

**PARK CITY PLANNING COMMISSION  
WORK SESSION MINUTES  
JUNE 11, 2014**

PRESENT: Preston Campbell, Stewart Gross, Steve Joyce, John Phillips, Clay Stuard, Thomas Eddington, Kayla Sintz, John Boehm, Polly Samuels McLean.

Commissioners Strachan and Worel were excused.

**WORK SESSION ITEMS**

**Land Management Code Chapter 15-5.5 – Architectural Review**

Planner John Boehm noted that on May 14<sup>th</sup> the Planning Commission requested that the Staff conduct a reconnaissance level analysis regarding the applicability of vinyl siding in the Prospector Park neighborhood. The purpose of this work session was to discuss the Staff's assessment and analysis.

Planner Boehm reported that currently LMC Section 15-5.5, under the Architectural Design Guidelines, lists vinyl as a prohibited siding material. Subsection 11 has an exemption for aluminum siding, as well as synthetic stone. At the May 14<sup>th</sup> meeting, Ben and Melanie Martin, homeowners in Prospector, requested that vinyl also be included as an exemption.

Planner Boehm stated that the Staff visited the Prospector Park neighborhood and performed a visual analysis of the existing conditions. They found that Mr. and Mrs. Martin were fairly accurate in terms of the number of homes that currently have vinyl siding. Approximately 44 of 160 homes have vinyl siding from a street level analysis. On a few of the homes it was more difficult to discern whether the siding was aluminum or vinyl. With approximately 44 homes being vinyl, the rest were either aluminum or a masonite-like composite. Planner Boehm pointed out that the predominant siding material was aluminum.

Planner Boehm remarked that the Staff did a high-level investigation of the pros and cons of vinyl and discovered that there was significant information both for and against, and the answers regarding vinyl were varied. The Staff determined that in order to be fair and equitable, in addition to a thorough investigation of vinyl, they should also do a thorough investigation of all siding materials.

Planner Boehm noted that the Planning Department has supported the prohibition of vinyl based on aesthetic character and its susceptibility to break down in high altitude climates. The Staff found that there have been improvements to the aesthetics of vinyl, but they found no hard evidence on whether or not the new vinyls would withstand the high altitude environment. At this point, the Staff felt that vinyl should remain on the list of prohibited siding materials.

Commissioner Joyce questioned why 44 homes in Prospecter have vinyl siding if it was prohibited. Director Eddington stated that the ordinance prohibiting siding went into effect in 2006. Prior to the ordinance, vinyl siding was not prohibited. After 2006, vinyl siding was only allowed if it was to replace existing vinyl siding. Commissioner Stuard clarified that the vinyl siding on those 44 homes was eight years old or older. Planner Boehm noted that some of the homes may have violated the ordinance and used vinyl siding after the ordinance was in place or other may have replaced existing siding.

Commissioner Campbell wanted to know how much of a burden is put on the Staff when someone requests an exception, and how often that occurs. Director Eddington stated that the primary Exception requests are for aluminum because that is a permissible siding. It takes several days for the Staff to look at the materials, visit the neighbor and take photographs to make sure what was being proposed is compatible.

Commissioner Campbell stated that building materials change faster than the LMC gets updated and he preferred to give the Staff the flexibility to make those decisions. He believed the vinyl product that Mr. and Mrs. Martin presented at the last meeting looked better than three-fourths of the siding materials already in Prospecter. As a builder, he thought it had good energy-efficiency, good thermal property and good moisture. In his opinion, twenty years from now it would look better compared to its neighbors. Commissioner Campbell proposed saying, "aluminum, vinyl, or other siding materials", and leave the discretion to the Staff. His only concern was overwhelming the Planning Department with additional work.

Commissioner Gross clarified that Commission Campbell was proposing to change the LMC to give the Planning Director the purview to make a decision on siding materials. Commissioner Campbell pointed out that the Planning Director already has that purview, but only for aluminum siding. He was proposing to change the language to read, "aluminum, vinyl and other siding materials" to the list of Exceptions, to be determined by the Planning Director on a case by case basis. Commissioner Campbell thought the Staff was capable of determining the difference between quality siding and inferior siding.

Commissioner Stuard was not uncomfortable making the change that Commission Campbell was proposing, but he felt that additional research need to be done regarding the use of vinyl. Commissioner Campbell thought the Staff could do the research without it coming back to the Planning Commission. Commissioner Stuard clarified that he was in favor of making the change now, but he wanted the Staff to continue to do the research. After vinyl siding is approved for two or three homes, physical evidence in the field may show whether or not vinyl siding should continue to be an excepted material. Commissioner Stuard emphasized the importance of further research before too many requests are approved for vinyl siding.

