

**Planning Commission**  
**July 17, 2006**

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

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

Cramer stated she would like to officially welcome Bill Dorn on board to the commission.

Montgomery moved to approve the minutes of the June 19, 2006 Commission meeting. Smith seconded the motion and the motion carried. Cramer had a question about the letter from Mr. Sundstrom. Will there actually be a response to Mr. Sundstrom or are we waiting for him to write the letter to the editor. Staley stated he would like clarification also, the way the minutes are written, it sounded as if the commission only wanted to respond to Mr. Sundstrom if he wrote the letter to the editor? The commission clarified that they would actually like to have a response to Mr. Sundstrom's letter regardless. Cramer also had a question about the variance hearing regarding the duplexes with two car garages, she was wondering what the outcome was. Staley stated the Board of Adjustments granted the variance to allow them to have only one car garages.

**Subdivision Regulations:**

**Collector Streets and Local Access (residential) Streets:**

Staley stated the main issue he has with this section is the pavement width (curb to curb). What he did with the local access streets is he added the current standard which is 36 feet. The minor arterials are 44. Do we want to think about having a different width than what is in the standards? Montgomery stated the minimum widths we can have with parking on both sides is 34 feet? Staley stated yes. Montgomery asked if we just want to change the street widths. Staley stated that is what we are discussing right now. One thing we do need to look at is making sure there is enough room for large vehicles to pass. Maas asked where a collector street is in Buckley. Staley stated Mason Ave is one. If we narrow the width, we have to look at removing parking from one side of the street. Maas stated what she would like to see is parking on both sides of the streets and the driving lanes wide enough for two cars to pass each other comfortably. Dorn stated he thinks it will depend on the zoning and the size of the lots. If you have a 6,000 square foot lot, there is not room for parking on the lot; you would need to allow for parking in the street. Maas asked for the clarification of right of way. Staley stated it is from sidewalk to sidewalk. Staley then did a drawing to show how the planter strip, curb, sidewalk and street width would be. There was a lengthy discussion regarding the size of the planter strips and sidewalks. There was also discussion about the types of trees that should be planted in the planter strips. There are concerns about the tree roots breaking up the sidewalks and also visibility. Dorn asked if it has to be trees or could it be shrubs. Montgomery stated the trees do have some positives and one of those is shading the streets in the summer and extending the life of the pavement. The developers will foot

the bill for the initial paving but it will then be up to the citizens and taxpayers to repave those streets in the future and that is one of the reasons street widths will be a big issue because the wider the streets are the more it will cost to repave.

Maas asked is there really a benefit having parking in the alleys and then making smaller street widths? She is not in favor of alleys and it has already been brought to the commission from the Utility Superintendent that he is not in favor of alleys because of the maintenance.

Staley suggested having a planter strip on only one side. Maas stated she has seen that in other developments around and the side where there are not planter strips, cars park on the sidewalks. Dorn asked what you do in cases of Local Improvement District's with something like that. Staley stated we would have to specify what side of the street would have a planter strip.

Maas stated she would like to sit on this until the next meeting and go out and measure some of the streets. Maas stated she likes planter strips and sidewalks and parking on both sides with the traveled width big enough for two cars to pass easily. Montgomery stated he also likes the planter strips on both sides; however, he would like to see the street width narrower to slow the traffic down and also the economy. Smith stated he kind of agrees with Montgomery regarding the safety issue for smaller streets but it depends on the street and the zoning. Dorn stated he likes it both ways as he said before, it depends on the zone. It costs a lot of money to build a 60 foot street and it doesn't do any good put a cracker box house on a huge street. It doesn't make sense to him to build up the exterior of town and let the downtown core go downhill. Montgomery stated we all want our arterials to have wide streets so the traffic can move freely but when we get in the neighborhoods, it would be nice to slow the traffic down. Dorn asked if we are going to have cul-de-sacs or grid streets. Staley stated it really depends on the size of the land that is being developed. The Planning Commission liked the grid system better than the cul-de-sacs but you have to allow development even if they can't provide a grid.

The streets the Planning Commission decided to look at and measure are the Collectors Jefferson, Dieringer, Division, and the Local Access Perkins, Cottage and A Street. Staley stated if someone has extra time, especially during peak traffic hours on streets such as "A" maybe to do a traffic count. Staley stated he thinks we are close but can't make a final decision until we do more research. The commission will actually do a field trip at the next meeting to measure the roads.

