

WALLA WALLA CITY COUNCIL
Work Session Minutes
September 11, 2017

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Pomraning called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

Present: Councilmembers Jim Barrow, Barbara Clark, Jerry Cummins, Dick Morgan, Steve Moss, Tom Scribner, and Mayor Allen Pomraning.

Absent: None

City staff in attendance: City Manager Nabel Shawa, Deputy City Manager Byron Olson, Development Services Director Elizabeth Chamberlain, City Attorney Tim Donaldson, Parks & Recreation Director Andy Coleman, Senior Planner Jon Maland, Planner Melissa Shumake, and City Clerk Kammy Hill.

2. ACTIVE AGENDA

A. Comprehensive Plan Housing discussion.

Development Services Director Chamberlain described the ongoing public outreach efforts for the comprehensive plan amendment. This amendment looks at planning for the next twenty years. Affordable housing is a consistent theme being heard throughout these outreach meetings. There are many draft housing policy concepts including some "out of the box" such as having a single-family residential zone and a multi-family residential zone and controlling use through density rather than lot sizes. The affordable housing indicators reflect that Walla Walla has affordable housing but a better indicator may be the cost burden index that shows housing is a high percentage of monthly income which puts a strain on other living necessities.

There was discussion on:

- Transfer of development rights from rural county to within urban areas to increase density.
- Use of mixed use zoning to require newly-annexed areas to develop a percentage as affordable housing.
- Intermixing housing types throughout the City.
- Housing costs as a measurement of cost burden.
- Rezoning areas within the Urban Growth Area to higher density.

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- Importance of affordable utility rates on housing.
- Increasing density in core areas.
- Barriers to second-story dwelling units in the downtown area and infill development.
- Mixed use development and standards.
- Additional insight into the data for the housing affordability index versus cost burden standards.
- Available land inventory.
- Public outreach.
- Negative impact of a potential policy that would allow a developer to pay or develop affordable housing outside of a more “upscale” development.
- Encouraging neighborhood commercial areas.
- Ensuring interests of trailer courts or manufactured home communities are represented.
- Allowing zoning for smaller lot sizes.
- Programs to maintain current housing inventory.

B. Continued discussion on short-term rentals, non-owner occupied.

Development Services Director Chamberlain and City Attorney Donaldson reviewed and there was discussion on:

- Limiting density of non-owner short term rentals goes beyond zoning controls. A density regulation would be an attempt to regulate the number of businesses versus allowed land use.
- Existing short term rentals are a legal use of property in the absence of other regulations. These are essentially leased properties which are allowed in residential zones.
- Even if short term rentals are banned, the existing rentals would be grandfathered in as a non-conforming use.
- Washington State has property rights. It is legal to lease property but this right can be regulated. If the City Council wishes to ban short term rentals, the existing rentals would be amortized out of the market.
- The City is able to regulate the impacts of short term rentals, not the number of units. The City may also ban future short term rental properties and require the registration of existing short term rentals.
- There are no known legal challenges to banning short term rentals within Washington State.
- Fees must be related to the cost of regulating short term rentals and cannot be punitive.
- Adverse possession versus established legal use.

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- Regulations can be considered by the City Council in approximately the same time period as a moratorium on additional short term rentals.

Staff was asked to bring back ordinances that would either ban or impose regulations for consideration by the City Council on November 1.

C. Lodging tax funding.

Councilmember Scribner and Deputy City Manager Olson reported and there was discussion on:

- Four of the five Lodging Tax Advisory Committee members met with Deputy City Manager Olson.
- A majority of the committee members saw no need to increase the number of members on the Lodging Tax Advisory Committee.
- The committee would like some guidance on the percentage of lodging tax revenue that should go to Visit Walla Walla for tourism promotion so the remaining percentage can be allocated among other organizations.
- Extending the length of the grants from one year to two or more years.
- Historical information on lodging tax revenue and grant recipients.
- Amount of fund balance that should be carried over each year.

D. Adam West Street Memorial.

City Manager Shawa reviewed the activities scheduled for September 19, "Adam West Day"; and reported there will be an honorary street sign placed on Alvarado Terrace at Clinton Street to memorialize the street he lived on in Walla Walla.

3. OTHER BUSINESS

No other business was discussed.

4. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 5:53 p.m.