



**CITY OF PROSSER, WASHINGTON
PLANNING COMMISSION**

AGENDA

6:00 P.M.

March 17, 2016

1. **Call to Order by Chair.**
2. **Roll Call.**
3. **Minutes for February 18, 2016**
ACTION: Approve, deny, or make changes.
4. **Minutes for November 19, 2015**
ACTION: Approve, deny, or make changes.
5. **Discussion about changes to sign code.**
ACTION: Update Only- Draft Ordinance Freeway Signage 1000 ft? Set Public Hearing for April?
6. **Adjournment**

**CITY OF PROSSER
PLANNING COMMISSION SPECIAL MEETING
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 2016
CITY HALL, PROSSER, WASHINGTON**

CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting of the Prosser Planning Commission was called to order on February 18, 2016, at 6:00 p.m. by Chair Glenda Schmidt.

ROLL CALL:

Members present: Glenda Schmidt, Dorothy Evans, Devina Riojas, Jeremy Lynn, and Michelle Cooke. Jay Boyle and Trevor Day were absent. City Staff present: Howard Saxton, City Attorney and Secretary, and Steve Zetz, Planner.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

No minutes were on the Agenda for approval.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS:

The Chair opened nominations for Chair and Vice-Chair of the Commission. The only nominee for Chair was Glenda Schmidt and the only nominee for Vice-Chair was Dorothy Evans. There being no other nominees, Glenda Schmidt was elected Chair by acclamation. There being no other nominees, Dorothy Evans was elected Vice-Chair by acclamation.

PUBLIC HEARING —HEARTLAND ESTATES SUBDIVISION:

The Chair opened a public hearing on the Heartland Estates Subdivision application for preliminary plat approval. The Chair asked the Commissioners whether any of them had a conflict in this quasi-judicial hearing. The Chair disclosed that she had completed appraisals for other properties owned by the applicant in the distant past. She did not feel this gave rise to a conflict and the applicant and the public present all agreed that there was no conflict. No other conflicts were identified by the Commissioners, the applicant, or any of the public present. Steve Zetz summarized the application and the SEPA determination in this matter. SEPA mitigation was as follows: LED Streetlights and the execution of a Voluntary Mitigation Agreement for the payment of fee in lieu of a dedication of land for a park. All witnesses were sworn under oath before they testified. The following testified as follows:

- Doug Gray testified that: he was the engineer for the project; the property on which the subdivision would be constructed is generally flat; there are 11 lots proposed for the subdivision; two of the lots will be large enough for a duplex to be constructed on them; and the infiltration trenches will be constructed to capture stormwater from the impervious surfaces constructed in the subdivision.

- Randy Ripplinger testified that he asked whether the sewer line extended through this subdivision would be able to serve his property to the south. Doug Gray indicated that it would not be able to serve the Ripplinger property without a lift station to get the wastewater back to the main line on Nunn Road.

Steve Zetz indicate that the Benton County PUD commented on the application. There were no other written comments.

The Chair closed the public hearing and the Commission deliberated on the application. Upon motion made by Jeremy Lynn and seconded by Dorothy Evans, the Commission recommended approval of the preliminary plat with the conditions of approval as indicated on the draft findings and upon the alteration of the access easement to allow for a full dedication of right-of-way to the City of Prosser at the time of final plat. All approved.

DISCUSSION ABOUT CHANGES TO SIGN CODE:

Steve Zetz and Howard Saxton discussed the proposed changes to the sign code to bring it into compliance with Reed v. the Town of Gilbert (No. 13-502) 576 U.S. ____, 2015. Steve Zetz discussed Freeway signs during a PowerPoint presentation. He indicated that staff was proposing to increase the maximum height of such signs to 100 feet and the maximum sign face to be 1000 square feet. The Commissioners requested another work session on the Sign Code changes before staff notices a public hearing on the matter. They also requested that staff summarize the alternatives available for changes to freeway signs.

