



## ALBANY CITY COUNCIL & PLANNING COMMISSION

### MINUTES

Monday, January 13, 2020

Joint Work Session

Council Chambers, City Hall

Approved Planning Commission: March 16, 2020

Approved City Council: April 8, 2020

#### CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Konopa called the meeting to order at 5:15 p.m.

#### ROLL CALL

Council Members present: Mayor Sharon Konopa; Councilors Rich Kellum, Dick Olsen, Mike Sykes, Bessie Johnson

Council Members absent: Bill Coburn (excused); Alex Johnson II (excused)

Commissioners present: Roger Phillips; Diane Hunsaker; Ann Ketter; Larry Tomlin, Ralph Menweg, Kenny Larson; Dala Rouse (arrived at 5:30 p.m.)

Commissioners absent: Cordell Post (excused); JoAnn Miller (excused)

Staff Present: David Martineau, Planning Manager; Jeff Blaine, P.E., Public Works Engineering and Community Development Director; Jennifer Sullivan, Administrative Assistant

Others: Cathy Corliss, Angelo Planning Group; Kate Rogers, Angelo Planning Group; Bill Ryals, ADC Amendments Task Force; Chris Equinoa; Peter Troedsson, City Manager; Ron Irish, City of Albany Engineer; Kristin Smith, Keller Williams Realty; Nina Phillips

#### SCHEDULED BUSINESS

5:17 p.m.

David Martineau gave an update on phase two of the Albany Development Code (ADC or code) amendments project and introduced Cathy Corliss and Kate Rogers, consultants with Angelo Planning Group who will provide the presentation.

#### Project Update and Overview

5:17 p.m.

Corliss reviewed the project's purpose and the status of Phase 2. Phase 1 focused on residential standards and was completed in June 2019. The Task Force is now working on Phase 2 which focuses primarily on commercial and institutional development and site design standards in Article 8. Phase 2 input thus far has included two community open houses and an online survey.

#### Presentation / Non-Residential & Commercial Code Concepts

5:20 p.m.

Corliss referenced the Article 8 Design Standards in the agenda packet which included two copies of the code, one with the changes tracked for easy viewing, and a clean copy with the changes made (see agenda packet). The purpose is to remove inconsistencies and clarify and improve the Commercial and Institutional Site Design Standards, and to build upon previous work (see Cover Memo in agenda packet). Discussion about the affects the amendments will have on development ensued.

Corliss reviewed the Amendments to the ADC Strikeout version and explained the reasoning behind the amendments. The requirements do not have to be clear and objective, instead allowing for discretionary choices. Corliss explained that the language adopted is the same language that was recently adopted for downtown.

Tomlin asked if the code amendments mean that everyone will have to have windows. Corliss advised that it does for new buildings, and possibly for new additions to the front façade of existing buildings. Discussion about window requirements, facades, and pedestrian amenities, pedestrian-scale streetlights, and parking lot clarifying language followed. Larson would like to see a maximum point value placed on the pedestrian amenities section. Corliss advised that on pages 22 – 23 wording was updated to reduce confusion and subsection six was removed because it was redundant.

## Q & A and Discussion

6:35 p.m.

The following key issues were addressed, and further discussion ensued:

1. How design standards will apply
  2. Parking location behind buildings
  3. Window Coverage
  4. Parking lots and drive aisles / Separation of pedestrian and bicycle connection
  5. Public Art
  6. Range of points available
- 
1. How design standards will apply: Blaine summed up design standards by explaining that there are current standards for three different industrial zones, and it was appropriate to not apply the standards to the heavy industrial zone. Konopa said the standards were to make streets more appealing. Tomlin asked if anyone who would use the industrial property has been polled. Kellum said it is not a good idea to make industrial and commercial buildings in the same zone follow different standards. Corliss explained that the amendments are to make the standards easier to meet instead of more difficult and to reduce unnecessary barriers. Blaine asked for approval from the planning commission to propose the design standards amendments to the public.
  2. Parking location behind buildings: Public comment was received. Standards apply to commercial and institutional development in all zones. Discussion ensued about regional parking. Larson said that putting parking in the back of businesses is placing unnecessary barriers. Corliss explained that exceptions have been added. Konopa explained that the goal was to prevent having a sea of parking lots and have more businesses oriented to the street. Kellum said business owners should be polled. Corliss recommends receiving public testimony before further conversation is had. Tomlin said other communities that have businesses closer to the street are seeing success because they are more noticeable. Blaine reviewed the proposals and options.
    - a. Move forward with relaxed requirements.
    - b. Delete unreasonable requirements.
    - c. Move forward with relaxed standards as proposed but explore in more detail later.
  3. Window coverage requirement on the primary façade and the idea of requiring windows will become less restrictive, but not deleted completely. Rouse said that in some instance's windows aren't a good idea and instead recommended allowing additional landscaping. Corliss said 25 percent of the primary façade requires windows. But the secondary façade (where there is not an entrance) does not require windows. Clarification about the secondary façade was provided and Corliss referenced table 8.345-1 to help explain that some secondary facades would be exempted. Larson asked for clarifications regarding businesses that put entrances at 90-degree angles. Corliss said it should be clarified that businesses can choose their primary façade or go by street hierarchy. Larson and Olsen agreed that both options should be provided to the applicant to increase flexibility to businesses. Blaine brought conversation back to the energy code issue and asked Ryals to give his opinion. Ryals said the amendments will make it easier for businesses. Corliss reiterated that they are supposed to be working to amend code to make it easier for businesses, not to remove code. Discussion about requirements and options ensued. Martineau said that more research needs to be done before changing the window percentages. Blaine suggested re-visiting window coverage requirements at a later time. Corliss asked to leave the window amendments like they are for now and allow public comments before making any decisions.
  4. The importance of parking lots, drive aisles, and property connections between buildings were reviewed. Irish talked about pedestrian connections between parking lots and that small parking lot makes it ok for pedestrian

connections to go around the parking lot instead of through the middle. Irish provided clarification about pedestrian paths. Discussion ensued.

5. Public Art: Discussion ensued regarding public art, points associated with it, and who should approve public art. it's approval. Equinoa said the points should be consistent with other point values. Ketter thinks there should be a 10-point maximum. Equinoa and Larson agree, and Larson thinks the art commission should get final approval. The commission agreed that there should be a maximum amount of points for art.
6. Range of points available: Equinoa recommended that points be discretionary up to a point with a 10-point maximum for other pedestrian amenities as well.

### Next Steps

7:48 p.m.

Corliss said she was hoping to leave the meeting with some guidance to prepare a new packet to present to the community for their review and comments.

### ADJOURNMENT

7:55 p.m.

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Reviewed by,

*Signature on File*

*Signature on File*

Jennifer Sullivan  
Administrative Assistant

David Martineau  
Planning Manager