

**Minutes**  
**PED Committee**  
**Tuesday, September 16, 2014**  
**Asheville City Hall, First Floor Conference Room**

In Attendance: Vice Mayor Marc Hunt, Council Member Gwen Wisler, Council Member Jan Davis

Staff: Cathy Ball, Stephanie Monson Dahl, Jeff Staudinger, Blake Esselstyn, Joey Robison

1. Davis moved approval of Aug 19 minutes, Wisler seconded. Minutes approved.
2. Updates
  - a. Residential Density Changes in Commercial Zoning Districts

Jeff Staudinger and Blake Esselstyn gave an update on increasing allowable housing densities in our commercial districts to help meet housing needs. That issue was first brought to PED in June. Councilman Smith's concern was how to meet affordable housing needs. Staff has been working on this with a goal of looking at carrying capacity of land, differences and constraints in commercial districts, and this density change as a part of the big-picture affordable housing strategy. The main change from June to now is layering in affordability and also looking at what would make sense rather than the existing limitations. Process plan is that this will be briefly discussed at the October work session, then P&Z, then Council. Staudinger hopes to put this on your agenda in November.

Esselstyn reviewed how he and Staudinger got to recommended units per acre. Currently, multifamily housing is allowed in commercial districts, but we do not see a lot of housing density there. Previous recommendation for maximum density was based on what the biggest commercial building would be, and then filling with residential units. Surface parking is reduced with residential, but as a site would still need buffers, building, parking, and open space, height is the way to get more units.

Changes include:

Unit size to less than 1,000 sq ft

Parking spaces per unit changed from 1.5 to 1

Affordable housing changed from 10% to 20%

These changes will change the maximum units per acre.

Staudinger and Esselstyn asked for feedback on this new scenario.

- Davis brought up that using commercial land for residential use may have a downside of reducing businesses and therefore jobs.
- Wisler was supportive in general, but concerned that by reducing the square footage to get maximum units, developers who increase unit size will create much larger developments than we want. Staudinger stated that 800 sq ft is the new average unit size across the spectrum, and felt that the committee wanted to see a comparison of tax revenue of residential vs commercial development and wanted to have some assurance of demand. Staff will bring committee some of the data that was analyzed to come to the recommendation.
- Concern was also raised that 1 space is not adequate parking. Is there adequate infrastructure and business nearby so that people do not have to get into their cars for everything?

Generally in support of the concept as a committee.

3. Unfinished Business: NONE

4. New Business

a. Creek Naming Policy

Stephanie Monson Dahl provided a draft resolution and suggested policy for the naming of creeks. The need for this arose after a community organization held a "Name that Creek" contest and we realized we did not have an adequate policy that included community process. The winner of that contest was Penland Creek.

Wisler requested the word "vet" be replaced as it is too casual. Davis was in favor of moving the policy forward. Hunt prefers a process where a community group would approach the City prior to the naming contest. Add "prior to public engagement" in regards to communication with the City. Committee moves to put the renaming of Penland Creek on the consent agenda for October 14 and the policy with the addition of "prior to public engagement" onto the regular agenda for October 14.

5. Presentations and Public Comment: None

6. Wisler moved to adjourn meeting, Davis seconded. Meeting adjourned.