

Tom Stirling
Taylor Engineering, Inc.
245 E. Main Street
Pullman, WA 99163

Stated that he is the agent for Mr. Duprel and was available if the Commissioners had any questions. Answered questions regarding the triangular shape of the subject property as the result of topography; the plan is to split the property into two lots, but it is not large enough to do so in the Commercial zone; access to the triplex is from an access route that extends to the site from N. Grand Avenue.

DICKINSON

Affirmed that there are two access points, one from Ritchie Street and another from Grand Avenue, and opined that the residents of the different buildings utilize different driveways.

GARL

Noted that there were no opponents on the speaker roster, or in the chamber. Closed the public input portion of the hearing

DISCUSSION

Gibney opined that the rezone is a good idea, but wanted to make clear the difference between the current rezone request and the last request heard by the Commission regarding property on Old Wawawai Road; the latter proposal was denied because the situation was very different.

MOTION

Shannon moved to approve Findings of Fact Nos. 1-15 for Resolution PC-2011-1 as prepared by staff. Seconded by Bergstedt and passed unanimously.

MOTION

Shannon moved to approve Conclusions Nos. 1-9 for Resolution PC-2011-1 as prepared by staff. Seconded by Anderson and passed unanimously.

MOTION

Anderson moved that the proposed amendment of the Comprehensive Plan Land Use Plan Map from Commercial to Low Density Residential for the subject property be forwarded to the City Council with a recommendation for approval. Seconded by Crow and passed unanimously by roll call vote.

MOTION

Shannon moved to approve Findings of Fact Nos. 1-15 for Resolution PC-2011-2 as prepared by staff. Seconded by Crow and passed unanimously.

MOTION

Shannon moved to approve Conclusions Nos. 1-9 for Resolution PC-2011-2 as prepared by staff. Seconded by Crow and passed unanimously.

MOTION

Anderson moved that the proposed zone change from C3 General Commercial to R2 Low Density Multi-Family Residential for the subject property be forwarded to the City Council with a recommendation for approval. Seconded by Crow and passed unanimously by roll call vote.

REGULAR BUSINESS

Conduct a discussion regarding a request from local realtor Chris Clark to initiate a zoning code text amendment related to garage design standards for residential districts.

Dickinson introduced Chris Clark, a realtor with Windermere, who recently approached the planning department with a request to amend the garage design standards in the zoning code. The garage design standards were established in 2003 to de-emphasize the presence of garages from the street. Prior to 2003, some developers were building homes that looked like all garage when viewed from the street. The design standards provide architects with a variety of ways to improve the appearance of garages, including placing the garage at the same or greater setback relative to the rest of the home; having a side-entry garage; designing a window or balcony in the wall above the garage; limiting the width of the garage to a maximum 60% of the front façade width. Mr. Clark is marketing many lots in the Whispering Hills subdivision near Old Wawawai Road and is finding that there is a market for homes with 3-car garages on some of the narrower lots in those subdivisions; this request is making it difficult to meet the design standards. He is requesting that the zoning code be changed to allow for a maximum 65% of front façade width to be consumed by a garage. Staff is opposed to any changes in the garage design standards because the standards went through a thorough public review in 2003; they are working well to effectively de-emphasize garages; the standards provide numerous different opportunities to comply. Dickinson pointed out that there are only three parties allowed to initiate amendments to the zoning code: 1) planning staff; 2) Planning Commission; 3) the City Council. Dickinson stated that if the Planning Commission does decide to initiate a code amendment process, staff will schedule a public hearing to review the matter in a formal fashion.

CHRIS CLARK
Windermere Real Estate
840 SE Bishop Blvd, Ste 203
Pullman, WA 99163

Mr. Clark opined that the design standards place a priority on providing attractive homes and/or garages. He said the house/garage designs shown in Attachments A and B to the Staff Report are attractive, but don't meet the design standards for narrower lots, while the design displayed in Attachment C is not attractive but does meet the design standards. Stated that he would like a 70% maximum width of front facades for garages. Stated that Copper Basin has a long history of working with the city to facilitate the construction of good quality homes in Pullman.

Answered a question regarding whether the establishment of the lots was before or after the code went into effect and explained that the narrower lots were developed after the zoning code garage standards were adopted.

DICKINSON

Explained that the minimum lot width is 60 feet, but that Copper Basin developed some lots in their Whispering Hills subdivisions with a narrower lot frontage through a Planned Residential District (PRD) designation.

DISCUSSION

Shannon stated that he was concerned about changing the code based on pressure/concerns of a single business, and opined that he didn't want to set that precedent. Dickinson responded that it should not be about the concerns of an individual or individual business, but whether the concerns were relevant to the community as a whole. Anderson stated that the code requirements were not implemented to create nice-looking houses, but rather to de-emphasize garages, and that he was not inclined to change the code at this time. Garl indicated a reticence to changing the code. Wendle opined that he would require more information, including updated comments from similar communities, before he could make a decision. Bergstedt opined that the Commission has been discussing design standards so this topic was timely. Alred opined that a 3-car garage is possible on the lots, given the flexibility of the current code, and stated that she is disinclined to change the code. Garl stated that the Commission appreciates Mr. Clark's time and input, but the general consensus is that the Commission does not feel it is appropriate to initiate a change to the zoning code at this time.

REGULAR BUSINESS

Election of Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson for the Commission.

Shannon asked if the incumbents are willing to stand and received affirmative answers from Chairperson Garl and Vice-Chairperson Anderson. Shannon moved to elect Garl as Chairperson and Anderson as Vice-Chairperson for 2011. Seconded by Crow and passed unanimously.

OTHER BUSINESS

Garl pointed out that this section was not listed on the agenda, but asked if there was any other business. There was no other business.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

February 23, 2011 – Crow will be unavailable
March 23, 2011 – no conflicts noted
April 27, 2011 – no conflicts noted

MOTION

Shannon moved to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Crow and passed unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 8:28 pm.

ATTEST:

Chair

Planning Director

Secretary