

City of Medical Lake
124 S. Lefevre Street – City Council Chambers
Planning Commission Meeting
September 28, 2023, Minutes

NOTE: This is not a verbatim transcript. Minutes contain only a summary of the discussion. A recording of the meeting is on file and available from City Hall.

- 1) **CALL TO ORDER, PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE, AND ROLL CALL**
 - a) Commissioner Hudson called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm, led the Pledge of Allegiance, and conducted roll call. Commissioners Jorgenson, Mayulianos, Hudson, and Mark were present in person. Commissioner Munson was present via Zoom.

- 2) **ADDITIONS TO AGENDA**
 - a) Motion to approve agenda as is made by commissioner Mayulianos, seconded by commissioner Hudson, carried 5-0.

- 3) **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
 - a) July 27, 2023, minutes.
 - b) Commissioner Mark suggested amending section 1, line 3 to read “Commissioner Hudson suggested,” since Commissioner Mark was absent and it was Mark Hudson who made the suggestion. Motion to approve as amended made by commissioner Mark, seconded by commissioner Mayulianos, carried 5-0.

- 4) **INTERESTED CITIZENS: AUDIENCE REQUESTS AND COMMENTS**
 - a) Tammy Roberson, resident of Medical Lake – see attachment A.

- 5) **STAFF REPORTS**
 - a) Elisa Rodriguez, City Planner
 - i) Provided an update on the Shipping Container Ordinance. City Council will be entertaining a first read on an ordinance related to non-residential zones at their meeting on 10/3/2023.
 - ii) Provided an update on the Official Zoning Map. City Council will entertain two ordinances to adopt an official zoning map that accurately matches the record related to the inconsistencies identified during previous Planning Commission meetings (May and June 2023).
 - iii) The Martin Street Wetland update. The owner limbed a tree before the silt fence was in place. The owner was contacted and the silt fence was installed. There has not been activity on the site since.
 - iv) Noted the November Planning Commission meeting falls on the Thanksgiving holiday and asked the Planning Commission to consider and identify if they want to meet the week before, the week after, or cancel the meeting that month.
 - b) Dave Yuhas, Code Enforcement Officer
 - i) Provided an introduction and presented information on Medical Lake Municipal Code, identified needed changes and new code considerations, and defined the process for making progress.
 - ii) Commissioner Munson asked about vagrancy and Mr. Yuhas explained how Code Enforcement works with Law Enforcement to address related concerns.

6) SCHEDULED ITEMS

- a) City Branding Discussion
 - i) Commissioner Munson: shared his desire to keep the conversation going and mentioned Enumclaw as another small city in Washington that attracts visitors.
 - ii) Commissioner Hudson: expressed how the Rusty Truck Ranch enjoys 8,000 visitors annually, which is a good draw. He also shared about Entiat as a community with an RV Resort that seems successful because they have a golf course that provides a reason to visit.
 - iii) Commissioner Mayulianos: reiterated a desire to see the City's branding build on the rich history of Medical Lake.
 - iv) Commissioner Mayulianos motioned to continue the discussion next month, seconded by commissioner Mark, carried 5-0.
- b) Education Packet for New Commissioners
 - i) Commissioner Mayulianos shared printed materials including A Short Course on Local Planning, conflict of interest materials, New to the Planning Commission? FAQ's, History and Geographic Setting of Medical Lake, and suggested Medical Lake Planning Commission Goals. She asked that commissioners read over the material and come prepared to discuss at a future meeting.
 - ii) Commissioner Mayulianos motioned to continue the discussion next month, seconded by commissioner Jorgenson, carried 5-0.

7) PUBLIC WORKSHOP

None

8) COMMISSION MEMBERS' COMMENTS OR CONCERNS

- a) Commissioner Mayulianos asked about groups hosting special events in the City and insurance requirements. Mr. Weathers shared that organizations such as the Blue Waters Bluegrass Festival are required to have insurance and name the City as an additional insured. She also asked about the need for a mission statement for the Planning Commission. Ms. Rodriguez highlighted that the Comprehensive Plan includes a vision statement that is highly related.
- b) Commissioner Hudson asked about the use of a vacant building in the Central Business District. Mr. Weathers was not aware of the current use and shared details on the draft Vacant Property Ordinance being considered by City Council, which would allow for inspection by city staff and ensure registration, maintenance standards, and encourage use.

