

Planning and Zoning Commission Work Session Minutes
May 9, 2013
5 pm to 7 pm
Conference Room 1B - City Hall

ATTENDANCE:

Commission Members Present: Lee, Peters, Puri, Reichlin, Strodtman, Vander Tuig
Commission Members Absent: Tillotson, Wheeler
Staff: Lepke, MacIntyre, Teddy, Zenner
Guest: Adrienne Stolwyk (ECHO)

ADJUSTMENTS TO AGENDA:

None

TOPICS DISCUSSED – New Business:

- **Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) – proposed text amendment**

Mr. MacIntyre gave an overview of the project background and indicated that it was originally requested by Councilman Schmidt. Mr. MacIntyre indicated ADU's are typically attached or detached units on a parcel of property that already has a principle structure. A classic example of an ADU is a "carriage house". An ADU offers an alternative housing option for occupants at a lower cost of ownership or rental.

Current ordinance structure limits ADU's in the R-1 district. The R-2 district allows two units but not detached. The R-3 and R-4 districts allow multiple detached units on a single provided a minimum lot area is met per unit. Mr. MacIntyre indicated that a concern with increasing the density by allowing ADU's could be on the existing infrastructure in the older parts of town.

Mr. MacIntyre indicated that typical standards found in ADU ordinances covered building orientation, setbacks, parking, and other standard building requirements. He noted that in preparing the Council report on the establishment of ADU's several options were considered.

The first option proposed was permitting an ADU in the R-1 district as a conditional use and in the R-2, R-3, and R-4 districts as a permitted use. The second option proposed suggested allowing ADU's via the establishment of a "floating zone". A "floating zone" is very similar to an overlay district but specific to a particular parcel. There was also discussion of an opt-in and opt-out for neighborhoods associations that would or would not desire to allow ADU's.

Mr. MacIntyre showed the Commission two maps that depicted the possible lots that could be affected by the revisions to the code to allow ADU's. He noted that the idea of ADU's and increased density was something that was recommended in the new comprehensive plan. He noted on the second map that the area adjacent to the downtown was already zoned to accommodate two dwellings per property (zoned R-2), but because of the lot area requirement the ability for ADU's was hampered.

There was general Commission discussion regarding the proposed ordinance options. Commissioners felt that development of an ordinance allowing ADU's needed to be a hybrid of the proposed options. It was believed that in the R-1 district a conditional use may be appropriate but could lead to conflict within neighborhoods and limit the establishment of ADU's. Similarly, allowing ADU's in the R-2, R-3, and R-4 districts without standards or a process could leave the public uninformed and create other problems.

Mr. MacIntyre indicated that what he was asking the Commission to do this evening was to give the staff some direction on how it wanted to proceed. He noted that in the past small working groups were used to develop ordinance standards and that may be an option in this instance. He also noted that it would be necessary to have meetings with the public about the idea of ADU's.

The Commission believed that it would be best if an ordinance on the topic was tied to the Neighborhood Congress meetings. Mr. Teddy indicated that the next Neighborhood Congress meetings would be in the fall. It was suggested then that using the e-mail/list serv addresses from those who attended may be beneficial to gain a good amount of input. Staff was asked about the timing of a possible ordinance. Mr. Zenner indicated that it would likely be a minimum of 3 months to draft, hold public information meetings, and then present a proposal to the Commission for a public hearing.

Mr. Zenner suggested that the Commissioners review the Council report that was included with the agenda and discuss the proposal more at the next work session. At that time the staff would be able to give the Commission a proposed timeline for input and possibly an approach to blend the options together to make the “hybrid” version that was desired. The Commissioners agreed that this was likely the best approach and directed staff to proceed forward with establishing the framework for the ordinance and the public input process.

- **Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU) – ECHO Presentation**

Adrienne Stolwyk made a presentation about ECHO’s purpose and how ADU's can be built and promoted within Columbia. She commented that regulations can be a discouragement to making ADU's a reality and that careful consideration should be given on how they are crafted. In general, ADU ordinances are effective when they 1) allow for affordable development, 2) convey a straight-forward process, and 3) create accessibility to a range of incomes.

