

**Planning Commission**  
**January 16, 2006**

Chairperson Schneider called the regularly scheduled meeting to order at 7:04 PM.

The following members were present: James Montgomery, Lisa Cramer, Cindy Maas and Ken Smith. Also in attendance was City Planner Dan Staley.

Ken Smith asked Devon that every word he is saying is put into the minutes please, quote my words please. "I Kenneth Smith believe that this open meeting to the public is an open public meeting is not legal according to the law because this is a national holiday, MLK day. So I recommend this meeting to be canceled and if not I abstain to any action taking at this meeting." Secretary Boyle asked for clarification as to whether or not Smith wanted just this information verbatim or anytime he speaks at any meeting verbatim. Smith stated just this for now. Schneider stated to Smith, so you think meeting on a National Holiday is illegal, do you have a basis for this. Smith stated he did not bring anything with him, this is his personal opinion and he felt that Schneider as the chair should probably realize that. Schneider stated he doesn't have any basis of knowledge of anywhere in law that this meeting is illegal and short of that he is not going to say we have all come together for nothing so we will continue with the meeting.

Montgomery moved to approve the minutes of the November 28, 2005 commission meeting. Cramer seconded the motion. Maas had a question about the side discussion. Was she here for this discussion? Schneider stated it basically means that we had gone off track of the regular discussion but that this needed to be included in the minutes because it was pertinent information regarding the parks. The motion then carried.

Cramer moved to approve the minutes of the December 5, 2005 commission meeting. Montgomery seconded the motion. Maas asked about the last paragraph it states Staley will relate some of the specific things to specific places in the plan. Maas would like to know if that was done because she doesn't remember receiving that. Cramer stated we didn't receive it. Schneider stated it is still information that we should get. Staley stated he would have a new section on the suggested agenda that says relevant code for the next meeting. The motion then carried.

Montgomery moved to approve the minutes of the December 12, 2005 commission meeting. Maas seconded the motion. Liebel stated the minutes stated Chairperson Schneider called the meeting to order, however it also states Schneider was absent. Secretary Boyle stated it should read Co-Chairperson Ramsey and she will get that changed. The motion then carried.

**Welcome to New Member:**

Planning Director Staley stated he would like to welcome Gordon Liebel to the Planning Commission asked everyone to introduce themselves and tell them how long they have been on the commission and what they do during the day.

Staley then went over with new commission member Liebel where we are right now and what we have been doing. We just completed the Comprehensive Plan Updates; we went through an extensive public process that took approximately two years. The city currently has over 500 developable acres in the City limits. He gave him some background information of what the Planning Commission has been doing for the last year or more.

What the citizens told us is:

Connectivity - pedestrian, bike and vehicle, but mostly pedestrian, non-motorized. How do we have people move around without their cars?

Affordable – the latest homes that have been built in the last six years, their assessed values are higher than what the median household income is in Buckley.

Open Space/Environmental Quality/Parks – the biggest challenge we will have here in the next couple meetings is defining open space and parks. One of the things we will be working on is the design for surface stormwater detention ponds.

One thing we are going to do a lot more of is involve the public for more checks. We haven't decided how we are going to do this but probably more than one way. We learned a lot from getting feedback from people last time so we want to continue with this.

Schneider stated to the new member that he should be aware that this process was not without controversy and there is not total agreement within the town on what we have done. The biggest single controversy was the density and for a number of reasons the Planning Commission believes they came up with the best compromise they could. Not everyone agrees with that in fact the former Mayor veto the plan as one of his last acts in office. There are a few other things that we had to take a stand. There are several people in town who don't want diverse affordable housing.

Staley passed out a handout that Investco gave to the City for information and ideas as to what they would like to do with the properties they have bought in the City. He just wanted to bring this up to show how it looks from the other side.

One of the things he would like to look at today is the park and open space issues. There was a lengthy discussion about stormwater detention ponds and what we can do about them. Staley stated there has been some discussion with Mayor Johnson and Administrator Schmidt and himself about the City owning the detention ponds rather than the homeowners association. Staley stated he doesn't think we should have square detention ponds; they should have character with proper landscaping. Staley stated a lot of cities depend on the proximity principal to forecast their revenue. If you are close to a green space, your property will be assessed higher. Maas stated to Staley that he is using those words, open space and green space interchangeably. One has value and one does not. Staley suggested that the committee that is working on the Highway #410 landscaping plan is almost finished so we need to start working on stormwater detention

