

**CITY OF SNOHOMISH  
REGULAR MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION  
MEETING MINUTES  
March 2, 2022**

*NOTE: Due to the COVID-19 declared federal, state and local emergency, and pursuant to Governor Inslee's Proclamations 20-05 and 20-28, the Snohomish Planning Commission held its meeting via remote participation.*

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Hank Eskridge opened the regular meeting of the Planning Commission at 6:03 p.m. on Wednesday, March 2, 2022. Mr. Pickus informed the Commission that City Council Liaison Lee Ann Burke would not be attending as she is out of town.

**2. FLAG SALUTE**

**3. ROLL CALL**

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:**

Hank Eskridge, Chair  
Nick Gottuso, Vice Chair  
Gordon Cole  
Merritt Weese  
Terry Lippincott  
Christine Wakefield Nichols

**STAFF:**

Glen Pickus, Planning Director  
Brooke Eidem, Planner  
Thomas Kreinbring, Assistant Planner

**OTHERS PRESENT:**

Judith Kuleta, City Council Liaison  
Michael Whitney

**COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:**

Mitch Cornelison

**4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA ORDER**

Chair Eskridge asked for the agenda order to be approved as presented. Hearing no objections, the agenda order stood as presented.

**5. APPROVAL** of the minutes of the January 5, 2022, regular meeting.

Commissioner Lippincott moved to approve the minutes of the January 5, 2022 meeting as written. Commissioner Cole seconded the motion, which passed 6-0.

**6. GENERAL PUBLIC COMMENTS**

There were no public comments on items not on the agenda.

**7. DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

**USES IN COMMERCIAL ZONES & UPDATING LAND USE TABLES**

Mr. Pickus provided a summary and background information about uses in commercial zones and the proposed land use tables update. He said the Commission's discussion on the issue at their December 2021 meeting provided staff with the direction to minimize the changes to the existing permitted uses and to treat each commercial zone differently.

Mr. Pickus presented the staff proposal. The Commission discussed and asked questions. The Commission agreed that warehousing and wholesale trade should be separate uses with wholesale trade allowed in commercial zones. The Commission asked staff to either define courier service in Chapter 14.25 SMC or add a size element to allow small-scale operations in certain commercial zones.

Mr. Pickus presented a new staff recommendation to make places of worship a prohibited use in the Midtown District. Commissioners Eskridge, Weese and Lippincott were in favor of prohibiting places of worship in Midtown while Commissioners Cole, Gottuso and Wakefield-Nichols supported allowing places of worship in existing buildings to keep buildings fully occupied. The Commission agreed that staff should bring two versions of the code to the public hearing.

Mr. Pickus then presented staff's proposal to consolidate the land use tables into five tables (from nine) and reducing the number of listed uses. The Commission discussed and asked questions. Mr. Pickus explained that staff would populate the Midtown column and revise the footnote errors after the Commission brought these issues to his attention.

#### **TITLE 14 AMENDMENTS REMOVING REFERENCES TO DELETED CHAPTER 14.205**

Mr. Pickus presented the summary and background information before describing the staff proposal to amend Title 14 to correct references to Chapter 14.205 SMC that was repealed in November 2021. The Commission discussed the proposal. Commissioner Weese stated that SMC 14.210.230(B) should be struck from the final code amendment and the Commission agreed.

#### **FENCE HEIGHT CODE AMENDMENT**

Mr. Pickus presented the summary and background information before describing the staff proposal to provide a maximum height limit of six feet for fences in rear yard setback areas and to remove the arbitrary height limit for retaining walls and fences located in setback areas. The Commission discussed the proposal. No revisions were recommended to the draft language.

#### **REZONING PROCESS CODE AMENDMENT**

Mr. Pickus presented the summary and background information before describing the staff proposal to provide a process for considering rezone applications in Chapter 14.15 SMC. The Commission discussed the proposal and asked questions.

