



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

JOINT MEETING WITH MEMBERS OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION
4:00 PM February 20, 2019
2nd Floor Conference Room, City Hall

1. ROLL CALL

Council Present: Kyle Strengholt, Jerry Kuiken, Brent Lenssen, Mayor Scott Korthuis
Planning Commissioners: Tim Faber, Diane Veltkamp, Gerald Veltkamp
Staff: Heidi Gudde, Mike Martin
Public: Kathy Stanford, Dick Vandenberg

2. ACTION ITEMS:

- A. Approval of minutes from the January 23, 2019 meeting
Approved as presented.

3. DISCUSSION ITEMS

- A. **City-wide (Pepin Creek) Design Standards Draft Discussed.** Discussion followed the key issues raised in the staff memo by Heidi Gudde.
- a. Garage setbacks. Proposal suggests that front loaded garages be required to be setback from the front living space of the home by at least 4 feet. Committee requested the origins of the garage setback. Gudde noted that this standard was drafted by the consultant for the purposes of the Pepin Creek subarea. The intent is to emphasize pedestrian scaled elements like front doors and porches along street fronts rather than garage doors. Gudde noted that this shift could be a significant change as many of the home being constructed today have garage-forward designs. This includes concerns regarding builders ability to adapt and the market demand for open concept homes. Feedback from a recent discussion with local real estate agents was not in favor of the garage setback requirement.

Advantages of Garage Setback Noted:

- Strengholt noted that having living spaces oriented toward the street creates a safer street environment. “Eyes on the street” is a CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) principal.

- The requirement would have significant impacts on townhome design - a housing type which is encouraged in the new RM-PC zoning category, but one that can be very garage dominated if not done thoughtfully. The setback could assist in this consideration and dictate that townhome lots be wide enough to accommodate not only a garage but also a pedestrian scaled entrance forward of the garage.
- More attractive streetscapes benefit the public good.

Disadvantages of the requirement noted:

- Setback may be difficult to achieve on odd-shaped lots.
- Property owners lose one aspect of freedom to create the home design they choose.
- Home builders may wish to focus living spaces on the rear yard or view rather than the street.

Conclusions:

- Staff to revise draft standards. Limit the distance that the garage can be set forward of the front facade – 8, 10, or 12 feet suggested – to prevent the full depth of the garage from being extended forward of the living space. Front façade, in this case, could be any first story living space of the house. It was noted that some of the ‘garage-dominated design’ issues could be resolved by limiting to how much of the façade could be garage doors. Currently the RMD zoning category uses a limit of 50% or less of the façade made up of garage doors. Proposal to extend this requirement to other zoning categories
 - Note that exceptions to the design standards would go to the Design Review Board – this could be applied to odd shaped lots.
- b. Accessory structures architecture discussed. Proposal requires that accessory structures match the primary structure. This limits the use of metal buildings or similar.

DV noted that there should be an exception for barn shaped buildings. Gudde agreed that staff had discussed the same issue. An allowance for agriculturally themed buildings (barns) seemed appropriate for Lynden. Likewise, use specific structures like greenhouses would obviously not match the primary residential structure. Staff to note the exceptions in the draft code.

It was also noted that building permits not required for buildings less than 120 square feet so the architecture of these would not be regulated by the City.

Committee discussed a limit to the number of small buildings that could be added to a residential lot. Currently it is the lot coverage requirement that limits these additions although it's nearly impossible to track unless a neighbor would complain to City staff. Committee added a suggested to limit the total number of accessory structures to 3 per lot.

- c. Accessory Building Heights. This issue discussed. Previously the height of accessory structures was increased to 18 feet to allow for the storage of RVs. No revisions to heights proposed at this time.
- d. Screening. Design standards propose code to require the screening of mechanical equipment with evergreen landscape or fence. JK noted the potential need for flexibility here as there are some months of the year when landscape screening cannot be installed. Gudde agreed and noted that flexibility regarding landscape installation already occurs.
- e. Street Trees. Discussion aimed to establish how much of a priority it is to the City to have street trees installed and replaced. "Right tree, right place" concerns were raised. The need to use smaller trees under power lines, the use of root barriers and other best practices are important and help reduce maintenance costs and potential sidewalk damage. Life expectancy of trees also discussed and the potential need for the City to take a more organized approach to replacing trees along streets. Committee discussed the potential or requiring street tree replacement in association with any residential building permit. A more voluntary approach may be better received.

Conclusions regarding Street Trees: Future work on this issue is warranted as the Committee recognized the value of street trees to the community. First steps include:

Leading by example – the City should replace the Pin Oak that was lost on Front Street, include street trees in City projects, and replace those lost along City owned frontages.

Future efforts - Identify street tree themes along major travel corridors (arterials) within the City such as Front Street, Grover Street, Depot Road, Line Road, Aaron Drive. Implement replacement projects. Potentially educational or school projects to replace trees within neighborhoods.

B. Pepin Creek Mitigation Study – Scope and Budget Update

- a. Committee reviewed the draft scope and budget from Berk Consulting for the Pepin Creek Mitigation Study. Discussed potential revisions to task descriptions which are planned but do not substantially alter the intent or scope of the project. Final scope and budget likely to be sent to Council for approval at the second meeting in March. Completion of

the financial study is dependent on having a final engineering design and cost estimate on the revised creek realignment and over-flow bypass project currently underway by R&E.

- b. Gudde related to the committee that Mark Sandal had identified and confirmed that a previously awarded Department of Commerce grant could be used for the proposed study.

Next Meeting Date: March 20, 2019