

Latah County Planning Commission
Minutes, 18 July 2006

Planning Commission [PC] Members: John Hunt [JDH], Suvia Judd [SJ], Kathleen Warnick [KW],
James Smith [JS], Janet Hohle [JH], Louise Barber [LB], Steve Heick [SH].
Planning Director, Michelle Fuson [MF]

Present/Absent: SJ, KW, JS, SH, LB present; JDH, JH absent. Staff: MF

Packet: Agenda; Moscow City Area of Impact draft information

Handout: Minutes of 6/20/06; JH memo to PC

Meeting: Minutes of 6/20/06 accepted

The discussion centered around five items from the City of Moscow codes not yet adopted by the county that would have an impact on residents in the Area of City Impact [ACI]. JS questioned whether the county has any control over annexation conditions in the ACI; state law prohibits county from involvement; if ACI area is not annexed, the county ordinances trump. MF noted that the county ordinances apply to all incorporated cities areas of impact in Latah County with the exception of Moscow and Genesee; the thinking is that eventually all ACI would be annexed and thus benefit from city services, etc.; the cities and county do negotiate the ACI and it is at that stage at which the county can have a say.

Mark Solomon, Mary Jo Hamilton, Nils Peterson, and Eric Nilsson all encouraged the PC to quickly recommend adopting the city code changes, particularly the “big box” section (2006-03) because the ACI is the logical place for this kind of development and the “threat” of this type of development without a required CUP process could be imminent; of particular concern is capping a large retail building’s size to prevent anything larger than 100,000 square feet (the size of the current Wal-Mart) and the section re. a “dark store” (an abandoned building). It was reported that the residents in the southeast section of the ACI seemed grateful for the city’s recent code change to apply conditions and that the petition against the Wal-Mart Super-center indicated support for application of the CUP process for this type of development. Solomon noted that the code does not prevent a large store; it simply tailors how it can occur. He also noted that a subcommittee for the city’s P&Z committee is working on an amendment for 2006-03.Section3.7.4.f (“dark store”); Peterson said it would be completed by the end of July; Moscow’s P&Z will hold hearing third week of August; City Council will have public hearing in September. Peterson: there exists a predatory business practice of leaving empty hulks of stores already on prime real estate, which decline in value, are difficult to sell, reduce surrounding property values, and force further development out to new land; example of Tidyman’s, which is not the result of a predatory business practice, but is showing all the signs of the above; assessed value has dropped from \$3 million to \$2 million in two years. The city code language refers to a Design Standards Manual, which is an actual part of the code; PC did not have access to this at the time.

There are areas in the ACI that would be affected by the county not adopting the city’s code, or its own modifications, so PC should make a decision, and if not now, it will be a long time before it’s a part of our agenda. KW moved to forward a recommendation to the CC that a public hearing be held for 2006-03 prior to renegotiation with the city; SH seconded; 4 yes votes; no nays; no abstentions.

KW moved to recommend that the CC adopt the change from 14 to 23 days for returning processed applications by the city’s code; SH seconded; 4 yes votes; no nays; no abstentions.

KW moved to recommend to the CC that a public hearing be held re. 2005-33 (CUPs for schools in commercial and special zoning districts) that would apply in the ACI; SH seconded; 4 yes votes; no nays; no abstentions.

SH moved to recommend to the CC that a public hearing be held re. 2005-04 (Telecommunication towers) and its application in the ACI; KW seconded; 4 yes votes; no nays; no abstentions.

JS moved to recommend to the CC that a public hearing be held re. 2005-03 (Outdoor Lighting) and its application in the ACI and to remove all references to outdoor lighting in 2005-07; KW seconded; 4 yes votes; no nays; no abstentions.

MF will send a memo reflecting the above to the CC.

The 8/1/06 meeting will be a working session to prioritize future PC work. One issue of concern is Proposition 2 (eminent domain and a move to cause counties to pay for property value losses); PC should study this carefully. The Comprehensive Plan needs scrutiny in the face of increasing population in county. Land Division should be addressed.

Next Meeting: 1 August 2006 at 5:30pm in the Latah County Courthouse, Room 2B

Submitted by Louise D. Barber, 19 July 2006