MINUTES

Monday, October 14, 2019 – 4:00 to 6:30 pm
Barnes and Sawyer Meeting Rooms – 1300 NW Wall Street, Bend

Call to order and introductions (All)

Nick Lelack went over the agenda, materials provided and discussed the purpose of the committee. Each member introduced himself or herself and described their interests and reason for participation.

Members Present:

- Brent Landels – Remax Realtor
- Brian Braddock – Farmers Insurance (Retired)
- Geoffrey Reynolds – Home Owner
- Jim Beeger – Planning Commissioner
- Jim Figurski – Landscape Architect
- Jodie (Joe) Foran – Fuels Management (BLM Retired)
- Ken Kehmna – Redmond Fire and Rescue
- Martha Meeker – Home Owner
- Matt Van Coutren – Hayden Homes
- Roger Johnson – Sisters-Camp Sherman Fire District
- Patrick Davenport – City of Sisters
- Tyler Neese – Central Oregon Association of Realtors
- Karna Gustafson – Central Oregon Builders Association

All members were in attendance.

Staff Present:

- Nick Lelack, Community Development Director
- Chris Gracia, Assistant Building Official
- Peter Gutowsky, Planning Manager
- Zechariah Heck, Associate Planner
- Ed Keith, County Forester
- Tim Berg, Applications Systems Analyst III
- Adam Smith, Assistant Legal Counsel
- Amy Heverly, Assistant Legal Counsel
- Ines Curland, Applications Systems Analyst I
- Ashley Williams, Administrative Assistant

Doug Green, City of Bend, and Melissa Bethel, City of La Pine, were invited but were not in attendance. Nick Lelack said that the City of La Pine would likely send a representative to future meetings.
Review of Charter, overview of ground rules (Nick Lelack)

Nick Lelack went over the Committee's Charter. The topics included scope and other big picture items. He went over the background of committee formation, and the University of Oregon's report referencing Wildfire Prevention needs. He also covered voting procedures, attendance requirements, the neutral role of staff and the diversity of committee members. He said that since these meetings are public they will have minutes and there will be an audio recording.

Public meeting rules, best practices (Adam Smith)

Adam Smith went over Oregon Meetings Laws and discussed the ethical implications of being a public official. He discussed gifts and the State of Oregon's definition of relative. He said that before accepting any questionable gift it is best to check with legal counsel to assure there is no ethical implications in taking the gift. He discussed Conflict of Interest and Biases. He said that the committee should expect to see biases amongst its members since there is such a diverse group. He discussed the differences between potential and actual conflicts of interest. He closed by reminding the members that chain emails violate public meeting laws and explained that they should never select ‘reply all’ when responding.

Summary of R-327 (Chris Gracia / Ed Keith)

Chris Gracia gave a quick overview of R-327. He said that mapping in years prior that showed that much, if not most, of the County is highly susceptible to wildfire. He added that R-327 must be adopted entirely and not piecemealed. There was discussion about the reasoning for this, which is that it will maintain consistency since Oregon has a 'minimum/maximum code'. There were also discussions about the likelihood of the City of Bend adopting this code and the need to qualify as a hazard zone for the code to be applicable.

There was discussion about the ramifications of not adopting this code and what other counties and cities had done so far in regards to adoption. A discussion followed about maps, qualifying lots of record, subdivision build out requirements, and interpretation and intentions of the law as written.

Overview of Draft Wildfire Hazard Maps / Zones (Ed Keith / Tim Berg)

Ed Keith provided history about how the current mapping and scoring criteria was developed. He went over the four criteria for scoring a property to measure fire hazard. Those criteria are weather, topography, fuel type, and fuel distribution. There was discussion about mapping area, slope, access considerations, data sources, farmlands, and irrigation. Based on the scoring criteria
any property scoring over a seven is in a Wildfire hazard area, which was most of Deschutes County.

There was discussion about where and how to go forward with the map of raw data. It was discussed that these areas may be easier to map if the Committee knew whether or not the City’s of Bend and Redmond had planned to adopt R-327. There was a discussion about rounding scores for fire hazard and how the numbers, once rounded, would be interpreted. The discussion closed with conversations about how landscapes can change, adjacent landscapes, gaining compliance, and potential future recommendations.

Summary of University of Oregon Natural Hazard Code Audit (Zechariah Heck)
Zechariah Heck discussed the Oregon State University wildfire work plan. He said that the County already does many things to address wildfire, including Project Wildfire, which is a group that meets monthly. There was discussion about possibly using a combining zone to address wildfire. This zone would be similar to a Wildlife Combining Zone. Land use will not be as direct of a topic as R-327 and will be discussed more subtly than the discussions about the building code, which are more direct.

These discussions will not be about land that is not developable but about how to mitigate risks when the land is developed. There was discussion about developments, such as Miller Tree Farm, that have fire mitigation standards placed on them. Those mitigation standards resulted from opposition and were completed by the applicants voluntarily. There was a discussion about enforcement of the County Code.

Major Decision Points – Looking Forward (Project Management Team)

The Committee decided that the next meeting should focus on creating the Wildfire maps. It was requested that population density, water rights and irrigation be addressed on those maps.

Adjournment

Next meeting:
Monday, October 21, 2019 – 4:00 to 6:30 pm
Barnes and Sawyer Meeting Rooms – 1300 NW Wall Street, Bend