



**CITY OF FIRCREST
PLANNING COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES**

**TUESDAY, JANUARY 7, 2025
6:00 P.M.**

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

1. CALL TO ORDER

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

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. ROLL CALL

Planning Commissioners Present: Commissioner Kathy McVay, Commissioner Eric Lane, Commissioner Andreas Schonger, Vice Chair Ben Ferguson. Chair Shirley Schultz was an excused absence.

City Staff Present: City Manager Dawn Masko, Community Development Director Mark Newman, Assistant Planner Natasha Kolostyak.

4. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA

Motion to approve the agenda for the January 7, 2025, Regular Planning Commission Meeting.

**Motion: Commissioner McVay
Second: Commissioner Lane**

**Vote: Unanimous
Abstaining: None**

5. APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Motion to approve the minutes for the December 3, 2024, Regular Planning Commission Meeting.

**Motion: Commissioner Lane
Second: Commissioner Schonger**

**Vote: Unanimous
Abstaining: None**

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

Three members of the public were in attendance but did not wish to give comment as they were in attendance for Item 10.A.

7. PUBLIC HEARING

None

8. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

None

9. COMMISSIONER COMMENTS/ROUNDTABLE UPDATES/STAFF UPDATES

Director Newman announced the successful adoption of the Comprehensive Plan in December 2024. Staff updated the Planning Commission on the status of the Middle Housing Public Survey. Despite posting announcements around town as requested, the online survey has received little feedback from the public so far. City Manager Masko informed the Planning Commission that the physical copies of the survey were expected to be mailed to each residence on January 7, 2025. Staff hopes that the physical surveys will bring in more responses from the public.

10. NEW BUSINESS

A. Graves & Associates Presentation on Orchard Street Properties

Jon Graves of Graves & Associates presented a potential development design for the Orchard Street Properties to the Planning Commission. The presentation depicted townhomes and garden-style apartments along the eastern edge of the buildable land, parallel to Orchard Street. The proposed design would require change in zoning from R-4C to a high-density zoning district as well as an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan land use map to support the higher density needed to make the project feasible to developers.

Commissioner Lane expressed concerns about the proposed access points as well as increased traffic in an existing high-traffic area along Orchard Street. Vice Chair Ferguson expressed concerns that the proposal did not fit in with the goals of the recently passed Comprehensive Plan or the community's expressed values. Commissioner McVay stated that she is opposed to any rezoning and expressed concerns over increased traffic and speeds along Orchard Street and Emerson Street. Commissioner McVay also shared concerns about the developments being advertised as high-end, citing that she felt a recent similar project did not meet her expectations for high-end development. Commissioner Lane added that the city's biggest housing need is affordable housing, not high-end housing that neither fulfills the projected housing needs nor the community's values and desires.

B. 2025 Agenda and Goals

The Planning Commission was asked what they would like to have added to the 2025 work plan. Vice Chair Ferguson suggested an increased focus on the middle housing bills, especially given the community's response so far. City staff has received some negative feedback and pushback from members of the community regarding the implementation of HB 1110. These community members fear that implementing HB 1110 will significantly alter the single-family residential character of Fircrest and disrupt their community values of a small town. During the November 26, 2024, the City Council formed and appointed members to a Middle Housing Ad Hoc Citizen Advisory Committee. The Committee serves the purpose of gathering and preparing materials and supporting documentation for Council consideration for a Department of Commerce alternative to or a timeline extension to delay the implementation of HB 1110 by citing infrastructure deficiencies. Commissioner Lane suggested exploring innovations for housing affordability needs in the 2025 work plan as well as reforming the tree code, knowing that development may be increasing. Commissioner Schonger suggested adding the tree code to the 2025 work plan to focus on exploring permits, incentives, or other systems that could support the existing code. Commissioner McVay noted that the city does have an existing tree code in place.

C. Topic for February Joint City Council Meeting

The Planning Commission was asked to set a topic for the February 2025 Joint City Council Meeting. Vice Chair Ferguson suggested that they discuss HB 1110 and City Council's goals relative to the bill. Vice Chair Ferguson also suggested that the meeting include a discussion of what areas of the Comprehensive Plan need work to make into reality as part of the required implementation report sent to the Department of Commerce. City Manager Masko informed the Planning Commission that the City Council is planning to add the Sign Code as a discussion topic for this meeting. The Planning Commission also had a brief discussion about adding traffic calming measures as a topic; however, it was decided that this matter is outside of the role of the Planning Commission and they will provide a recommendation to the City Council to further study the issue. City Manager Masko also shared that traffic calming is a City Council 2025 agenda goal.

11. FUTURE BUSINESS

None.

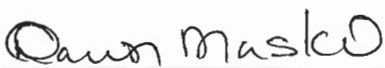
12. ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn the January 7, 2025, Planning Commission regular meeting at 7:30 PM.

Motion: Commissioner Lane
Second: Commissioner McVay

Vote: Unanimous
Abstaining: None


Ben Ferguson
Vice Chair, Fircrest Planning Commission


Mark Newman
Community Development Director