



# City of Columbia, Missouri

## Meeting Minutes

### Planning and Zoning Commission

---

Thursday, August 22, 2019  
5:30 PM

Work Session

Conference Room 1-C  
Columbia City Hall  
701 E. Broadway

---

#### I. CALL TO ORDER

**Present:** 7 - Joy Rushing, Lee Russell, Anthony Stanton, Rusty Strodtman, Brian Toohey, Michael MacMann and Valerie Carroll

**Excused:** 2 - Tootie Burns and Sara Loe

#### II. INTRODUCTIONS

#### III. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Adopt agenda without modifications

#### IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

**August 8, 2019 Work Session**

Approve August 8 minutes without modification

#### V. OLD BUSINESS

##### A. Street Trees in the Right of Way

Mr. Zenner recapped the previous discussion of the challenge of placing street trees relative to the location of where utilities are typically buried. He said there were conflicts between the dedicated areas for street trees per Chapter 29 (the Unified Development Code) and Chapter 24 of the City Code which governs utility placement. He said prior to preparing the proposed text change staff from internal City departments had discussed potential options and alternatives to address the issue. The proposed revisions to the code were seen as the possible best solution with the least amount of impact.

Mr. Zenner explained that the proposed regulations recommended that the existing road right of way (ROW) be expanded to allow for more room for trees and utilities adjacent to public streets but off-setting the impact partially by reducing the required rear yard set-back from zones that required 25 feet to 20 feet. Pros and cons were discussed.

Mr. Zenner noted that comments received from internal staff raised concerns about the loss of developable land area due to the additional ROW dedication and that the cost associated with that would be passed from the property owner/developer to the builder and then buyers. He also noted that internal staff identified possible conflicts with other code provisions that would arise from the need to increase the amount of concrete for longer driveways and driveway aprons, for example.

Concerns with the text change were also expressed about its impact on housing affordability. The impact of reduced rear yards was discussed. Larger utilities were often run along rear property lines, but the reduction in the rear yard may be an option to help reduce negative impacts of the proposed amendment, in terms of costs, while not impacting utility placement.

Mr. Zenner also discussed the concerns with installing trees in private yards. Pros and cons were discussed and weighed. Mr. Zenner noted that the City's ability to maintain trees on private property was a concern. By placing trees in the ROW this concern was somewhat alleviated. Furthermore, it was noted that putting trees further away from the sidewalk and tree lawn reduced the cooling and aesthetic benefits that were intended by the current provisions. Several Commissioners questioned the need for street trees given that most subdivisions have private covenants requiring that trees be planted and maintained. There was discussion on this point and concern about how to ensure consistency with placement and maintenance given private covenants were not the responsibility of the City to enforce. It was further noted that not all neighborhoods were equal in their demographic and some neighborhoods of greater affluence may have trees while those of lessor would not.

There was discussion on only requiring street trees on non-residential streets and higher if other options for private plantings were available. There was discussion of varying the standard for planting (presently 1 tree every 40 feet) and allowing for flexibility over a whole development to help avoid areas of conflict not only with utilities, but also potentially driveways and sight-lines at intersections and other critical areas.

Mr. Zenner noted that comments received from the public suggested that a potential option for sidewalk placement would be in a sidewalk easements outside of the ROW. Mr. Zenner indicated that the Bellwood and Cooperstone subdivisions were several examples of where this has happened within the City. Mr. Zenner noted that while an easement location may be an option there might be cross-slope or other ADA issues as sidewalks moved further away from the street grading. The intent of the current sidewalk regulations was to maintain public sidewalks in a location such that the public was comfortable in using them in terms of access and perception that they were truly public. Mr. Zenner noted that based on some past experiences with sidewalks outside the right of way he was not sure how readily acceptable an easement location would be as a means of retaining street trees in the right of way verses just increasing right of way width.

Mr. Zenner identified an oversight in one of the parts of the code where it said 44 feet instead of 50 as proposed text for residential streets. He identified an asterisk footnote in the street widths table that also needed to be deleted as it was a carry-over from the old code that was incorrectly placed in the new code. There was also discussion of the need to conduct additional research and analysis on how potential alternatives might impact the screening and buffering standards. The desire was not to create negative impacts by addressing this issue without looking at the entire code.

The Commission discussed how utility placements were handled in other areas. There was also discussion on how to allow for additional flexibility and options for Greenfield development areas to work with the City arborist. Mr. Zenner noted that it was staff's intention that once the proposed regulations were ready for a final public hearing and presentation to Council that developments previously approved and ready for permitting be exempted from the street tree requirements given the unforeseen conflicts that the proposed amendment was trying to address.

Commissioner's requested that additional research on different tree types be looked at that may help reduce costs and may do well in shallow root or smaller areas. The trees that would be planted needed to be able to thrive. Scenarios could be evaluated with the arborist. Based on public comments, comments were offered that the issue of cul de sacs right of way may need to be considered to ensure that street trees could be accommodated with all the other improvement typically found with such areas. The current cul de sac bulb was noted as likely not being sufficient.

Mr. Zenner asked the Commission their general will to continue to work on the topic. There was a desire to come back to another work session before scheduling a public hearing. Most Commissioners supported keeping street trees in residential areas. Most thought they could revisit the 1 tree/40' planting requirements for alternatives or flexibility. There was not consensus on whether additional ROW should be required to address the issue.

### **B. Rock Quarry Road Stakeholder Report**

Mr. Zenner provided a summary of the Commission's work on the report. He provided a spreadsheet which reflected the Commission's discussion. He stated that he would send the spreadsheet to Commissioners via email as he was hoping it would be a helpful analysis tool in terms of breaking down the report into individual recommendations and action items the Commission could provide feedback to the Council on. Mr. Zenner noted that he foresaw the Commission's public hearing and recommendations following a process similarly to the one used during the discussion and recommendation on the medical marijuana ordinance. He noted that staff would also prepare a formal report with specific recommendations using the spreadsheet framework.

Mr. Zenner said the Commission's comments and recommendations would be summarized and provided to the Council. Council would then have the option to direct back to the Commission any items that would require regulatory changes. Changes to the UDC would be required to follow the standard text amendment process.

There was general discussion of the spreadsheet. Mr. Zenner asked that the Commissioners review the materials that would be e-mailed and come prepared to the September 5 work session for added discussion. He noted that it was staff's intention to schedule a public hearing in in early October.

**VI. NEXT MEETING DATE - September 10, 2019 @ 5:30 pm (tentative)**

**VII. ADJOURNMENT**

Meeting adjourned at approximately 7 pm

**Move to adjourn**