

# Mayor's Business Ready Task Force (BRTF) Minutes

October 14, 2013

3:00 – 5:00 PM, Municipal Court Room

Albany City Hall, 333 Broadalbin St. SW, Albany

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Members: Sharon Konopa, Jessica Pankratz, John Pascone, Dave Reece, Dala Rouse, Janet Steele, Daniel Sullivan

Members

Absent: Ron Reimers, Mark Spence, Jeff Christman, Oscar Hult, Arthur Meeker and Bob Richards

Staff: Mark Shepard, Anne Catlin, Melissa Anderson, Edene Rice

Guests: None

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Business from the Public – None.

1. Sign Code – Staff reviewed the proposed changes to the sign code. The sign code subcommittee has agreed to all of the proposed changes and now these changes will be presented to the Planning Commission.
2. Planned Development Open Space Requirements

Catlin referred to page 4 of the packet to discuss how Open Space is calculated in a planned development and how it is currently based on zoning and density. The proposed change would be an across the board percentage requirement of possibly 20-25%, or it could fluctuate with density.

The group discussed how and why Open Space is regulated. Catlin responded that it, in part, is a benefit in exchange for flexibility with the development standards, the space can protect natural resources to meet Goal 5 requirements, or provide functional common space in a planned development. The proposed amendments would make the open space calculations easier, by excluding side and back yards, for example. The open space could include common areas, a centrally located park, walkways, tennis courts, front yards or common indoor amenities.

Reece suggested the size of the planned development be a factor in how much space is required. Catlin noted that indoor amenities or rooftop amenities could count towards the requirement.

The task force agreed to a 25% open space requirement across the board.

Konopa asked about removing the indoor open space requirement, noting reasons for requiring the space in manufactured home parks. Pankratz noted the indoor amenities are not selling features. Catlin explained that the indoor common space requirement is not required in other jurisdictions and manufactured home parks have a different set of standards.

Action Item: Catlin will look into variances or bonuses to the open space requirement for smaller developments.

3. Review Remaining BRTF Code Amendments

Site Plan Review - Proposed changes would allow for an administrative review on some actions that currently require a Type I-L land use process. This change would reduce processing time and costs. Administrative review is typically done concurrently with building permits but occasionally as a standalone review.

Expirations of Land Use Approvals –Proposal to add one, two-year extension on Land Use approvals for most application types if the approved application meets all current applicable standards. Reece commented that often due to finances projects are done in phases and sometimes the housing styles change. Reece would like to see architectural changes be able to be made without having to go through the whole process again. There was consensus to propose a second 2-year extension for phased developments.

Neighborhood Meetings – Proposal that neighborhood meetings be scheduled, in coordination with staff, for days and times that most neighbors can attend, i.e. after work hours or lunch times. Reece asked if there are postings for neighborhood meetings and Catlin said no, that postings only occur with certain types of land use hearings.

Infill and Redevelopment - Adjustments - Proposal is to add language to allow flexibility from the standards for infill sites that should help with challenging parcels. Staff also proposes adding the 10% reduction threshold back into the adjustment language to make it easier to determine what can be processed as an Adjustment versus a Variance, which could be a lengthier review.

Nonconforming Situations – Proposed code changes would allow for more leniencies for improvements when redeveloping a non-conforming site and to allow reinstatement of nonconforming status. Catlin noted some concerns staff had implementing the concept of requiring improvements only after \$25,000 in building permits were pulled for the property. Discussion took place regarding building permit values and setting aside 10% of the value for site improvements. It was suggested that staff notify property owners every time a building permit is issued and to require owners to sign off on the permit. Shepard commented that it could be difficult tracking that threshold and it may appear business are being punished for success.

Action item: Catlin will meet with staff again to discuss how to process improvements to Nonconforming Sites.

Non-Industrial Uses in Industrial Zones – Catlin reviewed proposed amendments to allow commercial uses in existing buildings in the Light Industrial (LI) through a conditional use review. Konopa asked if commercial uses should be restricted in size and raised a concern generated from a complaint regarding the proposal to allow gyms in LI. Discussion ensued.

4. Public Input Discussion – Catlin reviewed a tentative timeline to mail the required notice to property owners, hold an open house and then public hearings in early 2014.

The Business Ready Task Force will meet at least once more to continue reviewing the proposed amendments. Staff will poll the group to see what date works the best.

5. Adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 5:02 p.m.

BRTF, Page 3  
October 14, 2013

Respectfully submitted,

Edene Rice

Administrative Assistant