



City of McMinnville
Planning Department
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MINUTES

June 25, 2020
Historic Landmarks Committee
Regular Meeting

3:00 pm
Zoom Meeting
McMinnville, Oregon

Members Present: Mary Beth Branch, Mark Cooley, Joan Drabkin, and Christopher Knapp
Members Absent: John Mead
Staff Present: Chuck Darnell – Senior Planner
Others Present:

1. Call to Order

Chair Branch called the meeting to order at 3:08 p.m.

2. Citizen Comments

None

3. Approval of Minutes

A. January 23, 2020 Meeting Minutes

Committee Member Drabkin moved to approve the January 23, 2020 meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Committee Member Knapp and passed 4-0.

4. Action Items

A. Review of Downtown Design Standards Chapter

Senior Planner Darnell said an item on the Committee's work plan was to discuss the Downtown Design Standards. He intended to go through the code document and the Committee could identify any issues and direct staff to either research items or make potential draft changes. Some general issues were applying the design standards to a multi-family residential building product, process for amendments to a plan that had already been approved by the Committee, and specificity and level of detail required of construction plans submitted for review.

Senior Planner Darnell reviewed the Purpose Statement.

There was discussion regarding what the words in quotes meant, such as “themed” and “main street.” There was consensus for staff to come back with definitions from other cities and McMinnville’s Main Street organization for what “main street” meant.

There was further discussion regarding the first sentence of the Purpose Statement including “other elements” and what that meant. Senior Planner Darnell thought it meant signage, benches, etc. He could put together a map showing the boundaries of the different districts in this area.

Senior Planner Darnell reviewed the Applicability section of the code. There was consensus to add “sign alterations” in Letter B. There was discussion regarding addressing built structures and streetscape items in the downtown design standards and coordinating with different departments to follow the standards.

There was consensus to copy the definition of “similar” from the Secretary of the Interior standards language in Letter C or use the same definition for “alteration” that was found later on in the code. The Committee wanted to look into the maintenance language in Letter D.

Senior Planner Darnell discussed the Review Process section. He discussed the language regarding what needed to be submitted with applications.

There was discussion regarding the scope of projects and how much should be required to submit. The Committee thought some thresholds could be created by project type and scope of project. The Committee also wanted to clarify the details that would need to be submitted such as cross section details and dimensions in the detailed drawings. It was also noted that they should specify that the plans and drawings in the application were what was being approved and should be exactly what was going to be constructed unless otherwise noted.

The Committee agreed that minor and major alterations needed to be defined and that minor alterations could be approved by the Planning Director if there were no variances being requested. The Committee thought that any alteration to an opening in the exterior of the building should not be considered minor. It was suggested to have an easy application for a paint color change to be brought to either staff or the Committee, and that it have a small fee or no fee at all.

Senior Planner Darnell said fees were based on cost recovery for the services that the City provides, but that if the review process did not require much staff time there could potentially be a less expensive application fee developed for smaller project types.

There was discussion regarding the fee for appeals. Senior Planner Darnell noted again that McMinnville’s fees were based on cost recovery were lower than most other comparable cities. The Committee discussed how to streamline the process for certain applications with little level of review by staff to reduce the fees.

Senior Planner Darnell went over the Review Criteria. There were no concerns with the criteria.

Senior Planner Darnell explained the Building and Site Design standards.

There was discussion regarding the exceptions to the setback requirements. It was noted that the purpose of the exceptions was to align with the purpose statement.

There was discussion regarding the building design and the wording about buildings on street corners or intersections that should “appear to be two-story in height.” The Committee thought that there should instead be a maximum height allowed.

There was further discussion regarding the perception of the Committee being against development in downtown and the need to have a balance between the purpose of the Committee and meeting the mission and goals of the City. The standards should be there to provide the Committee with a direction in what they had been tasked to do, which was to review development for conformance with city codes. There was consensus to look at the numbers for the potential maximum building height to be more in line and consistent with the downtown built environment. The Committee also discussed the potential for height to be treated differently by geography, with Third Street facing properties or the historic district boundary having a different height standard than other blocks within the Downtown Design area.

5. Committee Comments

None

6. Staff Comments

None

7. Adjournment

Chair Branch adjourned the meeting at 5:04 p.m.