

City of Colville

PLANNING COMMISSION

September 25, 2013

7:00 P.M. – City Hall

MINUTES

The Colville Planning Commission held a regular meeting on Wednesday, September 25, 2013, in the Council Room at City Hall. Chairperson Jody Hoffman called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M. with a quorum present.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Terry Cripps, Alan Bedford, Jody Hoffman, Dee Hokom, and Brenda Buckner. Russ Larsen arrived at 7:47 P.M. MEMBERS ABSENT: One vacancy exists. STAFF PRESENT: Director of Building & Planning Jim Lapinski, Assistant Planner Melinda Lee, and Recording Secretary Susan Davis. OTHERS PRESENT: Sandy Bedford.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes from the previous meeting of September 11, 2013 had been distributed to each member prior to the meeting. Alan Bedford moved and Dee Hokom seconded the motion to approve the minutes as written. Motion passed.

OLD BUSINESS

- A. Continued discussion regarding potential amendments for the 2013 Comprehensive Plan/ Development Regulations docket.
- Discussion regarding potential amendments to the standards for Temporary Use Permits in Chapter 17.84.

As outlined in her September 19, 2013 memorandum, Assistant Planner Melinda Lee presented proposed changes to potential amendments to the standards for Temporary Use Permits in Chapter 17.84 (attached hereto and made a part of these minutes). She advised that changes are being suggested based on the need to clarify time limits. Staff suggested eliminating the “six month” extension” for temporary use permits. It was felt allowing the possibility of an extension, up to one year total, would negate the temporary nature of the activity and potentially cause the use to become more permanent and more difficult to remove. Director of Building & Planning Jim Lapinski recommended removing the proposal for a bond as he felt it would be more of a hindrance than a solution. As proposed, if the temporary use is not terminated by the end of the approval period, the City would have the ability to summarily abate the use (go in and remove it) and charge the property owner for this action. Staff felt there are other enforcement mechanisms available in the Colville Municipal Code, i.e., Nuisance Ordinance, to deal with situations involving the condition of property. Melinda explained that the changes include clarification of the types of uses pertaining to Chapter 17.84, which are uses on private property only. Currently, uses that are proposed within the public right-of-way are handled by request directly to the City Council. Examples include situations such as the annual display of retail items along Main Street and street closures for special events. The Commission had no objection to the proposed changes.

PLANNING COMMISSION

September 25, 2013

Page 2

- Discussion regarding potential amendments to the standards for the Keeping of Chickens in Chapter 17.64.190.

As outlined in her September 19, 2013 memorandum, Melinda Lee provided information regarding the most common complaints and concerns from applicants over the past year.

- Members of the public have complained that the keeping of chickens should be permitted within the C-3 (General Commercial) District.

Melinda explained that single family residences are permitted within the C-3 District as long as they meet the standards that apply to the R-2 (Multi-Family Residential) District. In this case, staff would agree that the keeping of chickens would be appropriate, since it is established as a typical single-family residence with ample yard setbacks and separation. It is recommended that the same would not apply to the C-2 (Central Business) District, since the residential requirements are more restrictive and not typical to a single family residence. Therefore suggested language was inserted in Section 17.64.190.A to reflect this change. The Commission had no objection to the change.

- Public requests have been received to allow chickens to forage, supervised, during the day.

Melinda pointed out the ordinance was written to prevent free-ranging on the property during the day. Staff has seen examples of chicken tractors (used until the coop was done) and wholly enclosed garden areas where hens could be allowed to forage temporarily. Staff felt if the applicants are willing to handle this responsibility, it would not create a problem. Suggested language was inserted in Section 17.64.190.E to reflect this change. The Commission had no objection to the change.

- It was noted that public comments have indicated that the requirement to have 40 square feet of coop space per chicken is excessive. Requests have been made to reduce the minimum from 40 square feet per hen to 10 square feet per hen.

Melinda advised that staff recommends a reduction to “20” square feet per chicken, which would still provide ample room for the hens to comfortably reside within their wholly enclosed coop and prevent overcrowding. Research has indicated that 10 square feet is recommended for a coop when the hens are allowed to free range the property during the day. The coop is primarily for their protection and roosting at night. Melinda felt 20 square feet is a good compromise for urban chickens and noted that suggested language was inserted in Section 17.64.190.G.1 to reflect the change.

For comparison, Chairperson Jody Hoffman distributed additional information about the keeping of chickens from the National 4-H Curriculum (attached hereto and made a part of these minutes). National guidelines state that 2-3 square feet of floor space for each adult chicken is needed for housing. Further, the outdoor area should be about twice as big as the coop area.

- Members of the public have requested increasing the number of chickens allowed from 5 to 10.

Melinda explained if the total square footage per hen is reduced from 40 to 20, then up to 10 hens could reside in a 200-square-foot coop comfortably. The only change applicants may be faced with is

PLANNING COMMISSION

September 25, 2013

Page 3

increasing the size of an existing hen house. This could be a condition on their permit, with a follow up inspection for existing permits to ensure compliance. Melinda stated that staff strongly recommends no more than 10 hens be permitted in any case (outside of the R-1-S District). Staff inserted suggested language in Section 17.64.190 to reflect the change.

Discussion ensued regarding the suggested changes to reduce the square footage per chicken from 40 to 20 and increase the number of chickens allowed from 5 to 10. Brenda Buckner and Dee Hokom expressed concern about reducing the square footage per chicken. They felt that adequate open area needs to be provided to ensure a healthy environment for the chickens. Melinda explained that the proposed changes would allow 10 chickens, at 20 square feet per chicken, to be kept in a 200 square foot coop, which is currently the maximum size allowed before a structure needs to comply with the Building Code. Based on comparisons from other jurisdictions, other research material, and discussion, it was a consensus of the Commission to accept these proposed changes.

Discussion followed relative to the definition of “coop”. Melinda advised that “coop” is intended to include the chicken structure and enclosure. Some Commissioners suggested for clarification that the word “required” be inserted in reference to the chicken structure in Section 17.64.190.G.

Melinda explained the timeline for potential action, noting that the proposed amendments will be presented to the public at an informational meeting on October 9, 2013. Public hearings before the Planning Commission and City Council will follow as required prior to final action.

NEW BUSINESS: There was no New Business to be presented.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD: There were no public comments.

REPORTS

Terry Cripps questioned whether the Hawthorne Avenue improvement project will include bike paths. He was concerned about the safety of children especially that use Hawthorne Avenue and other city streets to get to school. It was the understanding of staff that the Hawthorne Avenue project will include bike paths. Staff also noted that bike paths will be considered on other streets when new projects occur in the future. Information on street projects can be obtained from the Street Department and/or Municipal Services and from discussion found in City Council minutes, which are posted on the City website.

Staff reported that the City Council remanded the proposed RV Park Design Standards back to the Planning Commission. Council issues include redundancy, the need for further clarification, and reconsideration of some of the proposed standards. Melinda advised that staff will review the Council's issues and concerns, do additional research where required, and prepare a report for the Planning Commission for presentation at the next meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

As there was no further business, Alan Bedford moved and Brenda Buckner seconded the motion to adjourn. There were no objections and the meeting was adjourned at 8:17 P.M.