

# City of Ashton Minutes Planning and Zoning Commission

**Thursday, October 19, 2023  
7:00 p.m.**

**In Attendance:** Trenna Howel, John Finley, Rosie Owens and Dallas Hill

**Also, in attendance:** Administrator Sara Bowersox and Deputy Clerk Jan Warnke

Chairman Hill welcomed everyone and opened the meeting at 7:00 pm

## **1. Approve Minutes from September 28, 2023: ACTION ITEM**

Commissioner Rosie Owens made a motion to approve the minutes as submitted. Commissioner John Finley seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Each speaker will be allowed a maximum of 3 minutes unless repeat testimony is requested by the P & Z Commission

## **2. Public Hearing for Conditional Use Permit: ACTION ITEM**

The Public Hearing for Conditional Use Permit was postponed.

## **3. Administrator's Report – Sara Bowersox**

The administrator stated that since the last meeting there haven't been any new permits. Tyler Hess has started to build his apartments. North Fork Village is ready to get started on another 4-plex and an 8-Plex townhomes. The Administrator has verified the setbacks, and the Building Inspector is going over the building plans. On November 8, 2023, the Administrator will take the Planning and Zoning's recommendation on the HCZD changes.

## **4. Comprehensive Plan Updates**

At the last meeting, the administrator told the commission that she had found some information that she believed would be some guidance on the Comprehensive Plan. The information was printed and was placed on the desk in front of each of them. The documents are The Comprehensive Plan: Blueprint for Your Community's Future, Ten Steps in Preparing a Comprehensive Plan, and some pages from the 2018 City of Ammon Comprehensive Plan. This information is some of the guiding principles. She also printed off A Practical Guide to Effectively Regulating Short-Term rentals on the Local Government Level. Administrator Bowersox elaborated on the "Ten Steps in Preparing a Comprehensive Plan". Time was then given for open discussion. Chairman Hill asked where in the Ten Step Process, Administrator Bowersox thinks they are as a committee, and how to advance from there. She mentioned that a lot of information has already been gathered, and that data should be used to decide what type of public outreach the committee would like to do. She felt that the committee could use this information that has

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been gathered and move onto Step 4, which would be to identify specific problems. Trena Howell interjected that she felt it was important to have the end goal in mind to know how to proceed. She also mentioned the importance of subcommittees and public involvement. Administrator Bowersox suggested having committee members decide on a topic to discuss and create questions. Each planning and zoning member would then pick five citizens to have the appointed discussion with, creating subcommittees to gather more information on a designated topic.

The next discussion was centered around the contents needed for a comprehensive plan. By state law, every comprehensive plan must cover certain topics. Deputy Clerk Warnke stated that some information that is needed for the comprehensive plan is already answered in the city's data, for example population and school size. Administrator Bowersox then mentioned that it is important to consider that many people living outside the city limits take advantage of the city's amenities when they do not pay city taxes. A balance must be made so that the citizens of Ashton do not shoulder the load. Chairman Hill suggested that step one, in updating the comprehensive plan, should be to organize the material within the plan for ease of operation. People would then have an easier time navigating the comprehensive plan to answer any questions that they might have. Administrator Bowersox then added that it will be of utmost importance to look ahead 10-20 years in updating the plan as the city's grows and possible highways change.

Discussion was then based around how to best organize the existing plan, and how the future changes of Ashton will affect each topic. Possible questions were then discussed for each of them to ask residents in the hopes the information gathered would lead to what the city needs to plan for and include in the updated comprehensive plan. The suggestion of making sure the residents are involved in the planning stages and feeling that their opinion does matter. Chairman Hill then moved forward with ideas on how to approach people and gather information without them feeling put on the spot, so that they felt comfortable in sharing any ideas and answering questions openly. Moving forward, it was suggested to make a list of topics and then zero in on questions to take into the community. It was suggested that Facebook could maybe be used to ask some questions and gather information. During this conversation the subject of short-term rentals came up and the need to add verbiage in the Comp Plan about them. Cities cannot prohibit short-term rentals, but they can be regulated. Administrator Bowersox went through some of the ways that they could be regulated. The regulations have to be something that can be easily enforced.

It was decided that each commission member could bring a list of the topics that they would like to focus on first. Then by the end of the next meeting they could discuss their lists and dwindle them down to five topics to start on.

The meeting was adjourned.

The next Planning & Zoning meeting will be on November 16, 2023, at 7:00 pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted by Deputy Clerk Jan Warnke