



MASON COUNTY

PLANNING ADVISORY COMMISSION

MASON COUNTY COMMUNITY SERVICES

615 W. ALDER STREET, SHELTON, WA 98584

Meetings held at: Commissioners' Chambers

411 N. 5th Street Shelton, WA 98584

REGULAR MEETING

October 21, 2024

MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

At 6:00 p.m. Commissioner Wilkerson, Planning Advisory Commission Chair, called the meeting to order. The following commissioners were in attendance:

Bob Wilkerson Jeff Carey
Will Harris Mike Hill
Randy Lewis Brad Carlberg

Absent: Terri Arcieri

Staff: Marissa Watson – Mason County Long Range Planner

Kell Rowen – Mason County Community Development Director

Mariah Frazier – Clerical

2. REGULAR BUSINESS

A. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES

Commissioner Carey made a motion to approve the September 16, 2024, regular meeting minutes as presented. Motion was seconded by Commissioner Lewis.

Vote:

6 in favor

0 opposed

Motion passed

B. CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

Commissioner Carey asked to add a discussion under Other Business about his observations in reviewing the CPPs.

C. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

None.

D. NEXT REGULAR MEETING(S)

Special Meeting – November 6, 2024

Regular Meeting – November 18, 2024

E. COMMITTEE/STAFF UPDATES

None.

F. OTHER BUSINESS

This is a short summary of the action that took place during the meeting. The audio recording of the meeting can be found on the Planning Advisory Commission page of the Mason County website.

Commissioner Carey shared his observation that the County Wide Planning Policies don't have a clear intent and aren't necessarily true policies. He urged the other commissioners to pay attention in their own reviews and decide if what they're reading is a policy or not.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS – 6:05 p.m.

None.

4. PUBLIC HEARING – 6:06 p.m.

Draft Short Term Rental Regulations – Marissa presented her staff report, giving a timeline of what has happened so far, discussing the survey results received, and why Mason County is considering Short Term Rental Regulations. Some of the main concerns in support of STR's were residential neighborhoods being used for commercial purposes, water quality, criminal activity, contribution to long-term rental shortage and affordable housing, and emergency service response. Some of the main points for the opposition of STR's were that they're self-regulating, an income generator, and that they're often better maintained and have more rules than long term rentals which are already not being enforced on by Mason County. Before moving on to questions from PAC members, Marissa presented some staff suggested edits for clarification.

Commissioner Hill started off commissioner discussion, stating from his experience they might want to consider fencing along lot or property lines which could deter trespassing.

Commissioner Carlberg mentioned concerns of poaching shellfish of private beaches and ensuring lodging taxes from STR's are collected. Commissioner Carey confirmed that staff has been working with the Prosecuting Attorney's office for review and asked about how many complaints came in for septic violations that were related to STR's. Ian Tacy, the Environmental Health Manager, stated there were 4 valid septic violations over the past two years related to STR's.

Commissioner Lewis questioned what current regulations Mason County has that could help in regulating STR's but are not enforced and if they could be clearly identified within the draft regulations as already existing. He also expressed apprehension about requiring STR owners within service range to sign up for garbage services rather than being allowed to address within their management plan.

Commissioner Carey questioned how enforcement would be better than what is already in place as there are properties in Mason County already not being enforced on or difficult to enforce on. Marissa explained that Mason County would have to hire a third-party monitoring company to help track violations and hire additional planning staff to address the permitting and complaints.

Public Comment Opened – 6:56 p.m.

Lisa Shepard – Lisa expressed her support of implementing regulations. She focused on the idea of community and how the transitory nature of STR's offers little to no development of community.

Joyce Medeiros – Joyce shared Harstine Pointe recently implemented registration requirements for STR's in their HOA to abide by state regulations: have a business license, liability insurance, and pay B&O taxes. She also shared her negative experience living next to an STR and how she feels unsafe having new people in and out all the time.

Dean Remillard – Dean shared his highly positive experience as an STR owner stating it's a source of income that allows him and many others to afford homeownership and that he's never had complaints about his renters. He understands and agrees with the need for regulations but feels the proposed are too excessive and that there needs to be better enforcement in general.

Lori Brady – Lori stated that she is against STR regulations because it's another layer of government on top of codes that already exist to address these issues.

Tom Parker – Tom explained the Harstine Pointe HOA is unable to regulate STR's through their CCR's for many reasons, including Wilkinson vs. Chiwawa. He also stated his experience has been STR's with absentee owners are the problem, not those who have owners onsite.

