

MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE CITY COUNCIL

January 6, 2005

The minutes of the proceedings of a Joint Work Session of the City Council and the Planning Commission of the City of Coos Bay, Coos County, Oregon held at 6:00 p.m. in the Library Meeting Room, 525 Avenue, Coos Bay, Oregon.

Those Attending

Those attending were Mayor Joe Benetti and Councilors Jon Eck, Roger Gould, Jeff McKeown, Cindi Miller, and John Muenchrath. Planning Commissioners attending were Jim Berg, Chris Coles, Mark Daily, Bruce Harlan, Chris Hood, Jeff Marineau, and Rex Miller. Also attending were members of the Historic Design Review Committee Hilary Baker, Bill Blumberg, Andrew Locati, and Bob Sasanoff. Staff attending were City Manager Scott McClure, Deputy Recorder Joyce Jansen, Planning Administrator Laura Barron, and Building Administrator Joe McClay.

Discussion of the Intent of the Historic Design Review Standards and the Responsibilities of the Historic Design Review Committee

Planning Administrator Laura Barron reported the design standards were adopted in 2001 and the intent of the standards is to invoke the history of the area. Ms. Barron explained the process for review with the Historic Design Review Committee and the responsibilities of the Planning Commission in the process. There was considerable discussion on the process, the amount of time necessary to complete the process, whether the Historic Design Review Committee should be discontinued, and whether the committee should have decision-making authority,

Bruce Harlan commented many communities have historic areas and he supported retaining the standards and the committee. He further commented the problems with the last experience was not due to the ordinance or the process but caused by the person making the application. Councilor Gould commented the concept of a historic overlay for the whole area should be reviewed and the process may be why the historic standards have not worked well. There was further discussion on the history of the development of the historic district and standards. Planning Commissioners Coles and Marineau spoke in favor of keeping the standards, and Commissioner Daily commented other applicants have gone through the process without any problems.

Ms. Barron commented the problems with the last applicant were due to the applicant beginning work before meeting with staff and the committee. There was discussion on ways to get more information out to the public and property owners regarding the historic district and standards which included handouts, brochures, and having a zoning map available to the public. Mayor Benetti noted that information is handed out to applicants and Ms. Barron briefly reviewed the materials available to the public. Mayor Benetti inquired about the availability of the committee to assist applicants and Mr. Sasanoff reviewed the committee's responsibilities. Mr. Sasanoff commented the last applicant's problems were because she refused to work with the committee and follow the standards. Kathy Netter commented the committee worked hard to help the applicant and suggested that notifying all the property owners in the district of the standards may be helpful.

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Jim Berg commented that new people coming to the area have been pleased to find these standards in place and the standards add value to the community. There was further discussion on the process, ways to better educate the public, maintaining standards throughout the community, and coordinating the building permit application with the historic design standards. Mayor Benetti commented on the importance of the perception that staff and the committee are working with the people, and suggested applicants meet with the committee first. There was further discussion regarding assistance provided by the committee to applicants. Councilor Muenchrath suggested the committee provide design ideas to applicants. Bruce Harlan commented the commission and the committee should not be designing buildings for the applicants.

Mayor Benetti summarized the discussion that a pre-meeting with the committee would be helpful in the process, that everyone was in agreement there should be standards, and communication and education should be improved. Consensus of the Council and the commission that staff would put together suggestions on improving the process and distribute the report to the council, commission and committee. City Manager Scott McClure recapped the main points as clarification of the standards and process, include a pre-meeting process, add signage in the district, and provide applicants with a summary sheet of the process.

Adjourn

There being no further business to come before the City Council, Mayor Benetti adjourned the meeting to January 11, 2005 at the Downtown Fire Station.

Joe Benetti, Mayor

ATTEST:

Joyce Jansen, Deputy Recorder