



**CITY OF FIRCREST
PLANNING COMMISSION
MEETING AGENDA**

**TUESDAY, November 5, 2024
6:00 P.M.**

**COUNCIL CHAMBERS
FIRCREST CITY HALL, 115 RAMSDELL STREET**

Pg. #

- 1. CALL TO ORDER**
- 2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**
- 3. ROLL CALL**
 - A. Motion to Excuse Absent Planning Commissioners
- 4. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**
- 5. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**
 - A. [October 1, 2024 Regular Meeting](#) 2
- 6. CITIZEN COMMENTS (FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA)**

(Please state your name and address for the record and refer to the Rules and Decorum laminated sheet at the dais and table.)
- 7. PUBLIC HEARING**
 - A. None
- 8. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**
 - A. None
- 9. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS/ROUNDTABLE UPDATES/STAFF UPDATES**
- 10. NEW BUSINESS**
 - A. [Fire Sprinkler Requirement Discussion](#) 6
- 11. FUTURE BUSINESS**
- 12. ADJOURNMENT**



**CITY OF FIRCREST
PLANNING COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES**

**TUESDAY, October 1, 2024
6:00 P.M.**

**COUNCIL CHAMBERS
FIRCREST CITY HALL, 115 RAMSDELL STREET**

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chair Schultz called the Fircrest Planning Commission regular meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. ROLL CALL

Planning Commissioners Present: Commissioner McVay, Commissioner Lane, Chair Schultz, Commissioner Schonger, Vice Chair Ferguson

City Staff Present: Community Development Director Newman, Assistant Planner Kolostyak

4. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Motion to approve the agenda for the October 1, 2024 Regular Planning Commission Meeting.

Motion: Commissioner McVay	Vote: Unanimous
Second: Vice Chair Ferguson	Abstaining: None

5. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Motion to approve the minutes from the September 3, 2024 Regular Planning Commission Meeting.

Motion: Commissioner McVay	Vote: Unanimous
Second: Vice Chair Ferguson	Abstaining: None

6. CITIZEN COMMENTS (FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA)

Two members of the public were in attendance, but did not wish to give comment.

7. PUBLIC HEARING

Chair Schultz opened a public hearing for public comments on the City's 2024 Comprehensive Plan at 6:06 PM.

Comment: Nancy Atwood, 1204 Farallone Avenue, Fircrest, inquired why the Comprehensive Plan's climate resilience element is so vague.

Response: Director Newman responded that the climate resilience element is not required to be implemented until 2034 and has been added into the 2024 Comprehensive Plan as a means to head-start the process and act as a framework. The City intends to add to the Climate Resilience element in

the future with specific targets, strategies, and best-available science for greenhouse gas reductions, fleet electrification, critical area protection, and building energy retrofits to meet the requirements by 2034. Future grants from the Department of Commerce will fund research and studies that will inform the new climate resilience element.

Comment: Nancy Atwood, 1204 Farallone Avenue, Fircrest, commented that she is happy to hear that the climate resilience element will be updated to contain specific research and targets and hopes that the City uses the best available science.

No one else from the public wished to give comment.

Chair Schultz closed the public hearing for public comments on the City's 2024 Comprehensive Plan at 6:12 PM.

8. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None.

9. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS/ROUNDTABLE UPDATES/STAFF UPDATES

A. Whittier Elementary School Project

Director Newman briefly updated the Planning Commission on the timeline of the Whittier Elementary School rebuild project. The school district will start soliciting bids in November; however, the City does not expect to get involved until January or February 2025 when plans are available. Vice Chair Ferguson commented that the City will most likely not see any drawings or plans for this project until the spring based on the timeline. Commissioner McVay urged staff to be heavily involved in the project's preliminary plans and process to ensure that the rebuild is aligned with city values. Director Newman assured the Planning Commission that they will be involved in the process. He stated that while the Hearing Examiner runs the public hearing, the Planning Commission will still have a role to play. Planning Commission and Staff had a brief discussion about what kind of variance permits and conditional use permits go to the Planning Commission. Director Newman clarified that any large project, such as the Whittier Elementary School project and Comprehensive Plan, will require a public hearing before Planning Commission and City Council prior to approval.

B. Middle Housing Timeline

Vice Chair Ferguson asked what the current timeline for the missing middle housing is. Director Newman informed Planning Commission that the City had intended to send out a public survey by the beginning of November, however this step will most likely be delayed due to ongoing feedback on the specific survey questions that should be asked. These public survey results will inform the consultant's report of recommendations. Following this step, the consultant will present draft development regulations and draft amendments. The consultant's originally anticipated fall timeline for this step will most likely be pushed to early winter. The consultant and staff had planned to have final amendments adopted by April, though the City does have a buffer period until June to adopt.

C. Four Corners/Thriving Communities Project

The Planning Commissioners had a brief conversation about attending the Four Corners/Thriving Communities Project's open house held on September 25, 2024. Chair Schultz attended the events and reported that it was professionally done and well-organized.

10. NEW BUSINESS

A. Resolution: Recommending Adoption of the 2024 Comprehensive Plan Update

Director Newman proposed that the Planning Commission provide a recommendation on proposed amendments to the Comprehensive Plan as part of the 2024 Comprehensive Plan periodic update as

required by RCW 36.70A.130(5)(a). Director Newman also provided some background on the development of the 2024 Comprehensive Plan as well as the advantages of recommending the Plan to City Council, which includes meeting regional requirements. Since its inception, Planning Commission, City Council, and the public have had opportunities to review the Comprehensive Plan. Staff presented Planning Commission with two recommendations – to approve the plan as recommended by staff or to continue the decision to the November meeting if there are any concerns from Planning Commissioners.