9) INTERESTED CITIZENS: AUDIENCE REQUESTS AND COMMENTS

- a) Tammy Roberson, resident of Medical Lake – asked questions related to Martin St. Wetland.

10) CONCLUSION

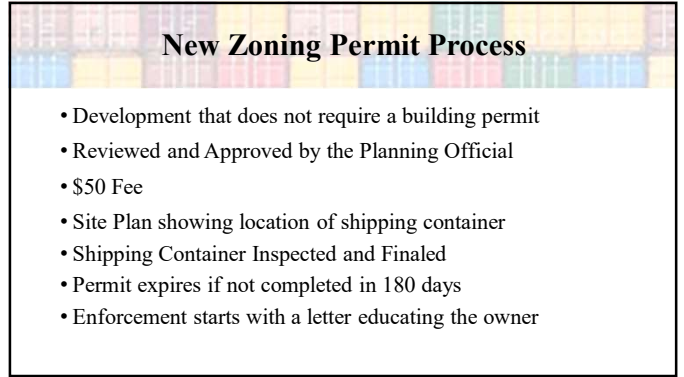
- a) Motion to conclude meeting made by commissioner Mayulianos, seconded by commissioner Munson. Motion carried 5-0 and meeting concluded at 6:37 pm.

Date: Oct. 26, 2023

Roxanne Wright
Roxanne Wright, Administrative Assistant



1



2



3



4

New Standards for Shipping Containers

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. 200 s.f. max | 9. Not in required parking or landscaping |
| 2. Placed beside or behind primary building | 10. Conform to building and fire code |
| 3. No utility hookups | 11. Not on septic system |
| 4. Screened from residential | 12. Not living space |
| 5. Good condition | 13. No signs or logos |
| 6. Similar color to primary building | 14. No containers in CBD |
| 7. Must meet standards of zoning code | 15. Not stacked |
| 8. Must meet accessory structure standards | |

5

Zoning Standards

- **School and Public Lands Zone:**
 - 35% maximum building coverage
 - 15-foot minimum front and rear yard setbacks
 - 5-foot minimum side yard setback
 - 10-foot minimum street side yard setback
- **Commercial (C-1) Zone:** No max building coverage, no setbacks
- **Mixed-Use (MC-1) Zone:**
 - 85% maximum building and parking coverage
 - 5-foot setbacks on all sides

6

Monark Self-Storage



7

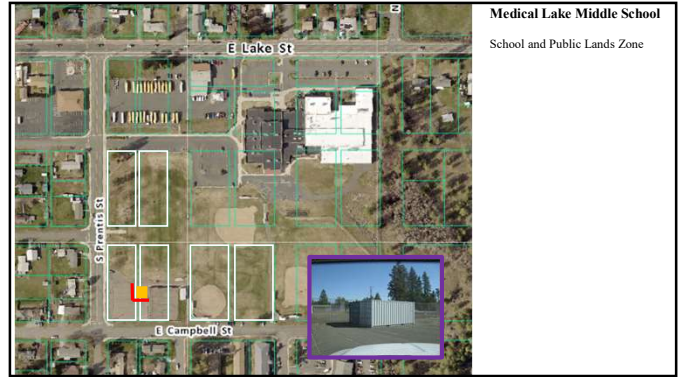


8

Attachment A



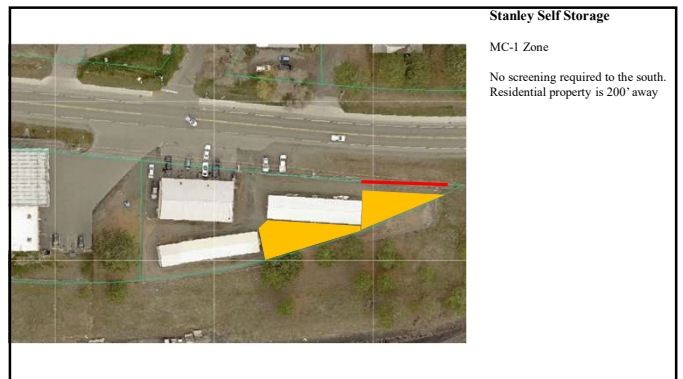
9



10



11



12

Branding Goals for Planning Commission

Medical Lake branding goals should result in 1) enhanced city image and community pride, 2) attraction of new businesses and increased profitability for existing ones, 3) funding for new services and city enhancements, 4) improved general welfare and lifestyle, 5) future growth direction, and 6) all of the above creating upgrade momentum that will become self-perpetuating as goals are met and new goals arise. While planning now, many goals below will not be achieved in our lifetime. But descendants will greatly appreciate what we began.

