



## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MINUTES

4:00 PM May 19, 2021  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Conference Room, City Hall

### 1. ROLL CALL

**Council Members:** Gary Bode, Brent Lenssen, Kyle Strengholt, Mayor Korthuis

**Staff:** Mike Martin, Steve Banham, Heidi Gudde

**Chamber of Commerce:** Gary Vis

**Guests:** Dean Francis, Kathy Stanford

### 2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- a. Community Development Committee Meeting 4-21-21 Minutes approved as presented.

### 3. DISCUSSION ITEMS

- a. Pepin Creek Development Update - Gross vs Net Density Discussion
  - Dean Francis, a prospective developer, shared with the CDC his concepts for developing a piece of property with 4-plexes (zoned RM-3 adjacent to the future park) within the Pepin Creek area. He also shared the challenges that he was facing as he got farther into the due diligence process. Concerns included wetlands as an obstacle to minimum density, the uncertainty of the moratorium, challenges of handling stormwater in this area. Francis noted that he will not have a final wetland determination on the property until it can be surveyed during the wet season.
  - Net density. Gudde shared with CDC that amendments to title 16 and 19 regarding minimum density and SEPA thresholds will be coming forward to the City Council. A specific discussion about how to calculate these densities, for example, removing wetlands and their buffers from the calculation may be a consideration that the Council makes. The code is currently drafted as calculating minimum density based on gross area.
  - Creative housing. Conversely, Gudde also noted that minimum densities may require developers to get more creative. This might include PRD's that allow for three story buildings – more apartments (in RM-3 zoning) rather than townhome sort of housing types so that minimum densities can be achieved. If minimum

densities are not being acquired, it may be because the zoning and the housing product are mismatched. For example, the housing type Dean Francis is looking to create is a good fit for RM-PC where the minimum density requirement is 6 units per acre rather than 8 units per acre on RM-3.

- Housing type and building height was discussed.
- Dean Francis advocated for net usable land after reasonable mitigation.
- Group also discussed the possibility of wetland areas on City owned property. Park and area under the Pepin Parkway also needs additional wetland study to determine any needs for mitigation.
- Kathy Stanford, representing the current owner of the property in question, is also concerned about the possibility of wetlands on this property.
- Gudde noted that concepts for wetland banking or advanced wetland mitigation may be an option for facilitating growth within the sub-area. R&E and Bob Carmichael both have experience in this area and would be good resources if the City wanted to create in-city mitigation areas so that Pepin wetlands could be filled. Off site mitigation at the Lummi wetland bank is no longer an option as this bank has been closed.

**Conclusions:** Staff to research how much wetland area was assumed when we did our target unit counts for the Pepin Creek Sub area.

Code amendment regarding minimum densities to include some additional options regarding defining gross vs net densities when it comes forward to Council in June.

Wetland work to be added to the Benson Park scope especially the 100 feet that would accommodate the Pepin. Staff to bring to Council some guidance on calculations of density with the minimum density requirements.

Advanced wetland mitigation (wetland banking) a favorable idea as it relates to development in the Pepin Creek Sub-Area and should be added as an item for staff to research.

- Update to the Transportation Impact Fee – Transpo

Banham gave an update on the work that Transpo has been doing to update the City-wide TIF and the Pepin Subarea TIF

Pepin Lite projects estimate has been revised by R&E to remove the utilities from the estimates.

**Conclusions:** Discuss again at the June CDC just prior to this item going to Council on June 21.

b. Building Division – Architecture and Engineering Requirements

- Discussed requirements needed and the thresholds for the use of engineer and / or architect. The group talked about implications to the building community but also the liability that the City is assuming by not requiring engineering.
- Gudde clarified that the City's building official will still be determining if engineering is needed for homes that are less than 4,000 sf rather than automatically requiring engineering.

**Conclusions:** Staff to implement engineering and architectural requirement (more strictly) beginning July 15, 2021. Notice will be given to builders and published on the City's website.

c. West Lynden Annexation

- Discussion related to annexation in the west Lynden area and other areas of potential UGA growth.
- In 2025 the Whatcom County Comp plan will be updated and discussion should be considered as this approaches.

**Conclusions:** CDC members were in favor of considering an annexation here. Staff and the Mayor to discuss options regarding a City-led annexations vs an effort led by private party.

#### 4. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

- a. Next CDC Meeting scheduled for June 23. However, Heidi will be out of town and critical Pepin Creek items would go to Council on June 21. A CDC meeting earlier in the month would be beneficial. **CDC decided to revise the next meeting date to June 16.**