Chair Schultz asked staff whether they feel that the current language in the housing and land use chapters of the Comprehensive Plan is broad enough to adopt the missing middle housing ordinance in the future as required. Director Newman confirmed that the language in those chapters mentions that the middle housing work is currently under review and is broad enough to adopt these future ordinances without a problem. Director Newman also confirmed that the City uses “best-available science” whenever there is a new statewide policy or plan published.

Commissioner McVay asked whether the City Council will only running the public hearing to adopt the Comprehensive Plan during their October 8, 2024 meeting and public hearing. Director Newman confirmed that the City Council will not be making a motion for adoption until their December meeting, thus providing a buffer period for any changes to be made to the Comprehensive Plan based on comments from the October 8, 2024 City Council meeting. Director Newman added that this timeline would allow for adoption around December 15, 2024.

Planning Commissioners discussed what the impact of making a resolution to recommend the Plan at the October 1, 2024 meeting or waiting until the November 5, 2024 meeting would be. Commissioner McVay stated that making a resolution to recommend the Comprehensive Plan may give the impression that the City is trying to rush the adoption before all public comments have been heard and proposed an alternative motion to continue the decision to November’s meeting.

Alternative motion to continue Resolution No.24-01 to the November 5, 2024 Regular Planning Commission meeting for further discussion failed.

Motion: Commissioner McVay
Second: Commissioner Lane

Vote: 1-4
Abstaining: None

Chair Schultz and Vice Chair Ferguson determined that waiting until the November meeting may unnecessarily delay the process. Commissioner Lane commented that waiting until the November meeting may give the impression that the Planning Commission does not stand by or approve the Comprehensive Plan by not providing City Council with a recommendation by their October 8, 2024 meeting. Vice Chair Ferguson added that if Planning Commissioners did not have any comments on or desired changes to the Comprehensive Plan that they should recommend adoption. Planning Commissioners had no comments about the contents of the Comprehensive Plan.

Motion to approve Resolution No.24-01, recommending the adoption of Amendments to the Comprehensive Plan as indicated in the 2024 Comprehensive Plan periodic update.

Motion: Vice Chair Ferguson
Second: Commissioner Schonger

Vote: 5-0
Abstaining: None

11. FUTURE BUSINESS

None.

12. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to Adjourn the October 1, 2024 Regular Planning Commission meeting at 6:44 PM.

Motion: Vice Chair Ferguson
Second: Commissioner Lane

Vote: Unanimous
Abstaining: None

Shirley Schultz
Chair, Fircrest Planning Commission

Mark Newman
Community Development Director

From: Mark Newman
Sent: Tuesday, October 1, 2024 4:10 PM
To: Gust, Derek
Subject: RE: Fire Review for Orchard Street Properties Pre-Application

Hi Derek,

Great – thank you. We adopted the 2021 IFC with WSBC amendments. In looking at the state code, it sounds like quadplexes or less are exempt from these requirements. I will keep the idea of requiring them for all units in mind as that does sound like a good idea to bring up to the Planning Commission.

Thanks,



Mark Newman, AICP | Community Development Director

City of Fircrest | 115 Ramsdell Street, Fircrest, WA 98466
253-238-4129 | mnewman@cityoffircrest.net

From: Gust, Derek <DGust@cityoftacoma.org>
Sent: Tuesday, October 1, 2024 2:43 PM
To: Mark Newman <mnewman@cityoffircrest.net>
Subject: RE: Fire Review for Orchard Street Properties Pre-Application

Hi Mark,

Weekend was great; hope yours was too.

I can absolutely take a look at this and provide some high-level comments.

Question for you regarding townhouses and automatic fire sprinkler systems: the City of Tacoma has a local ordinance that requires automatic fire sprinkler systems in all new townhouse units (Ref.: TMC 2.02.610). This differs a bit from the state-amended code (link here: [CHAPTER 3 BUILDING PLANNING - 2021 WASHINGTON STATE RESIDENTIAL CODE \(iccsafe.org\)](#)). Could you please let me know if Fircrest has its own ordinance regarding sprinkler systems in townhouses, is similar to Tacoma, or goes by the State amended code?

Thanks!

Regards,
DEREK GUST, P.E.
Engineer / Plan Review
Tacoma Fire Department | Prevention Division
901 Fawcett Avenue | Tacoma, WA 98402
253.317.0698 | dgust@cityoftacoma.org

SECTION R313

AUTOMATIC FIRE SPRINKLER SYSTEMS

R313.1 Townhouse automatic fire sprinkler systems.

An automatic **residential fire** sprinkler system shall be installed in **a townhouse unit**.

Exceptions:

1. An automatic **residential fire** sprinkler system shall not be required where *additions* or *alterations* are made to **an** existing ***townhouse unit*** that *does not* have an automatic **residential fire** sprinkler system installed.
2. ***Townhouse buildings containing no more than four townhouse units.***

R313.1.1 Design and installation.

Automatic residential fire sprinkler systems for a ***townhouse unit*** shall be designed and installed in accordance with Section P2904 or NFPA 13D.

R313.2 One- and two-family dwellings automatic sprinkler systems.

This section is not adopted.

