MAYOR'S BUSINESS READY TASK FORCE MINUTES

October 23, 2012
2:00 – 4:00 PM, Municipal Court Room
Albany City Hall, 333 Broadalbin St. SW, Albany

Members: Sharon Konopa, Jeff Christman, Oscar Hult, Arthur Meeker, Jessica Pankratz, John Pascone, Dave Reece, Rob Richards, Dala Rouse, Janet Steele

Members Absent: Ron Reimers, Mark Spence

Staff: Wes Hare, Heather Hansen, Anne Catlin, Kristin Johns

Guests: Steve Lathrup, Albany Democrat-Herald

1. Business From the Public - none
2. Approval of Minutes

   a. September 11 – John Pascone made motion to accept, Dala Rouse seconded, with correction that Oscar was absent and did not make the motion to accept the July 31 and August 14 minutes.

   b. October 2 - Dala Rouse made motion to accept, John Pascone seconded, with a correction to the time adjourned to 4:30 p.m.

3. Discussion of temporary signs; multi-tenant signs and planned developments.

   A. Temporary signs

   Staff reviewed temporary sign standards in other cities and reviewed proposed revisions to address identified issues. Most cities regulate the number of signs per business; however some limit them per property.

   A-frame Signs:

   Catlin presented the proposed code revisions that would change the number and time allowed for A-frame signs in non-downtown districts. The current standard limits the signs to 60 days per calendar year. The proposed revisions would allow one portable/A-frame per business, year round and city wide. When multiple tenants are on one property, it would require signs to be space 20 feet apart.

   Meeker stated that a 20 ft space apart is good and that people don't pay attention to the codes now or get a permit. He does not feel that all businesses will get an A-frame sign. Rouse asked about size and height permitted in the code. Catlin explained 16 square feet with a maximum height of 4 feet.

   Steele stated that it is a huge issue for businesses beyond downtown, especially retailers hidden back in. She asked if they can't put the sign on the sidewalk, would they need permission from the

property owner? Hansen explained that they would need permission. Catlin also explained how the downtown district A-frame signs are exempt.

Konopa asked for clarification for hidden buildings. Hansen and Catlin responded that in the proposal each business would be allowed to have one sign.

Hare clarified that no one is to put signs in the right-of-way and we can confiscate those that do. Hansen further explained that sometimes the right-of-way is not obvious. The permit is there to provide definitive distinction when it is not clear.

ACTION ITEM: Staff will follow up with Ron Irish regarding securing signs.

Christman asked why the proposal for A-frame signs included the sign be taken in and out each night. Hult stated that it has helped remind businesses to keep the signs up to date. He counsels business owners downtown to remove the sign during the night so people will know when they are closed. Konopa shared that leaving the sign out all night would then make the sign permanent and become faded, junky along with adding sign clutter. Konopa asked if we allow A-frame signs to become permanent if it had to be secured. Reece responded that it may be difficult if it has to be secured which would add another layer of regulation. Several noted concern requiring signs to be brought in nightly and to change the proposal to encourage signs be brought in at night. It will self-regulate. Hare noted it would be difficult to enforce.

Hare thinks we do pretty good at regulating and thinks that sweeping the community a couple of times of year helps. He is game for the change but also feels it may bring more conflict between business owners. Reece also proposed that permission from the property owner and 20 ft apart should be fine.

Pankratz asked about the sign requirements at North Albany Village and if they have their own regulations. Meeker knows that the businesses rotate banners on the large monument signs and probably do have regulations in place.

Other Temporary Signs

Catlin explained the current regulations for other temporary signs such as banners and secondary signs which have a 60 day per calendar year provision. One proposal would allow new businesses who need longer periods to have the temporary banner for up to a year or until their permanent sign is installed, whichever is sooner. Regarding the time period for banners for existing businesses, currently the code states that the dates can be scattered throughout the calendar year for up to 60 days. Catlin noted she reviewed standards in other cities and asked Meeker for his input and proposed increasing the days per year to 90 or 120 days.

Steele liked increasing the number of days but questioned how we were going to enforce it. Catlin explained the number of days is currently tracked so changing the number of days would not be difficult. She explained that the code allows issuing one permit per year if the applicant can lay out the dates that the temporary signed were posted throughout. Meeker suggested 120 days, 30 days at a time, good for a full year with changing verbiage as long as the banner was the same size and

put in the same location. Christman asked how staff would know and be able to regulate. Hansen explained how enforcement is complaint driven.

Hare shared that part of the purpose of our code is how people view the community along with trying to strike a balance. He thinks we have struck a good balance thus far and have the regulations to enforce it when needed. Christman stated that it creates different classes of business owners based on whether they care or not. He was also concerned about enforcement, noting the standards should be enforced consistently as complaint driven is not good. Hare explained how complaints play key role but staff also notices when out. The goal is to have standards that everyone can buy into.

Hansen gave the example of a recent complaint on Pacific in the right-of-way and how it prompted a sweep with Rob Goings.

Christman wants to be careful not to put something in place that will be harder to regulate and track. Catlin stated that we have had complaints that 60 days per calendar year is not long enough and something staff is willing to look at but it would not change how we track or enforce.

Konopa thought 120 days would be long for the “blow-up figures”. Meeker explained how they are expensive and don’t wear well so they should not be something to be concerned with.