### **Alleys:**

Cramer stated we need to make sure we address Public Works Director Dansby's concerns regarding the alleys. His concerns are maintenance and budgetary issues. Montgomery stated one of the main issues was the trash and recycling collection, if we move it out to the streets that will solve one of the main problems. Dansby also had concerns regarding adding additional parking off the alleys. Montgomery stated he is 100% in favor of alleys. Cramer stated she is personally opposed to them. To her they always look junky because that is where everyone puts their trash and other items

because it is convenient to hide in the back. She also feels it takes up more space, she would rather see more grassy area than gravel or asphalt. Where she came from, the people used the alleys to do things to get in trouble so it is hard for her to say yes to alleys when she has been programmed to think they are not good things. Cramer stated Dansby also had a concern regarding access in terms of sewer and gas lines. Maas stated she has made her opinion known that she does not like alleys. To her they do appear junky and she likes having privacy in the back yards. Dorn stated it depends on the lot sizes whether or not we should have alleys. With the smaller lots, it is easier to have access off the back of the yard. He likes having alleys but he also maintains his. He has mixed feeling about the maintenance of the alleys. Smith stated he kind of agrees with Dorn in a lot of ways. He feels it is a plus to have the utilities in the alley and if you can provide parking off the alleys, you can then possibly make the streets smaller because people wouldn't be parking in the front. But on the other hand if everyone is driving up and down the gravel alleys, then you have all the dust to deal with. He agrees with Dansby with the maintenance issues. Staley stated he really likes the discussion that has taken place. One thing we need to try and figure out is what type of people are going to be living in the different zones. As Dorn was saying, maybe in the R-6000 and R-8000 there could be alleys, but in the zones with the bigger lot sizes we wouldn't have alleys. Maas asked what if a developer comes in and says they don't like alleys and they don't want to put in alleys then what do you do? Staley stated then they would have to look at buying property in a different zone. Maas stated she thinks this is too restrictive and she is very opposed to that. Dorn asked if the developer comes in, do they have the option of either. Staley stated currently yes and that is one of the things we are talking about now with the new subdivision regulations are we going to require alleys and in what instance. Staley stated this wording does not require alleys, it makes it an option. Dorn stated there is a development in Enumclaw that looks like a cul-de-sac but it is actually a horseshoe. They have small streets but they have a paved alley. All the utilities are in the alley and the back of the homes look just as good as the front because the alley is paved. Instead of having a sixty foot street in front they put part of it in the back. Cramer asked if they have decent back yards or is it garages with driveways. Dorn stated they do have nice back yards. Maas stated she thought at some point we were talking if the developer did put in alleys, we would give them a density bonus. Maas stated she is having a problem because the land that is left in Buckley are generally good size chunks. She doesn't like 6,000 square feet. When she wants to develop her land, she would like maybe half of the lots with alleys and the other have bigger lots with ramblers on them. So to tell her she needs to have an alley for every lot or buy a piece of land that is in a different zone that doesn't require alleys. Staley stated he is not saying we should do anything; we are just hashing this issue out and discussing it. He doesn't feel we should come up with a decision tonight. For instance, we haven't even talked about paved alleys. Dorn asked if there is a state law that prohibits the width of the lots. Staley stated there is no law that says you have to have a minimum or maximum lot width. Staley stated regarding what Maas wants to do with her land with having some small lots and some large lots that is exactly what we are looking for. We don't want to have the same 40 or 50 foot lots all the way down the street. Maas stated she can see the point of getting access to the back yards. Montgomery stated he thinks with the smaller lots it preserves the view corridor

and the separation allows privacy. Cramer stated she appreciates everyone being up front with how they feel about the streets and alleys.

Staley stated he will put a package together for everyone when they go out and measure the streets.

Smith would like to thank Planning Director Staley for all his work at the skate park. He thinks he is doing a very nice thing for the city. Everyone on the commission agreed with that.

Smith stated for the record he would also like to thank Marvin Sundstrom for the things he has done. He is trying to do good for the city and puts in a lot of time doing a lot of research. Smith stated he doesn't agree with everything he says, but he does try to do good for the city.

With nothing further the meeting was adjourned at 8:55 PM.

---

Lisa Cramer, Chairperson