



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

MINUTES

4:00 PM July 19, 2023
2nd Floor Conference Room, City Hall

1. ROLL CALL

Council Members: Gary Bode, Brent Lenssen, Kyle Strengtholt
Staff: John Williams, Heidi Gudde
Guests: Terri Treat (Inn at Lynden)

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES - Community Development Committee Meeting
Minutes of 6/21/23 approved as presented.

3. INTRODUCTIONS of attendees.

4. Discussion Item – Downtown Parking

Terri Treat joined the group from The Inn in Lynden hotel. She came to the meeting to express an interest in managed parking for the downtown area. Treat has an existing agreement with the City for the hotel to use the City's lot at the Community Center for another 8 years. Hotel is hoping to add meeting rooms to the facility and they anticipate that the need for nearby parking will only increase. Treat expressed a desire to be part of the downtown success and that includes providing all types of parking including EV parking and ADA parking.

Treat noted that the DBA is starting to meet again and may be a resource to educate employees to park a farther from the Front Street corridor to make it available for customers. She feels that there is parking available in the downtown core but needs to be better managed to provide parking opportunities for customers / visitors.

Terri expressed her willingness to take a proactive approach. She is looking for support from the City in, perhaps a list of property owners nearby that she might be able to approach for parking agreements.

The group discussed some parking lots nearby that may be underutilized and available for employee parking.

Gudde noted that Planning Staff could assist in a review of nearby property and associated contact information.

Conclusions: Planning staff to review the area to provide Teri with some information and make connections with property owners.

5. Discussion Item - Recap Supplemental Information on Patio Screening / Enclosing

The Committee discussed the way the current code is written. Gudde noted that it already allows for 84-inch screening. This is measured from the lowest grade. This screen option has been part of the code for some time and was written before patios were allowed to have roofs – which made a free-standing screen more understandable.

The group also discussed the potential of editing the code to keep two sides open rather than three. Group discussion focused primarily on options for ridged screening for wind and privacy but with the understanding that there would be free air-flow through the patio and it would not be enclosed / sealed with walls, doors, or windows. Allowing for screened in patios, which also allow for air flow, also seemed to be acceptable to the group. Options should consider wind shear and need to leave spaces between the floor and the posts gaps to reduce concerns related to ventilation and the conversion of the space into living quarters.

Gudde requested that the issue be remanded to staff for an edit to the code which would address the desire for ridged screening options.

Conclusions: CDC asked staff to revisit the clarification of the code after researching ridged screening such wind walls and open louver designs. Item to be returned to CDC in August or September.

6. Informational Item - 2024 Budget Outlook

Gudde presented a summary of the 2024 budget outlook. Major projects will include work on the Comprehensive Planning Update and integration of permitting software if it is approved in the budget.

Gudde noted that the software will be used heavily by the Planning & Community Development Department but expects it to also be integrated into permitting and review processes used by Public Works, City Administration, Police and Fire. Cost estimates are currently being collected with a broad range of pricing. Most software appears to have an initial cost of \$50,000 – 100,000 with ongoing costs of \$22,000 - \$80,000 annually. Grant money has been made available to city's

that are converting to a digital process and staff expects that Lynden will be a good candidate for this funding. To date the Dept of Commerce does not have that application process ready to begin but anticipates we will be able to apply for funds in 2024.

Comprehensive Plan update will focus heavily on housing and the mandates of the State to address all types of housing as well as housing need at various income levels. The State is also focusing on climate resilience and a section related to resilience will be added to the City's comp plan in response. Recently the City was notified that it will be awarded \$125,000 over the next two years to assist in this comp plan update. Some of these funds, approximately \$22,000, will go toward a consultant shared with Whatcom County and other small cities in Whatcom County to cover joint efforts in the comp plan updates. Updates are due to the Department of Commerce by June 30, 2025.

The group discussed staffing levels in the department and changes in staff members related to recent additions and retirements.

Next Meeting Date: August 23, 2022