Branding Goals Discussion Topics

- Village Theme
- Town Celebrations
 - Valentines Weekend
 - July 4th
 - “Christmas Town”
 - Bluegrass
- Village Identity
 - Fairchild
 - Pitlochry...or
 - Bluegrass Amphitheater
 - Golf
- Town Central Park
- Village Design Standards
- Town Parking Garage

Envision what children and grandchildren might have in 50 years (Leavenworth began in 1962). Suggestions follow.

Medical Lake Theme

Our present theme is: “We Have Something for All.” Not really. We don’t have much of anything for anyone. Read on, however. Meanwhile, this expression is a bit deceitful. Alternative, long-term themes? Here’s one that is proven to work.

“Virginia Is for Lovers” license plates are everywhere in Virginia, together with municipal and private signs and displays that simply say “Love.”



The name “Lovers Beach” draws in Cabo. “Lovers Island” draws in Brazil. “Medical Lake Is for Lovers” would be a wonderful theme and a town attraction. Could become contagious. Would

look good on city entry monuments and give Medical Lake a whole new cachet. We would not be able to implement this theme, however, until we have a few things, such as discussed below, to show lovers.

Holiday Celebrations

If the above theme were adopted, *Valentine's Weekend* would be a given. But where would they stay?

Thanksgiving and "*Christmas Town*" (Leavenworth's most well-attended festival, not *Oktoberfest*) festivals are big draws at Leavenworth and certainly would be here if at our Village by the Lake comes to resemble the 19th century villages of Clement Moore and Charles Dickens.

Our *Bluegrass Festival* is in good hands. And it will grow. We need to plan for that growth (see below).

July 4th should be big. It's already wonderfully celebrated here, and we're next door to Fairchild AFB. Many active-duty personnel and retirees live here. Fireworks R Us. Seattle had an amazing 4th of July parade when I was young. Of course, that was post-WWII and patriotism was in full bloom. Compared to the homefront during my war, Việt Nam, however, patriotism now is much stronger. Fairchild is right over there. Big Medical Lake parade and Thunderbirds on the 4th.

Town Identity

Identify with Fairchild. Lefevre had the good sense to settle here, but noteworthiness beyond that is modest. I'd like to see Lefevre Street renamed Henry H. "Hap" Arnold Way, replete with a statue of Arnold (only five-star general in Air Force history) at Lake and Arnold.

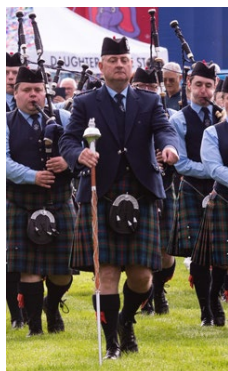


Fredericksburg, TX did for *The War in the Pacific* (right).

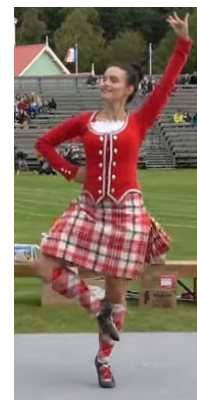
Renaming "Lefevre" to "Hap' Arnold Way" would be a big branding win. Thunderbirds on the 4th? The Blue Angels are all over greater Seattle during Seafair. I-90 corridor Spokane and Kootenai Counties have a combined population of 735,823. Good promotional opportunity for the Air Force. In the distant future, we could create an Air Force museum comparable to what Fayetteville, NC did for *Airborne and Special Ops* (left), or what



Identify with Pitlochry (pop. 3,000), Scotland, or... The mayor of



Leavenworth suggested finding and emulating a small European village that already attracts tourism from Europe. Pitlochry does. Charming Pitlochry is small, practical in terms of physical characteristics emulation, and has favorable amenities, e.g., golf course, hotel/castles (below), etc. To accommodate visitors and tourists,





Medical Lake will badly need a great hotel. Medical Lake has a quarrying history. So does Pitlochry. In fact, it's not yet history. Most Pitlochry buildings, while small, are of stone or brick. Roofs are 16/12 pitch with substantial fascia (see 423 Stanley St. in Medical Lake for a local example). In Scotland, most shingles are slate. Pitlochry would be a good Sister City for Medical Lake.

