

**CITY OF
ASHLAND**
ASHLAND PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
Minutes
November 8, 2022

I. CALL TO ORDER: 7:00 PM

Chair Haywood Norton called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. in the Civic Center Council Chambers, 1175 East Main Street.

Commissioners Present:

Michael Dawkins
Haywood Norton
Lynn Thompson
Eric Herron
Lisa Verner
Doug Knauer

Staff Present:

Brandon Goldman, Acting Community Development Director
Derek Severson, Senior Planner
Michael Sullivan, Executive Assistant

Absent Members:

Kerry KenCairn

Council Liaison:

Paula Hyatt

II. ANNOUNCEMENTS

Acting Community Development Director Brandon Goldman made the following announcements:

- Chair Norton will provide the annual Planning Commission report to the City Council on December 6, 2022.
- On November 15, 2022 the Council will discuss the updated ordinance regarding Housing in E-1 and C-1 Zones that the Commission recommended for approval at its September 27, 2022 Special Meeting. At a prior meeting the Council discussed manufactured home parks, which has also been discussed by the Housing Production Strategy (HPS) ad hoc group. Members of the community, including many who live in manufactured homes, have requested that a new zone be defined in order to protect manufactured home parks from being redeveloped in a different manner. The Council was generally in favor of including the creation of a manufactured home zone as part of the HPS. The Commission will hear this item at a later date.
- The November 22, 2022 Commission meeting will be a Special Meeting. The Commission will look at the Expedited Land Division code changes for Middle Housing that was brought to the Commission at its June 14, 2022 meeting.

III. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Approval of Minutes

1. October 11, 2022 Regular Meeting
2. October 25, 2022 Study Session

Commissioners Verner/Knauer m/s to approve the Consent Agenda. Voice Vote: all AYES. Motion passed. 6-0.

IV. PUBLIC FORUM – None

V. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- A. Approval of Findings for PA-T3-2022-00004, 1511 Highway 99 North

Ex Parte Contact

No ex parte contact was reported. Commissioner KenCairn is part of the design team and abstained from the meeting.

Staff Presentation

Senior Planner Derek Severson began by noting several changes staff made to the Findings. The changes were made to pages: 19, 22, 31, and Conditions #8e and #10c, and clarified the areas of required street frontage improvements (see attachment #1).

Mr. Severson informed the Commission that Commissioner Thompson had raised the question of affordability requirements with staff, and that staff would allow the applicant to determine at final plan whether they would be partnering with an affordable housing provider or would be dedicating the land to an affordable housing provider. Mr. Goldman added that the applicants, in the event that they are not willing to develop it themselves, could dedicate the land to affordable housing provider without concern for the development timeframe. The applicants would be required to provide additional affordable units if this route is taken.

Commissioner Thompson asked where the partnership guidelines were in the Ashland Municipal Code (AMC) as referenced by the Findings. Mr. Goldman responded that a partner would be considered a member of the applicant's team, and would therefore be beholden to the same development standards. Commissioner Thompson questioned whether the inclusion of such an avenue for development should be included in the Findings. Mr. Severson responded that the applicant would likely partner with an affordable housing provider to handle the administrative aspects of screening tenants for the affordable units, resulting in its inclusion as a potential development route under Option 1. Commissioner Thompson asked how the applicant could offload the affordable housing units to an affordable housing provider without the land being dedicated. Mr. Goldman agreed that the AMC is not clear on this topic, but that affordable housing providers have worked with private property owners in the past to receive land dedicated to affordable housing, with the promise that they will build it concurrent with the for-market development and would satisfy the Option 1a criteria. He added that this option is a widely preferred development method because an affordable housing provider would be more adept at requesting grant funds for the affordable units. The land dedication process was created in the event that a developer could not find an affordable housing partner, so that the remainder of the project could begin unhindered.

Commissioner Herron inquired if it was common practice to use nearby businesses as reference points for the project, and Commissioner Knauer suggested that the parcels be designated instead of the current occupying business of a property.

Commissioner Thompson suggested some grammatical changes to pages 47-48 of the Findings, and recommended removing various inclusions of the phrase "**is proposed**" and replacing it with "**shall be**" to denote the current status of the Findings.

Commissioners Herron/Verner m/s to approve the Findings with corrections. Voice Vote: all AYES. Motion passed. 6-0.

Commissioner Dawkins departed from the agenda to state his aversion to permitting the separation of the affordable housing units from the market rate units, and that the quality and equity of these types of projects should be discussed by the Commission. He suggested that the Commission explore ways in which to receive clear answers from applicants regarding affordable housing unit development and whether the applicant would engage in land dedication or develop the units themselves. Commissioner Thompson responded that this would require a code change, and the applicant had stated that it was more financially feasible to develop the affordable housing units in separate buildings, particularly when partnered with an affordable housing organization. Commissioner Dawkins replied that many affordable housing organizations are non-profit who receive funding through taxes, and that taxpayers would be indirectly funding the affordable units for this project. Commissioner Herron noted that low-income housing do not pay income taxes, and wondered how that would work in a mixed-unit building. Commissioner Dawkins commented that the administrative aspect should be figured out by the developer.

Mr. Goldman noted that the annexation standards had recently been changed to remove the requirement for developers to mix affordable units throughout a project. This was done after the City received testimony from affordable housing providers citing the difficulty in financing mixed housing units.

Commissioner Knauer remarked that he was more interested in the completion of the project itself, and asked about the importance of unit distribution. Commissioner Dawkins stated that placing all affordable units in separate buildings could result in stigmatization and discrimination against the tenants, to which Commissioner Knauer agreed. Commissioner Verner concurred

that affordable housing units should be evenly distributed throughout future developments, and suggested that this be discussed during the next series of AMC amendments.

Chair Norton inquired if an applicant could propose a project containing primarily two-bedroom market rate units, and only one-bedroom affordable housing units but in an increased number from the minimum required. Mr. Goldman responded that a variance to the code could be requested by the applicant, but that they would need to provide a benefit that is greater than or equal to what would be given otherwise. Chair Norton suggested that a developer could then provide a higher number of one-bedroom units for residents. Commissioner Verner emphasized the need for lower-income families to have multi-bedroom units as well, and Chair Norton agreed. Mr. Goldman commented that a project developed by KDA Homes was able to provide eight affordable units up from six by dedicating the land and removing the parity required.

Chair Norton commented that he had considered the possibility of adding an Open Discussion item to the Commission's agenda in the future to facilitate similarly impromptu discussions as the one brought up by Commissioner Dawkins.

Mr. Goldman noted the inclusion of the Community Development survey in the Commission's packet, and stated that he would share the results when they became available.

Chair Norton inquired about the state of the Tree Commission. Mr. Goldman responded that it will be changing to the Tree and Urban Forest Advisory Committee, and would operate as a management advisory committee. He stated that the Council was provided with a list of the current members of the Tree Commission to be appointed to this new committee, and that staff would continue to meet with them monthly to review development plans.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 7:40 p.m.

*Submitted by,
Michael Sullivan, Executive Assistant*