

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY SERVICES
LAND USE PLANNING DIVISION
MULTNOMAH COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

MINUTES OF JUNE 6, 2016

- I. Call to Order:** Chair John Ingle called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. on Monday, June 6, 2016 at the Multnomah Building, Room 101, located at 501 SE Hawthorne Blvd., Portland, OR.
- II. Roll Call:** Present – John Ingle, Katharina Lorenz, Bill Kabeiseman, Susan Silodor, Alicia Denney, and Timothy Wood
Absent – Jim Kessinger, Chris Foster and Jeremy Sievert
- III. Opportunity to Comment on Non-Agenda Items:** None.
- IV. Hearing: Dark sky Lighting Requirements (PC-2013-3056)**

Adam Barber, Senior Planner presented the staff report and provided history for this item which started in 2013. This topic has been presented to various neighborhood groups over the years and has received great support. Light pollution affects all the rural areas within Multnomah County. Barber showed a PowerPoint presentation that demonstrates the impact of dark skies. He went on to discuss impacts on human health and wildlife as well as the safety and economic benefits of dark skies lighting. He reminded the Planning Commission that we have dark sky requirements in the Columbia River Gorge and showed a map that identified areas of the County where we have no regulation pertaining to light. He discussed the difference between lumen (output) and watts (input) so that the commissioners clear when discussing proposed regulation

Next Barber shared feedback from the community that they believe that having an internally illuminated signs is not appropriate in the rural areas, outside of the commercial industrial zones. He states that one objective of this project is for the County's application of lighting standards utilize a basic non-discretionary process used for building plan review; a second objective is to focus on the lighting design and not placement and intensity; and third, safety first.

He explains that he is having conversation with staff at METRO and the City of Portland to garner support on a regional level. Next he provided a comparison of lighting thresholds used by other jurisdictions. He then goes on to review the proposed code amendments and explain that most of the ordinance is exemptions. There are thirteen exemptions listed in the proposed language.

With regard to Dark Sky Lighting Standards, Barber explained that these standards apply to all new exterior lighting approved through a development permit and all existing exterior lighting on property that is the subject of the development permit approval for enlargement of a building by more than 400 square feet. Put another way, "point it down" and "keep the light on your property".

Barber goes on to discuss proposed language for amending the County's sign provisions and identified zones which would be exempt from these provisions.

Commissioners Kabeiseman asked if there was any way to grandfather internally illuminated at already exists in these prohibited zones?

Barber didn't see any reason why that language couldn't be added; Cerbone added that this new language would need to be flushed out by the County Attorney.

Chair Ingle asked for clarification if existing lighting needed to be modified on other buildings on the property if triggered by a 400 square foot enlargement of a structure.

Barber provided an example of a remodel to a residential use that also had a commercial use on the property. Only the lighting on the residential structure would need to comply with the new standards if the permit was for the residential use and not the commercial use.

Commissioner Denney asked if a property owner were to build a shed larger than 400 square feet on their property; would all the exterior lighting on the house need to be modified? Barber responded that, yes that would be one possible outcome. Homemade options will be discussed with applicants at the planning counter. She went on to ask if the homeowner put 25 lumen bulbs if they would be exempt from these modifications. Cerbone indicated that would meet an exemption but that may not be enough light to be effective in most applications.

Commissioner Silodor how would you determine if a shielded light met the appropriate lumens requirements? Cerbone responded that if the light is shielded downward then it doesn't matter how many lumens are produced. Only unshielded lights would need to be restricted to the 30 lumens.

Commissioner Lorenz asked why staff placed a restriction of 30 lumens on pathway lighting that is also shielded. Barber stated that if the fixture was less than 30 lumens it would not need to be shielded. This takes into account holiday lights and ropes.

Cerbone reiterated the changes that the Commission would like to see staff make to the ordinance: grandfather internally illuminated signs the structure regardless of the use change, and, amending the 400 foot trigger as it related to all the buildings rather than the specific structure that you are altering.

Barber entered correspondence discussing the Seabeck Conference Center from Paula Sauvageau into the record.

Chair Ingle asked for a motion. Kabeiseman moves approval with inclusion of a grandfather of existing internal illumination of signs and emergency repair provision and the grammar in section C; Denney seconds. Motion passed unanimously.

Barber provided a tour of some of the resources available to applicants on our web site.

- V. Director's Comments:** Michael Cerbone, Planning Director, explained that we are down staff at the moment. Lindsey Nesbitt moved on to Clackamas County; Don Keinholz has accepted a position at the City of Portland and another planner has been out on extended leave. Recruitments are underway for the two current vacancies. The code consolidation project should come before you later in the year in addition to an accessory structures ordinance. Staff is working Farm stand and Agri-tainment policy as well as floating structure code and standards, both likely to come before you after the first of the year.

Meeting adjourned at 8:28 p.m.

The next Planning Commission meeting is scheduled for August 1, 2016.

Recording Secretary,

Stuart Farmer