APPROVAL OF FINDINGS FOR HEARTLAND ESTATES SUBDIVISION:

The Commission took a five-minute recess at 7:10 p.m. to fully read the draft findings for the Heartland Estates Subdivision. The Chair called the meeting back to order at 7:15 p.m. Dorothy Evans moved and Michelle Cooke seconded that the findings for the Heartland Estates Subdivision be approved. All approved.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no other business to come before the Planning Commission, the meeting was ADJOURNED at 7:20 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

HOWARD M. SAXTON, III, Secretary

**CITY OF PROSSER
PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 2015
CITY HALL, PROSSER, WASHINGTON**

CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting of the Prosser Planning Commission was called to order on November 19, 2015, at 6:00 p.m. by Chair Glenda Schmidt.

ROLL CALL:

Members present: Dorothy Evans, Glenda Schmidt, Devina Riojas, and Jay Boyle. Jeremy Lynn and Trevor Day were absent. Because Rob Siemens was elected to the City Council, he is no longer a member of the Commission. City Staff present: Howard Saxton, City Attorney and Secretary, and Steve Zetz, Planner.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

There were no minutes presented for approval.

DISCUSSION ABOUT CHANGES TO SIGN CODE:

The Commissioners reached a consensus that they had no further suggested changes to the City's Sign Code, however, Steve Zetz informed the Commission that had a few changes.

COMMERCIAL DESIGN REQUIREMENTS:

Steve Zetz summarized the proposed new commercial and industrial design standards that may be adopted by the City. Commissioner Evans had some editorial changes. The Commissioners asked the Steve Zetz to schedule a public hearing to take public comment on the proposed standards.

DISCUSSION ABOUT FUTURE MEETINGS:

The Commissioners reached a consensus that the December meeting should be cancelled and that a special meeting should be called for January 6, 2016.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no other business to come before the Planning Commission, the meeting was ADJOURNED at 6:35 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

HOWARD M. SAXTON, III, Secretary

**CITY OF PROSSER
PLANNING COMMISSION SPECIAL MEETING
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 6, 2016
CITY HALL, PROSSER, WASHINGTON**

CALL TO ORDER:

The meeting of the Prosser Planning Commission was called to order on January 6, 2016, at 6:05 p.m. by Chair Glenda Schmidt.

ROLL CALL:

Members present: Glenda Schmidt, Jeremy Lynn, Trevor Day, Jay Boyle, and Michelle Cooke. Devina Riojas and Dorothy Evans were absent. City Staff present: Howard Saxton, City Attorney and Secretary, and Steve Zetz, Planner.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

The minutes from September 17, 2015, October 15, 2015, and November 19, 2015 were approved by motion made by Jeremy Lynn and seconded by Jay Boyle.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

No public was present.

PUBLIC HEARING ON COMMERCIAL DESIGN STANDARDS:

The Chair opened a public hearing on the Commercial Design Standards Ordinance. There was one comment submitted by the Benton Public Utility District regarding where trees should be located when planted adjacent to power lines. This comment did not require a change to the Ordinance. Jay Boyle moved and Trevor Day seconded that the Commission recommend that the City Council approve the Commercial Design Standards Ordinance as drafted. All approved. Staff was directed to bring back finding supporting the recommendation to the next meeting.

DISCUSSION ABOUT CHANGES TO SIGN CODE:

Steve Zetz and Howard Saxton discussed the proposed changes to the sign code to bring it into compliance with Reed v. the Town of Gilbert (No. 13-502) 576 U.S. ____, 2015. The Commissioners requested staff to schedule the Ordinance for a public hearing.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no other business to come before the Planning Commission, the meeting was ADJOURNED at 6:35 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

HOWARD M. SAXTON, III, Secretary

To: Planning Commission

Date: March 11, 2016

From: Steve Zetz

The City of Prosser has received a request to consider changes to the Sign Code, specifically freeway signage. The request comes from a single business however the request will impact multiple properties. Staff has reviewed the request and examined the surrounding properties. Based on the surrounding topography staff agrees that there is a compelling reason to examine the request and that currently the sign code as written is inadequate to address geographical barriers in portions of the freeway zone. Staff has drafted optional changes to freeway signage below should the Planning Commission chose to make recommendation for changes.

