MINUTES

Monday, January 13, 2020 – 4:00 to 6:30 pm
Barnes and Sawyer Meeting Rooms – 1300 NW Wall Street, Bend

Call to Order

Director Lelack called the meeting to order. He gave a brief overview of the last meeting and went over the agenda for tonight's meeting.

Members Present:
Brent Landels – Remax Realtor
Brian Braddock – Farmers Insurance (Retired)
Geoffrey Reynolds – Home Owner
Jim Figurski – Landscape Architect
Karna Gustafson – Central Oregon Builders Association
Ken Kehmna – Redmond Fire and Rescue
Martha Meeker – Homeowner
Matt Van Coutren – Hayden Homes (left early)
Tyler Neese – Central Oregon Realtors Association
Roger Johnson, Sisters-Camp Sherman Fire District

Deschutes County Staff Present:
Nick Lelack, Community Development Director
Chris Gracia, Ast. Building Official
Zechariah Heck, Associate Planner
Ed Keith, County Forester
Boone Zimmerlee, Fire Adapted Communities Coordinator

Meeting Minutes (January 13, 2020)

Brian noted a change to the January 6, 2020 meeting minutes. A study referenced was dated 2016, but should be changed to 2015. **Roger moved to approve the minutes with the above noted change. Seconded by Brian. The motion was unanimous.**

General Comments

Ed introduced Boone Zimmerlee, Fire Adapted Communities Coordinator. He said Boone is new to the position and is here to learn about the Committee. He said that tonight they would be discussing in more detail the Land Use Provisions that the Committee would like to recommend to the Board
for implementation.

**Review of potential land use regulations and approaches**

The first question presented to the group was whether these regulations should be considered. Some of the discussion following that decision was about city requirements, county enforcement policies, and lot size. It was noted that city’s would have to have their own land use regulations. The County’s enforcement policies with code complaints were discussed, whereby the County focuses on education and voluntary compliance. Ed clarified that the County’s Hazardous Vegetative Fuels code, which is currently limited to unprotected lands, does not regulate defensible space on vacant lands greater than five acres in size.

There was a discussion on defensible space from house or property line. Staff explained the fuel breaks are informed by whether the property is developed with a structure(s) or vacant. The committee also quickly discussed if defensible space is more effective than fire hardening. Staff as well as the fire representatives on the committee explained that they are both important. A fire-hardened house could burn with or without defensible space. A traditionally built house faces the same fate, but more likelihood of burning without defensible space. The best practice is to have defensible space and a fire-hardened structure.

A majority of the group was in favor of considering defensible space requirements further.

The first item of discussion was whether to require defensible space for new structures and/or existing structures. The committee voted in favor of requiring such a standard to new and existing structures, with the understanding there would be a grace period for existing homes. The committee was also supportive of a robust education and outreach program during the grace period.

The committee also voted in favor of requiring defensible space on vacant properties (fuel breaks would be from property lines). Ed discussed the existing requirements found in DCC 8.21. Properties less than five acres in size must have a treated vegetation perimeter of 20 feet around property lines. However, if the property is adjacent to a County road, the treated vegetation buffer increases to 30 feet. Ed stated the goal is to contain a fire on the vacant lot. Several members of the committee shared concerns of larger vacant properties and agricultural uses. Concerns were resolved when it was shared that agricultural uses would typically have irrigation and thus would not be considered hazardous vegetation. Furthermore, the committee decided that even larger parcels have a responsibility to prevent fire escaping their property.
Break

After the break, the committee discussed steep slope, access, water supply, signs/property addresses, and gate requirements. Brent asked that cost estimates be provided for these standards. Staff said they would research cost estimates. When asked for a vote on whether the committee supported a steep slope regulation the committee voted: four in favor, three opposed, and two supportive of such a standard being advisory only. The committee unanimously (seven votes – Matt Van Coutran had to leave early) supported access requirements (requiring specific surface(s), minimum widths, max grade, road clearance, and turnarounds.

Staff discussed potential water supply, sign, and gate requirements. However, committee members wanted more information about what the specific standards are currently and what they could be. Staff stated they would provide more information during the next meeting.

Adjournment

Director Lelack adjourned the meeting, as there was no further business items for discussion.

**Last meeting:
Monday, January 27, 2020 – 4:00 to 6:30 PM
Barnes and Sawyer Meeting Rooms – 1300 NW Wall Street, Bend**