Identify with bluegrass. Many bluegrass tunes originated in Scotland. The Father of Bluegrass, Bill Monroe (1911-1996), called the essential emotion of bluegrass “Scottish bagpipes and ole-time fiddlin’”. Bluegrass is already established in Medical Lake and will gradually become much bigger. Sooner-than-later we’ll be hosting/promoting groups like Rhonda Vincent, Hunter Berry (left), and the rest of the Rage. Start planning now. A small amphitheater at the south end of the lake could be used for bluegrass and other concert festivals. Tickets sold. The former Aqua Theater on the southwest side of Green Lake (Seattle) seated 7,000. Overbuilt in 1950, it was subsequently demolished in 1979 after down years followed a couple a bad years. For comparison, Ryman Auditorium (Bluegrass, Gospel, Country) in Nashville seats 2,362. Martin Woldson Theater at the Fox seats 1,650+/-.



Identify with golf. Pitlochry has a golf course. Adare, Ireland also has a golf course. Adare has a population of 1,129 but also a five-star hotel/castle due to having a championship golf course that attracts golfers from all over the world. The 1,129 make a living from the golf course (where the 2027 Ryder cup will be held).



Another course of note is Redmond’s Sahalee, developed in 1969. Since 1980, Sahalee (left) has hosted the U.S. Senior Open each year, won variously by Arnold Palmer, Gary Player, Miller Barber, Tom Weiskopf, Lee Trevino, Jack Nicklaus, *et al.* Sahalee is a 27-hole course (one 18-hole plus a nine), a goal for Medical Lake.

Golf is an incredible draw if the course is done right. In North Carolina is the golf complex (nine adjacent 18-hole golf courses under the same ownership and management) of Pinehurst. Pinehurst No. 2, designed by Donald Ross and completed in 1907, is venerated by serious golfers worldwide. Ross continued to tweak No. 2 until he died. Nearby is a private airport where wealthy people fly in just to play golf. Airport proximity is beneficial. Medical Lake has airport proximity.



Golf courses are an excellent economic stimulus, use of open space, and source of community pride. Inglewood in Kenmore,



for example, with its beautiful clubhouse, matching pro shop (above) and extensive landscaping, in addition to the golfing attraction, hosts conferences, weddings, and gatherings year around. Money. Kenmore? Where's that? They get it done.



A local course that draws internationally is the Coeur d'Alene Resort golf course (left), once ranked the top course in the western U.S. (2009). Along the I-90 corridor, Coeur d'Alene would be one bookend while Medical Lake would be the other.

Town Central Park

Bellevue was fortunate to have an old grade school adjacent to downtown Bellevue in 1979. The 17.5-acre grade school property was purchased, through a combination of increased sales tax and private donations, from the Bellevue school district for \$14.3 million and, together with the purchase of some contiguous properties, the total 21-acre site was converted into Bellevue's downtown park (right). That ordeal took 11 years. The park is now described as "an oasis of green" south of Bel-Square and west of many, tall glass buildings.



New York's oasis of green, 843-acre Central Park, was the vision of two architects in the 1850s who saw a need for people in Lower Manhattan (as called today) to have a dependable getaway. The park site was a number of small farms. The city used eminent domain to acquire the farms at market value. Today, Central Park is invaluable to New Yorkers. Besides recreation and "getaway," proximity increases commercial space demand, rents and, therefore, the value of all peripheral New York buildings. Parks do

that. The best time to plan for a significant Medical Lake park is now. So, where?

