

**SANDPOINT PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
5:30 P.M. CITY HALL COUNCIL CHAMBERS
MINUTES OF NOVEMBER 15, 2016**

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT: Tom Russell, Tom Riggs, Collin Beggs, Yuri Simon, Mark Remmetter, Danny Strauss

COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT: Cate Huisman

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT: Planning & Community Economic Director Aaron Qualls, Assistant Planner Ryan Shea (minutes), Associate Planner Melissa Bethel

COUNCIL PRESENT: None.

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

Matters from the Public: Steve Lockwood shared his opinions on smaller living spaces based on his experiences of developing the Hickory Park cottages.

Agenda Item A: Approval of Consent

Commissioner Remmetter moved and Commissioner Russell seconded to approve the minutes from the September 20, 2016. Riggs abstained. **Motion passes unanimously.**

Agenda Item B: Presentation on Land Use, Economic Development, Community Health and Services

Qualls gave a presentation regarding land use, economic development, community health and services.

- Qualls stated that today the creative class represents about 33% of the jobs nationwide. This share of the workforce has increased significantly over time in the U.S. In Idaho this class is expected to grow at a higher rate than traditional jobs.
- Qualls went over the effects on environments and the factors of health. An active city is a competitive city.
- Qualls went over taxes and land use. Residential uses ultimately end up being a financial drain on cities.

Strauss asked what the city can do to ensure that appropriate development occurs in the ACI (Area of City Impact). Qualls said that the city and county need to work together. Russell asked about what the county presented on. Steve Lockwood explained that all the videos of the presentations are posted on whatshappeningupnorth.com. Lockwood explained that the organization Idaho Smart Growth has previously done work on relationships between cities and counties on ACI relationships. Qualls confirmed that Idaho Smart Growth staff would be able to provide technical assistance on this issue.

Agenda Item C: Workshop: Discussion of small living spaces; Tiny Homes, ADU's and Cottage Housing

Qualls explained that the commission directed staff to research and explore tiny homes and in addition staff thought it appropriate to also include other things like ADUs and cottage housing.

Qualls explained that tiny houses are licensed RVs and as such they are not taxed which can present level of service issues. Qualls said that Fresno is one of the examples as a community that allowed tiny homes with wheels as secondary dwelling units. Strauss asked if the limitations are that tiny homes are RVs (recreational vehicle) and we simply don't allow folks to live in RVs. Qualls responded yes, the primary issue revolves around putting tiny homes on foundations to make them legal living units. Qualls said that ADU (accessory dwelling unit) code also presents an issue in the sense that design standards require ADUs to look like primary dwelling units. This design code can prohibit some tiny home designs, especially those that are pre-built.

Qualls went on to explain that the cottage housing ordinance is also something that we included because they promote small more dense development that provides flexibility in density in the RS (residential single family) zone. Simon asked about if the cottage housing ordinance has anything to do with vacation rentals. Qualls stated that the ordinance is separate. Riggs asked about the statement in the staff report referring to density standards of cottage housing ordinances in RM (residential multifamily) zones and why cottages do not pencil out there. Qualls explained that in the residential multi-family zone the amount of units allowed are more than what the cottage housing ordinance allows. Riggs stated that the cottage housing ordinance seems like a type of PUD (planned unit development). Qualls said that PUDs are agreements between the city and a developer and these agreements run with the land.

Riggs asked if a tiny home would be required to be hooked up to water, sewer, and power. Qualls stated yes, that would most likely be required. Beggs said that he would like to explore the viability of tiny homes on wheels as a living unit. Remmetter said that tiny homes would be hard to meet as an ADU due to design requirements and being built off site. Remmetter also said that it might be very difficult to get units into the backyards of lots.

Strauss wondered what the goal here is. Strauss asked why there are so many types of small homes and why they exist under separate sections of code. Strauss asked if there was some way we could bring all of these under one umbrella.

At this time Riggs asked if any members of the public would like to speak. Steve Lockwood came to the podium to speak.

Lockwood explained that he has dealt with small living spaces. He went on to explain that he built small apartments near Hickory Park. Lockwood explained that historically the city council were cautious of smaller units, unique design, and density. Lockwood suggested that the commissioners consider relaxing the design requirements of ADUs. He believes that the code is overly restrictive and increase the costs of building ADUs more than it should. Lockwood explained that households are smaller now and it is what people are generally looking for these days. Lockwood went on to say that there is a real demand for smaller units and that housing density increases interest in a community. Strauss asked Lockwood what he thought of the 650 square foot limit of ADUs. Lockwood said that he believes the sizes should be more flexible. Riggs asked for Lockwood to specifically point out which part of the ADU code use improvement. Lockwood said he feels, for example, that an ADU needing the same type of roof as the primary dwelling unit is unnecessary as different types of roofs can look fine together.

Qualls stated that he wanted some direction from the Planning Commission as far as the ADU design code, the cottage ordinance, or tiny homes (houses on wheels) and that inviting the public to weigh in would be appropriate. Remmetter said that the Planning Commission should pursue the tiny house concept but the issue of tiny homes being classified as a RV needs to be fixed first. Riggs asked what the advantage of tiny homes would be over an ADU or a cottage. Riggs wondered if we are adding a new type of housing that couldn't be accomplished under existing ordinances. Riggs went on to say that the cottage housing ordinance seemed so restrictive that this may be the reason why developers are not taking advantage of it. Strauss said that there may not be an end user for this concept of cottage housing. Russell said he personally knows of builders that are interested in the cottage housing concept and he thinks that the cottage housing ordinance could be workable. Russell also asked how much the fees are for cottage housing. Qualls said that they are basically the same as single family housing.

Simon said he was concerned about the number of off street parking requirements required for more housing density. Russell asked how much flexibility does the city have to interpret new and creative types of housing. Qualls explained that building code largely defines housing types. Bethel explained that the city can exempt certain parts of the building code if the commission and council sees fit. Riggs asked if the commission were interested in pursuing these issues further. Beggs said yes he was interested in pursuing it further but we should focus on a specific topic. Beggs asked if we could bring in some photos of ADUs that have been built in the city thus far. Beggs said that the design parts of the ADU code does not make much sense from a designer's standpoint.

Qualls asked if the commission would like staff to look at the ADU code and incorporate some of the feedback that we have heard tonight. The commission agreed. Russell and Simon said that the public should also have a voice in this discussion. Remmetter said he doesn't see how the city benefits to pursue tiny houses as long as they are recreational vehicles. Riggs said that he was skeptical about the tiny house movement. Beggs said that the fact that they have wheels should not be of primary concern whether they fit into the built environment.

Riggs said that the commission needs more information on tiny houses in order to have more detailed and lengthy discussions on the topic.

Qualls stated that the bottom line is if the city wants to allow houses on wheels (RVs) in the city limits as accessory dwelling units.

The commission agreed that there is interest in further exploring tiny houses for now and at a later date exploring the ADU and cottage housing ordinance. Qualls said that staff will come up some dates and times for future meetings.

Matters from Staff: None.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting adjourned at 6:58 p.m.