

Planning and Zoning Commission Work Session Minutes
April 4, 2024
Conference Room 1A & 1B - 1st Floor City Hall

Call to Order

Commissioners Present – Carroll, Dunn, Ford, Geuea Jones, MacMann, Loe, Placier, Stanton
Commissioners Absent – Wilson
Staff Present –Craig, Kraus, Kunz, Teddy, Zenner

Introductions

Approval of Agenda

Meeting agenda adopted unanimously

Approval of Minutes

The March 21, 2024 work session minutes were approved unanimously with Commissioner Dunn abstaining.

Old Business

A. UDC Text Amendment – Small Lots

Commissioners discussed the proposed percentage of ground floor coverage that were developed for lots between 3,000 sq. ft. to 4,999 sq. ft. (33%) and 5,000 sq. ft. to 6,999 sq. ft. (35%). Mr. Zenner explained the rationale for how the percentages were arrived at noting that the percentage recommended for the lower range of lot sizes was to ensure a ground floor area would not be larger than that allowed on a traditional R-2 lot using conventional setbacks. He further explained that as lot sizes increased into the next band of small lots (proposed to only be applicable in the R-1 district) the lot coverage was not proportionally as significant as that allowed in lower lot size band, but such lot cover was generally consistent with the area that would otherwise be allowed if such lots (5,000 to 6,999) were permitted with conventional setbacks being applied.

There was general discussion on the percentages proposed as well as the option of increasing ground floor coverage by using a bonus system. It was concluded that prior to expending additional time on devising a process by which to establish the bonus criteria the new provisions needed to be implemented and applied to future development. Mr. Zenner noted that creating additional criteria for increasing the allowable ground floor area without first seeing how the proposed regulations may be utilized would be premature. He suggested that a future amendment to the proposed regulations to address this issue would be more appropriate when facts on its use or challenges in it were identified.

Commissioners discussed this recommendation and concluded that it was reasonable to consider holding off on further development of a bonus process. The Chairman called for a voice vote with respect to the proposed maximum ground floor area percentages. Commissioners indicated support of the proposed percentages and thank staff for its analysis. Based on this vote it was understood that discussion on dimensional standards was complete and work on potential use-specific standards could begin.

Mr. Zenner explained what the attachment to the work session memo was about. He noted that it represented the “Detached frontage-type” design provisions presented as part of the form-based code discussions that preceded the adoption of the UDC and the standards governing development in the M-DT district. Mr. Zenner suggested that the Commission could use the standards as a baseline of requirements if they felt them to be appropriate for new “greenfield” development such that a sense of place or “character” would be established. He noted that the work of the City’s consultant with respect to the Central City Study Area was likely going to developed design-guidelines for infill development and that the Commission’s focus was likely best spent on considering what they desired outside of this area.

There was general Commission discussion on what the potential use-specific standards should be. It was stated that caution needed to be taken that the creation of use-specific standards did not create added development costs without meaningful value to the communities/neighborhoods that were intended to be created. Concerns were expressed that being too prescriptive in establishing standards would create barriers. Discussion the types of general elements desired or believed essential to make use of the small lots successful included encouraging the use of alleys, reduction in right of way widths, and how to address parking needs including the minimum required and where they could/should be allowed to be located. The general Commission sentiment was that the proposed standards should establish “guardrails” not obstacles to use of the new provisions.

While discussion was resulting in meaningful recommendations/considerations, the Chairman noted that it was focused on very specific outcomes. It was recommended that the Commissioner’s step back and considered, from a 30,000 ft. vantage point, possible outcomes that were either not desired or desirable with respect to developments using the new standards. It was believed that if such outcomes were identified staff could look into how those outcomes could be achieved either by existing UDC provisions or creation of new ones. With this additional guidance, Commissioners took turns expressing what they believed were desired outcomes or issues that they’d like to be avoided.

This discussion resulted in the following topic areas being offered to staff for their consideration as it begins the process of identifying/developing possible use-specific standards.

1. Avoid the lack of open space. Create standards that would establish a mechanism for relief to be created (i.e. an open space ratio per total number of lots).
2. Avoid the lack of housing diversity in terms of housing types and architectural styles.
3. Avoid having parking requirements drive the form of development.
4. Encourage “cohesion” within and between developments such that differences in scale are minimized.
5. Encourage variety in housing styles and topologies (i.e missing middle, bungalow court, MUSE).
6. Require installation of sidewalks and street trees to activate the frontage and create “desired” walkability.

Having completed a full round-robin of Commissioners comments and concluding that sufficient guidance had been offered, the Chairman closed the work session. Mr. Zenner noted that staff would begin the process of identifying possible use-specific provisions that could be considered by the Commission. This process would be augmented by other observations, specifically relating to the subdivision standards, that would need to be addressed to ensure a successful integration of the small lot standards into the built environment.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 6:55 pm.

ACTION(S) TAKEN:

Motion made to approve the agenda as submitted by Commission Loe and seconded by Commissioner Carroll.
Motion made to approve the March 21, 2024 work session minutes as presented by Commissioner Loe and seconded by Commissioner Ford with Commissioner Dunn abstaining.