

LEAVENWORTH SPECIAL CITY COUNCIL MINUTES

September 19, 2017

Mayor Farivar called the September 19, 2017 Leavenworth City Council Special meeting to order at 3:00 PM and Planning Commissioner Pete Olson led the City Council in the Flag Salute.

ROLL CALL

Council Present: Mayor Cheryl K. Farivar, Carolyn Wilson, Gretchen Wearne, Elmer Larson, Mia Bretz, Margaret Neighbors, and Sharon Waters.

Staff Present: City Administrator Joel Walinski, Nathan Pate, and Sue Cragun.

Planning Commission acting Chairman Andy Lane called the September 19, 2017 Leavenworth Planning Commission Special meeting to order at 3:02 PM.

Planning Commissioners Present: Andy Lane, Joel Martinez, Chuck Reppas, Pete Olson, and Scott Bradshaw.

Mayor Farivar stated that Councilmember Richard Brinkman and Planning Commissioners Anne Hessburg and Larry Hayes are excused from the special meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT ON HOUSING AFFORDABILITY TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS

Mayor Farivar asked if there were any comments from the public on the Housing Affordability Task Force Recommendations.

Stephen Sharpe, P.O. Box 582, Leavenworth; Mr. Sharpe stated that he and his wife live in Leavenworth and have been trying to buy a home for several years. They attended the last meeting and reviewed the data regarding housing affordability in Leavenworth and wanted to put a face to a local family who is struggling with affordable housing. He added that they are a family who is trying to stay in town; they both work in town and own a business in town. He stressed the importance of coming up with solutions sooner, rather than later, as there are many families affected by a lack of housing. He noted that multi-family zoning seems to be the most important factor to his family's needs.

Kyrial Dreis; 11210 Freund Canyon Road, Leavenworth; Mr. Dreis stated that he is a local builder and sees density as an issue; if you can put two residences under one roof, the cost per square foot goes down, and that will bring down the cost for housing. He noted a concern that property values in general are already high, raw land is high, so increased density may be a primary solution.

RESOLUTIONS, ORDINANCES, ORDERS AND OTHER BUSINESS

1. Housing Affordability Task Force Recommendations – Identify Priorities

Development Services Manager Nathan Pate presented the recommendations that have come from the Housing Affordability Task Force. He noted that the group met for eight (8) months discussing various ideas; the group was made up of contractors, landlords, business leaders, local and county leaders, etc. He said that an objective of this meeting was for the Council and the Planning Commission will work together to decide which items will be included in the Planning Commission Docket for the Commissioner's to review and develop Code changes per the Council's directive. He noted that the

challenge at hand is to build and develop additional housing units in the City of Leavenworth. The Commissioner's will study, work through the code, devise a plan, and present their recommendations to the Council for approval.

The discussion began with a review of the standards and criteria to allow for innovations for a Planned Unit Development (PUD). Discussion included zoning consistency, allowed uses, and removal of the 5-acre minimum (as that does not appear available in the city limits), and managing accessory dwelling units. Mayor Farivar suggested that the Planning Commission review every aspect of the PUD standards and criteria.

There was discussion of the definition of "affordable housing" and it was stated that "affordable housing" means something different to various government agencies and people in general. The group agreed that the definition needs to be specific to Leavenworth, is important in regard to financing and grant applications, and that the more appropriate terminology may be that they are looking to create more "workforce housing." Commissioners were tasked with defining "a Leavenworth workforce / affordable housing," being clear that the goals and incentives line up with the term, and using the Housing Assessment Study - cost burden for rents and home ownership as guidance.

Discussion continued regarding a review of Multi-family and Residential Zoning, the use of the term "district" and getting away from the term "family" with regard to labeling specific zones or uses. Discussions included infill, lot widths, common wall units, zero lot lines, multiple units, an appropriate zone for apartment complexes, parking solutions, and monetary incentives. It was stated that the work could focus on the issues that can help families right away in the short term. The group agreed that they are looking to create more rental opportunities for those who work in the city limits.

The top five (5) priorities for the Planning Commission to study are as follows:

1. Review standards and criteria to allow for innovations for a Planned Unit Development (PUD)
2. Define City of Leavenworth "Affordable Housing"
3. Sub-lot infill, common wall, or zero setback
4. Consider the inclusion of triplex / 4-plex within differing zones and the possible use of a Conditional Use Permit (CUP)
5. Examine potential areas for multi-family zoning

Commissioner Reppas stated that he would like the Planning Commission to address the future uses, take a specific look at the planning, and proactively plan into the future with how the zoning works, including the Urban Growth Area (UGA). He noted that it is more of an artistic exercise, rather than practical, but may be a proactive tool in determining where the City can grow. There was a brief discussion that the growth seems to have moved in a different direction than originally anticipated. The group discussed the difference of the 20-year Comprehensive Plan and this broader concept.

Mayor Farivar stated that the City is very lucky to have such a knowledgeable group of Planning Commissioners whose expertise lies in the areas of engineering, land use, contracting, and wetlands, as well as being leaders in the business community. She said that she appreciates that they work so well together and thanked them for their service for the City.

Mayor Farivar asked if there was anyone else who wished to comment.

Carrie Hennis, 8000 E Leavenworth Road, Leavenworth; Ms. Hennis stated that people come from Seattle and buy homes in Leavenworth and she would like to see that problem addressed.

ADJOURNMENT

Planning Commissioner Andy Lane motioned to adjourn the September 19, 2017 Special meeting of the Leavenworth Planning Commission. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Chuck Reppas and passed unanimously.

Seeing no other business, Councilmember Larsen motioned to adjourn the September 19, 2017 Special meeting of the Leavenworth City Council. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Neighbors and passed unanimously.


The meeting adjourned at 4:35 PM.

APPROVED



Cheryl K. Farivar
Mayor

ATTEST



Chantell Steiner
Finance Director / City Clerk