



Memorandum

To: Planning Commission
From: Thomas Dansie, Director of Community Development
Date: January 28, 2022
Re: Planning Commission Priority Work Items

The Planning Commission has identified the following three issues as priorities for work meetings:

1. Revisions to the Village Commercial zone.
2. Setback modifications.
3. Housing strategies.

The Commission assigned one or two Commissioners to research each of these issues and bring suggestions to the Commission. The Commission should use the upcoming work meeting to discuss the research findings the assigned Commissioners have made on each of these topics. The following background information on each of these issues can help frame the discussion.

Village Commercial Zone

Assigned Commissioners: Pam Inghram and Hyatt

The Commission has expressed concern in recent meetings that the size and intensity of development allowed by the current development standards in the VC zone is not consistent with the purpose of that zone. The Commission may wish to examine these development standards and identify changes that could help more fully promote the stated intent of the VC zone (reproduced below).

The village commercial (VC) zone is established to provide areas in the Town where low impact commercial and service uses may be harmoniously integrated with low and medium density residential uses and preserve a village scale in the development thereof. Serving as a buffer area between the low density VR and FR zones and the higher density CC zone, this zone is intended to allow for a lower density of buildings and structures and a lesser impact from noise, lighting and activity levels than those normally associated with commercial development. It is also intended to ensure buildings with a residential character and scale, a feeling of open space around buildings and preservation of public views of the area's natural and scenic beauty. (10-11B-1)

A summary of the current development standards in both CC and VC is contained in the chart below. This will help the Commission visualize the current difference between CC and VC development.

Standard	VC	CC
Building Size	5,000 sf (can be increased to 8,000 sf)	8,500 sf (can be increased to 12,500 sf)
Building Height	26 feet	26 feet (20 feet within 30' of SR9)
Setbacks	30' front, 10' sides, 20 rear (side setback adjacent to residential is 20')	15' to 45' front (depending on building width), 10' side, 10' rear
Landscape required	60% of lot area	30 to 40% of lot area, depending on lot size
Minimum lot size	0.5 acre	0.25 acre
Density	One unit per 4,000 sf of lot area	One unit per 2,500 sf of lot area

The information above is a brief summary of the VC zone development standards. Staff suggests the Commission become familiar with all of the VC zone requirements ([Chapter 10-11B](#) of the Town Code) prior to the meeting to be prepared to discuss potential revisions.

Staff further suggests the Commission consider the following strategies to potential revisions to the VC zone:

- Consider height limit changes. Many of the concerns recently expressed about the VC zone have to do with tall buildings. Altering the building height standard could help reduce the visual mass of new buildings on VC properties. This could help preserve important public viewsheds and help the buildings have more of a residential character. One option for the Commission to consider is requiring taller portions of the building to be set back further from the road and adjacent properties. Another option could be to limit the building height based on the width of the building (e.g. height cannot exceed 40% of the width of the building). This will encourage buildings with a more horizontal emphasis rather than narrow tall buildings which have a vertical emphasis.
- Create visual impact / viewshed protection standards for the VC zone. The FR zone currently has development standards designed to limit visual impact of new buildings. A similar strategy (with different standards) could be adopted in the VC zone.
- Consider increased setback requirements from SR. A larger front setback on SR9 will create more open space between the road and buildings. This will provide more of a buffer between the public space and new buildings.
- Prohibit parking areas between the road and buildings (meaning parking would be located to the side or rear of buildings). This is already a requirement in the CC zone, and is encouraged in the VC zone.

The Commission should discuss these strategies, as well as research from the assigned Commissioners, and give staff direction.

Setbacks

Assigned Commissioners: Pam Inghram

Setbacks are intended to accomplish several objectives. These include:

- a. Provide separation between structures on adjacent properties for fire safety.
- b. Ensure buildings and structures on adjacent properties are separated far enough to help mitigate impacts of noise, odors, lighting, etc.
- c. Promote more open space around and in front of buildings.
- d. Avoid overcrowding the streetscape as seen from the public right-of-way.
- e. Preserve important views.

There are several issues associated with setbacks the Commission wants to address. These include:

1. Clarify the measurement method for setback requirements.
2. Revise setback requirements in CC and VC.
3. Clarify the setback requirement for commercial recreational facilities in 10-7A-4(F).

Clarify Measurement Method

The Town measures setback distances from the furthest projection of a building. Thus, roof overhangs and eaves must meet the required setback distances. This is different from the way most other communities measure setbacks, which is from the building wall (or edge of foundation in some cases). Because the Town's method is unique it catches many property owners, architects, and builders by surprise. There have been a number of instances where the Town's unique method of setback measurement has caused confusion during construction of a project. While staff believes the Town's unique method has benefits, the Commission may wish to consider ways to make this method more clear in the code to avoid surprises and misunderstandings.

Revise Setback Requirements in CC and VC

As discussed in the VC revisions section above, the Commission can change setback requirements in the commercial zones to help achieve the style of development and community character the Town desires.

Setbacks for Outdoor Recreational Facilities

Section 10-7A-4(F) requires commercial recreational facilities to be setback at least 100 feet from a residentially zoned property. In the review of previous development applications the Commission has questioned what qualifies as a commercial recreational facility. In particular the question of whether or not an outdoor pool at a lodging establishment should be considered a commercial recreational facility, and thus be required to be setback 100 feet from a residential zone. The Commission may wish to clarify the intent of this requirement and discuss whether or not it should apply to pools at lodging facilities (as well as other recreational uses accessory to a permitted use on a commercial property).

Section 10-7A-4(F): Recreational facilities, commercial: Outdoor recreational facilities must be located at least 100 feet from any residentially zoned property.

Definition of “recreational facility”: For the purposes of this title, recreational facilities shall include conventional playgrounds, baseball fields, basketball courts, tennis courts, racquetball and handball courts, swimming pools, fitness centers, fitness courses, or weight rooms. This definition shall exclude those uses listed as prohibited in Chapter 7A of this title.

Housing Strategies

Assigned Commissioners: Tom Kenaston and Ric Rioux (Housing Analysis), Tom Kenaston and Pat Campbell (Housing Strategies)

Housing affordability is a nationwide problematic issue. The State of Utah is in the midst of a housing crisis with housing costs increasing much faster than income and ability to pay. The Town of Springdale is not immune from the national and statewide housing affordability crisis. The Town has made a number of attempts to address housing affordability in Springdale in the past. Some of these attempts have been successful, others have not. However, housing affordability remains a pressing issue in the Town.

In 2020 the Town completed a [housing study](#) which recommends a number of strategies the Town can consider to address housing. The Commission may wish to review this study and discuss which of the recommended strategies the Town should pursue.

Commissioners Rioux and Kenaston are in the midst of creating a comprehensive analysis of housing (and other development) in the Town. This will be a resource for the Town to use in developing housing strategy.

Commissioner Kenaston has been working with affordable housing consultants, Council members, and staff to identify specific projects that could help increase the amount of affordable housing in the Town.

All of these efforts are important in helping provide housing diversity and housing options in the community. The Commission should discuss these efforts and give staff direction on how to proceed.