



CITY OF WHITE SALMON
Planning Commission Meeting - Wednesday, May 24, 2023

COMMISSION AND ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL PRESENT

Commission Members:

Greg Hohensee, Chairman
Michael Morneault
Seth Gilchrist
Tom Stevenson
Ross Henry (Arrived at 5:40 pm)

Staff:

Jeff Broderick, City Land-Use Planner
Erika Castro Guzman, City Associate Planner

CALL TO ORDER/ ROLL CALL

Chairman Greg Hohensee called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m. A quorum of planning commissioner members was present. One audience member attended by teleconference.

PUBLIC HEARING

1. Ordinance 2023-06-1142 Amending the Zoning Code Regarding Residential Home Widths

Chairman Greg Hohensee opened the public hearing at 5:31 p.m.

Presentation

The Land-use Planner, Jeff Broderick, introduced Ordinance 2023-06-1142 Amending the Zoning Code Regarding Residential Home Widths.

Public Comment

Chairman Greg Hohensee opened the public comment portion of the public hearing at 5:35 p.m.
There were no written or spoken public comments.

Chairman Greg Hohensee closed the public comment portion of the public hearing at 5:36 p.m.

Discussion

The Planning Commission discussed the proposed amendments to the zoning code regarding residential home widths.

The commission discussed potential changes to the residential zoning code, specifically regarding the minimum width of living spaces and how to measure square footage. They also discussed the need for visual aids to help people understand the code and the importance of balancing property rights with design concerns.

During the conversation, Chairman Greg Hohensee suggested reducing the 20-foot width to 15 feet. Commissioner Michael Morneault also discussed the definition of "living space" and the possibility of eliminating section C.

The group discussed the definition of minimum floor area for residential buildings and considered various options, including measuring from interior wall to interior wall and using the definitions from the International Building Code (IBC). They ultimately simplified the requirements to a 14-

foot minimum width in elevation with at least 75% of the footprint being 14 feet with a minimum of six and a minimum of 600 square feet as measured interior wall to interior wall. They also debated the best way to measure living space and the potential impact on builders.

The Commissioner Ross Henery discussed eliminating all width standards, but some members expressed concerns about the potential negative impacts on the town's small-town feel and livability.

Motion made by Ross Henry, Seconded by Seth Gilchrist

Motion to recommends deleting WSMC Ch. 17.23.035(A)(3), WSMC Ch. 17.24.035(A)(3), WSMC Ch. 17.28.035(A)(3), and Ch. 17.32.034(A)(3); eliminate all width standards all together within code and to move forward to the City Council for further public comment.

Further Discussion

The group discussed the elimination of a house width requirement in a 100-year-old town. It was argued that Hood River has a height standard, but no minimum width. Some commissioners believed that an opportunity should be given to the Building Official to research no minimum width code compliance with Washington's State International Building Code. Other commissioners expressed their concerns about eliminating the width requirements as they do not wish to negatively affect our small-town sense and livability. Planner Jeff Broderick said that eliminating all width standards would be controversial and it would not be something the community would be expecting.

MOTION FAILS 2-3.

Henry – Aye, Stevenson – Abstained, Morneault – Nay, Gilchrist – Aye, Hohensee – Nay.

Discussion

The Planning Commission discusses the option to table the discussion or continue revising the proposed ordinance. Chairman Hohensee with the commissioners edited the proposal and ultimately made a motion to send the recommendation to the city council as edited below:

SECTION 1. WSMC Ch. 17.23.035(A)(3)

WSMC Ch. 17.24.035(A)(3)

WSMC Ch. 17.28.035(A)(3)

WSMC Ch. 17.32.034(A)(3):

and is hereby amended as follows: Key: Deleted = ~~striketrough~~

Added = **bold underlined**

17.23.035 Property development standards.

A. Dwelling standards:

1. A single-family residential dwelling shall have a minimum floor area of six hundred square feet, **as measured from interior wall to interior wall**, excluding porches, carports, garages, and basement or other rooms used

exclusively for the storage or housing of mechanical or central heating equipment.

