

CROOK COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION



February 13, 2019

Crook County Planning Commission Chairperson Michael Warren II called the hearing to order at 4:00 p.m. Commissioners present in addition to Warren were George Ponte, Laquita Stec, Linda Manning, and Commissioner Pro Tem Lawrence Weberg. Commissioners Gary Bedortha, Susan Hermreck, and Bob Lundquist were not present.

Crook County Planning staff present were Planning Director Ann Beier and Planner Katie McDonald. Fire Marshal Russ DeBoodt was also present.

Warren led all persons present in saying the Pledge of Allegiance.

Opening statements were omitted because a public hearing was not being held.

WORK SESSION

Beier said that most of the Forest Zones in Crook County are under other fire districts. She said that the Commission should consider fire siting for areas zoned Rural Residential as well.

McDonald explained the Forest Zone map and the locations of forest uses. She said that there are comparatively few existing residences in the Forest Zones. She said that few people want to build in forest areas, and that extensive requirements must be met.

DeBoodt explained the boundaries of the Crook County Fire District.

Beier said that there are no identified Urban -Wildland Interfaces in the County, and no identified Special Protection areas.

Ponte said that fire hazard in EFU zones should also be considered.

Beier said that the top five fire protection recommendations should be attached to the Code sections for Rural Residential and other zones.

DeBoodt explained the Fire Ready guide for homeowners on the Fire District website.

Beier commented that new residents from urban areas need guidance concerning wildfire protection.

Ponte said that most of the Forest Zones in the County are under Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) protection. He said that they go through classification standards which focus on interface areas.

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DeBoodt said that wildfire hazards in the County are located primarily in the EFU zones.

Beier said that regulations should be implemented for high risk areas.

Stec asked DeBoodt about driveway standards.

DeBoodt said that a minimum 14 foot driveway width is required to accommodate firefighting equipment. He said that some quasi-subdivisions have a single access road, which presents potential problems with residents trying to evacuate conflicting with firefighting equipment.

Beier said that the Commission should focus on such areas. She said there should be provisions for turnouts and turnaround spaces.

Ponte said that insurance companies are taking an interest in wildland fire hazards, and have been canceling policies in some areas of the country.

DeBoodt said that policies have been canceled in Crook County. He said that driveways accessing more than four residences are required to have a minimum 20 foot width. He said that a 30 foot width is required for subdivision access roads.

DeBoodt said that residential fire suppression systems are designed to protect from structural fires, and do not protect from wildfires.

Beier said that water sources are required for Forest Zone residences, such as a pond or cistern.

DeBoodt said that another look should be taken at the ordinances in ten years.

Beier said that the Model Code is useful for developing fire standards.

DeBoodt discussed defensible space for residences.

Beier said that clear guidance is needed for defensible space.

DeBoodt said that it is not feasible for defensible space to be fuel-free. He said that the terms “primary fuel break” and “secondary fuel break” are appropriate.

McDonald said that she would take out the term “fuel-free”.

DeBoodt said that use of the term “defensible space” would prevent having to change the Code in response to new developments.

Beier agreed that the term would be used.

DeBoodt discussed primary and secondary defensible space.

Beier said that county requirements can be more stringent than state requirements, but cannot be less stringent.

McDonald asked if the tables should be taken out of the Code.

Beier said that they should be.

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Beier said that the Commission should look at the riskiest areas.

DeBoodt said that high density residential development contributes to fire hazard, as in the recent California fires. He said that in that situation, fire spreads from house to house.

Beier said that development on large adjoining lots tends to cluster along roads, and this should not be permitted. She said that there is a density problem in Rural Residential zones in the County. She said that there is a question whether high density development makes sense if hydrants are provided.

McDonald referenced communications towers, including cell towers. She said there is not much on them in the Model Code. She said that they are covered much more explicitly in the conditional use standards.

Beier said that Grant and Jefferson Counties are going through the same process as Crook County, and that Grant County is about to adopt its revisions.

The Commissioners and staff discussed private hunting and fishing accommodations. Beier said that the Model Code addresses guest rooms in lodges rather than individual cabins. She referenced the Oregon Structural Specialty Code. She said that there are no definitions for cabins.