pond landscaping standards. We need to start thinking about how we incentivise how we are going to get green space and/or park space. The other thing the people really value around here is the view corridors. One thing Staley wants the commission to think about is as we are laying out the parcels do we ask that there are four one story homes back to back you can see Mt. Rainier because they are only one story? Maas stated no. Basically, you cannot preserve everyone's view. How about a suggestion of staggering homes so it is not a straight wall of one story or two story homes. Staley stated that is exactly what he is looking at. Staley gave some ideas to maximize green space. Cramer stated the idea is great but how do you incentivize for this. Staley gave an example of how this could work. There was a brief discussion about parks and whether or not we can require developers to dedicate land for parks a long with having them park the park impact fee. Staley stated it is one or the other but not both. Staley stated today the meeting is to get the commission to start thinking about things. What we have in front of us, what we are getting our hands around and what we are going to prioritize. We are going to think about open space, green space and park space. Schneider asked for a clarification between open space and green space. Staley stated green space if more of a fully landscaped area. Open space has the lowest value of level of service; it is just a vacant field that has had nothing done to it, such as a horse field. Schneider stated so open space does not necessarily entail public access at all. Staley stated correct, but you can have open space that can have public access but there is no extra development. Schneider stated so if you just have open space on the plateau, it is basically useless. Staley state what he wanted to focus on is whether or not we want to continue using the phrase open space. Discussion ensued regarding contiguous parks.

Maas brought up the issue regarding a plat off of Sergeant Street that has had their frontage improvements deferred for two years. There was a lengthy discussion regarding this and making sure the rules and regulations are spelled out and in writing. Staley stated there may be some differences between the smaller land owners versus the larger land owners.

TDR – Tradable Development Rights, this is something that Investco is trying to do. Staley stated for instance they want to build us the park on the Miller property in order to get the amount of lots they need in their development. We could say, maybe not develop Miller park but maybe you can have one of things you want if you'll extend the sidewalk 150' on Ryan Road.

Schneider asked why a park has to be five acres or more. He sees kids playing on smaller parks and they are perfectly happy. He would trade 2-1/2 acres for parks to get a trail somewhere else. Staley stated by the time we are done we may get 25 acres in parks, in which the city will have to hire at least one person even more to maintain these. Liebel asked what these parks will entail. Will there be restroom, playground equipment, backstops and things like that. Staley stated probably not back stops, but maybe some soccer goals, playground equipment, landscaping and shrubbery.

Staley stated what he liked about today is we got our hands around some of this stuff that is going to give us definitions and things later on. We talked about open space, green

space, green connectivity, parks – maybe not one big park, but a bunch of different ones, tradable development rights and view sheds and what flexible lot sizes can do for these. Next time, he will point out in the regulations that we have is where we start to see some of these things that they are trading away. He will also try to find some more things specifically with respect to what some of these tradable things are.

Maas asked if Staley could give the commission an update of what is going on in the City not only the developments but everything else that has been going on. Staley stated governmentally, Mayor Johnson is now having the committee all meet the same time every month so the Building/Zoning/Environmental Committee will be meeting the first Monday of the month before our meetings. They are then welcome to stick around for the meeting so this may allow for more interaction and communication between from the Council and the Planning Commission. Cramer asked how that would affect the Planning Commission sub-committee meetings. Staley stated we can just meet in the other room. Schneider stated the Mayor would like reports from the Planning Commission, he would like to know if there was a reason we couldn't do this once a month. Staley stated that is up to the Mayor. Staley stated for the first few meeting is that he or Schneider would do the reports. When we get to an easy point, he would like some of the commission members to actually run the Planning Commission meetings and then that person can also do the report to the Council. Staley stated as far as other things that are going on in the City is we received funding for the Senior Housing on the Miller Property; however the amount of money funded allows for fewer units so we will be getting some sewer connections back for this. Also we received some connections back from the school district so it looks like this year we could have as many as 30 connections which will allow for some development of single homes and smaller short plats. Staley stated the road to Elk Heights is open so you can drive up there now. Maas asked if their retention pond was full with these last storms. Staley stated yes it was. Maas asked what happens when homes are built up there and more impervious surface is disturbed, what is going to happen to the retention pond then. Staley stated is fills up and then it goes into the overflow.

The meetings in February will be February 6<sup>th</sup> and February 27<sup>th</sup>.

With nothing further, the meeting was adjourned at 8:57 PM.

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Wolfe Schneider, Chairperson