



**Planning Commission
Worksession
Monday, January 7, 2013**

**Hood River City Hall
Council Chambers
211 2nd Street
5:30 p.m.**

**CITY OF HOOD RIVER PLANNING COMMISSION
WORKSESSION AGENDA**

- I. Call to Order: Chair Stephens
- II. The Planning Commission held a public hearing on November 19th and did not recommend approval of the code change which would have eliminated residential dwelling units as permitted and conditional uses in the General Commercial (C-2) Zone in the Waterfront district. They are scheduling this 3rd work session (1st one was December 3rd and 2nd one December 17th) to formulate an alternative(s) for consideration by the CC.
- III. Adjourn

December 28, 2012

To: Hood River Planning Commission

From: Scott Keillor and Kevin Liburdy

Re: Floor Area Ratios and C-2 zoning update concepts for the Port Waterfront Area

At the December 17 Planning Commission work session, staff was directed to study the existing floor area ratios for built sites on the port waterfront and to return with a strategy for addressing land use and zoning for commercially-zoned properties north of I-84. The Planning Commission's objective is to develop C-2 General Commercial zone update concepts that ensure commercial use of properties meets the employment targets of the City's Economic Opportunity Analysis (EOA) while allowing residential use with reasonable design considerations.

Existing Floor Area Ratios

Floor area ratio (FAR) is one zoning tool that can be helpful in setting minimum or maximum preferred density on a project or within a district. The FAR is calculated by dividing the building floor area by the lot area. For example a 20,000 square foot building on a one acre (43,560 square foot) lot has an FAR (also called a floor to area ratio) of $20,000 / 43,560 = 0.46$. The following existing sites and floor area ratios were calculated based on existing tax lot data, preliminary plans and amendments, and coordination between port and city staff.

Site and Map No.	Zone	Building/Site Area (Square Ft.)	Floor Area Ratio (FAR)*
Jensen Building 3N10E25#114	LI	60,000 bldg.** / 152,460 site	0.4
Halyard Building 3N10E25#124	LI	19,952 bldg. / 55,757 site	0.35
Hood Tech 3N10E25#125	LI	40,769 bldg. / 54,450 site	0.75
KDC/Dickinson 3N10E25#126	C-2	21,205 bldg. / 34,848 site	0.6
Port Expo 3N10E25#127 & 129***	C-2	32,465 bldg. / 145,490 site	0.2

*rounded to the nearest 0.25

**estimated building area to be confirmed

***two lots are included in FAR site area (a higher FAR exists on one lot)

Minimum and Maximum FARs

FARs can be used to set a minimum and maximum development potential for a site or zone. The City could apply a minimum FAR for the C-2 zone in the waterfront area to ensure that the

minimum employment projections used in the City's EOA (i.e. FAR of 0.25 to 0.35) are realized to accommodate needed employment land. The Commission could decide to allow residential uses on the same property once the minimum commercial FAR is met. To set the upper end of site densities, the Commission could set a maximum FAR, or could elect to simply allow parking and height restrictions to "cap" development potential.

Use of FARs within the C-2 zone in the waterfront area would allow various development scenarios, with commercial uses required to meet the minimum FAR:

- 100% commercial development at or above minimum FAR;
- Phase 1 commercial use meeting the minimum FAR, and residential use in phase 2; or
- Mixed use development in which the minimum FAR is met with commercial use, and residential use is allowed beyond the minimum commercial FAR and up to the maximum FAR.

Example C-2 General Commercial Zone Approach to Waterfront Area

Permitted Uses	Minimum FAR	Maximum FAR*
Commercial Use	0.4	1.0
Residential Use Provisional	If FAR of 0.4 commercial is provided	1.0

*An FAR above 1.0 may require structured parking in order to meet minimum parking and landscaping requirements. An alternative to a maximum FAR can be established with parking, building height and landscaping requirements within the existing code. Note that the current in-lieu parking fee policy may reduce on-site parking requirements, and could be revisited.

Design Standards

The Planning Commission supports quality design through use of standards similar to those applied by the Port of Hood River in the waterfront area. At a minimum the Commission is interested in applying the following design standards for the C-2 waterfront zone:

Density, Use and Location - The City requires a minimum amount of commercial use and encourages such uses on street-fronting ground floor spaces in the C-2 zone to promote an active street frontage. Residential uses may be allowed above minimum commercial FAR standards, and may be placed above or behind primary street-fronting uses, with minimal access to residential uses located along active street frontages.

Orientation – Access for residential uses should not occupy more than 10% to 20% of a building's street-facing ground floor façade. Residential uses should be limited to upper floors or minor street/access drive frontages.

Building Facade – Street fronting facades should be articulated to avoid long monotonous and uninterrupted walls. Offsets, windows, vertical separations, balconies and other design elements are required to ensure compliance.

Parking Location – Off-street parking is encouraged at the side or rear of buildings, with no more than 20% of lot's front yard (street frontage) occupied by parking.

Traffic Trip Reductions – The Planning Commission should encourage Transportation Demand Management methods, such as company policies to promote rideshare, shuttles, flex schedules, bicycle and transit use to reduce peak hour impacts to the transportation system. Site planning should include adequate pedestrian, bicycle and transit design.

Material, landscaping, buffers, etc. – additional considerations may be warranted based on the Commission's primary concerns.

Next Steps

The Planning Commission should review the above C-2 zone update concepts, make any revisions and prepare a memo summarizing its preferred concepts to be delivered to the City Council. The memo will ask the City Council for concurrence and authorization for the Planning Commission to develop specific C-2 General Commercial code update language for the waterfront area.