

**SANDPOINT PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING  
5:30 P.M. CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS  
MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 6, 2018**

**COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT:** Tom Riggs, Danny Strauss, Thomas Russell, Cate Huisman, Jason Meyer, Slate Kamp

**COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT:** Gregory Crettol

**STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:** Planning & Community Economic Director Aaron Qualls, Planner Ryan Shea (minutes), City Engineer Dan Tadic

Chairman Riggs called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

**Matters from the Public:** None.

**Approval of the Consent:**

Commissioner Russell moved to approve and Commissioner Strauss seconded to approve the minutes of September 4th. **Motion passes unanimously.**

**Agenda Item B: Public Hearing for Title 9 Chapter 5 Off Street Parking**

Riggs started off by going over the public hearing procedures.

**Qualls started off the staff presentation** by saying that this agenda item began as a strategic City Council strategic priorities in regards to barriers to affordable housing. Additionally, it was also brought forth due to barriers to various types of development in the areas just outside the deregulated parking area in the Downtown core. At the same time staff also looked at the entire code and examined how it compared to other city's codes and if it was meeting the comprehensive plan goals and objectives. Qualls said that this version of the code is the culmination of 6 workshops. Qualls said that he would also invite the Commission to discuss the change of use section of the code and to consider that when a change of use occurs to look at the change of use from one category to another category (there are 5 use categories: residential, commercial, entertainment, institutional, schools, and industrial). Qualls said that this is an enforcement issue from a staff perspective and can be onerous to review every single business license. Further, Qualls asked if the Commission would consider exempting smaller scale residential developments from the hard surfacing requirements. Qualls went on to the drainage section and said that this section is covered by our Stormwater Management Ordinance and needs to be cleaned up/removed. Additionally, the lighting section was slightly modified to include requirements for timers and take out the restriction of photo cells, and modifying the decorative lighting provision to take out this requirement. Qualls said that the Tree Committee has reviewed the code and recommended that the proposed code exempting Industrial zones from landscaping standards not be approved.

Qualls also asked the Commission to consider the use table requirements in the current draft stating that multifamily under 800 square feet requiring 1 parking space instead of 1.4 might want to be raised to 1,200 to be consistent with other parts of City Code. Qualls said that the Cottage Housing ordinance requires units of approximately 1,200 square feet to have 1 parking space. Qualls also recommended that the parking credits for being closer to transit stops be reduced because as it currently reads (parcels within ¼ mile of a bus stop can obtain this credit) almost the entire city benefits from this credit. Lastly, Qualls said that the part of the code regarding junked vehicles was modified. Qualls asked the Commission if they had any questions.

Russell asked Qualls to clarify the residential uses being exempted from hard surfacing. Qualls said that there are a number of cities in Idaho not requiring hard surfacing for residential uses. Some have relief valves like Boise that can be approved by the City Administrator. Ketchum allows for compacted gravel or other dustless materials. Qualls said that this modification would be bringing the code more in line with current City Council priorities to remove cost barriers to missing middle housing. Russell asked how this provision would affect curb cuts and drive aprons. Qualls explained that this would not affect those requirements since they are in the public right-of-way and typically triggered through sidewalk and public improvement requirements.

Huisman asked for an example of the change of category provision Qualls presented earlier. Qualls explained that currently any change of use triggers parking requirements. Qualls said that the suggested change would be if a use changed from one category to another. Huisman asked if a 3 bedroom house moving to a 5 bedroom house would trigger additional parking requirements. Qualls said yes this would be the case, but that change is occurring through a building permit not a change of use. Huisman then asked if a bank changed to a bowling alley would then trigger additional requirements. Qualls clarified that these two uses are in the same category but under current code if the change of use occurs they would have to meet parking standards. Qualls said that currently staff does not enforce this at the business license stage. Riggs said he was worried about the inequity here where new projects would be required to meet the whole code while use changes may not be required to meet it. Huisman wondered if the change of use trigger is even possible to enforce and is it so much of a problem that it's not even sensible to keep in the code. Qualls reminded the Commission that the changes proposed should be in line with the goals and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan.

Riggs asked why staff changed the instances of "shall" to "must." Qualls said that it was a suggestion from the City Attorney. Riggs suggested changing "should" within 9-5-9.C. to "must" to be consistent with this change.