Commissioner Joyce stated that vinyl siding has progressed and it can be done in all shapes and textures. He thought that Planner Boehm's comment about not being able to tell what the siding was on some of the homes was proof that vinyl is not obvious from a distance. Commissioner Joyce believed that the negative feeling towards vinyl comes from the cruddy vinyl that was on the market 25 years ago. It was a terrible product and one hail storm could shred a house or sunlight would cause it to flake. However, the product has been improved and elements have been added to keep it from fading and breaking down. In most cases, vinyl siding holds up better than wood in many environments. Commissioner Joyce suggested that the Staff set a minimum standard for vinyl so they would not be wasting their time looking at inferior vinyl.

Director Eddington stated that if the Planning Commission decided to allow vinyl siding as an exception, he would recommend a thickness minimum and other minor standards, similar to the standards in place for aluminum siding. Director Eddington noted that this was a work session and he understood that the Planning Commission was directing the Staff to come back with an amendment to the LMC that incorporates the language proposed by Commissioner Campbell. It would be publicly noticed for the June 25<sup>th</sup> meeting and the Planning Commission would forward a recommendation to the City Council for final approval.

Commissioner Phillips agreed with the idea of looking at all siding materials. He commented on the number of masonite-type products, and stated that in his experience it is the least stable product. The masonite does not hold up to standing water and it can disintegrate after a wet winter. Commissioner Phillips suggested that the Staff look closely at masonite in their studies, because it might be better to add vinyl to the list of exceptions and move masonite products from an approved material to an exception as well.

Planner Boehm stated that all siding materials have a range. Commissioner Phillips agreed, which is why the Staff would have the ability to research the particular siding the applicant proposes and make the determination based on that research.

Commissioner Joyce stated that as he drove around Prospector, affordable housing came to mind. The City is pushing for affordable housing and vinyl is one way to keep the cost down. Also, as he drove around, some of the houses that looked the worst were those with wood siding that had been stained or painted and it was peeling off. Commissioner Joyce recalled that when Mr. and Mrs. Martin spoke at the last meeting, the issue they had with their current wood siding was water damage caused by the masonite product.

Director Eddington pointed out that in addition to quality, vinyl was prohibited primarily because of the character issue and the desire to keep Park City Park City. Commissioner Campbell thought it was difficult to identify vinyl from the street and he thought homeowners should have the ability to choose the siding they want.

Commissioner Phillips stated that the most important part of vinyl is how it looks. The type of vinyl used in the tract homes in Sandy would not fit in. However, the sample Mr. and Mrs. Martin brought in looked nice and it would fit in. He assumed the Planning Department considers that when looking at the exceptions.

Commissioner Gross summarized that the proposal by Commissioner Campbell was to revise the LMC to say, "aluminum, vinyl and other siding materials" as Exceptions. Planner Boehm stated that the Staff would also add language regarding thickness and other standards to ensure a higher quality material.

Commissioner Campbell disagreed with specifying thickness, etc., because materials continually change and that would eliminate the flexibility to consider new materials. Director Eddington stated that the types of vinyl are extensive and the Staff would do the necessary research to ensure the right product for Park City's climate. However, he felt that minimal parameters would be beneficial to the Staff and the applicants.

Planning Manager Sintz agreed with Commissioner Campbell in terms of changing technology. She suggested that there would be more flexibility if they leave out a numeric value and state that the thickness of material would be a review criteria. Director Eddington clarified that he was not saying that it needed a specific numeric value, but they have to talk about some type of standard. Commissioner Stuard suggested a quantitative standard that addresses durability in light of UV, standing water, etc. Planner Boehm thought the applicant should be given some idea of what the Staff would be reviewing and the expectation.

Planner Boehm stated that the Staff would come back with the language proposed, as well as flexible language for the Planning Commission to review. Commissioner Stuard reiterated Commissioner Phillips comments regarding Masonite products and moving it from the list of approved materials to the list of exceptions. Commissioner Phillips questioned whether that could be done without further research of masonite-type materials. Commissioner Campbell suggested that they make the change for vinyl at this point and allow the Staff to research other materials. Commissioner Stuard was comfortable with that suggestion as long as masonite materials would be addressed in the future. Director Eddington stated that over time the Planning Commission would be looking at a number of issues related to materials because the technology has changed.

Commissioner Joyce echoed Commission Campbell's concern regarding increased workload for the Staff. He encouraged the Staff to let them know whenever they have an idea that may overburden the Planning Department. He hoped the decisions they made this evening would be a reasonable reflection of changes in the market, without greatly impacting the Staff.

Chair Pro-Tem Gross called for public input.

Ben Martin stated that he and his wife were the homeowners who requested the discussion regarding vinyl, and he appreciated the direction that was taken this evening. Mr. Martin thought a case by case basis was a good approach. He presented photos of the masonite siding on his home to show that it had exceeded its life span. Mr. Martin again presented the vinyl siding material that he proposed to use to replace the wood siding. They had chosen the best grade category in terms of thickness, moisture barrier, etc. He noted that they have the approval from the neighbors directly surrounding them, as well as neighbors around the area who support what they were doing to improve their home. He believed that in addition to improving their home, it would also improve the value of the surrounding homes in the neighborhood.

The Work Session was adjourned.