Mike Mostin – Mike expressed support for STR regulations. His main concerns are for the many STR properties on saltwater which have absentee owners.

Angela Barnes – Angela stated regulations are needed but that the proposed draft is too restrictive.

Daniel Hanson – Daniel voiced his opinion that STR's are self-regulating through reviews.

Constance Ibsen – Constance proposed the PAC recommend to the BOCC that staff develop a RFP based on the current draft documents.

Kristian Schonberg – Kristian was against adding additional layers of government and stated he didn't think Mason County needed spend any money on the issue.

Kristy Buck – Kristy asked the PAC members to ensure any regulations would be addressing quantifiable issues and not adding additional layers of government.

Terry Clancy (via Zoom) – Terry stated as a STR owner he is very involved and has never had an issue with renters. He agreed with others that enforcement of current regulations should be the focus rather than adding new ones.

KJ (via Zoom) – KJ focused on the Type 2 STR's where an owner or operator is not on site and argued that rural residential zoning should not be next to a commercial enterprise.

Teri (via Zoom) – Teri stated she believes STR's are operated as mini hotels and should have the same rules as hotels. She recommended National League of Cities as a resource for additional information on implementing regulations.

Susan Winter (via Zoom) – Susan talked about the positive impact owning an STR has been for her in that it's allowed her to keep a family legacy property within the family and share with others. She explained that she's not opposed to regulations, but that they shouldn't impose additional restrictive rules to good owners who are responsive and active in maintaining their properties.

Lorie Thomas (via Zoom) – Lorie expressed her opposition to the current proposed regulations as she feels they are excessive and unfairly target small business owners who make up the majority of STR owners in Washington.

Jeff Pam (via Zoom) – Jeff echoed previous comments that when purchasing property in a rural residential zone, people aren't expecting to have a commercial enterprise next door. He also emphasized that STR's should be treated the same as other commercial businesses.

Jim Findley (via Zoom) – Jim emphasized the emerging pattern within comments that the STR’s with owners living onsite tend to be more attentive and responsible and are not contributing to the problem as much as those who have owners in separate states or run by businesses.

Paolo Mottola (via Zoom) – Paolo shared his positive experiences as a host and emphasized how often he rents out to his neighbors and friends when they have guests because of the lack of hotels in Mason County. He echoed previous comments to do further research and ask for further consult on the matter as it’s complex not just an issue here but universal and to focus on enforcement of current regulations.

Larry Pazaski (via Zoom) – Larry expressed concern regarding small lot sizes and the impact on nearby lakes and streams and limited parking.

Cavda (via Zoom) – Cavda talked about her experience living next to an STR and feeling apprehensive by having new people rotating in and out next door on a regular basis and the lack of privacy.

Dave Bayley (via Zoom) – Based on comments heard, Dave requested PAC to focus regulations on Type 2 STR’s where the owner or operator is not on site.

Elena Mallman – Elena expressed her support for regulations and stated without them the problems will only get worse.

Ben Reynolds (via Zoom) – Ben expressed the lack of privacy he’s experienced owning property next to an STR and shared a story about renters ignoring local burn bans.

McGlaulin (via Zoom Chat) – I’m sorry I don’t have a mic to speak, I am an STR owner and could agree with a need for a few regulations: ie paying taxes and a business license. I do object to the language on conduct being an obligation of the owner when law enforcement is the right resource to enforce those issues in all circumstances. Also the fire safety regulations offered by the Fire Marshall are meant to meet commercial occupancies but an STR is still a private residence with normal residential activities occurring- you would not require a piano teacher who teaches lessons from their home to have a fire extinguisher on each floor! Please be sure a land use attorney has evaluated the ordinance proposed and not just a prosecuting attorney. Thank you!

Public Comment Closed – 8:05 p.m.

PAC members discussed their options for moving forward as they weren’t comfortable recommending approval of the draft regulations after hearing public comment. They recognized the need for regulations and better enforcement of already existing codes but agreed some of the proposed regulations were redundant or excessive.

Members came up with a timeline to review and provide their comments to Commissioner Lewis by November 4th for him to compile. The consolidated draft will be forwarded to PAC members for final review by October 11 and an updated draft to Marissa on or before November 18th. That version would then be discussed at the December regular meeting.

With no further discussion, Commissioner Carey made a motion to continue the public hearing to the December 16th regular meeting, seconded by Commissioner Harris.

Vote:

6 in favor

0 opposed

Motion passed

5. ADJOURN

With no further discussion, Commissioner Wilkerson called the meeting adjourned at 8:50 p.m.