

City of Hood River
Planning Commission
Work Session
Monday, December 17, 2012

City Council Chambers
211 Second Street
Hood River, OR 97031
5:30 p.m.

PRESENT: Chair Laurie Stephens, Commissioners Nathan DeVol, Steve Winkle, Nikki Hollatz,
Jennifer Gulizia, Bill Irving, Casey Weeks

ABSENT:

STAFF: Planning Director Cindy Walbridge, Senior Planner Kevin Liburdy, City Manager Bob
Francis, Planning Consultant Scott Keillor

MINUTES

- I. CALL TO ORDER: Chair Laurie Stephens at 5:32 p.m.
Chair Stephens explains that the commission is continuing to look at the C-2 concerns and looking at mixed-use at the Waterfront.
- II. PLANNING DIRECTOR'S UPDATE: When the Planning Commission had the public hearing a motion was made not to accept a proposal from the City Council. That will be presented to the City Council on January 14th, 2013. It does not include land east of the Hood River Bridge. There is a timeline to get this work done by January 21st, 2013. Staff has been drafting language on how residential would look on the Waterfront and going over the criteria and policy issues that needed to be addressed concerning allowing residential at the Waterfront. Walbridge called Scott Keillor to get assistance on Floor Area Ratio (FAR) and looking at how to protect land for economic use and allow residential and what that would look like.
- III. WORK SESSION:
Scott Keillor of BergerABAM: Presented handouts showing two Floor Area Ratio (FAR) examples. FAR is a tool in terms of land use and planning to develop property. Cindy and Scott were working with the objective of ensuring waterfront commercial zoning would include ample employment use while allowing residential use. Suggests that commercial on bottom floor with residential on top as a possible design scenario. Gave examples of a 1:1 FAR. Currently the FAR on the Waterfront exceeds what was projected in the EOA.

Walbridge thinks the FAR is the best way to protect employment land while allowing residential. Asks Commission where they want to go from here.

Winkle reiterates his design concept of residential on top with a FAR 1 for commercial with residential on top. Walbridge says there will be design restraints with that; only vertical housing or housing in the back that will address the dark frontage, no farther than 10 feet from the street to add that pedestrian activity and the maximum height. Winkle wonders about density. Keillor says the commercial should be on the property first then use the FAR for residential.

Discussion about FARs as applied to need for parking and landscaping and whether open space is a priority.

Irving references Ordinance 1851 which, if it had been adopted, would have required parcels to have a master plan which needs to address employment.

DeVol noted that the Port has design guidelines for development. Walbridge says the City has not adopted those guidelines though they have been effective in having well designed buildings on Portway.

Stephens suggests that if the Commission comes up with a FAR that basically exceeds what the EOA was for commercial use and then allows certain residential on top that would satisfy what the EOA was approximating. What should the FAR be?

Walbridge reminds commissioners that transportation needs have to be considered. The Port has done a traffic study for a possible business campus so that is a tool to be used. Trips should be for commercial not for residential. Residential does bring down traffic trips and does it go at a different time of day.

Keillor explains you can have increments of residential over or along side of the employment base using the FAR tool. You could use a 50-50 project with two stories commercial and two stories residential in equal parts on the parcel. Limits would include location and the maximum height of the residential, the parking and if landscaping, if required.

Walbridge says it is tricky to introduce residential on the Waterfront while maintaining the acreage that is necessary for economic development.

Stephens suggests maybe the Commission could direct staff to explore the 0.3, 0.4, 0.5 FAR range with some parking examples and whether there would be any residential allowed on the street front.

Walbridge suggests that staff put together the recommendation in a memo form for the City Council.

Discussion about transportation issues and whether the main streets need to be identified for vehicular traffic and what commercial vehicles will be allowed. Currently the City has street classifications but might need new definitions for the Waterfront.

Discussion about percentages of commercial versus residential. Percentages might give developers the most flexibility in design. Commissioners feel that criteria should not be too restrictive but with the understanding that the residential needs to be on the first floor and that the FAR has to be met.

Liburdy asks how the commissioners feel about the in-lieu parking fee concept. Discussion about where the money goes and what it is used for. Keillor says it could be planned that the

money goes into a service lot or a structure. Walbridge says part of the recommendation could be that the City Council eliminates the parking in lieu of.

Discussion about street frontage on main streets; agreement that there would be no residential but if it's on the back of the lot it would be fine or if the residential was on top.

Commissioners want to avoid conflict with residential and commercial. Suggestion that there be an 80/20 percentage on the front street and a 20 percent residential on Portway as long as the FAR is met. Suggestion that some of the language of Ordinance No. 1851 be incorporated in the recommendation.

Walbridge says based on what the Commissioners have said tonight the recommendation to the City Council should be simple, starting with a FAR with staff to suggest a correct FAR accompanied with a list of design constraints that would include a 10% maximum of street frontage on major access roads.

Liburdy suggests the location of retail/commercial is key to the planning of the Waterfront and that the Commission might want to minimize gaps in commercial uses along certain streets and paths. It might be a good to work with the Port on Lot One.

Commissioners voiced concerns that residential should not be right on the Waterfront. Conflict with residential and public use needs to be avoided.

Discussion about the PAW and the Riverfront Trail and that residential should not abut them.

Stephens asks staff to ask the City Council to work with Port to make sure nothing will come between the path and the water and to achieve a Waterfront Trail along with the recommendation to limit residential frontage along the street and the waterfront. Discussion about the "breaks" in the Waterfront Trail.

Michael McElwee of the Port of Hood River: The Port has a commitment to a continuous trail. The Port would be willing to put that in a legal document so there will no doubt that there will be continuous public access. It would include definitions of the width. Suggests that a work session with the Port might be useful. Concerned about the timing of the proposal when there are only three bodies; Hattenhauer, Naito and the Port are the only commercially-zoned properties affected and there is only a small amount of land that would be impacted by zoning changes. Talks about parking, density on the Waterfront, desire for open space and transit needs. Wonders what the driving force is for this discussion. Says that the Port is a willing partner in this discussion.

Walbridge says that what is driving this discussion is the input from the public hearing which made it clear that residential should not be eliminated but it needs to be planned in a way that won't reduce the economic viability of the land. Agrees that the City, with some constraints, can work with the Port together on Lot One. McElwee says the Port has a policy not to sell land north of Portway. "Zone C" in the current concept is for perpetual public use and a collaborative effort could happen to work on the vision of Lot One.

Walbridge says the Commission has the answer to City Council that you'd like to see residential at the Waterfront. A way needs to be figured out in how to work with the Port. Staff can come up with a memo on FAR, caveats include that the Riverfront Trail and that the Commission wants to see separation between the trail and residential. Asks if the Commission can make a recommendation knowing that the boat basin is Light Industrial. Walbridge couldn't draft code provisions knowing that the properties that she was looking at were the Expo Center, Hattenhauer, Naito and then the Marina Green. Does the code look different in Part A and Part B, Walbridge says it is. The staff will work on the memo incorporating the Commission's decisions.

Next work session scheduled for January 7th 2013.

Meeting adjourned at 7:37p.m.

ATTEST:


Laurie Stephens, Chair

4/29/13
Date


Cindy Walbridge, Planning Director

4/29/13
Date (Approved)