2. All single-family dwellings shall be placed on permanent foundations.
3. ~~All dwellings shall be not less than twenty feet in width at the narrowest point of its first story.~~

No more than 25% of the ground floor may be less than 1420' feet **from exterior wall to exterior wall** in width at the narrowest point.

- a. Any street-facing portion of the structure shall be no narrower than 1420' feet in width. Residences on corner lots shall have all elevations facing a street considered street-facing.
 - b. Architectural features, including, but not limited to **entryways**, porches, bay windows, offset facades, offset elevations, and the like, may be part of street-facing portions of structures and may be narrower than 1420' feet in width as long as the overall face of that side of the residence is not narrower than 1420' feet.
 - c. The narrowest portion of a residence designed for living space shall not be less than 6 feet in width. Architectural features, such as unenclosed porches, bay windows, offset facades, offset elevations and the like, may be narrower than 156 feet in width.
 - d. ~~For hallways, entryways or corridors connecting two or more sections of a larger house, the narrowest point shall not be less than 12 feet in width and shall not comprise of living space, bedrooms, kitchens or dining rooms. Such connecting narrow hallways or corridors shall count toward the 25% maximum ground floor space allowed to be less than 20 feet in width.~~
 - ed. For structures that are two stories or more in height **or two floors touch the ground grade all floors touching the ground grade will be considered ground floors.** where two or more floors touch the ground/grade, all floors shall be held to the following standard: no more than 25% of a floor touching a grade or the ground may be narrower than 20'.
4. All manufactured homes must be new on the date of installation and comply with applicable siting standards in Section 17.68.130 - Manufactured home siting standards.
 5. Maximum building height shall not exceed twenty-eight feet in single-family residential zones.
 6. No business signs shall be erected or displayed on residential lots or adjacent street right-of-way buffer strips, except as provided in Sign Ordinance, Chapter 15.12 of this code.
 7. No contour or existing topography shall be substantially altered by fill, excavation, channeling, or other device that would cause flooding, inundation, siltation, or erosion by storm water on adjoining lots, open spaces, or rights-of-way.

Motion made by Seth Gilchrist, Seconded by Tom Stevenson.

Motion to recommends revised changes as discussed in WSMC Ch. 17.23.035(A)(3), WSMC Ch. 17.24.035(A)(3), WSMC Ch. 17.28.035(A)(3), and Ch. 17.32.034(A)(3); and to move forward to the City Council for further public comment.

Tom Stevenson withdrew his second, Seth Gilchrist withdrew motion.

Discussion

Commissioner Gilchrist clarified that the interior surface of exterior walls, excluding garages, porches, and storage rooms. Planner Broderick agreed to add additional clarification, as measured from interior wall to interior wall and 14 feet as the minimum width.

Motion made by Seth Gilchrist, Seconded by Ross Henry.

Motion to recommends revised changes, as read by Chairman Hohensee and Commissioner Seth Gilchrist, plus edited by Planner Jeff Broderick, in WSMC Ch. 17.23.035(A)(3), WSMC Ch. 17.24.035(A)(3), WSMC Ch. 17.28.035(A)(3), and Ch. 17.32.034(A)(3); and to move forward to the City Council for further public comment.

MOTION CARRIES 5-0.

Henry – Aye, Stevenson – Aye, Morneault – Aye, Gilchrist – Aye, Hohensee – Aye.

Chairman Greg Hohensee closed the public hearing at 7:07 p.m.

FINAL ANNOUNCEMENTS/REMARKS

Planner Jeff Broderick stated that the next Planning Commission meeting will be in early August for the consideration of the draft Transportation System Plan (TSP).

The Planning Commission thanked Planner Broderick for his effective short time with the City of White Salmon.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 7:12 p.m.



Greg Hohensee, Chairman



Erika Castro Guzman, City Associate Planner