DeBoodt said that the Oregon Fire Code also applies to hunting and fishing accommodations. He said that a minimum 20 foot width is required for drives, and sprinklers are required. He said that the County can regulate for fire safety for areas outside the Fire District.

Ponte said that ODF does not protect against structural fires.

DeBoodt said that Crook County has no ambulance code. He said that road standards for fire equipment also provide for ambulance access. He said that Fire District regulations provide for public safety rather than only for fire safety.

Manning asked if commercial hunting lodges were being referred to.

Beier said that was the case. She said that the Code is not concerned with nonpaying houseguests or relatives. She said that staff pays particular attention to proposed structures with large footprints, which might be intended as accommodations which would require approval.

McDonald said that no small, permanent structures such as cabins should be permitted.

Ponte referenced private fishing facilities. He said that stream classifications have changed. He said that "Fish Bearing Streams" are currently referred to. He said that it would be more appropriate for the Code to refer to "stream used for sport fishing", or "place where people normally fish".

Ponte commented that the term "meet minimum Forest regulations" sounds fuzzy. He said that the rule is intended to protect resources used by commercial forest activities such as logging.

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Beier said that hunting and fishing facilities are required to get signoffs from ODFW. She said that when the public is brought into an area, fire safety must be considered.

The Commission discussed bridge and road construction, and youth camps in Forest zones.

McDonald said the use tables refer to transportation weigh stations and log scaling and weigh stations as separate entities.

Ponte commented that there are now few log scaling stations.

Beier addressed home occupations. She said that the current language does not distinguish between zones, but distinguishes home occupations on parcels of 20 acres or larger, as opposed to those on parcels of 20 acres or less. She said that the current wording should be kept.

The Commissioners and staff discussed the Definitions section.

Beier said that the Model Code language on Accessory Structures is better than that in the current Code.

She said that the Model Code definition for Agricultural Structures should be used for all zones.

She said that the current definition of Agro-Tourism is satisfactory.

Ponte stated that Airport Elevation refers to the Prineville Airport.

The staff and Commission addressed Transmission Lines and Auxiliary Forest Structures. It was decided that the existing definitions are satisfactory.

Beier stated that the Model Code definition for Campground is better.

She said there are no Commercial Dairies in the County.

She said that the existing definitions for Commercial Farms, Commercial Tree Species, and Contiguous Lands are satisfactory.

The Commission and staff discussed Farm Stands. It was pointed out that they are required to sell a preponderance of local products. Beier said that the state definition includes commercial operations.

Ponte referenced back-conversion of agricultural land to forest. The Commission and staff discussed this.

Beier said that the current definition of Golf Courses should be retained, although they are not permitted in Forest zones. She said that the definitions are in alphabetical order, rather than being numbered.

Weberg said that irrigated land has been classified as High Value Farmland. The Commission and staff discussed the definition of Irrigated Land. Weberg pointed out that much irrigation water is provided by water rights rather than irrigation districts.

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It was decided to add Living History Museums. Beier said they are addressed by state regulations.

It was decided to keep the current definition of Medical Hardship Dwelling.

McDonald referred to Tiny Homes, which are covered by construction standards, but can be moved. Beier said that manufactured homes are covered by state handicapped regulations. It was decided to keep the current definition.

Beier said that Mining regulations are the same for EFU and Forest zones.

Beier said that Open Playfields should be added.

Beier said that Outdoor Mass Gatherings are covered in the Code language.

Definitions were discussed for Parcel of Land, Personal Use Airport, Preparation of Forest Products, Principally Engaged in Farm Use, Private Park, Processing, Public Park, Relative, and Storage Structure for Emergency Supplies.

Beier pointed out that there is presently no definition for Structure.

Temporary Structures were discussed. Ponte pointed out that permits are generally not required.

Definitions were discussed for Tract, Cell Tower, Youth Camp, Yurt, and Yard Front.

Beier pointed out that the height limit for structures in Forest zones is 30 feet. She discussed definitions for flat roofs, mansard roofs, and structures with eaves.

OTHER BUSINESS

Beier said that the next meeting is to be held at 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, February 20.

Ponte moved for adjournment, and Weberg seconded.

The Commissioners present approved the motion by a vote of 4-0.

Warren adjourned the meeting at 6:45 p.m.