



## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

### MINUTES

4:00 PM November 17, 2021

#### 1. ROLL CALL

**Council Members:** Gary Bode, Brent Lenssen, Mayor Scott Korthuis

**Staff:** John Williams, Dave Timmer, Heidi Gudde

**Chamber of Commerce:** Gary Vis (joined last half of meeting)

#### 2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- a. Community Development Committee Meeting Minutes of 9/22/21 approved as presented.

#### 3. DISCUSSION ITEMS

- a. Introduction to a Prohibition of Public Camping in Public Spaces: Legal Framework and Potential Next Steps

John Williams gave an introduction to the topic. He noted that initial discussion on this issue had occurred at the Parks Committee and will be going to the Public Safety Committee at the beginning of December. Discussion was initiated because of a concern related to the potential of overnight camping / sleeping on City spaces and the City's ability to regulate these activities.

Williams recommended that an ordinance begin with some basics such as defining camping as well as camping paraphernalia. Other cities have helpful ordinances that we can model, and case law gives us guidance as well.

The Committee and staff discussed the use of park rules as a tool to regulate activities include a provision on camping. Parks hours of operation become key in order to limit overnight use of the parks. This gives some flexibility for folks to use tents during the day for example, for sporting events, but would prevent overnight stays.

Parks closing at dusk raised the question about trail use after dusk. Williams noted that some park rules / ordinances make provisions for the actively use of the trail (as it runs through the park) for its intent can be included so that trail use and even park use of lighted areas could continue after dusk.

Noting special events – such as camping during the Tractor Club event – could include camping for a specific amount of time.

While Parks can utilize and adopted set of rules, other public spaces will also need to be addressed. And, of note, camping prohibitions have not been supported by the courts unless other sheltering options are available.

The Committee discussed the option of partnering with non-profits and the Health Department to develop a plan. This may need to include provisions which would provide transportation to those in need of sheltering and also a location for the City to store camping paraphernalia that may be collected from public spaces during the enforcement of a camping prohibition.

Mayor recommends getting an ordinance in place as soon as possible which covers the basics. Reach out to the Lighthouse Mission to be the sheltering option.

Next Steps:

- Draft an ordinance that defines camping, camping paraphernalia and prohibitions of camping.
- Potentially amend the Master Parks Plan to comprehensively define the areas considered parks (funding source for those properties are a consideration before they can be called a park).
- Policy to address homelessness should be in place. Transportation provisions or storage of personal items should be included in this policy.

b. Land Use Projects Map

General discussion of ongoing projects and especially those along the edge of the flood plain.

c. Additional Topics:

- Adjacent short plats versus long plats. Potential revision to code to clarify when a long plat might be triggered.
- Street widths, on-street parking, and cul-de-sacs discussed. Currently the Public Works Director makes the determination as to the standard required when code does not otherwise stipulate. Gudde noted that revisions related to street standards could potentially be added to the upcoming change to the Engineering Design Standards set to go before Council on December 6. The potential revision to Engineering Design Standards discussed additional clarifications / parameters to:

1. When private streets can be used and

2. When hammer heads can be used rather than a cul-de-sac.
- Lenssen raised a new issue related to the construction of multi-family housing and a potential moratorium on additional multi-family housing. Concerns related to parking and to mixed used concepts within the CSL which may not be functioning as well as hoped. Of note is the corner property located at Bay Lyn Drive and Guide Meridian as well as the potential annexation area in west Lynden. Suggested next steps:
    1. Code revision on the commercial and multi-family section of code related to the mixed-use provisions.
    2. Evaluate Census data to determine the status of multi-family ratio to the single-family ratio as set in the City's comprehensive plan.
    3. Review provisions related to CSL and the intent of the code as it relates to mixed use.
    4. Define mini-storage and storage in general where its permitted.

**Next Meeting Date: December 22, 2021 unless moved to an earlier date to avoid conflicts with Christmas holiday activities.**