Current Sign Code

Height	Size
0-29 Feet	100 Square Feet
30-50 Feet	200 Square Feet
51-70 Feet	300 Square Feet

OPTION A

Height	Size
0-30 Feet	200 Square Feet
31-60 Feet	400 Square Feet
61-80 Feet	600 Square Feet
81-100 Feet	800 Square Feet

OPTION B

Height	Size
0-30 Feet	100 Square Feet
31-60 Feet	250 Square Feet
61-80 Feet	400 Square Feet
81-100 Feet	650 Square Feet

OPTION C (Not recommended)

Height	Size
0-30 Feet	250 Square Feet
31-60 Feet	500 Square Feet
61-80 Feet	750 Square Feet
81-100 Feet	1000 Square Feet

Sign Code

I have researched sign codes from across Washington and the Country and have found that there is no one size fits all formula. With most sign codes that are more restrictive the intent seems to be to legislate aesthetics.

Jurisdiction	Height	Size
Richland	80 Feet	240 sq ft.
Pasco	70 Feet	480 sq ft.
Ellensburg	100 Feet	600 sq ft.

Signage like art is subjective, what looks good to me may not look good to you. Further complicating the issue is the goal of signage. Let's look at Leavenworth as an example. Their signage has a specific theme, and its goal is to create a look and feel that is harmonious with an architectural theme.



Now imagine for a moment neon signs, electronic message boards, and flashing lights in Leavenworth. Most would agree that such signage would not be appropriate in such a location. This does not however mean that flashing lights, neon signs and electronic message boards are ugly and unattractive. Look no further than Las Vegas and the millions of visitors who flock to the City each year.



The point of this comparison is to remind the Planning Commission that there is no right or wrong answer, and there is certainly no absolute when it comes to what is visually appealing or not. I encourage the Planning Commission to give equal weight and consideration to the all elements of the issue when determining what regulations should be. These are just a few that I have identified.

1. Aesthetics
2. Prosser's Vision
3. Existing Signage
4. Goal of Signage
5. Property Rights
6. Business Modeling

Public Opinion

I met with the Sign Committee and discussed the proposed changes as well as the issues regarding Reed vs Gilbert AZ. The Committee discussed at length the pro's and con's of changes to the freeway signage. At the end of the meeting the majority of the committee decided that proposed changes to enlarge freeway signage and increase height was the preferred method provided that a matrix was used to keep the size of the sign proportionate to the height and requiring landscaping at the base.

I showed the conceptual drawings that were submitted by the developer to staff and a handful of other citizens. The general consensus was that the signage as shown in the renderings was acceptable and appeared to be necessary to fulfill the goal of "drawing people off the freeway."

Other Options

1. Make no changes to the freeway signage
2. Allow for a deviation process through the Board of Adjustment. (Not preferred)
3. Create an overlay zone specific to exit 80 (This will take quite a bit of time)
4. Eliminate a second freestanding sign if a freeway sign is permitted and require a monument sign and landscaping instead. (Recommended)

Staff Recommendation

Staff believes that all options are legal and that no recommendation will appease everyone. There are specific strategies being employed by business districts. The Historic Downtown is seeking to capture a tourism market that is seeking a small town historic look and feel. The businesses along the freeway are seeking to capture travelers looking for modern freeway off-ramp conveniences. The advertising goals of both are different, yet neither are wrong. Staff's recommendation is to find a balance that the Planning Commission can comfortably say balances the needs of both without unfairly giving weight to one or another. Staff recommends option A or B with the added elimination of a second freestanding sign and replacing it with monument signs and landscaping.



Love's



DIESEL #2

UNLEADED







OPEN SOON



DIESEL #2

UNLEADED





Carl's Jr.

OPEN SOON

UNLEADED

Carl's Jr.
CHILDREN'S RESTAURANT