



# PLANNING COMMISSION

## MINUTES OF THE MEETING

### **MEETING SUMMARY**

Regular Bi-monthly Meeting  
Thursday, March 2, 2017, 6:30pm  
City of Sammamish Council Chambers

### **COMMISSIONERS PRESENT**

Frank Blau, *Pos. 6*  
Roisin O'Farrell, *Pos. 2*  
Larry Crandall, *Pos. 4, Vice-Chair*  
Jane Garrison, *Pos. 5*  
Shanna Collins, *Pos. 3 Chair*  
Eric Brooks, *Pos. 1*

### **Absent:**

Nancy Anderson, *Pos. 7*

### **STAFF PRESENT**

Jeff Thomas, Director of Community Development  
Doug McIntyre, Senior Planner  
Kellye Hilde, Planning Manager  
Kevin Johnson, Permit Technician

### **CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Shanna Collins called the Sammamish Planning Commission meeting to order at 6:31 pm.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA:** Chair Shanna Collins motioned to move public comment to before the training session. Commissioner Blau seconded, **Approved 6:0** The Agenda was approved as amended.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** Moved to 3/16 meeting.

**Public Comment: Non-Agenda:** (3 Min Individual / 5 Min Representative)

No public Comment

**Public Comment Closed**

**OLD BUSINESS** [Bookmarked Video Link](#)

**Neighborhood Character** – Work Session

Doug McIntyre, Senior Planner and Kellye Hilde, Planning Manager gave a presentation on “Zone Transition and Arterial Street Setbacks”

**Staff commenced presentation:**

**Overview:** Staff presented on proposed changes regarding Buffers vs. Setback, Arterial Buffers, Low-Density Residential Transition Buffers, Recreation Space Location, and Tree Protection Standards.

- **Definitions and the concept of a Buffer versus a Setback.** City Staff have clarified the distinction between a buffer and a setback. The Planning Commission should review the need for these new definitions as well as the language proposed in the definitions. Furthermore, the Planning Commission should consider the proposed requirements for buffers instead of setbacks.
- **Arterial Street Buffers.** A scaled street buffer is proposed to be applied to SMC 21A.25.030 as a development condition. There are several options to consider, as demonstrated in the strikethrough/underling proposed code amendments. The Planning Commission should consider the function of the buffer and whether it should be undisturbed or of a more active nature.
- **Low-Density Residential Zone Buffers.** Low-Density Residential Zone buffers are proposed to apply only in instances where R-1 zones abut R-6 or greater zones. The Planning Commission should consider this restriction as well as the three options that have been proposed regarding the type of buffer (i.e. more active or more passive). The buffer is proposed to be scaled (i.e. limited by a percentage of the lot width or depth, whichever is greater) in order to avoid potential issues with regard to perceived or actual takings.
- **Recreation Space Location.** In instance where outdoor recreation spaces are required on lots that are zoned R-6 or greater and abut R-1 zoned lots, the recreation space is proposed to be located adjacent to the zone boundary. The Planning Commission should consider this proposal and whether or not it would be an effective means to contribute toward neighborhood character.
- **Tree Protection Standards.** City Staff is proposing to include residential buffer areas to be part of the prioritized location for the protection of significant trees.

## **Commission and Staff began discussion**

### **Buffers Vs. Setbacks & Arterial Buffering**

- Commission would like to have multiple choices creates to flexibility in the way buffers are created. Trails throughout these buffers is a great idea as we are not trying to build walls and there should be opportunities to create trails throughout these buffers to provide access from neighborhoods to streets.
- Commission stated that the buffers should not be different based on lot size as some lot owners would be negatively impacted by the shape of their lot. There should be a maximum that can be taken.
  - Staff responded that the proposals shown was trying to create a scaled regulation to avoid the possibility of a taking by having a one size buffer for all.
- Commission stated that we should be looking at these buffers based on the street, not the property that abuts the street. Each street should have its own standard buffer depending on the street classification. Buffers should not be imposed on the properties to the point we are telling homeowners you can't use this space.
- Commission believes that the City should be looking at the existing space before tearing out the buffers that exist just to change them; the city should be trying to preserve existing

character first. Commission also asked that staff look into having some of the buffer obligation to be included as ROW. Commission reiterated that staff should look at specific arterials and create a buffer size that is unique to an area as that would create a unique character depending on your location in the city. Using a percentage of a lot for buffer calculation is not appropriate.

- Commission discussed the possibility of starting out with a pilot or phased program on the principle arterials with the intention of expanding this to the minor arterials.

### **Low-Density Residential Transition Buffers**

- Commission believes that creating buffers between residential zoning types only separates community and does not build character. Also discussed, was which property owner is responsible for placing the buffer or is it whoever develops first?
- Commission also stated that this type of buffering affects the amount of affordable housing that can be created. By imposing large buffers on higher zoned properties it reduces the area for the high density housing that is more affordable.
- Commission asked staff for examples from other jurisdictions.
  - Staff responded that typically cities regulate transitions between single and multifamily, residential and commercial or commercial and industrial.
- Commission agreed that they are less interested in buffers and barriers between zones, instead these areas between zones should have enhanced landscaping.

### **Recreation Space Buffers**

- Commission agreed that a recreation area shouldn't be in a periphery where parents cannot keep an eye on the kids and where kids would be playing along a major street. Commission is not interested in regulating recreation space location.

### **Tree Protection Along Roadways**

- Commission believes that existing stands of significant trees along arterials should be protected and recommends that they are protected between neighboring properties as well.

### **Commission ended discussion**

- Director of Community Development Jeff Thomas explained to the Commission that staff will be gathering this input and provided information on next steps.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT (Agenda) 7:48 [Bookmarked Video Link](#)**

- Paul Stickney, 504228<sup>th</sup> Ave SE
  - Topic: Residential Zone Transitions, arterial buffers, and tree protection
- Mazen Aladwan, 22904 NE 21<sup>st</sup> St
  - Topic: Effect of changes on current property owners

- Ramiro Valderrama, NE 18<sup>th</sup> PI
  - Topic: Neighborhood character and urban forest management

## **PUBLIC COMMENT CLOSED**

Chair Shanna Collins mentioned that this will be the last meeting that Commissioner Frank Blau will attend as he is stepping down

Commissioner Blau thanked everyone for the great times as well as the impact that they contributed to the community.

Director Thomas thanked Commissioner Blau for his time as well as everything he has contributed to the Commission and the City.

Vice-Chair motioned to excuse Commissioner Blau for the remainder of the meeting, Chair Collins seconded. **Approved 6:0**

**OLD BUSINESS** [Bookmarked Video Link](#)

## **TRAINING VIDEOS**

[Dept. of Commerce Short Course Training Video Series](#)

**First Video** ([Roles and Responsibilities](#))

**No comment regarding the first video**

**Second Video** ([Public participation and Effective Meetings](#))

**No comment regarding the second video**

**Third Video** ([The open Public Meetings Act](#))

Commission decided to move the final video to 4/20/17

**Motion to Adjourn:** Vice-Chair Crandall motioned to adjourn; seconded. **Approved 5:0**

Meeting adjourned at 8:54pm.

Chair: Shanna Collins

PC Coordinator: Kevin Johnson

[Video Audio Record 3/2/17](#)

*Roberts Rules of Order applied: [RONR (10<sup>TH</sup> ed.), p. 451, 1. 25-28]*