**Chairman Riggs opened the public hearing.**

Brendon Brock, who resides in Sandpoint, stated that he is in the process of acquiring a commercial property and his proposed change of use for the parcel would balloon the

parking requirements to approximately 35 parking spaces required. Brock said that without the code changes his business plan would not be viable at this location. Brock said he is in full support of the changes.

Steve Holt, who resides in Sagle, spoke and said that he has a property in Downtown Sandpoint that is the beneficiary of the deregulated parking area, Matchwood Brewery, said that he is in full support of the changes and further deregulation of the parking requirements would allow additional development on this property. Holt said that there are grandfathered uses in the city that currently could not exist under the current parking code requirements. Holt said that change of uses can run into issues despite the existing business operating fine without additional parking.

**Riggs closed the public hearing and moved into deliberations.**

Russell asked if staff has received any negative feedback on the proposed changes. Qualls said that there have been staff-level concerns which have been articulated throughout the 6 workshops and staff reports. Qualls said that there have been press releases and proper notification. Qualls said that he has checked with other cities and stated that Ketchum has deregulated significantly and has received no negative feedback since. Qualls said that the deregulation efforts he has researched have been widely supported. Riggs suggested that the Commission first consider the items that they have been talking about in previous meetings and not the newer items proposed by Staff tonight.

Strauss asked at three units if there is 4.2 spaces required would it round up or down. Qualls stated down and at 4.5 it would round up to 5. Strauss said that he feels most of these changes is simply cleaning the code up and it is well done.

Kamp asked for a clarification if Mr. Brock's proposed business use change was outside of both the current deregulated zone and the expanded zone. Qualls said yes, and that without the changes he was saying that his proposed use change would not be feasible.

Strauss said that he was in support of relaxing the change of use requirement in order to encourage the reuse of properties. Strauss said that the Matchwood Brewery is a good example of a project not being possible if they had to meet current code requirements. Strauss said he was in favor of the market determining the parking requirements of existing, empty buildings. Riggs said that this kind of rationale could also apply to new development so why require any off street parking requirements? Huisman agreed that the change of use requirement may have a dampening effect on the reuse of empty commercial buildings. Huisman wondered if the Commission could somehow allow the market to dictate requirements or if there's a relief valve that could be put in code. Qualls said that there is indeed a relief valve that requires an engineered traffic study to relax requirements. Tadic says that for a traffic demand analysis they are typically in the \$5,000 range and that they would typically be used for larger projects. Riggs reminded the Commission that Staff's proposed language was the change of use only triggering for

uses going from one large category to another like Industrial to Commercial or vice versa. Riggs suggested that taking on this section of code is potentially too much for tonight's meeting and that he is uncomfortable with existing businesses being treated differently than new businesses. ***The commission agreed to not address the change of use component of the code changes and move onto the other changes tonight.***

The commission next spoke about the relaxation of hard surfacing requirements for small scale residential properties (§9-5-6). Qualls clarified that it would only be exempting single family homes, duplexes, accessory dwelling units and units near alleys from the requirements. Riggs stated that this seemed like a fairly narrow exemption. Huisman stated that it makes sense since it reduces costs and that she was in support of this change. ***The commission agreed.***

The commission next moved onto the elimination of the drainage section, §9-5-7. The change would simply state that drainage issues would need to be addressed by the Stormwater Management Ordinance and this section is redundant and can be removed. ***The commission agreed.***

The commission then spoke about the lighting changes in §9-5-9. Qualls said that one of the changes requires timers which turn off all unnecessary lights when the lot is not in use to reduce glare in the surrounding neighborhoods and to save energy. The second change would be eliminating the requirement of Decorative Lighting from the code as it has caused confusion about who maintains it as property owners have assumed that the city maintains decorative lighting. Qualls said that decorative lighting will still be required in the public right-of-way per City-adopted plans. ***The Commission agreed.***

