

WOODLAND PARK PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES *for June 10, 2021 – 7:00 PM*

Council Chambers, 220 W South Avenue, Woodland Park

This meeting was a hybrid meeting with in-person and virtual attendance. The Zoom meeting link is in the calendar on the City website front page. Public input is very important to the Planning Commission. Comments were encouraged in writing in advance of the meeting to be submitted by mail to the Planning Department at PO Box 9007, Woodland Park, CO, 80866 or email to sriley@city-woodlandpark.org.

1. **ORDER AND ROLL CALL:** Order was called at 7:00 p.m. Commissioners present in-person: Chairman DeVaux, Vice-Chairman Ken Hartsfield, Lee Brown, Larry Larsen, Ellen Carrick, Al Bunge. Staff present in-person: Planning Director Sally Riley, City Planner Lor Pellegrino, City Attorney Nina Williams.
2. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** The May 27, 2021 minutes were approved as presented.
3. **PUBLIC HEARINGS.** None.
4. **WORK SESSION.** To discuss policies related to Ordinance No. 1397 repealing the 180-day occupancy limitation for Recreational Park Trailers and Recreational Vehicles.

Planning Director Riley gave a brief verbal overview of RVs and Park Models and presented a draft administrative policy to supplement Ordinance 1397 to ensure that existing and future campers are not evicted; to require that RVs be registered, insured and mobile; to limit expansion of the use; and, to provide for the upkeep, care and maintenance of the property, structures, RVs, and use. The intent is to find a compromise between current operations and regulations. She stated that all three campgrounds have been given the draft policy and that the public hearing on the ordinance is scheduled for June 24.

Commissioner Bunge: Supports the policy as written but he believes that the use should end with the existing tenant. He does not want these parks to turn into eyesores, no matter who owns them. His aim is to protect the community. He believes the City should change with the evolution of the RV community.

Commissioner Carrick: Stated that she toured the Woodland RV Park and feels that it is clean and well run. She agrees with the policy but would like to delete “at a moment’s notice” as that is too onerous. The Park Models are not owned by the park/property owner. She is undecided about whether the use should end with the tenant. She would like staff to consider new zoning (or perhaps an overlay district).

Vice-Chairman Hartsfield: He believes the original intent is for recreational use and temporary occupancy. He does not agree with eliminating the 180-day limit and suggests that campgrounds be rezoned to a residential use if permanent occupancy is permitted. He suggests creating a new zone district. He believes that the use should end with the tenant – if a long term tenant leaves, then the next RV that moves in should be temporary use. He recommends a contract or agreement to enforce the administrative policy as a means to better enforce the policy. Trashiness and maintenance are separate issues.

Commissioner Larsen: He understands that this is a hybrid use and believes a flexible administrative policy is the right approach (similar to how the sign code is administered). He is concerned by Council’s position. He believes that the use should end with the tenant. Attention should be focused on the three existing parks and a reasonable compromise.

Commissioner Brown: Believes that the residential use should end with the existing tenant. He also stated that the policy would need to be clearer. He accepts the Council view but feels the “temporary, short term” language should remain but not be enforced for current occupants. There is no land use right now and care should be taken about creating a legal use. The current campground business model applied by current owners is contrary to the Municipal Code. He would like to see the City Attorney draft language that retains short term use but not enforced with current occupants.

Chairman DeVaux: He is concerned about the ability to sell the campground. He also stated that campgrounds and RV parks make the City a destination and that permanent occupancy should occur. He suggested that the City Attorney talk to the Baldwin's attorney.

City Attorney Williams: She commended the Planning Commission on all the work they did on Ordinance 1383. Residential use was never permitted therefore residential use cannot be "grandfathered" as part of the code. Enforcement would be based on the baseline site plan and it is in the property owner's best interest to voluntarily conform with policies. The City could clarify the policy with a letter to each campground.

Ivan Mehlhoff (owner of Bristlecone Campground): He offers month-to-month leases but many customers stay more than 180 days in aggregate (for example, some people live in the campground while they are building their house, some are Charis students who are here for the college term).

Jeff Baldwin (owner of Woodland RV Park): He purchased the park in 1984 and caters to customers who stay as long as they wish on an extended stay basis. Many jurisdictions like El Paso, Colorado Springs, and Manitou Springs do not restrict occupancy. Folks want and need alternative housing. Rents, mortgages and building costs have skyrocketed. We have provided that alternative option to nurses, dentists, regional managers, students, police officers, retirees, mechanics, single women, etc. We charge \$550.00 per month. Our rules are strictly enforced by the campground manager. He stated that he will lose half of his business if the 180-day limit remains. The park is valued at \$2.5 million and taxes are paid. Six customers currently have consistently stayed longer than 180 days. We are temporary, transitional, seasonal and long term and we allow park models to pull in depending on space and availability. He believes the draft policy is redundant, further limits RV park owners, and injures property rights.

Mac McVicker: Suggests that in the RV world there is no such thing as permanent houses but that the Commissioners should focus on their goal. RVIA likes terms like "temporary" because then they don't have to meet IRC codes. If the goal is to avoid dilapidated parks, then 180 days is irrelevant. Refocus on what you want these parks to look like, not an occupancy limit. Work with current park owners to implement their rules and best practices into regulations with particular consideration given to life/safety issues.

Mike Nakai: It is not your role to placate City Council. Four votes of Council is required to overturn the Planning Commission recommendation. A tie vote is a fail. Consider if you want full-time RVs and park models expanded, status quo or reduced over time. The original premise was to reduce full-time occupancy of campgrounds over time. Status quo was the compromise that this administrative draft policy attempts to achieve. He disagrees that due process was denied to the campground owners. State of Colorado stays are limited to 14 days. 180 days satisfies summer seasonal use and is double what Teller County allows. He suggests the Commissioners should not feel obligated to bend over backwards for Council.

5. REPORTS

- A. Envision Woodland Park 2030: Planning Director Riley briefly provided the status of the comprehensive plan. Each draft chapter will be reviewed at the next subcommittee meeting (in-person on June 28). Commissioners can expect to review a complete draft of the revised plan during the July and August Planning Commission meetings.
- B. The next Planning Commission meeting on June 24, 2020 will include Ordinance 1397 and a work session on the proposed Comprehensive Plan land use map.

6. ADJOURN: The meeting adjourned at 9:13 pm.

Approved this 24 day of June, 2021 by


Jon DeVaux, Chairman