

**CITY OF FIRCREST PLANNING COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

February 7, 2017  
6:00 PM

Fircrest City Hall  
115 Ramsdell Street

---

**CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Karen Patjens called the regular meeting of the Fircrest Planning Commission to order at 6:00 p.m.

**ROLL CALL**

Commissioners Kathy L. McVay, Jerry Foss, Karen Patjens, Kenneth Halgren, and Arne Michaelsen were present. Absent: None. Excused: None. Staff present: Planning and Building Administrator Angelie Stahlnecker and Principal Planner Jeff Boers.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

The minutes for the meeting of January 3, 2017 were presented for approval

**Moved by McVay and seconded by Foss to approve the minutes. Ayes: Kathy L. McVay, Jerry Foss, Karen Patjens, Kenneth Halgren, and Arne Michaelsen. Noes: None. Absent: None. Excused: None. Motion carried.**

The minutes for the meeting of January 26, 2017 were presented for approval

**Moved by Foss and seconded by Michaelsen to approve the minutes. Ayes: Kathy L. McVay, Jerry Foss, Karen Patjens, Kenneth Halgren, and Arne Michaelsen. Noes: None. Absent: None. Excused: None. Motion carried.**

**CITIZEN COMMENTS**

None.

**PUBLIC HEARING**

Case 17-02 – Amendments to FMC 22.99.010 Designation of frequently flooded areas.

Karen Patjens opened the public hearing for Case 17-02, amendments to FMC 22.99.010 Designation of frequently flooded areas at 6:02 p.m.

Planning and Building Administrator Angelie Stahlnecker presented the staff report for the proposal to amend FMC 22.99.010 Designation of frequently flooded areas, updating text language to reference the new “Flood Insurance Study for Pierce County, and Incorporated Areas,” where the study and maps can be found, and adding the phrase “or his or her designee”

after “director” in section (a)(2). The amendments fulfill the requirements of the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

Patjens invited public comments.

No comments were made.

Patjens closed the public hearing at 6:04 p.m.

**Moved by McVay and seconded by Michaelsen to adopt Resolution No. 17-02, a resolution of the Planning Commission of the City of Fircrest, Washington recommending adoption of amendments to FMC 22.99.010, Designation of frequently flooded areas. Ayes: Kathy L. McVay, Jerry Foss, Karen Patjens, Kenneth Halgren, and Arne Michaelsen. Noes: None. Absent: None. Excused: None. Motion carried.**

## **PUBLIC HEARING**

Case 16-11 – Amendments to FMC 22.26, FMC 22.98, and FMC 22.64, relating to sign code regulations areas.

Karen Patjens opened the public hearing for Case 16-11, amendments to FMC 22.26, FMC 22.98, and FMC 22.64, relating to sign code regulations at 6:05 p.m.

Principal Planner Jeff Boers presented the staff report for the draft amendments to the sign code. The proposed code borrows and adapts certain provisions from a Model Sign Code prepared in 2016 by Fircrest special land use counsel, Carol Morris. The amendments are intended to:

- Respond to Reed v. Town of Gilbert by achieving content neutrality;
- Improve code clarity and simplify administration;
- Achieve more attractive and effective signage per community character goals; and
- Provide greater flexibility for property owners and tenants with respect to sign types, sizes and locations that may be permitted.

Patjens invited public comments.

David Viafore (Viafore’s Deli), 1120 Paradise Parkway, stated concerns over treating businesses differently than public buildings, that replacing pole signs with monument signs may take up parking spaces, replacing signs would be expensive, and that methods of notification were inadequate. Would suggest keeping the “grandfather clause.”

Jerri Turner (Rollin’ 253 Skate and Community Center), 2101 Mildred Street W., stated concern over business visibility if sandwich board signs are not allowed near the street for buildings on the back of properties. Thanked staff for previous conversations and clarifications. Submitted a letter by the owner of Sylvan Learning.

David Harrison (Director of Sales and Marketing for Bodine Enterprises), 1702 53<sup>rd</sup> St NE, Tacoma, stated signage is important to obtaining and promoting businesses, and sandwich board

signs enable their businesses without street frontage to reach customers. Harrison stated concerns over limit on window signage, specifically affecting the semi opaque window films used at the women's gym. Harrison suggested more input from businesses, increased design guidelines for Sandwich board signs instead of location limits, and allowing window signage.

Kathy Hadman (Figures), 2079 Mildred Street W., stated her support for what Turner and Harrison had stated about sandwich board signs and window signs.

Jill Overfield (Sunrise Center), 2079 Mildred Street W., stated the businesses use the sandwich board signs to highlight their various options and specials. Overfield requested clarification of how proposed code would affect current window signage.

Dale Bisceglia, 893 11<sup>th</sup> Ave Fox Island, (owner of property 1375 Regents Blvd) stated he has previously owned a pharmacy in Fircrest and will be opening one again. Bisceglia questioned the problem with pole signs and stated concerns over the cost of sign replacement and setbacks.

Patjens closed the public hearing at 6:38 p.m.

Discussion included the following:

- Need to addressing conflict between design guidelines limit (10%) on window signs and current sign code limits (25%)
- Option to distinguish window signage for sidewalk retail and parking lot facing businesses
- Sign code does not specifically address window films
- Concern over financial impact of requiring replacement of non-conforming signs within a seven-year timeframe.
- Majority of code proposals address the Supreme Court mandate and increase signage options
- Current code does not recognize or regulate heritage signage
- Proposed feather sign regulations were to regulate signage that currently is not regulated, but has been used by businesses in the past
- Desire to clean up A-frame clutter without eliminating them as well as recognizing challenge of visibility at Fircrest's two retail centers for businesses without frontage
- Non-conforming signs are currently required to meet current standards when the building expands, changes uses, or sits vacant for a significant amount of time
- Option of requiring replacement of non-conforming signs with a change of ownership

Deliberations were continued to the March 7<sup>th</sup> meeting.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

None.


## **NEW BUSINESS**

None.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Moved by Foss and seconded by McVay to adjourn the meeting at 7:05 p.m. Ayes: Kathy L. McVay, Jerry Foss, Karen Patjens, Kenneth Halgren, and Arne Michaelsen. Noes: None. Absent: None. Excused: None. Motion carried.**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Karen Patjens, Planning Commission Chair

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Angeli Stahlnecker, Planning/Building