

Minutes
Cheney Planning Commission
Regular Meeting – By Phone/Video Conference

June 14, 2021

Commissioners Attending: Richard Mount, Natasha Jostad, Jake Vibbert, Dan Turbeville, David Early, Vara Lyn Conrath and Daniel Hillman.

Commissioners Absent: None.

Staff Attending: Brett Lucas, Mark Schuller, Todd Ableman and Susan Beeman.

Councilmembers Attending: Vince Barthels.

Call to Order: Chairman Mount called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

Minutes: Commissioner Vibbert made a motion to approve the minutes of the May 10, 2021 regular meeting as distributed. Seconded by Commissioner Hillman, and the motion carried unanimously.

Citizen Participation: None.

Public Hearing: #2021-07
Zoning Text Amendment – Bonus Density in R-3 Zone

Chairman Mount opened the public hearing at 6:04 p.m.

Mr. Lucas explained that this was a discussion item a couple of months ago, but tonight's public hearing allows public comment, and also provides the Planning Commission to see the proposed change to the zoning code in a draft ordinance.

Mr. Lucas shared his screen to show a short slide show regarding the bonus density proposal. He explained that as currently prescribed in the zoning code for the R-3 zoning district, the density is 21 units/acre. For a 5,000 sq.ft., lot, that works out to 0.115 acres. 0.115 acres x 21 units/acre works out to 2.4 units allowed on a 5,000 sq.ft. lot. Per the measurements section of the zoning code, we would round down and allow 2 units per 5,000 sq.ft. lot.

Mr. Lucas explained that the proposal is to allow, on 5,000 sq.ft. lots only, a total of 3 units instead of 2, IF the developer does only 1 bed/1 bath units for all three units. He explained that under this scenario, there should be less demand on parking in comparison to a 2 bedroom or 3 bedroom unit configuration. It could also result in less demand for

police services, since studio apartments are less likely to become ‘party houses,’ because of the lack of space.

Mr. Lucas showed a map illustrating the location of 5,000 sq.ft. lots in the R-3 zone. A total of 31 parcels in the R-3 zone are 5,000 sq.ft. in size. Of those, 2 parcels are vacant, and 18 parcels have a structure with historic designation eligibility. He suggested that the studio/one bedroom option on a 5,000 sq.ft. lot would likely have less impact on the community than a 2 or 3 bedroom duplex structure.

Mr. Lucas reviewed portions of CMC 21.08, Definitions, which pertain to multi-dwelling structures, and dwelling units, and reviewed the proposed zoning text amendment.

Chairman Mount asked if someone could divide an existing home into three spaces with a shared kitchen. Mr. Lucas explained that that scenario would still be classified as a single family structure, because it only contains one kitchen. A dwelling unit must contain separate kitchen and bathroom facilities, its own entrance, and so on.

Mr. Ableman explained that this proposal marries up the zoning code designation of R-3, which is intended for 3 or more units on a single lot, and also limits the total number of bedrooms on a 5,000 sq.ft. lot.

Discussion continued.

Commissioner Early asked if this proposal is being driven by property owners who are requesting the change, or if it is a proactive move on the City’s part. Mr. Ableman explained that it is both, but mostly based on the zoning code definition, and establishing the functional density as 3 or more dwelling units per lot in the R-3 zone. Commissioner Early asked if off-street parking would be required. Mr. Ableman said that these would have to meet all other requirements of the zoning code, including the requirement of one off-street parking space per bedroom.

Commissioner Early made a motion to recommend approval of the proposed bonus density change to City Council. Seconded by Seconded by Commissioner Turbeville. Motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Reports:

Chairman Mount asked about water levels in the reservoirs. Mr. Ableman said that the water levels are looking good. In spite of the recent heat and irrigation demand, we have not put all the wells in service yet.

Chairman Mount said that he had been asked by a couple of citizens about why the pool schedule for open swim and family swim times are so limited. Mr. Schuller explained that it has to do with staffing levels, and limiting the numbers of people down. He explained that we are keeping an eye on Covid-related guidelines from the Governor, and will adjust accordingly.

Commissioner Hillman asked if we have a status on repair of the play structure at Sutton Park. Mr. Schuller explained that we are waiting for a part to come in.

Commissioner Early asked about the status of the mountain of dirt along Washington Street. Mr. Ableman explained that we are working with the developer's engineers to update their grading plan. They had an approved plan, but exceeded the quantity of cubic yards that was proposed in the SEPA. Their engineer is working on a revision to the plan.

Commissioner Hillman asked about the status of the development on Ridgeview. Mr. Ableman said that he believes they are close to finalizing the subdivision, but as soon as the land division is completed, the lots are on the tax rolls. The developer may be choosing to delay that step until he is close to wanting to build.

Commissioner Conrath asked about adding a barricade along Betz RD to keep drivers from crossing a solid yellow line to turn into the Safeway complex. The signage alone does not seem to be keeping drivers from making that unsafe left turn. Mr. Ableman said that he would look into it.

Staff Reports:

Mr. Ableman said that City staff are working to get the pool ready for the season, and looking for seasonal park maintenance staff. Things are currently very busy with construction activities around town.

Mr. Schuller added that this is shaping up to be a very dangerous fire season. He encouraged everyone to practice good safety habits.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:25 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Approved By:

Susan Beeman, Secretary

Richard Mount, Chairman