000 sq. ft., and R-2 cottage lots at 3,000 sq. feet. She said they also had not yet seen a project utilize one of the two density bonuses prescribed by the code.

There was additional discussion of how the density bonuses were intended to work, and areas that may need additional work to make the bonuses actionable and/or better understood to the development community. There was discussion on the model types and lot sizes the local development community had historically built and desired housing types which were sometimes unpopular in this community relative to other communities. There was discussion of the role of setbacks versus lot coverage and areas that may present inequalities, inefficiencies, or loopholes in the code.

It was discussed there was no maximum lot size in the R-1 and the impacts of very large lots on the provision of utilities and services and less compact development patterns. The code provisions regarding how much of an area could be replatted for cottage lots was also discussed as an area which may need to be looked at.

There was discussion on how use-specific standards may be used in addition to text amendments for the existing and potential new zones. The use-specific standards may address allowable versus resultant build-out scenarios.

Ms. Lot noted of the 18 communities she had researched, most had more residential zoning districts than the City. There was also discussion on how lot coverage may be calculated in terms of what counted toward coverage (e.g paving, pools, etc.), and how to reflect community priorities (such as sustainability, stormwater runoff, etc.) in how lot coverage is calculated and permitted. There was discussion on how these factors are addressed in the existing use-specific standards for customary accessory structures. There was discussion on unintended or intended consequences of regulations, such as how reducing the footprint of a building may increase the desire to utilize higher buildings and vice-versa, height restrictions may encourage building in a larger footprint.

There was discussion on the "transect" concept where residential types may look and function differently depending upon where they are in the community from the rural edge to the central

city. There was discussion of options and how the current tightness in the housing market was impacting building types and buying behavior. There was further discussion on how to work with the building community to try innovative or just different housing-model types. Incentives versus regulations were discussed in terms of tools to put in place to address challenges and high entry cost.

There was discussion on how to utilize existing vacant lots in terms of revisiting existing option in the code and education on how to use such options. There was discussion on the benefits of hosting a development workshop or public/private charrette to look at the code in these ways.

There was consensus that the Commission would like to spend more time looking at lot size, setback and lot coverage in the R-1 and R-2 districts. This may include looking at the ADU regulations as well as issues that had arisen in recent cases. There was a desire to spend time in additional work sessions on housing topics.

Mr. Zenner said they would prepare a report to the Council asking for direction. They would bring the report back to the Commission to review before sending it on to the Council.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned approximately 7:00 pm

ACTION(S) TAKEN:

Motion made by Commissioner MacMann, seconded by Commissioner Russell, to approve the agenda as submitted. Made motion by Commissioner Russell, seconded by Commissioner Carroll, to approve the April 22, 2021 work session minutes as presented.