Design Standards

With respect to peripheral values, golf courses and parks invariably attract higher-end homes. While the minority of new homes in Medical Lake would be high-end, for successful branding, new home design should reflect a historic ambiance. Clement Moore and Charles Dickens? Building design standards need not be complicated. Presently, most homes built elsewhere according to Victorian, Classical or Colonial designs, are simplified. Efficient design is

interesting. An architect friend designed a fire station in Bellingham and was criticized for designing “a Taj Mahal.” It just looked that way. Construction costs per sq. ft. were low. A hotel developer I met in the 1980s used set designers rather than interior decorators because the former



were accustomed to creating high-end appearances out of inexpensive materials. Hollywood.

Whether Colonial, Federal, Greek Revival or Victorian design, purchase offers are based on location, appearance, and functional utility. That’s what people buy. While a brick or stone

exterior will be more expensive than vinyl (and infinitely more durable), the added cost is offset by added value due to attractiveness, reduced maintenance, decreased fire hazard, and increased longevity. Having masonry exteriors, full porches, fascia of substance, and 16/12 pitch roofs covered by long-lasting simulated (steel or synthetic) slate, makes a difference in appearance, maintenance, longevity, and, consequently, value.



Downtown Parking

Plan well in advance for a multilevel parking garage. Leavenworth has a parking problem because the initial planners didn’t quite envision what ultimately happened. Due to their degree of success, said the mayor, combined with this lack of foresight, parking inadequacy is their biggest problem.

Conclusion

If the above suggestions are seriously pursued, justification for the theme “Medical Lake is for Lovers” will become obvious. Our children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren will reap what we’ve sowed. Down the road, bright professionals looking for a place with traditional social values, a good school system (a desire which will enhance Medical Lake schools), and a community with obvious civic pride, will want to be here. All will love living here.

From: [Diane Nichols](#)
To: [Mark Hudson](#); [Marye Jorgenson](#); Jmayuliani@medical-lake.org; [Andie Mark](#); [Carl Munson](#)
Cc: [Sonny Weathers](#); [Roxanne Wright](#)
Subject: Shipping Containers Ordinance
Date: Monday, October 23, 2023 2:36:59 PM

Planning Commission Meeting: October 26, 2023

Diane Nichols

Medical Lake Resident

Agenda Item: 6a Shipping Containers Ordinance

Dear Commissioners,

I have been involved with the discussions of this ordinance at the City Council meetings, and I am against adopting such an ordinance. My emails to the council are available and part of the record.

I believe the Planning Commission made the right decision. I was confused and discouraged when the Council ignored the Commission's recommendation. I am not sure why they chose to go down the path of wanting containers all over the city without consulting any Planning Commissioners to get your input. I was actually very surprised that after much discussion the ordinance failed to pass. Indeed, some Council members voiced their support of the Planning Commission denial of shipping containers in Medical Lake.

However, it seems some Council members are determined to have shipping containers in Medical Lake and have sent the ordinance back to you. The Council members want you to consider an ordinance for shipping containers at mini storage businesses and schools. Therefore, the ball is back in your court.

Just in case it re-emerges, I strongly feel that shipping containers in residential areas would be a huge mistake. As I outlined to the Council, there is absolutely no way for Code Enforcement to be able to keep track of all the containers; make sure they are painted to match the house; are in the appropriate location on the property; meet the lettering or logo requirements or prevent someone from living in them---and it will happen. Just look around town at what is currently in some yards. There are people living in RVs around town in yards and driveways (before the fire happened so not related to that). There is already such a heavy burden on our Code Enforcement Officer to work on updating our codes and prioritizing the problem houses, yards and vehicles that this additional burden would be untenable.

I will concede that the schools could be the exception. Our school buildings are old and have limited storage capacity. Since covid the requirements for cleaning supplies, masks and other related items that have to be available and stored at the facilities have put a burden on their storage capacity. Shipping containers could be a viable solution for the school district. The containers could be painted to reflect school spirit and shielded quite easily. A limit to the number of units allowed could also be specified quite easily for the schools.

However, I am against storage facilities having shipping containers. I believe the owner who put the units in his facility without consulting the city should not be rewarded for ignoring ordinances or doing his due diligence as a responsible member of this community. It would also be a very bad precedent to set to allow business owners to do whatever they want, plead ignorance, ask for an ordinance change and then get it. That is exactly what would

happen if this ordinance is approved.

