



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (CDC)

AGENDA

4:00 PM April 17, 2024
2nd Floor Conference Room, City Hall

1. ROLL CALL

City Council: Brent Lenssen, Gary Bode, Kyle Strengholt, Scott Korthuis

City Staff: John Williams, Dave Timmer, Heidi Gudde

Community: Ron Hanson (Downtown Business Association),

Jennifer Lautenbach (Lynden Senior Center), Terri Treat (The Inn in Lynden)

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- a. Community Development Committee Meeting Minutes of 3/20/24 approved as presented.

3. DISCUSSION ITEMS

- a. **Downtown wayfinding sign installation request from the Downtown Business Association (DBA).**

The CDC typically reviews downtown amenities and provides the full Council with a recommendation prior to approval.

Ron Hanson joined the CDC on behalf of the Downtown Business Association (DBA) to propose the installation of a pedestrian wayfinding sign at the corner of Front Street and 6th Street near the Chamber of Commerce offices. Originally the DBA discussed installing on the corner of Front and 5th but an April 17th meeting of the DBA resulted in a vote to move the sign one block west. The DBA plans to install the sign after the “flower tree” structure that is located there is moved to an alternate location. Plans to move the structure were already in the works because it blocked views of the Phoebe Judson statue that is installed on this corner. The flower tree is moving west to replace a failing ornamental tree near the Post Office.

The sign design was distributed to the group. It features a map of surrounding downtown streets and business names and locations.

Lenssen asked how the sign could be updated if businesses changes. Hanson explained that the vinyl sign can be replaced relatively easily or small vinyl stickers could be adhered to the original to switch out business names. The biggest costs are the aluminum stand and installation.

Strengholt asked what criteria were used to select the businesses that are listed. Hanson explained that they had included businesses that visitors may want to frequent when staying in town. Tammy Yoder has been working on developing the sign content.

Gudde had previously informed Hanson that because the sign is located within the city right-of-way a street encroachment permit would be needed so that Public Works staff could review the method of installation and location of the proposed sign. Gudde also provided the group with the code section that allow directional signage and informational kiosks within the Historic Business District. This is found in LMC 19.33.055.

Wayfinding Sign Conclusions: Committee asked that the DBA contact as many businesses as possible and add those that want to be added to that the opportunity to be listed is equitable. With this effort, the Committee supports the installation of the wayfinding sign at the location near the Chamber office.

Planning staff will follow up with Ron and Tammy and then add the item to the full Council agenda.

- b. **Electric Car Charging.** Terri Treat attended the meeting to ask that the City consider adding more charging stations to the downtown area. Her hotel clients are requesting them more frequently. She noted that charging stations can now be set up so that when a car is fully charged the owner is motivated to move the car because the charging rate increase exponentially if the car remains connected. The group talked about adding charging stations to the 5th Street angled parking on the west side of the hotel, they discussed the alley as a location as well as the 4th Street parking lot near the public restrooms.

Charging Station Conclusions: The CDC asked Terri to come back to the group with a proposal for adding charging stations to locations near the hotel and she agreed she would.

c. **Downtown Parking**

- 1) The DBA and Chamber letter to business owners re parking options for employees.

The Committee discussed how many employees might be parking downtown and how many spaces could be freed up by having employees park elsewhere. Terri shared that her employees, on a typical day at the Waples Bldg has about 10 employees and when

restaurants and other businesses are added in it could be about 100 spaces in the most congested 3 blocks.

6th Street and Liberty Street also have a lot of on-street availability. 3rd Church owns the lot next to Faith Reformed. This was also suggested as a potential partner in the downtown parking solution. All of these parking areas could be identified on a map graphic and distributed to downtown businesses so that employees had direction as to where they could park instead of on Front Street.

Conclusions: Terri to contact Peoples Bank to find out if they would be interested in a cooperative use of their parking lot on 5th Street.

Timmer and our GIS staff to coordinate with Terri to create a map graphic to identify alternate locations.

2) **Parking Enforcement Strategies.** John Williams continues to discuss parking enforcement strategies with Bellingham so that the Committee has an understanding of what would be involved if we but the Committee wanted to pursue a softer approach as the first priority.

3) **Construction of Additional Downtown Parking.** Creating additional parking through a Local Improvement District (LID). The group discussed the potential of creating an improvement district between 2nd Street (Gillies and the Museum included) and then west to 8th Street. The committee discussed excluding single family homes from assessment. The water tank site identified as a good location for more downtown parking. The group looked at a scenario where parking lot construction costs equal one million dollars and the payback is over 20 years at 4.5% interest.

d. **Proposed Amendment to the Special Events Code** – Slated for the first Council meeting in June. The group talked about the inclusion of animals in events and how this is monitored through the application process.

Conclusions: The Committee asked staff to update some of the language on permit review to indicate that requests could be reviewed by the department hear or their designee.

This item is slated for the next Public Safety Committee meeting for additional discussion.

e. **SmartGov Software** – Implementation Update

Gudde gave an overview of the progress on implementation of the permitting tracking with the goal of going live by the end of 2024.

Next Meeting Date: May 22, 2024