

Ruth Stellmacher

From: Sadie Carney <sadiekcarney@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, September 5, 2024 5:11 PM
To: CityRecorder
Subject: Public Comment: Housing Code Amendment

Greetings,

Thank you for considering this important topic. I would like to voice my support for the proposed code amendments related to housing being considered by Salem City Council on September 9, 2024.

When I relocated to Salem, about 13 years ago, apartments were scarce and options for a safe place to live that I could afford were very limited. Most of what was available was not suited to a young couple, poorly located for access to goods and services, and in relative disrepair. I have since purchased a home, but I have watched the housing need for our community grow in alarming and desperate ways.

Like many Oregon cities, Salem lacks housing for individuals, couples, and young families. Our city was built out with families that like to drive their cars in mind. Streamlining the approvals process, allowing more housing options, and updating standards for housing development are all critical changes to our UDC if we want to realize a supportive, inclusive and thriving community where everyone has a safe place to sleep.

The more density is promoted, the more housing we can provide. The more density we promote, the more eyes we have on the street and the safer our neighborhoods and streets become. We have more neighbors, networks and resources in challenging times. The greater Salem's diversity of housing options, the more we welcome people in all phases and stages of life to bring their passion, their lives, and their ideas to Salem.

Please vote in favor of these changes.

Very Best,

Sadie K Carney

Mayor Hoy and Councilors:

I am E.M. Easterly, Ward 8. I thank staff for the dedication and commitment they have shown to the process of updating the Salem Unified Development Code and the process of bringing Salem's legal development language in conformance with Oregon statutes and judicial decisions.

The 248 page document, Exhibit A, of CA 24-1, before you highlights the revisions and changes to the original version that the Planning Commission reviewed. Staff listened to community concerns and wisely adjusted the recommended language. I am pleased support the positive results before you.

However, code revision is an on going process. In reviewing Exhibit A, I found missing and inaccurate definitions that need correction before Council approves the proposed updates.

- **First Salem's code does not define the hydrological event known as a "spring" nor does the code define a link between such a ground water outpouring and an existing waterway channel.**
- **Second, the Salem term "waterway" is limited to a specific city staff declaration, not an existing channel within the City of Salem hydrological system.**

The proposed definition: "Waterway means any river, perennial stream, or creek within the City as designated by the Director." restricts who may define a water course in Salem and leaves the Development Code and the City challengeable under state water laws and vulnerable to federal clean water requirements.

Specifically, waterways exist in Salem even though they have yet to be so designated by the Salem Public Works Director. For example SRC Chapter 601 offers an alternative definition: **Sec. 601.005. - Definitions.** "Waterway means any perennial river, stream, or creek within the City of Salem." and introduces a new undefined term "watercourse":

Sec. 601.040. - Duties and responsibilities of the floodplain administrator.

“Duties of the floodplain administrator, or their designee, shall include, but not be limited to:

(a) Permit review. Determine that development permits meet the following criteria:

* * *

(7) The provisions in SRC 601.070(a)(1) have been satisfied if the proposed development activity is a watercourse alteration; and

(8) The provisions in SRC Chapter 82 have been satisfied if the proposed development activity includes the placement of fill or excavation.”

* * *

(d) Watercourse alterations.

(1) Notify adjacent communities, the Department of Land Conservation and Development, and other appropriate state and federal agencies, prior to any alteration or relocation of a watercourse, and submit evidence of such notification to the Federal Insurance Administration.”

And SRC Chapter 802 also references waterways.

Sec. 802.030. - Watercourses.

(a) Any modification to a watercourse shall conform to SRC chapter 601 and the Public Works Design Standards.

(b) Public improvement and maintenance easements for watercourses may be required. The easements shall, at a minimum, extend 15 feet in each direction from the waterway centerline, ten feet from the top of a recognizable bank, or a sufficient width to pass ten-year flood flows or to accommodate the 100-year floodway on a FEMA regulated stream, whichever is greater. Such easements shall be of a width sufficient to allow both initial improvements and future maintenance and operations. Larger widths may be required.

I, therefore, request that the definitions approved in CA-1 be tabled until both the updated UDC definitions of “spring” and the hydrological definition of “waterway” parallel and complement state of Oregon water law and the federal clean water requirements.

E.M. Easterly

