

City of Springfield  
Work Meeting

**MINUTES OF THE WORK SESSION MEETING OF  
THE SPRINGFIELD PLANNING COMMISSION HELD  
Tuesday, December 11, 2007**

The City of Springfield Planning Commission met in Work Session in the Jesse Maine Meeting Room, 225 Fifth Street, Springfield, Oregon on Tuesday, December 11, 2007 at 5:30 p.m., with Frank Cross as Springfield Planning Commission Chair.

**ATTENDANCE**

Present were Chair Frank Cross, Vice Chair Bill Carpenter and Planning Commissioners Lee Beyer, Johnny Kirschenmann, Sheri Moore, Eric Smith. Also present were Development Service Director Bill Grile, Planning Manager Greg Mott, Planning Supervisor Mark Metzger, Planning Secretary Brenda Jones, and City Attorney Joe Leahy.

**ABSENT**

Terri Leezer

**APPLICATIONS**

Residential Lands Study – Land Use Efficiency Measures Work Plan -

As discussed during the November 6, 2007 Planning Commission work session, review and evaluation of land use efficiency measures is one of the next steps necessary for completing the Residential Buildable lands Study ORS 197.296 (9) requires that communities consider a range of land use efficiency measures to help accommodate future growth within their existing urban growth boundary (UGB), prior to any UGB expansion efforts. During the November 6th work session, the commission requested that staff construct a work program to help guide the next steps of this process.

Mark Metzger, Planning Supervisor introduced Planner David Reesor. He asked the commission to review the measures and determine if they were something that it wanted to see implemented in Springfield.

Mr. Reesor drew the commission's attention to the work plan for the Land Efficiency Measures, noting it was part of the larger work plan for the Residential Lands Study. Staff worked closely with EcoNorthwest to formulate the 12 efficiency measures before the commission. He reviewed the proposed process for reviewing the efficiency measures, which was also outlined in the transmittal memorandum.

Mr. Reesor attributed the review to ORS 197.269(9), which required communities to consider a range of efficiency measures to help accommodate future growth within their urban growth boundaries.

Responding to a question from Commissioner Beyer, Mr. Reesor anticipated that staff would attempt to identify how well each measure had worked in other Oregon communities, and would

help the commission visualize how each measure worked ‘on the ground’ and how many acres each could realistically “save.” He envisioned that the measures could end up being new code standards and that when implemented through ordinance, they would be designed to assure, ‘as best we can’ that the community got what it wanted in its neighborhoods.

Commissioner Beyer said he would be more inclined toward permissible standards rather than “mandatory’s or minimums.” Mr. Reesor said there were many tools that communities used to encourage such land use practices without necessarily “putting the hammer down.”

Mr. Reesor asked the commission to consider the measures with Springfield in mind as what worked for other communities would not necessarily work for Springfield or be what Springfield wanted.

Mr. Metzger recalled a meeting of the Residential Lands Committee attended by Department of Land Conservation and Development staff Gloria Gardner. The committee asked Ms. Gardner “how much is enough” in regard to the efficiency measures and when one knew a city had satisfied its responsibilities, and Ms. Gardner had no answer because there was no rule. Springfield had to demonstrate that it considered the measures, but in the end the issue that counted was what was livable for Springfield and what made sense for the community. He noted that Springfield had already implemented many of the measures.

Commissioner Beyer noted those measures the City had in place, such as the minimum lot size and common wall duplexes, and asked how often those were used in development. Mr. Reesor responded that Springfield saw many development proposals that attempted to reach as small a lot size as possible. Springfield also allowed panhandle lots. He noted that the minimum lot size in Springfield was 4,500 square feet for lots oriented east-west and 5,000 square feet for north-south lots because of solar requirements. Mr. Metzger noted that his lot was just over 5,000 and he did not think he would want a lot much smaller than that; his house was not large but it just fit on the site without much back yard. He pointed out that Springfield also had a cluster development provision and other ways of economizing land.

At the request of Chair Cross, Mr. Metzger diagrammed an example of cluster development to demonstrate how additional density could be achieved on a parcel. He indicated that staff would provide additional examples for the commission to examine in the future.

Commissioner Beyer recommended that staff post examples of success as well as unsuccessful efficiency measures as well as information about where in had worked, particularly if it worked in Springfield, on the Web. Mr. Metzger concurred. He said that staff was looking to the commission for its sense of the local market because some of the ideas were good ideas that worked well in the context of a larger community and might not work in Springfield. He emphasized the importance of good design to making density work. Short of having a design review committee, it was hard to assure good design.

Mr. Metzger suggested that he ensure all of the commissioners had his and Mr. Reesor’s contact information so that if they have questions regarding any of the information they were provided by staff, they would be able to get questions to staff in a timely manner.

Mr. Reesor reviewed the time line included with the work plan. He determined the commission had no further questions.

Turning to another topic, Chair Cross recalled that Mr. Carpenter had raised an issue about commission training the previous summer and he had been working with Mr. Carpenter and Mr. Mott to establish a format for those trainings in commission work sessions. He also envisioned a

change in commission agendas to allow for more public input. Chair Cross indicated he was working on a draft topic outline that he could share with the commission via e-mail for further discussion at the following meeting. He reviewed the draft outline.

Responding to a question from Ms. Moore, Chair Cross anticipated that the commission would discuss the subject of roundabouts when Transportation staff had more time.

Mr. Metzger determined from Chair Cross that he envisioned the training as a series of lectures or briefings on the topics identified specifically for the purpose of commission education and to build on the commission's knowledge so it could make better decisions. He thought examples of past commission decisions relevant to the topics would also be useful. He discussed some options for scheduling such trainings.

Chair Cross also noted a change in work session formats in that briefings on public hearings items had been dropped to ensure that hearing took place completely in the Council Chamber. He suggested that if the commission agreed to that, it would help in the scheduling of trainings.

Commissioner Beyer commended the change in work session format as it unintentionally excluded the public from discussion related to a public hearing. He commended the work done by Chair Cross and recommended that he send out the topic areas and schedule time early in 2008 for additional discussion.

Commissioner Moore also commended the change, acknowledging that it might lead to more time spent in meetings. She liked the idea of scheduling trainings on nights when the commission had no public hearings.

Responding to a question from Chair Cross, Mr. Mott indicated he thought staff could be prepared to develop small "fill in" briefings after the topic list was established.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Cross adjourned the meeting at 6:30 p.m.