

MINUTES
Warrenton Planning Commission
May 11, 2023 - Work Session
5:30 p.m.
Warrenton City Hall - Commission Chambers
225 S. Main
Warrenton, OR 97146

Chair Hayward called the word session to order at 5:31 p.m.

Commissioners Present: Kevin Swanson, Christine Bridgens, Chris Hayward, Mike Moha, Jessica Sollaccio, Karin Hopper, and Lylla Gaebel

Staff Present: Planning Director Jay Blake, Planning Technician Rebecca Sprengeler, and City Manager Esther Moberg

Introductions were made between the Commission and the new City Manager, Esther Moberg. Planning Director Jay Blake explained Ms. Moberg has been supportive of the Planning Department and improvements to the development review process.

Mr. Blake noted no members of the public in attendance, but that he has spoken with two ministorage facility owners. One rents larger garages to businesses only and suggested a square footage maximum rather than a unit maximum. This would allow for future division or combination of existing units. The meeting packet was mailed to each facility owner. No other communication was received. There has been one pre-application meeting for a ministorage site with about 300 units in an industrial zone. Mr. Blake argued that they should be allowed to continue through the review process. Mr. Blake requested direction on how to proceed with the draft ministorage cap ordinance.

Commissioner Swanson noted Warrenton has the lowest population per storage unit ratio in Clatsop County and requested data on the number of jobs per acre or per unit. Mr. Blake explained most newer facilities will be using online reservations. The number of employees may decrease. Mr. Blake will bring back more information on the number of employees per acre from the business licenses and can compare jobs at other commercial uses on comparable sites. Commissioner Sollaccio would like livable wages and full-time vs. part-time jobs to be considered in the analysis. Commissioner Swanson noted the importance of livable wages for affordable housing. Commissioner Hopper noted other considerations of ministorage facilities are the utilities and that income is not generated for the city. The city needs housing, jobs, and the ability to make money. Mr. Blake agreed that there is a need for an increase in city revenue. Commissioner Swanson noted ministorage facilities pay less taxes and asked if there is any action the Commission can take to address this. Mr. Blake explained the County assesses at a stable tax rate; it is also based on the value of the property or potential earnings of a use. There was a request to other cities about a ministorage tax like short term lodging, but there were no examples of this. Mr. Blake will provide an analysis on employment using the same businesses from the tax analysis. Commissioner Gaebel suggested revenue be the basis for ministorage property taxes. Chair Hayward noted an explosion of ministorage units along Tualatin Valley

Highway. The demand for the property is not what it used to be. Commissioner Bridgens noted the highest and best use is an important consideration and ministorage is not the highest and best use of property. Commissioner Moha added that ministorage facilities are low traffic; a future application for a commercial business around Ensign and Costco will be problematic for traffic and may be cause for denial. He would like to see different criteria for C-1 and Industrial. Chair Hayward asked if the ordinance's intent is to push ministorage facilities away from corridors into the Industrial zones. Mr. Blake clarified that the goal is to allow the current facilities and to prevent any additional unless there is an increase in the population. Commissioner Gaebel asked about changing the way ministorage facilities are taxed. Mr. Blake clarified they cannot change the means of valuation or rate; he can discuss further with the County Assessor. Commissioner Sollaccio asked about the tax rate for short term rentals. Commissioner Hopper noted it is 12% in Warrenton and 1% in Clatsop County. She would like to see a similar tax for ministorage. Mr. Blake will bring back more information on tax valuation. Commissioner Moha asked about the occupancy rate of existing facilities. Mr. Blake will bring this back as well. He is also curious about business vs. personal use and noted this discussion can continue at the end of the regular meeting.

There being no further business, Chair Hayward adjourned the meeting at 5:58 p.m.

APPROVED:


Chris Hayward, Chair

ATTEST:


Rebecca Sprengeler, Secretary