



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

MINUTES

4:00 PM October 23, 2024
2nd Floor Conference Room, City Hall

1. ROLL CALL

- a. City Council: Gary Bode, Brent Lenssen, Kyle Strengtholt, Scott Korthuis
Staff: Dave Timmer, Heidi Gudde, John Williams
Guests: Teri Treat

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- a. Community Development Committee Meeting Minutes of 9/18/24 approved as presented.

3. DISCUSSION ITEMS

- a. Downtown EV Stations. Teri Treat, representing the Downtown Business Association (DBA) and the Inn at Lynden, updated the Committee on her efforts to establish an electric vehicle (EV) charging station downtown on 5th Street. Efforts have been built on previous conversations with the committee that assumed the EV station could be added to the City right-of-way for use by hotel guests but also the general public and an agreement between the hotel and the City. Treat told the Committee that the project is in line for a PSE What's Up grant. She noted that in order to create the EV space a light pole, not a power pole as previously thought, has to be moved.

Conclusions: Treat to update the committee on possible grant awards for the construction of the EV charging station.

- b. Downtown Parking. Treat reported to the Committee that the DBA is supportive of self-regulation of parking restrictions on Front Street rather than the city beginning to issue parking tickets. Treat stated that the DBA group has the goal of getting 100 cars off of Front Street to free up space for shoppers / diners especially in the middle of the day when parking it at its greatest demand.

Treat had, that same day, talked with WaFd about their parking lot at 3rd and Grover as a potential place to have Front Street employees park. WaFd is going to be focusing that location as a small business loan center and indicated that the use of Front Street employee parking is a good collaboration / community contribution. Details yet to be discussed regarding an agreement between the DBA and the bank or necessary signage.

Treat also talking with Peoples Bank about their parking needs and extra space they may have in their downtown lots.

The Committee considered a printed image of the city center to review where employees of businesses on Front Street should be directed to park. The group discussed the streets that had the most on-street parking or other private property opportunities – People’s Bank lot, Liberty Street and 6th Street (3rd CRC lot), and possibly First Reformed Church (Liberty btw 6th and 7th).

Conclusions: Treat to continue to work with Peoples Bank, WaFd, and with Dave Timmer on potential areas that could be identified on a map to be distributed to Front Street employers.

- c. Comprehensive Plan Updates and Population Projections – Gudde and Timmer walked the committee through the information that was provided to the Committee related to population projections. Gudde noted that the Committee had previously indicated an ‘adjusted high’ would be the city’s projection so that we were planning for the larger number but not necessarily hoping for that same projection. However, the State requires that the comp plan show the capacity for this growth. Staff described the process that they have explored with the city’s consultant including land capacity (developable parcels), capacity of the mixed-use overlay, and ADU capacity. The conclusions showed that Alternative 1 – the medium projection was more realistic. It showed a deficit of about 260 units in the low-income units. Alternative 3, the adjusted high, would be difficult to accommodate without some significant zoning changes. It showed a deficit of about 900 units in the low-income category as well as a deficit of just over 300 units in the high-income category. Some zoning changes were discussed including the increase in the maximum density of mixed-use zoning overlays which would close the gap of this projected need for units.

Gudde noted that based on concepts the Com Dev Department has seen that it is possible to achieve a density of greater than 28 units per acre and still achieve the other zoning requirements of the overlay.

Committee discussed the possibility of increased density within the Central Lynden area where infrastructure and on-street parking is available. Timmer noted that many of these lots stem from the original plats of the city and lots sizes range from 6900 to 7000 square feet so that, despite a zoning category that permits duplexes, most lots cannot accommodate duplexes because the minimum lot size is 8000 for two units. The Committee expressed limited support for potential revisions here as long as they didn't drastically change the character of the neighborhood. Timmer indicated that most property owners were interested in converting existing homes into duplexes or adding an additional unit. The proportions of the existing lots would limit the scale of new construction if that were to occur.

Conclusions: Committee asked for clarification on the dramatic change to the housing over 120 Annual Median Income when comparing the 2 alternatives.

The Committee indicated support for a Medium Population Projection rather than the Adjusted High as the City's chosen projection. And, to meet the shortfall on apartment-type units to increase the zoning change to maximum density of the mixed-use overlay to as much as 40 units per acre while maintaining the other zoning regulations related to height and parking.

Staff was instructed to continue to explore options which would alter the RM-2 zoning category specifically in the Central Lynden Subarea to facilitate duplexes on lots that may not meet the 8,000 sf minimum lot size.

Strengholt also asked that the adjusted low (a 1% growth rate of 4,481 people) be reviewed with the potential of making no zoning changes. Review this moving forward for our own Comp Plan but would not necessarily be ready for the County EIS.

- d. Unified Fee Schedule Changes for 2025. Staff discussed changes to the Unified Fee Schedule as they relate to the Community Development Department. Most fees are increasing by 5% but Gudde pointed out a few that are being added per the last CDC meeting and a few other points of discussion.

Conclusions: The Committee did not recommend any changes to the Fee Schedule as presented.

- e. Update to Building Valuation (BV) Table. Gudde explained to the Committee that last year the BV Table was updated to the August 2021 schedule. The CDC's package included more recent table updates – which are issued by the International Code Council every 6 months. The group reviewed the tables. Gudde noted that the table is used only as the lowest accepted value for a construction project. Projects typically come in at higher values and those are used to

Conclusions: Update to the August 2024 and add it to the Unified Fee Schedule. The Committee agreed that every January the department could update to the previous August's Building Value Table. Gudde indicated that she would work with the Finance Department to have this update added to the Unified Fee Schedule.

- f. Pepin Creek Impact Fee Review. This topic began at the workshop for the Pepin Creek Subarea plan. Council asked that the city review impact fees related to this Subarea but also the City as a whole. The Committee discussed the existing fees and reviewed the state-wide average (MRSC – study) for transportation impact fees (TIF) which Timmer pulled up on his laptop. Lynden sits near the bottom well below the state average.

The Mayor asked if staff would be able to prepare updates for the 2025 budget. Gudde indicated that studies were necessary per State code and that it was more realistic to review TIF with our transportation consultant who was working on the City's comprehensive plan update. The consultant is also slated to review our policies on frontage improvements and how these relate to impact fees on what are known as "impact fee streets".

Fire impact fees are quite outdated, and a new study will need to be conducted to establish a better impact fee. Park Impact fees were updated relatively recently (2021) but have not been annually adjusted since. Their yearly adjustment (along with the other impact fees) should occur as part the overall unified fee schedule indexing.

Conclusions: Staff to pursue an increase in transportation impact fees more in line with the State average both city-wide and in Pepin Creek. The Committee supports increases in both Park and Fire impact fees as well. Additional research into annual indexing needed. Staff will also

work to pin down the best index for cost increases as the WSDOT index adopted in the TIF ordinance no longer seems to be published publicly.

- g. Revise November Meeting Date. **November meeting date updated to the 19th instead of the 20th.**

4. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

- a. 3rd Quarter Monthly Development Update. The Committee reviewed the development report provided by the Community Development Department. Gave feedback about the new format.

Next Meeting Date: November 20 19, 2024