

Minutes of the Veneta Planning Commission

June 1, 2009

Present: Chairman James Eagle Eye, Jim Bruvold, Lily Rees and Estelle Sweet

Absent: Len Goodwin

Others: Ric Ingham, City Administrator; Zac Moody, Assistant City Planner; Sheryl Hackett, City Recorder; Darci Henneman, Assistant City Recorder; and Herb Vloedman

I. REVIEW AGENDA

Chairman James Eagle Eye called the Veneta Planning Commission to order at 7:12 p.m. and reviewed the agenda.

II. PUBLIC COMMENT

None

III. STAFF CODE INTERPRETATION

Zac reviewed the memo he provided to the Planning Commission. He said because of the recent declining economy, Hayden Homes has been looking for ways to bring new interest into the two Applegate Landing subdivisions. They offer a range of floor plans for one and two story homes to a variety of home buyers. In an effort to bring buyers to the area, they are requesting an interpretation of the Residential Design Standards in the Southwest Area Plan (SWAP) to see if they could include single family homes in both subdivisions that have a side loaded garage out past the front facade of the home.

In examining the SWAP Section IV, Table 2, Development Standards specifically state that all residential zoned garages shall be *“flush or recessed from the front facade. If detached from a dwelling(s), it must be of the same architectural style as the dwelling(s) it serves; and must have windows if facing a street.”* Zac said these provisions are consistent with the existing Comprehensive Plan and the Veneta Land Development Ordinance.

When the SWAP was approved, the idea of setting the dwellings back from the street allowed residents to have “eyes on the street” providing a clearer line of sight through a neighborhood and allowing occupants inside the home to watch the streets from their windows. Setting dwellings back from the street required the garages to be recessed to the front facade allowing for better neighborhood aesthetics in an area where narrower lots were allowed to prevent a garage dominated neighborhood.

In a memo, City Attorney, Carrie Connolly said the intent of the code appeared to be met with the new floor plan. She said asking the Planning Commission to make an interpretation is really asking them to modify the code. Staff felt Hayden Homes meets the code but needs direction from the Commission. The required amendment to the SWAP is very expensive. The deposit fee for an amendment to a specific development plan is \$7,500. The high cost could keep a small developer from making the minor design changes. Changes to the design and construction standard requires a Major Amendment to the SWAP. A Public Hearing is required along with City Council approval.

Zac said staff would like to make sure changes in the SWAP similar to this to allow the amendment of home-site designs are acceptable under a Minor Amendment so the applicant isn't burdened with a substantial cost. This would also prevent staff being involved in a long process that could be done administratively as long as it does not change the intent of the code, with this change the Planning Commission could approve small amendments such as development standards. The City Council would also need to approve this code change.

In response to a question from Jim Bruvold, Zac said other Code provisions allow the Planning Commission to make specific changes as they see necessary. The SWAP does not include any of this language.

In response to a question from James Eagle Eye, Zac said under the current Land Development Ordinance if the Commission allows this kind of interpretation, they put themselves at risk. However, code language could be written to allow code changes at the administrative level. Staff is suggesting adding this amendment to those currently being proposed. Zac suggested finalizing these code changes at a Planning Commission work session on July 6, 2009. The City Council work session would be on July 13, 2009.

Lily Rees is concerned City Ordinances do not give the City much latitude to make considerations. She is concerned how the Commission would define "Minor" and "Major" amendments.

In response to a question from Lily Rees, Zac said Hayden Homes recently proposed this style of building. He said the lot coverage, number of lots nor the dwelling size would change. He said how the dwelling sits on the lot is the only change.

Roy Hankin of Hayden Homes said the requested change will provide a variety of options to home buyers. He said Hayden Homes didn't want all the houses to look the same and 25% of the homes will have a different street appearance in the subdivision.

Zac said if this remained a Major Amendment it would go before the City Council and a public hearing would be required. A minor amendment would allow residents within 300 feet of the development to have the opportunity to submit written comment. The applicant will be required to provide adequate reasons for why the change is still consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and SWAP.

In response to a question from James Eagle Eye, Zac said he didn't compare the proposed changes with the design standards. This proposal would be relatively consistent with the new code as it is written now without changes. He said definitions for Minor and Major Amendments would be needed and that the Planning Commission would need to decide what could be done at the administrative level. Zac said he will provide definitions of Major and Minor Amendments in order for the Commission to make a decision on the findings at the July 6th meeting.

IV. OTHER

Zac said he would be providing quarterly reports to the Commissioners at the July 6, 2009 meeting. Zac said Frontier Resources and BowTech, located in the Cornerstone Development, are required to provide individual Site Plan Reviews in order to split their parking lot into two separate parking areas.

Zac said Ixtapa Restaurant requested a Site Plan Amendment in order to expand their restaurant to include the old MetLife Insurance Co. office in order to add a cantina. He said an adjustment to their parking area is also required but looked feasible.

Zac said the Jehovah's Witnesses Kingdom Hall Site Plan Review will be on the July 6, 2009 Commission meeting agenda. He said their stormwater management plan did not follow what they previously submitted therefore staff requested they resubmit their plan.

VII. ADJOURN

Chairman James Eagle Eye adjourned the Veneta Planning Commission at 7:34 p.m.

James Eagle Eye, Chairman

ATTEST:

Darci Henneman, Assistant City Recorder