Mr. Pickus explained that Commissioner Weese pointed out the two City Council options for rezones provided for in the draft and asked if a third possibility should be provided. Mr. Pickus agreed and recommended adding a third option of remanding the rezone proposal back to the Planning Commission with direction on how to reconsider the proposal and the Commission agreed. Further, the Commission directed that a definition of property owner should be added to Chapter 14.25 SMC to provide consistency in the use of the terms "property owner" and "property owner or designee". The Commission also directed the rezone criteria, as proposed, should be revised to become factors to consider rather than criteria to be met to make it less problematic in interpreting and administering rezone applications.

#### **UPDATE OF SMC 14.215.125, FEE SIMPLE UNIT LOT SUBDIVISION**

Mr. Pickus presented the summary and background information before describing the staff proposal to amend SMC 14.215.125 and SMC 14.210.215 so they are not contradictory.

The Commission discussed and asked questions. The Commission provided direction to clarify the wording regarding a required maintenance easement and its relation to a common wall or zero-lot-line development. Mr. Pickus stated staff would offer a revision in the draft presented at the public hearing that would clarify the language.

### **PILCHUCK DISTRICT EQUIVALENCE CLARIFICATION CODE AMENDMENT**

Mr. Pickus presented the summary and background information before describing the staff proposal to delete remaining references to “Neighborhood” before the zone district names in Chapter 14.212 SMC and to clarify the process for seeking a determination of equivalence and a code deviation. The Commission discussed the proposal; no revisions were recommended.

## **8. COMMISSIONER QUESTIONS & COMMENTS**

Chair Eskridge proposed adding a standard item to all future agendas to provide an opportunity for Commissioners to discuss issues not on the agenda. Other Commissioners supported the proposal. Chair Eskridge then asked Mr. Pickus to define and explain the purpose of the subarea study.

Commissioner Weese asked Mr. Pickus to provide a broad description of the purpose of the Urban Growth Areas.

Chair Eskridge asked Mr. Pickus about the Steuber Distributing business and its future. Mr. Pickus explained he had no new information he could provide regarding the status of the property and that to the best of his knowledge there have not been any recent inquiries about how it could be redeveloped.

Commissioner Cole asked for an update on the Bickford Avenue assisted living project.

Chair Eskridge asked for an update on the Maple Avenue project to build a dental office.

Commissioners asked about the process to add items to the Planning Commission agenda for future meetings. Mr. Pickus explained and Commissioner Gottuso moved that any proposed addition would need a vote of approval by a minimum of three Commissioners. Chair Eskridge seconded the motion, which passed 6-0. Mr. Pickus stated that staff would provide an update to the Planning Commission bylaws to provide that process for the Commission to consider.

## **9. DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Mr. Pickus explained that as the Planning Director, he makes code interpretations when necessary, and that the best practice is that they eventually are codified through the Planning Commission code amendment process. He explained he has made code interpretations regarding short-term vacation rentals and preschools that he would like to see codified before the end of the year but were not included on the 2022 Work Program. He stated it is possible public hearings on the two topics could take place in June but he needed input from the Commission regarding whether a discussion on either item would be required before going to a public hearing. The Commission was receptive to meeting in June for the public hearings, meaning the Commission would meet twice in the month as a joint workshop with City Council is already scheduled for June 7<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Pickus said he would email the Commissioners the code interpretations for them to review. The Commissioners were asked to respond to Mr. Pickus if they had any questions or concerns about going straight to public hearing on the two topics.

Mr. Pickus referenced the 2022 work plan schedule to highlight and reiterate which public hearings on the items discussed tonight were coming up first. He then described the work City staff was conducting to allow the Commission to meet in person at the Carnegie Building next month. Commissioner Lippincott stated she would be out of town. Mr. Pickus informed Commissioner Gottuso, who was absent at the February Joint Workshop with City Council, of the City Council's decision regarding the Midtown District.

#### **10. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting adjourned at 7:52 p.m.

Approved this 6<sup>th</sup> day of April 2022.

By: s/s Eskridge

Commissioner Hank Eskridge, Chair