

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

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT: Tom Riggs, Danny Strauss, Tom Russell, Cate Huisman, Jason Meyer

COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT: Mark Remmetter, Slate Kamp

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

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

Matters from the Public: None.

Approval of the Consent:

Strauss said that on page 5 to amend the sentence “not in accordance” to read “in accordance.”

Commissioner Russell moved to approve the minutes as amended and Commissioner Strauss seconded to approve the minutes of May 15. **Motion passes unanimously.**

Agenda Item B: Review and Discuss Sandpoint City Code Title 9, Chapter 5, Off Street Parking and Loading Facilities

Qualls said that the discussion tonight evolves from a discussion that he had with Commissioner Russell about a week ago on how to promote more workforce housing. Qualls gave some background about when the city deregulated the parking requirements in the downtown core and has said that it has contributed to a pretty significant amount of investment in downtown. Examples include: Ponderay Winery Building, the Hive, and Joel’s Mexican Restaurant. Qualls said that during the construction of the bank building required the applicant to knock down some buildings to provide parking. Qualls said that the traditional downtown core never would have been able to be built as it stands with the current requirements. Qualls said that there has been interest from parties that are just outside the downtown core but have been inhibited by the off street requirements. Qualls showed the commissioners some examples of these properties on GIS. Qualls said that the granary parcel is a good example – half of it is within the exempted area and half out.

Qualls provided some examples of other communities and what they have done to provide some relief for parking requirements. Spokane, Washington has deregulated parking in their downtown area and reduced the parking minimums in other zones. Ketchum, Idaho has reduced the parking requirements in residential zones if a licensed engineer could show the parking requirements were less than the code dictated. Qualls said that excess parking requirements tend to spread cities out and encourage vehicular

travel instead of other forms such as walking or biking. Additionally, unused parking lots do not provide very much taxable value.

Qualls said that structured parking garages are about \$20,000/space and requiring some kind of public on-street charge is necessary at a certain point.

Qualls said that as part of this round of code change there could be other potential code changes like the tree canopy requirement in the off-street parking code.

Huisman stated that a relief valve like Qualls mentioned that would require an engineer to prove that less parking would be required what would the savings really be? Qualls said that a relief valve like that is just an idea at this point. Simply reducing the off-street parking requirement could be an option. Huisman asked if there have been any other communities that have gotten rid of parking requirements and experienced issues with too much on-street parking. Qualls said that this is a good point and without parking minimums it would be left up to the market. We wouldn't forbid developers to building parking, but it would be at their discretion.

Strauss felt that this is an important topic to discuss at this point. Strauss felt that off-street parking is very site-specific. Is there some way we could make a change in code that could provide flexibility like coming to the Planning Commission and ask for relief?

Huisman suggested that we could maybe use parking relief to prioritize construction of housing for the missing middle.

Russell reminded the commission that for commercial parking the nature of it is more transient than residential.

Riggs said that he's worried about too many cars flooding the streets of Sandpoint.

Strauss said that expanding the exemption area may not be going far enough. Providing relief to multi-family residential areas that are further out may be critical.

Russell suggested expanding the de-regulated zone and create a relief valve for other areas. Huisman asked if expanding commercial uses is also an issue. Qualls responded yes. Huisman asked if the commission could deregulate just within the Commercial A zone. Qualls said that the commission can recommend any change they would like to.

Strauss asked if there have been any studies done on the change of use of vehicles. Russell suggested that the lack of on-street parking spots would encourage more people to use alternative modes of transportation.

Riggs suggested that an incremental approach might be best like a modest expansion of the deregulated zone.

Qualls reminded the commission that de-regulation of parking isn't the only potential change that's on the table – changes like reduction of setbacks may also encourage more infill and multi-family development. Strauss requested that staff look deeper into minor tweaks that could encourage multi-family residential use. Strauss said that many developers have issues with high cost of fees in regards to multi-family developments.

Huisman stated that she doesn't necessarily agree with Strauss and Riggs. Huisman suggested focusing on providing ways to obtain an exemption from the requirements at a reasonable cost.

Meyer suggested providing paid parking might be an important component to obtain more parking options for the downtown core.

Qualls told the commission that staff could come back with some examples from other cities and alternatives on expanding the de-regulated zone outward. Riggs agreed that providing some alternatives would be helpful.

Riggs suggested that recently with the two-way traffic change and additional parking has made downtown significantly more busy.

The commission discussed the example of the bank building going up and how some well-known and utilized buildings had to be torn down in large part because of a large parking lot. The commission also discussed Kochava within the de-regulated parking area and how they purchased more parking to provide for their employees.

Russell suggested that projects outside of the de-regulated zone that want to be a walkable neighborhood type development could be harmed if they're not provided some kind of appeal process.

The commission discussed ADUs and parking requirements.

Matters from Staff: Qualls gave an update on the downtown construction to the commission. Qualls showed the commission the updates to the website: sandpointstreets.com. Qualls also said that Council may be adopting the proposed changes to the STR code.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting adjourned at 6:32 p.m.