

Planning Commission
October 9, 2006

Chairperson Cramer called the meeting to order at 7:0 PM.

The following members were present: Gordon Liebel, James Montgomery, Bill Dorn and Cindy Maas. Ken Smith was absent. Also in attendance was City Planner Dan Staley.

Liebel moved to approve the minutes of the September 18, 2006 commission minutes. Montgomery seconded the motion and the motion carried.

Stormwater Detention Pond Plan:

Staley stated the committee just started and they worked through some of the potential issues and pitfalls that may arise and we will have to work through in created a stormwater detention plan ordinance. He suspects by next week we will have some working goals to publish on the website and some basic design rules. Cramer asked where the plan actually fits. Staley stated it will be an ordinance which will go in the Buckley Municipal Code in the subdivision regulations.

Subdivision Regulations:

The commission reviewed what they discussed at the last meeting in the Dead-end street section and the changes that were done. Staley stated one of the things he had in the parking lot to discuss was surrounding cities drive and street definitions, which are all over the place. There is not a consistent thing. So he made an executive decision to discuss this for about 20 minutes. Driveways can serve a number of different parcels that are private and not publicly owned and we need to decide how many parcels a private drive can serve. He is not sure the Buckley Municipal Code actually defines how many parcels a private driveway can serve. It is called out in flag lots but we don't say how many are the maximum. Liebel asked if the code defines the difference between driveways and streets. Staley stated drives or driveways are privately owned whereas streets are publicly owned. Liebel stated so a private drive is a private street. Staley stated yes. Cramer stated that was one our points, do we want to spell private street/private drive. Staley stated maybe we should just define it up front. Cramer stated one thing is the private drive doesn't have a separate name whereas a private street does. Dorn stated there should be a different definition between private drives and private streets. He feels the regulations should be different if for nothing else, for safety reasons. Liebel agreed, he thinks a driveway should be no more than ___ feet that have direct access to a garage or parking area. A drive is like a flag lot where you have to go through one or two more lots to get there. Discussion ensued. There was discussion about fire access and if they have to provide a turn around in if it is a certain distance. Maas stated if a driveway serves one and subdivision serves for or more, would a private drive serve two or three. Maas stated where would you have a private street, does there have to be two definitions. Cramer stated she was thinking why even have private drives. Staley stated the question of why do we have a private street is a good one. There are going to be certain situations with critical areas that may put some restrictions on their development where their configuration may force them to have little off shoot streets.

One problem you have with private streets is maintenance. Who is responsible to fix the street if it has to be dug up to fix something? Dorn stated the other thing he can think of is a private drive is one lane and goes both directions where a street should have two lanes if there are multiple homes for traffic to go both ways. Cramer stated she likes that distinction. Liebel stated he feels we really don't want private streets and drives; we want to minimize them as much as possible. Montgomery stated that is why we put those limitations in that section. Maas asked why someone would want to put in a private street. Staley stated it allowed him to get out of making frontage improvements. Maas asked why the city allowed him to do that. Maas stated we want to prevent this from happening again. Discussion ensued. Staley stated the key is what we are trying to get at is we are trying to tightly define dead-end streets, if it is going to end into a dead end street he hears that we want to do a cul-de-sac or a private street. Maas stated she would just like to see no more of the issues like Moe did on Sergeant. Staley stated the developers are always going to try and get away with the minimum. So we need to spell out exactly what we want. Staley stated he is taking notes and he will type everything out and print off a new copy of the subdivision regulations, so if we have it in front of us we can make sure it is what we want.

Street Lighting:

Liebel stated the only comment he has is do we want to set some sort of standard for subdivision to be the same. Maas stated she doesn't know if she wants to see all the lights the same in every development, maybe within the same development. Maas asked what the standards of the city are. Staley stated it would be candlepower, design, spacing, etc. After discussion, everyone agreed to leave it as is.

Street trees:

Maas asked how do we know what the Buckley standards and species are. Staley stated there is a list. Staley stated you do not want to have too much specificity because it is hard to change in case some species of tree doesn't make it here or if there is a bug in the trees that kill all of them. It is a lot easier to amend an ordinance than it is to amend a regulation so you want to keep this as vague as possible. Cramer asked if the list is done. Staley stated it is almost complete. Dan explained how this would work if any of the existing homeowners developments want to remove their trees and replace them. The city has turned the tree care over the homeowners association. Every place we have to rip out and replace trees will cost us around \$200 per tree. One way to prevent this from happening is in our ordinance, you have to have space them minimum of 6 feet and save the native soil. Liebel stated the problem they are having in Copperwynd right now is people have been taking the large trees out that are breaking the sidewalks and replacing them with whatever they want so there will be no conformity within the subdivision. Cramer stated do we want to add some language about the conformity within subdivisions. Montgomery stated he likes having the list to pick from with different species. Staley stated in 25 years, having your street trees in really defines your city. How you care for them is a problem you have to figure out later. It is a lack of care and lack of money devoted to maintenance is what gets rid of street trees all across the country. Generally a developer will want to put in no more than 4 or 6 species. The reason for this is you don't want to have one tree dominate throughout the area, but you

also don't want too many. Maas asked if there is a certain size caliber of tree that will have to be planted. Staley stated the wider you give it the better chance you are going to have. Dorn asked why the trees have to be in the planter strip, why can't they be in the property owner's yard. Liebel stated you are not going to be able to force people to plant trees in their yard. Dorn stated the developers can plant them. Cramer stated she has seen that she thinks in Dupont they have all the greenery on the property owner's side of the sidewalk. Staley stated one of the things you have to keep in mind is if we require them on the private property owner the tree has a lot more roots and will be healthier generally because people generally water their lawns. The problem we have here is if we require them on the private property, and have the shorter setbacks, you start to get conflicts with the house. You have more leaf problems and then you have the branches that start running into the house. The other issue is the sidewalk would be right next to the street without having the planter strip in between. Liebel stated with the trees being planted in the planter strip it then makes it difficult for a property owner to plant trees in their front yards, you could but it wouldn't look right. Maas asked about like in Tacoma where there are street trees down the middle of the road. Staley stated those are boulevards and post World War I, boulevard's were very popular in the Midwest cities. Maas asked if they are coming back again. Staley stated you need the space for them. Staley stated what he thinks he is hearing is there is a concern and not everyone is going to want a tree. Staley stated for the most part the street tree ordinance is referred to in here and what we should keep in mind is if we want to have trees the place for them is in the public right of way and if we want to ensure they survive we need to make sure they have enough room. Staley stated what he wanted to do with this today is eliminate the issues we have with street trees. Basically at this point he would like some thoughts and reflections with what we want to do with these things. In his view not having them in the right of way is hard. So do we create space for them in the right of way, how much space do we create in the right of way, is it both sides and who maintains them. Or do we have some balance with in between open space stuff and some tree cover. In his opinion if it is not a minimum of six feet it is a waste of time. He would like to see eight feet. Eight could be an option if you only have one side. Maas stated if we have 5,000 square foot lots and we have bicycle paths in the front, we are eliminating all the parking on the street. Dorn stated he doesn't think all situations are going to be same; it is going to depend on what kind of street it is and what the configurations will be. Staley stated where we don't need parking; you can have a wider planting strip. Staley thinks we need to specify in a subdivision where these planter strips need to go but after discussion tonight, he doesn't think we can do that now.

Maas stated Dorn has taken her place on the stormwater detention plan committee.

Lisa Cramer, Chairperson