

# Meeting Minutes

Monday, September 23, 2024

6:30pm

Online Meeting via Zoom

## I. Call to Order

A regular session of the Gresham Planning Commission was called to order by Chair Pro-Tem John Hartsock on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of September 2024, at 6:35pm online via Zoom. The meeting was digitally recorded, and minutes prepared by Hayley Hamann.

**COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:** Stacey Rustad-Smith, Chair  
Kayla Brown  
John Hartsock  
Greg Schroeder  
Frank Stevens  
Doug Walker

**COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:** Tim Kamp, Vice-Chair

**COUNCIL LIAISONS PRESENT:** Jerry Hinton

**STAFF PRESENT:** Hayley Hamann, Administrative Assistant II  
Mary Phillips, Senior Planner  
Terra Wilcoxson, Comprehensive Planning Manager  
Jim Wheeler, Development Planning Manager  
Josh Williams, Senior Planner  
Ellen Van Riper, City Attorney

## II. Work Session: Development Code Process Update

- a. **Presentation:** Josh Williams gave a presentation on the Development Code Update Project in partnership with Kate Rogers from MIG Consulting. This project is examining a wide variety of issues related to housing regulations in the Development Code, specifically related to recent state laws that have been adopted. One of the key components is to address ORS 197.400 which relates to clear and objective standards, conditions, and procedures for housing. This requires development codes to have a clear and objective process or path to development for housing. This project also looks to improve policy, equity, consistency, and simplicity within the code.

The changes made in this project are projected to be adopted in August of 2025. Some of Gresham’s existing regulations need to be updated to make sure they are consistent with recently adopted House Bills and Senate Bills. Other code improvements in this project aim to remove outdated code, remove certain code barriers to housing, and address opportunities to improve consistency across different design districts- retaining purposeful differences only. City staff will be doing concurrent work to clean up the code in a parallel effort with the consulting team.



A code audit has been completed, and key findings from the audit were shared in the presentation. Stakeholder feedback related to this project has so far included the Design Commission, an outreach event in Downtown Rockwood, the Planning Commission, a developer advisory group, and will include the Neighborhood Coalition this fall.

- b. Commission Questions and Discussion:** Commissioner Brown raised a question surrounding unifying standards for different districts while maintaining the personality or uniqueness of each district. Williams answered that the project aims to bring cohesiveness to the code language itself, as different sections could have the same standard, but be written entirely different in each area because they were adopted at different times. The goal is not to change the character of each district to all look or feel the same, but to bring clarity to the shared codes between the districts. Commissioner Brown suggested that careful thought is taken to preserve the historical buildings in the Downtown District with regard to their unique character.

Commissioner Stevens asked how these changes impact the single-family homes within the City. Williams answered that this project will touch on the single-family homes within the City and that he expects to hear a lot of feedback from upcoming meetings with the Developer Advisory Group and the Neighborhood Coalition. Commissioner Stevens then asked if Williams anticipates standardization creating road blocks to development. Williams answered that it could create barriers, but they hope to work through, and mitigate these problems as they get further into the project.

The Planning Commission continued to give Williams feedback throughout the rest of the presentation. Commissioner Brown suggested that not all newly developed areas should have ground floor commercial space, as it seems the City currently has a lot of vacancies in these types of spaces already. The rest of the Commission agreed with this sentiment.

### III. Other Commission Business

- a. Minutes Approval:** Commissioner Brown made a correction to add her to the minutes as voting on the motion at the last hearing from August 26, 2024. Commissioner Brown made a motion to approve the minutes with the agreed upon changes from August 26, 2024. Chair Rustad-Smith seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. August 26, 2024 minutes approved.
- b. Staff Check-In:** Mary Phillips gave a schedule update. The next Planning Commission meeting is scheduled for Monday, October 14<sup>th</sup>. Jay Higgins is scheduled to give a presentation with a consultant on the Transportation System Plan Update. Currently no other meetings on the schedule for the rest of the year beyond October 14<sup>th</sup>.
- c. Council Liaison Check-In:** Councilor Hinton gave an update on health and safety improvements being implemented regarding fire stations around the City. He also informed the group that the police department has scheduled a public workshop to discuss the utilization of drones. The Regner Reservoir Seismic Retrofit project has been awarded by FEMA. The City of Gresham was one of 53 selected cities out of 788 applications.
- d. Subcommittee Liaison Check-In:**

- i. Commissioner Stevens updated the group on Transportation Subcommittee related items; The committee has met twice since the last Planning Commission meeting. He encouraged the group to visit the Engage Gresham webpage for more information, information. Commissioner Stevens also mentioned that Planner, Carly Rice, had completed an outreach event with the East County Wind Walkers group to gain feedback and perspective regarding the Wy'East Trail.
- ii. Commissioner Schroeder updated the group on Urban Forestry Subcommittee related business; at the most recent meeting there was a presentation on stormwater reporting by the City. The discussion revolved around changing out the current planter strip style for more of a tree well and bioswale based runoff system. The UFS is looking to plant new native trees in the Shall Woods area that was damaged last spring in the ice storm.

e. **Commissioner Round-Robin:** No commissioners had any other business-related updates to share for this meeting.

#### IV. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 7:38pm.

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Chairperson

\_\_\_\_\_  
Recording Assistant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

*A full recording of this meeting is available upon request.*