The commission then addressed the landscaping section, §9-5-13. The Tree Committee recommended that the parking areas in the Industrial General zone not be exempt from any of the requirements of 9-5-13: Screening and/or Landscaping. Huisman said that she was not sure what the benefit to the general public is for planting trees in an Industrial General parking lot and could use up parking spots. Qualls said that it would primarily impact employee parking areas. Kamp suggested that trees be limited in the parking areas and the trees should be focused along the streets and limited in employee parking areas. Strauss agreed that trees are important but should probably not be heavily focused in the parking lot areas of Industrial General development but could be planted elsewhere on the property. Qualls clarified that street trees are still required for development within the city and this would not be changing. Riggs said that so long as there are requirements for planting street trees he would be OK with not requiring trees in industrial parking lots. Russell said that trees are important in paved areas more so than in unpaved areas. Russell proposed to have trees required only in paved areas. Kamp stated that he is still in opposition of trees in Industrial parking areas even if they would be paved. ***The commission did not agree with the Tree Committee's recommendation to remove the §9-5-13.K.4. exemption stating that parking areas within the Industrial General Zone shall only be required to adhere to the minimum landscaping standards (§9-5-13.A).***

The Commission next spoke about paving requirements in the Industrial General zone. Currently, the code states that hard surfacing in the Industrial General zone *may* be waived by the City Engineer. Tadic said that large equipment heavily damages asphalt surfaces and may not make much sense to put it in more heavier trafficked Industrial property. Tadic said that asphalt parking in areas for customer parking seems to make sense. Strauss wondered if the 1 space per 1,000 square feet is appropriate. Qualls said that this is the minimum requirement. Strauss provided an example of a 16,000 square foot facility having 5 employees being required to have 16 spots would be too many. Riggs reminded the Commission that this could be reduced through an engineering study. The commission came to no conclusion on changing hard surfacing requirements.

Qualls next went onto the proposed change to reduce the requirements for small residential units. Currently, the proposed code states that multifamily units as 800 square feet or less require 1 off street parking space. The proposal is to change this number to 1,200 square feet. Qualls said that this would make it consistent with language in the draft requiring homes with 3 bedrooms or less to provide 1 parking space. Additionally, elsewhere in code 1,200 square feet is typically the threshold for requiring 1.4 spaces. For example, the Cottage Housing ordinance allows a 1,200 square feet or under unit to have 1 parking space. Huisman agreed that it makes it more consistent. Qualls said that staff has also done some unit research for recently constructed projects within Sandpoint and found that 1,200 square feet units are typically 3 bedroom units. ***Russell stated that he preferred 800 while the rest of the Commission agreed with the proposed change.***

Qualls next went onto the change for the parking credits for being close to transit stops, §9-5-17.C. Riggs suggested that this change be brought back for discussion along with the change of use. Russell said that such a credit would be more valid in a community where public transit is a larger component of people's everyday lives. Riggs said that because transit stops oftentimes move around over time he is OK with removing this credit completely. Huisman said that this credit seems to be lessening the parking requirements city wide so if the Commission is OK with the parking requirement table then the requirement should simply be removed. ***The Commission agreed that this credit should be removed.***

Huisman moved that the Sandpoint Planning Commission, after consideration of the criteria and relevant standards of Idaho Code and Sandpoint City Code recommend to the Sandpoint City Council that they approve and adopt the proposed amendments to Title 9, Chapter 5: Off Street Parking & Loading Facilities of Sandpoint City Code.

With amendments as discussed.

The reasons for this decision are:

1. Particular consideration has been given to the effects of these proposed changes upon the health, safety and welfare of the residents and the delivery of services by any political subdivision providing public services, including school districts, within the City of Sandpoint.
2. Staff has followed the notice procedures applicable to zone changes contained in Idaho Code 67-6511 and Sandpoint City Code Title 9, Chapter 9.
3. The proposed amendments are in accordance with the goals and policies of the Sandpoint Comprehensive Plan.

***Strauss seconded the motion. Motion passes unanimously.***

**MATTERS FROM STAFF:** Qualls said that next up on the agenda would be addressing the draft streeteries ordinance, also known as parklets. Qualls explained that streeteries would be a way to extend seating areas into nearby public parking spaces. Qualls said that this ordinance would hopefully be timed to go live for the next summer season. Qualls said that the next meeting would most likely be December 4<sup>th</sup>.

**ADJOURNMENT:** The meeting adjourned at 7:03 p.m.