

**July 2021 Stevenson Regular Planning Commission Meeting**  
**Monday, July 12, 2021**  
**6:00 p.m.**

In Person:-Attendees at City Hall followed current CDC guidance regarding use of masks, social distancing, and attendance.

**Attending:** Planning Commission Chair Valerie Hoy-Rhodehamel Valerie; Commissioners Jeff Breckel, Davy Ray, Mike Beck, and Community Development Director Ben Shumaker. Commissioner Auguste Zettler was not in attendance. Public participants included Brian McNamara, Mary Repar, Tracy Gratto, Rick May, Dave Cox, and others unidentified.

**Planning Commission Chair Valerie Hoy-Rhodehamel** opened the meeting at 6:00 p.m.

**A. Preliminary Matters**

1. Public Comment Expectations:

**Chair Valerie Hoy-Rhodehamel** provided information on participating for remote attendees: Please raise hand to comment. Use the tools \*6 to mute/unmute & \*9 to raise hand. Individual comments should be limited to 3 minutes.

2. Minutes: June 14, 2021 Meeting Minutes

**MOTION** to approve minutes as presented from the June 14<sup>th</sup>, 2021 Stevenson Planning Commission meeting made by **Commissioner Breckel**, seconded by **Commissioner Beck**.

- Voting aye: **PC Chair Valerie Hoy-Rhodehamel, Commissioners Ray, Beck, Breckel.**

3. Public Comment Period: (For items not located elsewhere on the agenda)

>Mary Repar suggested commission members view the Gorge Commission's website regarding the National Scenic Area. She also invited people to attend a Stevenson Grange presentation on community resiliency to be held July 27<sup>th</sup> at the Stevenson Community Library.

**B. New Business**

4.Short Plat Review: SP2021-02 Feeley Short Plat Planning Commission Optional Review

**Community Development Director Ben Shumaker** provided the Commission background information on a 2-lot short plat in town. Following a short discussion the Commission agreed to the staff recommendation the Planning Commission bypass its review of the short plat and entrust the decision on the application to the Short Plat Administrator.

**C. Old Business**

5. Subcommittee Report: Public Involvement

**Community Development Director Shumaker** provided the Commission with recommendations made by the public engagement subcommittee regarding public outreach and involvement. He pointed to documents in the meeting packet -a Draft Submission of Public Involvement Framework for Review, a sample Project Flow Chart, and a draft Engagement Methods/Analysis that covered a range of simple to more complex engagement methods that could be employed to initiate public

engagement in any issue. He asked if the flowchart was something to build in as communication tool regarding decisions.

**Commissioner Breckel** briefly discussed the work performed by the sub-committee. He commented if the Commission was comfortable with the recommendations, they could be initiated regarding the zoning review on increasing residential building capacity that is currently on hold.

>Tracy Gratto presented additional information and details on the suggestions made by the subcommittee. She commended the Planning Commission' work, but noted that explaining the need for zoning is among the roles of the Commission. Let people know what you are doing and why. Being more transparent and solution oriented in thinking and planning is important. She emphasized informing, educating and networking as a way to provide information and address any concerns the public has, and pointed to examples offered in the framework.

**Planning Commission Chair Valerie Hoy-Rhodehamel** thanked her and the committee for their work, and stated her appreciation for a living document due to things changing. She noted she was in favor of the complete framework.

**Commissioner Breckel** suggested the process could be used to address other issues such as future infrastructure needs, as sewer and water access is integral to efficient zoning. He also noted zoning is not the sole answer to affordable housing.

>Rick May commented the material offered a multi-faceted approach, and he would like to see the suggestions adopted as the community is experiencing growth and change beyond the scope of the Planning Commission. He stated trust is critical and public involvement 'ups your game', in that the more you know, the better decisions you make.

The commission further discussed the recommendations, with questions raised regarding realistic strategies that could be used to implement them. Staff time and other resources were noted to be limiting factors. Further use of workgroups and subcommittees was considered, with **Community Development Director Shumaker** noting they could help define components of identified problems, i.e., resources, responsibility to solve, who benefits from problem or solution, and how are solutions proposed.

**Commissioner Beck** advised focusing on a streamlined process, with workshops and public hearings used to maximize engagement efforts in light of limited capacity and to keep business moving, as many items are time sensitive. He said bogging down multiple sub-committees with multiple issues should be avoided. He recommended any sub-committee be provided a time-frame for decision making.

**Commissioner Ray** spoke in favor of ensuring issues be prioritized.

**Commissioner Beck** thanked Tracy Gratto, Pat Rice and Brian McNamara for their work in developing the public engagement materials. He asked to convene a sub-committee to review the issue of increasing residential building capacity and to have the sub-committee's recommendations provided to the Planning Commission by September 2021. Incorporating the

public outreach and involvement recommendations into the Planning Commission bylaws was also discussed. It was agreed to go through the steps required to amend the Commission's bylaws to include the flowcharts and engagement processes.

**Planning Commission Chair Valerie Hoy-Rhodehamel** asked Commissioners for a show of hands in support of the idea, and all hands were raised. **Commissioners Beck and Breckel** will stay on as members, and Mary Repar will also take part. Other participants will be invited.

6. Zoning Amendment: Increasing Residential Building Capacity: Public Involvement Expectations  
**Community Development Director Shumaker** pointed out the Commission had addressed the issue through the previous discussion.

#### D. Discussion

7. Thought of the Month: Community Submission: Kate Raworth: A healthy economy should be designed to thrive, not grow.

[https://www.ted.com/talks/kate\\_raworth\\_a\\_healthy\\_economy\\_should\\_be\\_designed\\_to\\_thrive\\_not\\_grow](https://www.ted.com/talks/kate_raworth_a_healthy_economy_should_be_designed_to_thrive_not_grow)

Mary Repar reminded meeting attendees there would be a speaker from Portland, Oregon city administration coming to Stevenson to talk about implementing the 'doughnut theory.' It is based on a Tedx Talk by Oxford economist Kate Raworth.

8. Staff & Commission Reports: ICMA Fellowship (Parking Intern), Utility Service Outside City Limits  
**Community Development Director Shumaker** reported there was a new intern from UW prepared to work on assessing downtown parking.

An RFQ has been issued for consultants for the Columbia Avenue realignment project regarding bringing brownfield sites back into productive public use with funds provided by a grant through the Department of Ecology.

Stevenson City Council is taking up the issue on utility services outside city limits and is considering draft changes to current policies. Three approaches are possible-maintain the status quo, (which allows new hookups only if the house existed before 1980, adjacent water lines are in place, and a petition for annexation was denied); allow new hook-ups to infill on the system by using existing lines only; or extend water lines for new service. **Community Development Director Shumaker** stated the question remains if building capacity can or will increase by allowing connections.

**Commissioner Breckel** expressed concerns over the past development of the city's water and sewer lines, noting effective delivery systems need to be in place to avoid potential high costs in the future.

**Commissioner Beck** pointed out circular or loop water mains require less pressure than straight lines.

>Mary Repar invited everyone to visit to community gardens near the fairgrounds.

#### E. Adjournment

**Planning Commission Chair Valerie Hoy-Rhodehamel** declared the meeting adjourned at 7:38 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Johanna Roe