

MONROE CITY PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

May 14th, 2019

6PM City Council Chambers

1. Call to Order: Chair Smith called the Planning Commission meeting to order at 6:00PM.
2. Pledge of Alliance: Chair Smith led the commission and staff in the Pledge.
3. Roll Call: Present was Kathy Smith, Fred Cuthbertson, Dan Sheets, Linda Fredricks, David Mills and Tim Eastridge. Brandon Bathke informed the Planning Commission of his lack of attendance the morning of the hearing. City Administrator Hohnbaum and Community Development Coordinator Taylor Evans present. The audience included Mike and Kerry Hastings, Jim Doyle, Eliza Mason, Thorin Nielson, and Lorrita Davidson.
4. Public comments: None
5. Approval of Minutes: Commissioner Eastridge moved to approve the minutes of February 4th. Seconded by Commissioner Sheets. Ayes-All.
6. Public Hearing: A Public Hearing to receive input for the Ordinance 2019-02 amending Section 4.111 Residential Zone allowing the use of Recreational Vehicles for housing seasonal farm workers.

Chair Smith called the public hearing to order at 6:15PM.

City Administrator Hohnbaum recommended the planning commission to use the script for the formal hearing process. Hohnbaum shared the request of a public hearing and recommendation to the city council which is scheduled to do a hearing on this subject, Monday, May 20th.

The city received a request and directed staff to provide some proposed language which would permit a limited number of recreation vehicles to allow housing for seasonal farm workers exclusively for farm work zones. Staff proceeded to write the draft language. This evening is for a proposed amendment for the Monroe Land Use Development Code (MLUDC). Amending existing code with current limitation to recreation vehicle use of only 30 days.

Commissioner Fredericks asked to clarify the purpose of this Planning Commission review. The hearing tonight is to provide a recommendation to council to vote on the amendment change.

Staff Report: At the direction of the planning commission, staff was asked to write an amendment to existing development code to extend the days pertaining to urban farming, directed to seasonal farm workers, which usually stay 30 to 60 days at the beginning of the planting season. The farm workers typically live in the RVs. The criteria be proposed requires the farm to be registered as a farm by the State of Oregon: farms shall be a minimum 3 acres in size, be seasonal use from March

through October, two RVs at any given time during farm season. The issue before the commission is to make a recommendation to city council. Total of four letters: Mr. Doyle, Eliza Mason, and Larry and Celinda Miller. Today we received by electronic communications Fair Housing Council of Oregon.

Several questions were brought up by the Planning Commission regarding the staff report and the changes to the ordinance. The major concerns were specifying how long the farm workers/volunteers would be staying on the property at the time and how the amendment could affect the revision to the City's comprehensive plan, and how this could affect City services such as water and sewer. The question of what defines a RV was asked. City Administrator Hohnbaum stated that the County Building Inspector Ron defines it as vehicles with wheels that don't have eaves on the building and one other material regarding roofing. The City's code does not clearly state a definition. However, it has language stating that within a GRA zone that boats, trailers, detached campers and recreational vehicles can be stored on site and shall not be used for human habitation. Guests can use it for no more than 30 days.

No declarations of conflicts of interest.

Testimony in favor.

Letter from Eliza Mason (Letter #1)

Larry and Celinda Miller (Letter #2)

Thorin Nielson spoke on behalf of the amendment change. He stated how he and Eliza are very active community members such as contributing to the start of the Monroe Farmers Market and collaborating with OSU on trials regarding dry farming. They discussed how the World Wide Opportunities on Organic Farms, which is how they get their farm volunteers and the screening criteria that would prevent a lot of the concerns brought up by citizens and planning commission. There was a lengthy discussion regarding the burden additional temporary residents would cause on the City's facilities, specifically the water and sewer.

Lorrita Davidson also spoke on behalf of Eliza and Thorin who is a neighbor to the south. She declared that they have been very respectful and conscientious neighbors.

Chair Smith asked for any testimony in opposition.

Jim Doyle opposes the ordinance amendment. He lives at south end of north 9th street, and is surrounded by two sides of Ms. Masons property and would be greatly affected by the ordinance. "You have addressed most of my concerns tonight. I strongly oppose to change the rules to benefit only one person. You covered the access, noise, traffic and sewer issues. This will happen 30 ft

from my bedroom. Roosters have been disruptive.” He also brought up the concern about fire danger of dry land farming. (Letter #3)

Testimony in neutral.

Letter from Fair Housing Council of Oregon & HLA (Letter #4)

Staff could not get a hold of the writers of the letter for clarifications.

Closed public hearing at 7:30PM.

Commissioner Fredricks moved to approve per application for ordinance amendment as it is written. Need to revisit in the future to make sure City facilities are not being overused/ in compliance.


Commissioner Eastridge seconded the motion. Ayes: All.


Chair declared approved and read the script for the appeal process.

7. Other Business: None

8. Adjournment: Chair Smith adjourned the meeting at 7:41PM

Minutes approved by Planning Commission action May 21st, 2019.

ATTEST:  Date: 4 June 2019
Chair Smith

ATTEST:  Date: June 4, 2019
Rick Hohnbaum, City Recorder