

Meeker Planning Commission Meeting Minutes- January 27, 2025

The meeting of the Town of Meeker Planning Commission was called to order by Commissioner Joy at 7:00 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance

Commissioners Present: Amanda Back
Leif Joy
Michele Morgan
Amanda Smith

Staff Present: Carly Thomson, Town Planner
Mandi Etheridge, Town Administrator

Approval of Agenda

Motion to approve agenda made by Commissioner Morgan, second by Commissioner Back. All ayes, motion carried.

Approval of Minutes

Motion to approve the minutes from the November 4, 2024 Planning Commission meeting made by Commissioner Smith, second by Commissioner Morgan. All ayes, motion carried.

Public Participation

None

Public Hearing

Consideration of a Conditional Use Permit to convert an existing structure at 925 7th Street into an Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) from Daniel & Sabrina Ferguson, also known as Lot 3, 4, 5, 6, and sly 6' of 7, Block 113, Town of Meeker. Commissioner Joy opened the public hearing at 7:03. Planner Thomson thanked applicants Daniel and Sabrina Ferguson for being present and participating in the process. Thomson continued that applicants, owning property at 925 7th Street, are requesting to convert a shed on their property into an Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU). The property is located in the Single-Family Residential zoning district. At the time of the application the applicant did not know the intended use of the ADU however it will be a 2 bedroom, 1 bath unit. The property meets the requirements for all off-street parking including those for the proposed ADU. The subject property is 30,900 square feet and the ADU is approximately 528 square feet which calculates to 1.7% of the lot size and is less than 1,000 square feet, meeting the requirements for maximum size. The ADU will remain under the same ownership as the principal lot. The applicant currently has two water taps associated with property. Accessory Dwelling Unit is listed as a Conditional Review Use under the single-family residential zoning code, updated in May of 2023. The applicant has submitted the required application and fee within the required time frame. The request has been advertised as mandated by the Meeker Land Use Development Code including notification of the Public Hearing to property owners within 300 feet, at the subject property, and in the Herald Times. During the referral review period the application received the following comments from referral agencies:

- *Meeker Sanitation District: The applicant will be required to pay an initial Plant Investment Fee of \$3,250. As well the property will be charged monthly for each residential unit.*

The applicant has been made aware of this requirement from Meeker Sanitation District.

Since receiving the application, staff has received 0 Negative/Against comments and 0 Positive/In-Favor comments. Thomson added that since the applicants have taken ownership of the property there have been improvements made to the property which was once blighted. Staff recommends approval of the Conditional Use Permit to construct an Accessory Dwelling Unit at the property at 1302 Sage Ridge Road for the following reasons:

- The Conditional Use request meets the conditions of Meeker Land Use Development Code section 18.1.16 and 18.1.18.
- The Conditional Use request meets the goals of the Comprehensive Master Plan.

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Commissioner Joy asked if the applicants had any additional comments or questions; hearing none, Joy then opened the floor for public comment and Mari Carmen Tobin (915 7th Street) shared that the applicants were wonderful neighbors and asked whether the ADU was the small building on the property, referred to as the cabin. Applicant Sabrina Ferguson confirmed that it is the long-existing cabin that is currently abandoned and is being remodeled for the ADU, and Tobin expressed support for the application. Bob Tobin then asked for clarification on the property boundaries and why an application was necessary to remodel the cabin. Commissioner Joy clarified the difference between parcels and lots and the process required for an ADU on the same property.

Commissioner Joy disclosed that his residence is within the 300 foot of the applicant property and that even though he has no bias toward the request he would still abstain from the vote.

Commissioner Joy then asked the applicants about off-street parking and Daniel Ferguson offered that the driveway is not fully defined but has plenty of space in front of the house and the proposed ADU. Upon further clarification, Ferguson added that the No Parking sign in the driveway was due to excess traffic at the 7th Street trailhead and other traffic and that they wish to better define the driveway entrance to prevent illegal parking along the street.

With no further comments, Commissioner Joy closed the Public Hearing at 7:15 pm and called for a recommendation to the Board of Trustees. Motion to recommend approval of the Conditional Use Request made by Commissioner Smith, second by Commission Back. All ayes, Commissioner Joy abstain. Motion carried.

New Business

Consideration of updates to the Meeker Municipal Code Title 18: Zoning and Subdivisions: Planner Thomson thanked the Commission for being present to discuss Zoning Code updates and clarified that the Commission will provide a recommendation to the Board of Trustees.

The first group of updates would bring back regulation into the code that was dropped when Title 18 was updated in 2023:

18.1.5 – Rural Residential

18.1.6 – Single Family Residential

Thomson recommended to add a minimum building width of 24 feet.

