CITY OF COVINGTON
Planning Commission Minutes

June 1, 2017
City Hall Council Chambers

CALL TO ORDER
The regular meeting of the Planning Commission was called to order at 6:32 p.m. by Vice Chair Dimmett.

MEMBERS PRESENT
Chele Dimmett, Jennifer Gilbert-Smith, Jonathan Ingram, Paul Max and Alex White

MEMBERS ABSENT – Bill Judd and Jim Langhough

STAFF PRESENT
Brian Bykonen, Associate Planner and Code Enforcement Officer
Richard Hart, Community Development Director
Salina Lyons, Principal Planner
Greg Markley, Battalion Chief, Puget Sound Regional Fire Authority
Ann Mueller, Senior Planner
Kelly Thompson, Planning Commission Secretary

APPROVAL OF MINUTES AND AGENDA

➢ C1. Commissioner White moved and Commissioner Max seconded to approve the corrected May 18, 2017 minutes and meeting agenda for June 1, 2017. Motion carried 5-0.

CITIZEN COMMENTS - None

UNFINISHED BUSINESS - None

PUBLIC HEARING

1. Critical Area Ordinance Amendments

Vice Chair Dimmett called the Public Hearing to order.

Senior Planner, Ann Mueller gave a brief presentation and explained the need for a periodic update of the Covington Municipal Code (CMC) 18.65 Critical Area regulations and related code amendments. She provided a brief explanation on each of the attachments.
Vice Chair Dimmett asked how our regulations compared to Federal Regulations. Ms. Mueller responded that the proposed regulations are in line with federal requirements. Ms. Mueller added that she also consulted the Department of Ecology and incorporated their feedback which is consistent with Best Available Sciences (BAS).

Commissioner Ingram asked whether the city could be liable for granting a variance. Mr. Hart said that staff follows the requirements outlined in the state law. If a variance was granted, the city would not be held liable.

Commissioner Ingram asked about the signage requirements at the boundary for a critical area. Ms. Lyons said the city ensures that the required signage is in place as part of the process. A bond is collected and the site is monitored for 5 years. Staff verifies that the required signage is still in place prior to releasing the bond.

Vice Chair Dimmett closed the Public Hearing.

➤ After review and discussion of the proposed amendments and supporting information and findings of facts provided in the city’s staff reports on May 18, 2017 and tonight, Commissioner Ingram moved and Commissioner White seconded to recommend to the City Council, the adoption of the proposed amendments to the Covington Municipal Code (CMC) in substantial form as attached to the June 1, 2017 staff memo on this topic including:
  1. Repeal of CMC 13.37 Critical Area Recharge Areas.
  3. Repeal and Replace CMC 16.65 Critical Areas Regulations.

The motion carried 5 - 0.

NEW BUSINESS

2. Discussion of Sign Code Amendments

Mr. Hart shared that an Open House regarding the sign code updates will be held on June 15, 2017. He provided background on the need for the sign code updates based on a Supreme Court Decision in 2015 and reviewed the provisions of the proposed code amendments.

Staff clarified the dawn to dusk provisions for temporary A-frame signs and how they do not apply to non-commercial message signs.
The Planning Commission asked about individuals standing in the right-of-way sign spinners, which are not addressed as a temporary sign. Staff indicated it is considered free speech in a public forum and not a sign.

Commissioner Ingram asked about political signs. Mr. Bykonen explained that the city is no longer able to consider the content of the signs, and that temporary signs are regulated by size, location and duration.

Vice Chair Dimmett asked about signage versus art. Mr. Hart responded that staff will respond to that issue when there is a complaint. Mr. Bykonen made the distinction between private art and public art. It is public art that is exempt from the sign code regulations.

Vice Chair Dimmett asked about the size of a standard American flag being 3’ x 5’. Mr. Bykonen found there is an exemption for display of a flag on a permanent pole or bracket, so there is no size limitation.

Commissioner Gilbert Smith asked about holiday decorations that exceed the size limitation. Mr. Bykonen indicated that staff would respond on complaint basis. Staff decided to provide limited guidelines on holiday signs.

3. Discussion of Fire Code Amendments

Ms. Lyons introduced Puget Sound Regional Fire Authority (PSRFA) Battalion Chief, Greg Markley. She summarized the services PSRFA provides the city. She reviewed the authority to collect the impact fees, the proposed rates, and how those fees can be spent.

Battalion Chief Greg Markley shared the background providing the capital needs of a community. The demand has grown in the need for emergency medical services. He reviewed the level of service deficiencies by region and explained how fire services measure success in response time. He explained how, due to lack of resources, they were unable to meet their service standards. There is currently no capacity for growth. He reviewed the needs identified in their Capital Facilities and Equipment Plan.

The Planning Commission expressed their support of collecting a Fire Impact Fee to provide high quality fire and life safety services to the citizens of Covington.

ATTENDANCE VOTE

- Commissioner Gilbert-Smith moved and Commissioner White seconded to approve the absence of Commissioner Langehough and Chair Judd. The motion carried 5-0.
PUBLIC COMMENTS - None

COMMENTS AND COMMUNICATIONS FROM STAFF AND COMMISSIONERS - None

ADJOURN

The June 1, 2017, Planning Commission Meeting adjourned at 8:22p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

[Signature]

Kelly Thompson, Planning Commission Secretary