

Planning Commission Regular Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, October 7, 2015
7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.
Town Hall Meeting Room

Note: The Action Minutes represent a summary of presentations given and actions taken. For a more detailed record, the audio recording of the meeting can be accessed through the City Clerk's Office, City of University Place. Contact Emy Genetia at (253) 460-2511.

1. **Call to Order (7:07)** Acting Chair Smith called the meeting to order at 7:07 p.m.

2. **Roll Call (7:07)**

Planning Commission Members Present

Mr. Steve Smith – Acting Chair
Mr. Frank Boykin – Co Vice Chair (arrived at 7:07)
Mr. Chris Barrett
Mr. Diogenes Xenos

Planning Commission Members Excused

Mr. Cliff Quisenberry – Chair
Mr. Morry Stafford
Mr. Tony Paulson

Staff Present

David Swindale, Director
Jeff Boers, Principal Planner
Becky Metcalf, Project Assistant

3. **Approval of Minutes (7:08)**

MOTION: by Commissioner Xenos and seconded by Commissioner Barrett to approve the minutes of September 16, 2015 as submitted. Motion passed.

4. **Public Comment (7:09)**

There being no public comment on any item not appearing on the agenda, Acting Chair Smith stated the Public Comment section of the meeting was closed.

5. **Public Hearing and Consideration: Tree Retention Code Amendments (7:09)**

Principal Planner Boers provided background on and summary of this item. He summarized changes to the Tree Retention Code that have been made in response to comments from Commissioners at the September 16, 2015 meeting. In addition, Staff recommends that, on page 20, item B, the phrase “and trees located outside of critical areas or their buffers” be deleted

Acting Chair Smith opened the hearing to public comment on this issue.

David Harrowe, 4616 79th Ave. Ct. West, expressed regret that there is nothing in the proposed amendments to establish a heritage or significant tree policy. He asked how the change in size of regulated trees, from 6 inches to 9 or 12 inches, would benefit the typical UP resident. He also asked if a systematic survey of tree ordinances of cities in Western WA had been done, and if so, are the proposed size thresholds for regulated trees in University Place out of step with those of other cities surveyed. If so, why? He questioned whether the Planning Commission had done any active public polling?

Principal Planner Boers responded that several months ago the Commission looked at how central and south Puget Sound cities define trees. Tree size thresholds vary and there are other factors to be considered when comparing tree regulations. He also stated that comments received from citizens at the Department office are on both sides of the issue – with some residents wanting more flexibility to remove more trees and others wanting tighter restrictions to retain more of the urban forest.

Mr. Harrowe asked how long the Commission has been reviewing this issue. Principal Planner Boers stated the Commission had held study sessions for the past two months. Commissioners expressed appreciation for Mr. Harrowe's input.

Acting Chair Smith closed the public hearing.

Commission discussion and comments included:

- Commissioners not in attendance have had much input on this topic and should have the opportunity to be involved in the Commission's decision on a recommendation to Council, if there is no urgency to move this issue forward tonight.
- Commission consensus is to wait until the Oct. 21 meeting to make a decision on finalizing their recommendations to Council on the tree retention code amendments.

6. Staff Comments (7:44)

Director Swindale distributed a chart (attached to minutes as Attachment 1). He reported that the Puget Sound Regional Council has required the City to plan for an increased level of population. There will be a special City Council study session held on this topic on Monday, October 12th, and Commissioners are invited to attend if they wish. The proposal will be to provide for additional density in the city's regional growth center. The higher targets the City will need to plan for apply to population, housing units, and employment growth.

7. Commission and Liaison Comments (7:51)

None.

8. Adjourn

MOTION: by Commissioner Barrett, seconded by Commissioner Xenos to adjourn the meeting. Motion to adjourn was approved unanimously. (7:52)

Submitted by:

Becky Metcalf, Project Assistant
Community and Economic Development

Approved as submitted: October 21, 2015