

Planning and Zoning Commission Work Session Minutes
April 8, 2021
Conference Room 1A & 1B - 1st Floor City Hall

I. Call to Order

Commissioners Present – Burns, Carroll, Geuea-Jones, Loe, MacMann, Russell, Stanton, and Toohey

Commissioners Absent –Rushing

Staff Present – Kelley, Palmer, Smith, Teddy, Thompson, and Zenner.

II. Introductions

III. Approval of Agenda

Meeting Agenda adopted as presented unanimously.

IV. Approval of Minutes

March 18, 2021 work session minutes adopted as presented unanimously.

V. New Business

Rules of Procedure for the Planning and Zoning Commission

Mr. Zenner introduced the topic by stating that the current rules are not approved and a minor amendment to the rules of procedure would open up the rules to be potentially modified by Council. At that point, components may be modified, added or removed. The Commission discussed a letter to Mr. Zenner in which the Commission requested to review the attendance policy as to have assurances that excused absences would not be counted against commissioners.

The Commission discussed as to whether or not there was a need for an attendance policy that may be stricter than what the rules call for as of now. Commissioners agreed that they currently self-regulate and do not have attendance issues. Commissioners did not want to continue with making changes to the attendance policy. It was commented that the Council is currently conducting board and commission appointments in a timely fashion. The Commission asked Mr. Zenner if boards are evaluated in a scheduled manner regarding their rules and procedures. He replied that board evaluations are typically only conducted as a result of that board's request.

Regarding attendance, it was mentioned that finding qualified applicants who can commit to the boards term length is difficult and that a strict attendance policy might be too limiting or punitive. Commissioners generally agreed that it takes 2-3 years to have a good grasp of a commissioner's role and purview and concluded that reducing the term times would lead to instability in the board. The Commission discussed the attendance policy of Council and it was mentioned that the attendance of elected officials is checked and balanced by that body's citizens on election day.

Some senior Commissioners provided insight as to the attendance policy and appointment terms when they were first appointed. When asked if there were any quorum issues at that time, they replied yes but there were other contributing factors and reiterated that there are not quorum issues now. Mr. Zenner concluded that the matter is resolved and stated that changes to the attendance policy or general rules and procedures would not be pursued.

Climate and Energy Commission

Mr. Zenner introduced a previous topic in which the Planning and Zoning Commission and Climate and Energy Commission (CEC) wished to meet regarding the overlap and conflicts between the Comprehensive Plan, Unified Development Code (UDC), and Climate Action and Adaptation Plan (CAAP) as discussed in the Columbia Imagined Status Report. Mr. Zenner solicited the Commission for a list of topics that would be potentially discussed and asked the Commission what they hoped to achieve at the meeting.

The Commission still wanted to meet with the CEC so as to better understand each other's role and to relay how much information staff collects and provides to the Commission in preparation of reports on development requests. The Commission recognizes the CEC as a major stakeholder in the planning process. Commissioners noted that they have a commitment to the community to meet with the CEC regarding the climate.

Mr. Zenner stated that the Community Development Department has included the Sustainability Office into development review but noted that they have not made any comments, provided alternatives, or offered knowledge of perhaps more sustainable development options during planning review. Ms. Smith mentioned that staff have made a few comments and offered that their sparse comments may be a result of working from home during the pandemic.

Mr. Zenner reiterated that the UDC is a regulatory document while the CAAP is a policy document. He stated that the realm of policy relies on incentives to encourage specific types of development. Regulations would need to include more incentives to steer development in the ways that the CEC would prefer. The Commission discussed competing issues such as the current housing shortage which contribute to commissioners' decisions. Commissioners desired for members of the CEC to see how Planning and Zoning turns policy documents into specific regulation in which they can rely on. Mr. Zenner asked the question of "how does this body effectuate their policies in our regulations?" Commissioners suggested that this body send the CEC micro-sized topics and request that the CEC turn them into regulation.

Commissioners and staff discussed the various methods by which commissioners from each body could learn from each other. Mr. Zenner stated that sending a rep to each body and effectively maintaining a visiting commissioner from another board would lead to quorum issues and offered that using staff in a similar capacity may accomplish that goal. Some commissioners added that sustainability staff can get more involved in the review process and learn.

The Commission asked Mr. Zenner as to how the CAAP was vetted in its development and presentation. He replied that it was not vetted to the same extent as the Comprehensive Plan or Unified Development Code and noted that it does not look at competing issues like the Comprehensive Plan does. Commissioners noted that the CAAP is not a specific planning

document. Mr. Teddy mentioned that it seemed that the Commission was ultimately desiring a shared implementation plan. Mr. Zenner mentioned that the Comprehensive Plan is the umbrella policy document under which other plans should fall under but noted that this is not current practice.

The Commission called the meeting to adjourn as to have adequate time to prepare for the regular public hearing. Additional discussion further coordination of Planning Commission activities and CEC activities would be discussed in a future work session.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned approximately 6:56 pm

ACTION(S) TAKEN:

Motion made by Commissioner Russell, seconded by Commissioner Toohey, to approve the agenda as submitted. Made motion by Commissioner Russell, seconded by Commissioner Toohey, to approve the March 18, 2021 work session minutes as presented.