Ms. Stolwyk indicated that ADU development in Columbia would be limited and not create a significant issue if allowed as a “by-right” use. She cited an example from Portland Oregon in which she noted that after adopting the initial restrictive ADU ordinance it has been relaxed through repetitive amendments. She showed a graphic indicating a steady increase in ADU permits annually following reductions in the regulations. She pointed out that in a City roughly seven times the size of Columbia less than 150 ADU permits were issued. She sees ADU’s in Columbia constituting a small percentage of the permitted development, but believes it is an important option to allow property owners to have.

On behalf of ECHO, Ms. Stolwyk, indicated that caution should be exercised in creating barriers such as architectural or other subjective regulatory processes to allow ADU’s to be built. She and ECHO support allowing ADU construction as a permitted use in all residential zoning districts. There was general discussion surrounding this idea. Much of the discussion involved concerns about allow such uses in the R-1 zoning district and compatibility with adjacent development.

Ms. Stolwyk, offered to help the staff in the drafting of the proposed ADU ordinance and getting the word out to residents about its benefits. She noted that the staff ordinance was an excellent start and that ECHO and Mr. MacIntyre had worked together on it. She concluded her presented indicating a willingness to help move the process forward.

- **Smart Growth Conference**

Mr. Zenner introduced the next segment of the work session and asked that Commissioner Strodman and Peters provide their perspectives on the recent Smart Growth Conference in Kansas City. Commissioner Strodman began the discussion.

Commissioner Strodman indicated that he was surprised with the City staff attendance at the conference and that the focus wasn't too environmentally driven. He noted he attended sessions on transportation, historic preservation, and urban cottages. He indicated that he’d be willing to attend another conference in the future – it exceeded his expectations. He stated the best takeaway from the event was a better understanding of how the relationship between the developer and regulations effected outcomes.

Commissioner Peters recalled her experiences at the conference. She explained that she took a bus tour through a variety of neighborhoods at varying income levels. She said the experience helped illustrated how new development can be integrated into the historical fabric of existing neighborhoods without creating significant impacts. She also recalled the several lunch speakers offering perspectives on how Smart Growth has impacted development in the cities they represented. She was impressed by the speakers and the effects that Smart Growth principles have had on those communities.

Commissioner Peters suggested that one of the takeaways from the lunch speakers dealt with tourism. She thought that it may be worthwhile to develop an art tour in Columbia that could help promote tourism.

Mr. Zenner announced the location of the 2014 Smart Growth Conference. It will be held February 13-15 in Denver. Mr. Zenner indicated that once the PZC budget is approved it will be possible to determine how many Commissioners may be able to attend.

- **Other Topics**

None discussed

OLD BUSINESS

- **Signage Ordinance Amendment**

Mr. Zenner updated the Commission the status of the sign ordinance amendment. At the May 6 Council meeting the moratorium was extended for an additional 3 months – from what date was unclear. Mr. Zenner noted that the Law department was trying to sort out the details relating to when the extension was effective and the total time which the PZC would have to work on the revisions.

It was noted that the proposed ordinance presented to the PZC would need to be “tweaked” to address some unintended effects that the Law department identified before it was presented to the Council on April 1. Mr. Zenner indicated that he was working with the Law department on trying to address those issues as well as find out more details on the actual extension of the moratorium. Mr. Zenner indicated that the ordinance would need to be presented to the public for review. He believed that to have a complete ordinance before the Commission would take roughly 1 ½ months. Mr. Zenner would update the Commission at the next work session on the progress toward completing the ordinance draft.

There was general discussion. The Commissioners were supportive of staff proceeding with the revisions and engaging the public. They also believed the proposed timing was reasonable.

- **Temporary Abeyance- Council Tracker #2853 was not discussed**
- **Steep Slopes was not discussed**

ACTION(S) TAKEN: April 18 work session minutes were approved at the beginning of the Regular PZC meeting. Staff was directed to proceed forward with drafting the ADU amendment and present a proposed public engagement schedule at the next work session. No other motions were made or taken. Meeting adjourned approximately 6:55 p.m.