In summary, Konopa asked the group if they would like to see 90 or 120 days per calendar year for temporary signs. Most agreed that 120 days would be friendlier for businesses.

Temporary Event Signs

Catlin presented that we currently do not receive sign permit applications for events. The proposal would require one permit per event. Rouse felt permits would tell applicants of the regulations and be informative for proper placement along with approved timelines. Steele and Pankratz both inquired about non-profits along with the Chamber. Steele inquired about the Business Extravaganza which has large signs for the event. Catlin explained that this pertains to small signs stuck in yards and around town. Steele asked if regulating large signs for events was included and then Meeker asked for clarity as to what defines an event. The group asked about big sale events and home show events for profit. Steele stated that they are so important to business. Hare felt that it would cause problems if not regulated. Hansen reminded that we cannot regulate sign based on content per the Supreme Court. Catlin said that staff will work on defining event signs vs. sales, profit vs. non-profit and fundraiser’s.

Meeker asked about sign placement and how sometimes you will see five event signs in one spot. Catlin explained that the proposal would state one per property. Reece feels it is problematic that we continue to crack down. Cautioned that we paint ourselves in a corner and that the more we think it through the more prohibitive it will be.

Konopa suggested that we look at one sign per property frontage. Pankratz said that no event is going to put everywhere due to expense and that she does not think we need to regulate them. Meeker gave the example of 15,000 signs for a recent event and Konopa included that they were up

for a long period of time which is why we need to limit the number of event signs and number of days allowed before and after.

Number of signs

Catlin went over the proposed one portable A-frame and one other temporary sign per business located on a site. See table on exhibit (A). Meeker inquired about Walgreens vs. a small building along with multiple frontages. The question arose about what constitutes building frontage vs. business frontage. Catlin then proposed two signs per business except for Downtown where we don't regulate A-frame signs. Meeker likes the idea of allowing two signs. Pankratz along with the others agreed. Konopa asked if staff had enough direction now and Catlin stated yes.

Multi-tenant development signs

Catlin explained that determining the sign allowances is confusing and in some cases limiting. A few changes are proposed to increase the allowance to allow two signs per street frontage rather than per business or property. She reviewed the proposal for multi-tenant buildings and interior businesses. More detailed language is being developed.

Hansen explained that more is happening with businesses within businesses such as banks within a business. Catlin stated that the proposal gives an allowance for those infill businesses and more signs. Meeker liked all of the provisions proposed.

Pascone brought up the issues at the airport with signs and asked that staff address those as well. Catlin informed the group that a meeting is already planned. Konopa asked the group if everyone was comfortable to move forward and the consensus was yes.

B. **Planned Developments**

Catlin went over the table in the memo (Attachment A, page 3) which lays out current and proposed code that would streamline the process. She explained how the proposed code amendments would change the process from three steps to two and not change the neighborhood meeting requirement. After a brief discussion all were in agreement and moved forward to the next item.

Catlin went over the current open space requirement of 40 percent and what staff found in looking at other communities. (Attachment A, page 4). She proposes a range of 20 to 40 percent in residential zones and 20 percent in mixed use or commercial zones. She also went over the tools to protect natural areas which typically create a nicer development vs. more flexibility.

Rouse started the discussion asking about condos, cluster developments and, therefore, the need for more open space. Konopa noted the great neighborhoods project. Reece stated how developers are looking at the dollar at the end of the day and how to achieve density transfer. He feels that although Planned Developments helps get to the maximum and give back with open space, the current code at 40 percent is hard to achieve. Along with that every time the development changes house types, they have to recalculate which increases cost for plans. Rouse also stated that the 40 percent requirement is tough and maybe why do not get many planned developments. Rouse asked

about common space vs. outdoor and what is our goal. Suggested that if it is just outdoor, then lower the percent for just that. Catlin stated the proposal for what to count as common outdoor space and is proposing a sliding range based on density.

Hansen stated that sometimes planned developments are large in scope with mixed use and change over the duration of the development which is a challenge. Reece suggested allowing future phases to be flexible with the ultimate goals in the approval to make sure they are compatible and consistent. Rouse pointed out some of the issues that could happen if the 3rd phase did not take place. Reece suggested that future owners be accountable. Rouse also stated that the goal is to make sure everyone can go out and enjoy and not count every inch. Hansen asked if areas could be dedicated for future phases. Reece brought up easement issues, non- buildable space, open space and how it would be a tricky to plat it. Developers would love to dedicate open space so the city would own it but then city would have to maintain it as well and cost could be an issue if the city cannot afford it.

At the conclusion of the discussion, Rouse suggested reducing the open space requirement to 25%, Reece liked Catlin's sliding scale and that staff should look at Bend's code. Hansen suggested 20% if close to those other amenities. Catlin said that staff will look at how to phased developments t would work.

Catlin explained how natural features would be set aside in developments. The oak tree at Heritage mall was discussed. The goal is to encourage protection of natural feature and the need to write criteria. Rouse believes it is a good idea and wants to see the wording.

Konopa asked if everyone ok with the proposed planned development standards.

4. Schedule Joint Work Session

   Hansen and Konopa reviewed the next step and discussed scheduling a joint work session with the Planning Commission and City Council in February.

5. Other Business

   Pascone brought up a complaint about the property at Queen and Hill regarding parking spaces and access barricades. Staff and Hare addressed questions and informed all present that there is a process and our city attorney is looking at it.

6. The meeting adjourned at 4:06 p.m.