

City of Springfield  
Regular Meeting

MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF  
THE SPRINGFIELD PLANNING COMMISSION  
Wednesday, September 3, 2008

The City of Springfield Planning Commission met in regular session in the Council Meeting Room, 225 Fifth Street, Springfield, Oregon on Wednesday, September 3, 2008; 7:00 p.m., with Frank Cross as Springfield Planning Commission Chair.

**ATTENDANCE**

Present were Chair Frank Cross, Vice Chair Johnny Kirschenmann and Planning Commissioners Lee Beyer, Sheri Moore, Eric Smith, Terri Leezer and Steve Moe. 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**

- None

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

- The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Chair Frank Cross.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

*Commissioner Beyer moved, seconded by Commissioner Leezer, to approve the minutes of the May 6, 2008, Joint Planning Commission Minutes with Lane County. The motion passed, 7:0:0, Commissioner Steve Moe abstaining.*

**BUSINESS FROM THE AUDIENCE**

- None

**LEGISLATIVE PUBLIC HEARING**

- **Proposed Amendment to SDC (Springfield Development Code) Section 3.2-610, "Bowling Alleys" to the list of permitted uses in the Mixed-Use Commercial zoning district – LRP2008-00010–**

An amendment was proposed to add "Bowling Alleys" to the list of permitted uses in the Mixed-Use Commercial zoning district. Bowling alleys are not currently allowed in the Mixed-Use Commercial Zoning District. The amendment would allow bowling as an activity but would not change the pedestrian-oriented, transit supportive design standards

that apply to development in the Mixed-Use Commercial zoning district. The design standards are important to achieving attractive commercial developments in mixed-use areas. The standards are also a key to implementing “nodal development,” one of the TransPlan strategies for reducing Springfield’s reliance on the automobile.

A citizen initiated amendment has been proposed to add “Bowling Alleys” to the list of permitted uses in the Mixed Use Commercial zoning district. Bowling alleys are not currently allowed in the Mixed-Use Commercial zoning district. At issue is whether to allow this new use.

SDC Section 3.2-600 – Mixed-Use Zoning Districts was drafted in 2002. The list of permitted uses within mixed-use districts was developed by an advisory committee composed of citizens, business owners and members of the Planning Commission. At the time the committee evaluated permitted uses, our experience with how to structure “mixed-use” zoning and “nodal development” was limited. Over the past six years, observation of other communities as well as our own experience had broadened. The emphasis on achieving attractive commercial development that is pedestrian-friendly and transit supportive is seen as more important than regulating publicly recreational activities such as bowling.

The amendment would allow bowling as an activity but would not change the pedestrian-oriented, transit supportive design standards that apply to development in the Mixed-Use Commercial zoning district. These design standards are important to achieving attractive commercial developments in mixed-use areas. The standards are also a key to implementing “nodal development,” one of the TransPlan strategies for reducing Springfield’s reliance on the automobile.

Attachment 1 to the staff report shows that other comparable recreational uses in the Mixed-Use Commercial district such as gyms and athletic clubs, recreational centers, and miniature golf were permitted in the zone. The applicant believes there is a market for an updated form of bowling establishments that incorporates full service restaurants, and the upscale attractions and décor. Attachment 2 to the staff report is a compilation of news articles describing this new trend in bowling alleys.

Planning Manager Greg Mott reviewed the request before the commission and called attention to the applicable criteria. He asked that any issue be raised with enough specificity to allow the decision makers to respond. He noted that the commission’s recommendation on the matter was advisory to the City Council, which would consider the issue on September 15.

In response to a question from Commissioner Beyer, Planner Mark Metzger confirmed that no written testimony had been received.

Mr. Metzger presented the staff report. He recalled that in 2002, staff had crafted the initial mixed-use commercial zoning district with the assistance of an advisory committee. They considered more than 200 uses when deciding what uses to include in the zone. Speaking to the reason that bowling alleys were not allowed in the zone, Mr. Metzger recalled that in general, the City was attempting to develop a district for residential and smaller scale commercial uses, leading to a maximum footprint of 60,000

square feet. The goal had been to create a pedestrian-friendly urban village with niche boutique neighborhood commercial that would service a half-mile radius. He said now the City was less concerned about being so precise about what could be in the zones and more concerned about ensuring that the centers themselves were attractive.