18.1.7 – Mixed Residential

18.1.9 – Town Core

18.1.10 – Highway Corridor

18.1.11 – Industrial

18.1.12 – Community Facilities

Thomson recommended to add a minimum building width of 10 feet.

18.1.8 – Mobile Home Park

Thomson recommended to add a minimum building width of 8 feet.

18.1.9 – Town Core

Thomson recommended to add dimensional requirements for an accessory building of maximum 1,000 sq ft and maximum height of 25 ft. to align with similar requirements in other zones.

The Commission concurred with the recommended changes.

The next group of updates would provide new language to address renewable energy, much of which was modelled after and in agreement with the County's land use code:

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18.1.2 Zoning Definitions

Thomson recommended the addition of several definitions to address renewable energy, including Renewable Energy Facility to cover commercial use, and the modification of the definitions of Energy Production Facility to cover non-renewable fuels and Renewable Energy System to cover personal, or accessory use.

18.1.16 – Supplemental Regulations

Renewable Energy Systems

Thomson opened the discussion with a recommendation to change the setbacks for underground geothermal energy systems to 2 feet.

Commissioner Joy asked whether the Town was planning to allow commercial renewable energy and Administrator Etheridge clarified that there is currently no regulation for renewable energy in town, with Planner Thomson adding that we are considering regulation so that it is already in place before it is an issue, stating it is “Better to have it and not need it than to need it and not have it.”

Discussion brought up whether the Federal Aviation Administration, Colorado Parks & Wildlife, or any geological authorities would have to be consulted for an application; Thomson stated that there is language in the regulation to address all of those impacts.

Renewable Energy Facilities

Thomson stated that for commercial use, the application requirements would be similar to other applications, but with added specifics that include impacts to wildlife, geotechnical impacts, and neighboring properties.

Commissioner Smith asked about specifics for a wind turbine as an accessory use and Thomson clarified that as an accessory use it is permitted in all zoning districts meeting the described standards. If it were for commercial use it would be Conditional Use, so permitted via application and public hearing before Commission and Board, in Rural Residential, Single Family Residential, Highway Corridor, and Industrial Zones only. Thomson also clarified the design standards for an accessory unit and confirmed that the setbacks for each zone would still apply. Thomson then asked whether the Commission felt like there should be a minimum lot size for a Renewable Energy System.

Discussion centered around what a Renewable Energy Facility could potentially look like in town, whether wind energy was even a sustainable option in Meeker, and what solar options were available currently in town.

Thomson continued the discussion by recommending the addition of a Town Road agreement to complement the County and Private Road agreements in the regulation. Thomson then clarified that the review process would be similar to other Conditional Use Permits.

Under the design standards for Facilities, Thomson recommended adding language to include the requirement for appropriate warning signage to be placed on any tower, electrical equipment, entrances and along perimeter of any facility.

Thomson asked whether there should be a maximum height for a Wind Energy Facility and discussion followed regarding potential possible locations, Federal Aviation Administration regulations, and whether a height restriction would be necessary.

Commissioner Joy shared his appreciation for Planner Thomson’s efforts in creating a comprehensive regulation and Thomson replied that there are a lot of layers in the application and that the application should reflect the magnitude of the project and the Town should do their due diligence to make sure it’s a good project.

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Thomson asked again whether there should be a minimum lot size for wind and solar facilities. Discussion led to concerns about how it would look, and Commissioner Joy suggested applying the same visual impact regulations from the Renewable Energy Facility section to the Renewable Energy System section.

Thomson summarized the recommendations of the Commissioner as follows:

- Apply the visual impact regulation to Renewable Energy Systems
- Add appropriate signage for a commercial facility
- Require a minimum lot size of 25 acres for a commercial facility
- 2-foot setbacks for underground geothermal
- Add Town Road Use Agreement
- Defer to the Board the maximum height requirement for wind facility both commercial and accessory

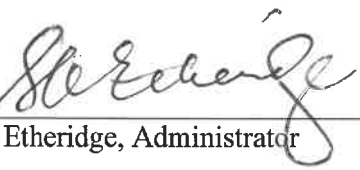
Thomson then pointed out that there were added sections at the end of the new code language that serve as reserved spots for geothermal, hydroelectric, and biomass for future consideration.

The Commission concurred with the recommended code updates and revisions as discussed.

Commissioner Joy adjourned the meeting at 8:13 p.m.



Leif Joy, Chairman

Attest: 

Mandi Etheridge, Administrator