



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

MINUTES

4:00 PM October 18, 2023
2nd Floor Conference Room, City Hall

1. ROLL CALL

Council Members: Brent Lenssen, Kyle Strengholt, Scott Korthuis
City Staff: John Williams, Dave Timmer, Heidi Gudde
Guests: Gary Vis

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Community Development Committee Meeting Minutes of 9/20/23 approved as presented.

3. DISCUSSION ITEMS

a. LMC Text Amendment – Patio Screening and Enclosure

Revised text related to ventilation was reviewed by the committee and found to be consistent with feedback from the September meeting.

Next steps include the drafting of an ordinance to accompany the text amendment to Council. A hearing on this item was already held and the committee agreed that an additional hearing was not needed. Staff to bring the item forward as Ord 23-1674 at the next Council meeting.

b. November CDC Meeting Date

Staff related a scheduling conflict for the meeting slated for November 15th. The committee agreed to move the next CDC meeting to December 5th. The group also acknowledged that the December 20th CDC meeting may be cancelled.

Upcoming items for Committee review include changes to the sign code and revisions to the civil penalties code.

4. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

a. Special Events – Amending LMC 5 and LMC 9

The summary memo, written by Dave Timmer, was included in the meeting packet. Staff is currently collecting feedback from all of Council.

A few items were discussed by the Committee including fees. Lenssen noted that he would prefer to keep the special event process very low barrier and have no fee for both Tier 1 and 2 events as the City's primary objective is to simply be aware of events that are occurring.

The number of people triggering a special event is currently set at 75 and Williams reported that the Police Chief concurred with that number.

Vis indicated a preference to go back to the draft version that exempted events, which are held in facilities specifically designed for that purpose, from getting a permit from the city. Examples included events such as dog shows or ag expos at the Fairgrounds or groups at the Jansen Art Center. However, he strongly recommended that social events which included dances should be subject to a special event permit regardless of where they are held so that the city is aware of their occurrence. Vis believes social events that include dancing, and often drinking, can become noisy, impact the community, or need police support.

Vis also expressed a desire to maintain code provisions which prohibit dancing in establishments that sell alcohol (LMC 5.05.035) citing examples from Blaine and Sumas and the potential need for additional law enforcement if night clubs are permitted.

Discussed the consumption of alcohol at special events. Mayor confirmed that the WA Liquor and Cannabis Board routes alcohol licenses to the city for review and approval.

Conclusions: The committee agreed that the proposed code amendments would repeal and replace LMC 5.32 which does not alter the code provisions of 5.04 - "Alcoholic Beverages". Staff will collect additional feedback from Council members and then return to CDC at the next meeting. Take-away from this meeting is return to a previous draft that exempted events that are held in locations designed for special events (auditoriums, Jansen Art Center, The Fairgrounds) from getting city permits but with the caveat that event that include dancing (band/DJ) will need a special event permit.

b. Comprehensive Plan – HB 1181 Climate Planning Strategy

A staff memo was included in the meeting packet that introduced the Committee to the requirements of HB 1181 which was passed by the State legislature earlier this year. The bill requires that the City address climate change in the next Comprehensive Plan update (due June 2025). This must include a Climate Element (chapter) in the Comp Plan which addresses reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and climate resiliency.

Staff noted that the State has set aside up to \$500,000 for the city, through a non-competitive grant, to address this requirement. Staff is proposing that the funds be used to meet the requirements of HB 1181 and conduct community outreach with the help of a consultant. The Committee was asked to identify community resilience topics that could be reviewed and / or prioritized in this process. Staff suggested that resiliency planning could include creek bank stabilization plans, flood hardening, urban tree programs, social wellness/safety including cooling/warming centers, water supply security, agricultural production protections/support.

The State is requiring that the city address greenhouse gas emissions and policies that could reduce overall vehicle miles traveled (VMT) in the city.

The Committee discussed the potential uses of the funds noting that the city cannot use the funds for capital expenditures, but they must be focused on planning. Consensus from the committee was to not conduct a broad GHG emission inventory. More information will be coming from the Dept of Commerce on this use of funds issue.

Conclusions: Staff will be completing an application to the Dept of Commerce by the end of October for grant funding. The application will propose to use funds for consultant assistance on the writing of the Climate Element, collecting public feedback, and assessing the city for both climate action assets and areas needing improvement. While the Committee did not have an interest in focusing specifically on greenhouse gas emissions, they were interested in pursuing other ideas. In addition to some of the programs that we have already started such as the aquifer recharge pilot project, adopting the Complete Streets, and Safe Routes to School programs, the Committee indicated an interest in the following community resilience topics:

- Urban Forestry Program – increasing tree canopy in the city and supporting residents as they do the same.
- Walkability (reduce VMT) – increase pedestrian access to commercial uses (including existing commercial centers) and green spaces (trail access) especially with families in mind.
- Solar programs such as a clearinghouse of information
- Emergency response to natural disasters (extended power outages, floods, extreme heat) especially for the most vulnerable or economically disadvantaged in our community.
- Electric Vehicle Charging network plan

- Creek bank stabilization 'how-to' / guide of resources for private property owners and potential strategy for securing funds that could be available to private property owners for stabilization projects.

c. 2023 Development Report – July through September

Committee reviewed the development reports from the last few months as well as the statistics for Accessory Dwellings Units that Gudde brought to the meeting.

Staff reported that ADU use has increased since the city revised the code in 2017. The most common way of seeing new ADUs is with new construction – when an ADU is planned in as part of a new home.

Next Meeting Date: **December 5, 2023**