

**CITY OF BLAINE  
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES  
Thursday, February 23, 2017  
7:00 PM  
Calvin Armerding - Chair**

**A. CALL TO ORDER: 7:00 PM**

**B. ROLL CALL:**

**PRESENT:** Richard May, Steve Hrutfiord, Kevin Owens, Calvin Armerding, Sue Sturgill, and Larry Wonnacott.

**ABSENT:** John LeBrun

**STAFF:** Community Planner II, Alex Wenger  
Community Planner I, Maddie Ottley

Mr. Wenger noted Commissioner LeBrun asked to be excused from the February 23, 2017 Planning Commission meeting.

**MOTION BY COMMISSIONER OWENS, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER STURGILL TO EXCUSE COMMISSIONERS LEBRUN, APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY (6-0).**

**C. ELECTION OF OFFICERS:**

**MOTION BY COMMISSIONER STURGILL TO BECOME VICE CHAIR, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER MAY, APPROVED UNCONTESTED.**

**D. AUDIENCE COMMENTS: None**

**E. PUBLIC HEARING:**

**CHAIRPERSON ARMERDING READ THE RULES FOR A PUBLIC HEARING.**

Storage Container Zoning Text Amendment

Ms. Ottley presented the proposed Zoning Text Amendment and discussed the process and background of the application, including approval of a Resolution by Council to initiate the amendment and then a review of the draft language by a special Council subcommittee.

Ms. Ottley discussed the current definitions provided in the Blaine Municipal Code and how storage containers are being used more frequently in some of Blaine's neighborhood.

Ms. Ottley summarized the different proposed development regulations and zoning language for storage containers.

Commissioner May had a question about which zones a shipping container home would be allowed in and there was some discussion about Semiahmoo having CC&R's and the RPR Zone.

Sharon Somers-Hill, 1333 Harrison Ave, presented pictures of architecturally designed container homes and discussed her familiarity with storage container homes. Ms. Somers-Hill discussed her concern about how the proposal will affect home values and the need for architectural design, and the need for management of the permits and the appropriate allocation of City resources.

Ms. Somers-Hill read a letter from Glen and Jo-Anne Pentland and a second letter from Ray Leone that are both opposed to the proposed amendment.

Janet Pickard, 733 Adelia Street. Ms. Pickard stated she is generally in support of temporary and emergency usage, but she has concerns about permanent uses and the use of storage containers as building materials.

Commissioner Armerding had a question about what is allowed today and how the proposed amendment would affect those allowances.

Commissioner Owens had a question about who is responsible for the regulation of the installation of the storage containers.

Commissioner May had a question about what other cities allow in regards to storage containers. Ms. Ottley stated that most jurisdictions don't allow them in residential neighborhoods.

Commissioner May had a variety of statements and voiced concerns about allowing storage containers throughout established residential neighborhoods and that the character of Blaine may be negatively impacted.

Commissioner Armerding had a question about large dumpsters and how to distinguish between the storage containers and refuse containers. There was further concern voiced about what happens when there isn't enough room in the driveway. There were some questions about the length of the term of 90-days for a temporary storage container.

There was some discussion about a renewal option, and requiring a permit and associated costs.

Commissioner Armerding had a question about the public right-of-way and obstruction of the right-of-way. There was discussion and questions about the number of existing containers within the neighborhood today and how does this proposal affect them.

There was general discussion about having allowing replacement containers within the proposed 90-day window.

Commissioner Owens had some concerns about the look of the storage containers and that simply painting them will not change their appearance as an industrial piece of equipment. There was discussion that property owners may be negatively impacted if neighbors are allowed to place large unsightly industrial containers in backyards.

Commissioner Wonnacott had a question about what to do with the existing neighborhood stock of existing shipping containers. There was discussion about grandfathering.

Further discussion ensued about distinguishing between temporary and permanent storage units.

Commissioner Sturgill expressed some concern about the use of storage containers for building materials.

The Commissioners discussed amending the proposal to include allowing replacement containers within the permitted window, allowing longer/different timelines; perhaps 6 months was discussed. The Commission further discussed allowing alternatives for placing storage containers outside of driveways if they would not easily accommodate placement of a storage container on the driveway and there was discussion about permanent use of storage containers.

Commissioners discussed allowing storage containers to be used as permanent assessor structures and there was no support, with six Commissioners stating they did not support this concept at this time and one Commissioner saying they were undecided.

Commissioners discussed the use of storage containers as primary structures material and there were varying degrees support.

The Commission directed staff to revise the proposed amendment based on the comments from the Commission and stated that they would need additional time to consider the proposed Zoning Text Amendment.

**MOTION BY COMMISSIONER MAY, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER STURGILL, TO KEEP THE PUBLIC HEARING OPEN TO MARCH 9, 2017, APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY (6-0).**

**MOTION BY COMMISSIONER WONNACOTT, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER MAY, TO TABLE THE PROPOSED ZONING TEXT AMENDMENT TO MARCH 9, 2017, APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY (6-0).**

F. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:

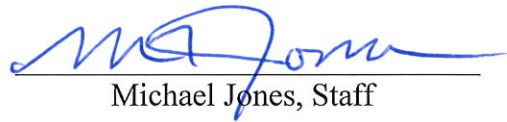
G. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

**MOTION BY COMMISSIONER OWENS, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER HRUTFIORD TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF JANUARY 26, 2017, APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY (5-0-1) STURGILL ABSTAINED.**

H. ADJOURNMENT 8:48 PM.



Calvin Armerding, Chair



Michael Jones, Staff

Planning Commission minutes of February 23, 2017, to be approved at the March 9, 2017 Planning Commission meeting.