The two storage businesses we have now are on Hwy 902 coming into Medical Lake. The one on the north side of 902, Monarch Storage, has already installed about 17 containers. They are visible to me as I drive N Stanley each day and I believe they are not the best look for Medical Lake.

The business on the south side of Hwy 902, Stanley Self Storage, extends north very close to the railroad tracks. Any containers in that area would be very visible to people driving into Medical Lake, even with some sort of fencing (which is already in place). Additionally, I would be concerned about standing water or snow melt in that area where containers may be placed.

The ordinance states under 17.42.030, D2: A container shall not be closer to the street of address than the primary building.

How would that be determined since storage facilities are long rows of buildings? What would be considered the primary building to establish the demarcation line that storage containers can not be placed in front of? With the Stanley Self Storage facility, the entrance is on Stanley but it extends close to Hwy 902, so any storage containers placed on the north side (where the lot is somewhat vacant) would be visible to all entering Medical Lake.

Additionally, Monarch Storage is bordered on all sides by Hwy 902 on the south, N Stanley to the west, Graham Ln to the east and then the Baptist Church and homes on the north. How do you determine how close to the street those storage containers could go? What would be considered the primary building?

The ordinance states under 17.42.030, D4:Hedges shall be evergreen of mature height of no less than six (6) feet.

I foresee a problem with that. The owner could buy evergreens that are a foot tall or less, whatever is most economical. It will take a substantial number of years for those evergreens to provide any kind of screening effect! I believe if you are going to consider mini storage facilities then the ordinance should read screened fencing only, since they have fences surrounding them already. It would just require appropriate height and screening material.

These storage facilities are in the C-1 commercial zone. How is such an ordinance going to be defended in the future, when another business (not a storage facility) wants the ordinance to be amended to include their business because they are in the C-1 commercial zone and feel it is unfair for some businesses to have shipping containers and they cannot? (The Council approval for C-1 at Graham Road is an example of what could be an extremely visible future commercial area).

Indeed that would already apply to Tommy G's which is in the commercial zone and has a shipping container on site. Or RJR Tractor which is across from Monarch Storage and beside Stanley Self Storage and has a shipping container tucked inconspicuously behind the building. How does the City explain to those business owners that they have to get rid of ONE small container, yet another business in close proximity which has SEVENTEEN containers, will be allowed to keep the illegally placed containers and add more?

Is this the type of perceived preferential treatment of one business owner over another that this Commission or the City wants to defend? I don't believe that is the intent but could very well be the conclusion reached by the community.

Do you approve some owners for use and not others or do you approve for all the commercial zones? To approve all C-1 would have a very detrimental effect on the vision for the city, in my opinion. This commission stated as much with the original decision. I don't believe it is wise to carve out these exceptions for a business owner who ignored existing ordinances. This opens up the possibility of a controversial decision that could have long range effects.

From my research, most municipalities in the West Plains area and throughout the state are not approving shipping containers. I believe we should reflect on that and ask why most municipalities are saying no. I suspect it is not conducive to the look that they want, nor can it be reasonably controlled or maintained by Code Enforcement.

Branding ideas for the city are also on the agenda for discussion. I think it is very important to consider how shipping containers will fit into that vision. Do you want a golf course overlooking shipping containers? Do you want shipping containers visible as people drive or walk around town? I do not think they are aesthetically pleasing. I have been to Leavenworth, Winthrop, Walla Walla, Colville, Sandpoint, Wallace and many other attractive cities that have a theme. I do not see shipping containers as a priority for them. Please don't make it a priority here.

I would encourage you to affirm the Planning Commission's original vote and the Council's vote which were NO to adopting the shipping container ordinance. The request for the Planning Commission to revisit the ordinance does not mean that it has to be approved. I believe your original thoughts and arguments against this ordinance are still valid and I support them.

I urge you to vote no to shipping containers in any commercial, mixed use or residential zones in Medical Lake, including storage facilities. A very restricted, limited use of shipping containers in the school facility zone could be written exclusively for their use, if needed.

Thank you for your time and consideration of my thoughts on this ordinance.

Respectfully,
Diane Nichols