Mr. Metzger reported that the amendment before the commission was citizen-initiated. The applicant, Steven Yap, was a local resident who purchased commercial properties, renovated, and sold or leased them. The old K-Mart building was an example of Mr. Yap's redevelopment efforts.

Mr. Metzger said that Mr. Yap hoped to create a bowling facility with a full-service restaurant that attracted occasional bowlers rather than depending on leagues.

Commissioner Beyer observed that what Mr. Metzger was describing sounded like a recreation center. He recalled that he had expressed concern at the time the zone was revised about the potential of including similar uses with similar impacts in the zone. Mr. Metzger said the division's work program included review of the development code and the City's approach with the goal of moving away from specific lists of uses and more toward categories of uses. He reiterated that currently, bowling alleys were specifically precluded from the zone. He confirmed, in response to a follow-up question from Commissioner Beyer, that such centers were restricted to 50,000 square feet or less.

Mr. Metzger recommended approval of the proposal. His research indicated that such facilities were not traffic generators and would not be inconsistent with nodal development. The City's building design standards would continue to apply to such developments.

Commissioner Moore asked if laser tag and miniature golf were allowed outright in the recreational use centers. Mr. Metzger responded that the City code was very specific about what was allowed, and it did not mention laser tag, although the City might interpret the code to allow such a use as a part of a recreational center.

Mr. Mott clarified that the building footprint restriction applied to wholesale and retail activities, not other uses allowed in the zone, such as religious, social, or institutional uses. The maximum building footprint for a grocery store was 70,000 square feet; the maximum footprint for other single tenant wholesale or retail uses was 50,000 square feet. The maximum footprint for all other uses was based on lot coverage and building setbacks. A bowling alley or video parlor was in the recreational category, not the wholesale or retail categories, so there would be no maximum footprint.

Mr. Metzger attributed the maximums to a desire for smaller scale stores in the mixed use zones and a desire to avoid big box retail.

Commissioner Leezer asked if the redevelopment of an old building would have to meet the design standards in the mixed use zone. Mr. Metzger said yes; if there was sufficient change in the building, the option to grandfather in the building went away and the City could request variations in the building façade, for example.

Returning to the issue of the building footprint, Commissioner Cross asked Mr. Metzger if he perceived a need for transit-supportive design standards if the footprint was not limited. Mr. Metzger said no. He believed there were ways to create attractive connections to the nearby bus stops on Mohawk and Centennial in a manner similar to that at Oakway Center, where the owners had done a good job in revitalizing an older retail facility with the addition of pedestrian-oriented design amenities and features.

Mr. Metzger used a map of Springfield to identify the location of the community's mixed use areas.

Commissioner Cross opened the public hearing. There being no one present wishing to speak, he closed the public hearing.

*Commission Beyer, seconded by Commissioner Kirschenmann, moved that, based on the findings and the staff report, the commission recommends to the City Council the adoption of the change to the code. The motion passed unanimously.*

#### **BUSINESS FROM THE DEVELOPMENT SERVICES DIRECTOR**

- Responding to a request from Development Services Director Bill Grile, Commissioner Leezer and Commissioner Cross volunteered to sit on a panel to consider the responses to the Request for Proposals for the downtown consultancy.
- Mr. Grile and Mr. Mott provided an update on the implementation of House Bill 3337.
- At the request of Commissioner Beyer, Mr. Grile provided an update on the status of Marcola Meadows and the Lowe's Home Improvement Center developments.

#### **REPORT OF COUNCIL ACTION**

- There was no report.

#### **BUSINESS FROM THE COMMISSION**

- Commissioner Leezer announced she would be leaving the Planning Commission to sit on the City Council representing Ward 3. Commissioner Leezer informed the commission and staff that she will continue with the commission through October 2008, which would give staff time to find a replacement for her.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

- The meeting was adjourned at 8 p.m.

Minutes recorded by Brenda Jones, Transcribed by Kim Young