

**Polson Development Code Update
Advisory Committee Meeting Notes
November 4, 2009, 9:15 –11:10 a.m.
Polson City Hall, Commission Chambers**

ATTENDEES

Bruce Agrella, PDC Advisory Committee
Bob Fulton, PDC Advisory Committee
Lee Manicke, PDC Advisory Committee
Dennis Duty, PDC Advisory Committee
Cora Pritt, Polson Building and Planning Department
Dave DeGrandpre, Land Solutions, LLC
Sue Shannon, Lake County Planning Department
Todd Crossett, Polson City Manager

DISCUSSION

Polson Area Parks

- Parks Department Director Karen Sargent stated that in the past some of the parkland dedicated through the subdivision process has not been useable. As a result not much land is being accepted today. Karen said some of the City's parkland is a drain because it requires weed control but does not provide a benefit to the residents. Bob suggested that some of this land could be sold or even given away if necessary. Karen said City Attorney James Raymond is looking into this.
- Karen said that instead of parkland sometimes cash-in-lieu is being accepted. Also, impact fees are charged for parks, but the city avoids "double dipping". Dave asked how the choice is made between cash-in-lieu and impact fees and Karen suggested talking with Ron Melvin who administers the impact fee program.

Note: In a follow-up phone call Ron Melvin told Dave that when cash-in-lieu is accepted for a subdivision, the park impact fees are reduced by a proportionate amount. For example: In a 10-lot residential subdivision with a cash-in-lieu donation of \$5,000, when a lot owner wants to build a home, the park impact fee is reduced by \$500 ($\$5,000 \div 10 \text{ lots} = \500 per lot).

- Karen said when a subdivider proposes parkland she evaluates the land based on the following criteria: size, location, topography, usefulness, the City's ability to cost-effectively maintain it, overall value to the public and how it fits into the Parks Department's goal of providing recreational opportunities to all segments of the population.

- Dave asked about the current requirement of a 6-acre minimum park and Karen said that minimum is not necessary. Dennis said much smaller parks can be beneficial and the Polson Development Code (PDC) should not put a minimum acreage on park dedication in order to allow greater flexibility.
- The committee agreed that pedestrian and bicycle trails are a high priority for the public. They are widely used and add value to adjacent property.
- The committee decided it is important to be able to evaluate parks proposals on a case-by-case basis and suggested the following methodology:
 1. The subdivider meets with the Parks Director prior to preliminary plat submittal to discuss plans to meet the parkland dedication requirement.
 2. The Parks Director considers the proposal based on the criteria cited above and provides feedback to the subdivider.
 3. The subdivider submits the preliminary plat application, including a parkland proposal.
 4. The Parks Director evaluates the proposal and provides comments to the Building and Planning Official and the City Commission.
- Todd said it would be helpful to put a parks planning map or overlay in the PDC that shows existing and planned parks to aid developers, officials and citizens understand the City's and County's Polson-area priorities. Under Karen's leadership, Sue, the Polson Parks Board and a small number of parks and trails advocates will be asked to help develop the map.

Highway 93 Bypass/Alternate Route

- Todd told the committee that the CSKTs, MDT, Lake County and Polson are negotiating funding two potential studies: A study of potential bypass or alternate highway routes and a more widespread transportation study/plan for the Polson area. MDT would like the three governments to pay 15% of the cost of one of the studies each (Todd didn't have his notes and couldn't recall which one) and MDT would fund the other one entirely. Todd said that because so much had been put into this project in the past they wanted to build on what has already been accomplished, although some circumstances have changed over time. He hoped to have the funding agreement worked out within two weeks.
- Bob asked about the political environment, noting that in the past the Tribal Council had not wanted traffic to be routed around the KwaTaqNuk and effectively has veto power. Dennis stated he sensed they were open to different options, although new council members may soon be seated. He said Joe Hovenkotter, an attorney representing the Tribes on this project, had expressed some optimism. One of the studies is expected to include an evaluation of different routes' economic impacts on Polson businesses.

- Todd indicated that once the studies are underway it could be a year before the results are final, but he should have an idea of the direction the studies are pointing toward sooner.
- Dennis stated, and the committee agreed, there isn't much the PDC and zoning map can show regarding a potential bypass or other alternate routes because the final decision may be made years in the future. Todd said that given generally escalating land values and always forthcoming development there will never be fewer barriers than today so time is of the essence for the studies and decisions to take place.
- Lee said, and the committee agreed, that if an alternate route is selected, that should automatically trigger a re-review of the PDC and zoning map.

Polson Planning Area Boundaries

- Dave informed the committee of his and Sue's meeting with the County Commissioners regarding potential northwest and east boundary expansion. The Commissioners said they were open to extending the boundary northwest for approximately one mile along Highway 93 and to the east one mile along Highway 35.
- Dave showed the committee a map of the northwest area with different land uses, parcels, existing zoning designations, etc. The committee agreed to propose CIZD area where the mini-storage, lumber sales and other commercial uses are, as well as a potential CIZD area where the Sunny Hills Subdivision is, pending review of the approved land uses. Sue suggested trying to include the Stoneridge Zoning District in the planning area to aid with ease of administration and because it is likely to become annexed at some point in the future. She asked Dave to contact the majority landowners with the idea of zoning it RRZD.
- Dave showed the committee a map of the eastern area showing road infrastructure, parcels, irrigation canals and other information. He also showed USDA soils maps for the area. Dave stated that the whole area contains important/prime soils, it is very rural nature of the area and it has a 5-acre per unit density designation with incentive for cluster development. Based on these factors he recommends not trying to extend the Polson Planning Area this far because it would allow an increased density and therefore provide incentive for development in a productive agricultural area. The committee noted there is a lot of land further to the west that would/should be developed first. The committee also discussed the growing importance of local agriculture and agreed with Dave's recommendation.

Affordable/Workforce/Special Needs Housing

- The committee discussed already identified efforts to address different types of housing needs (see October 2nd meeting notes). Discussion focused on accessory dwellings, both attached and detached. Dave indicated that currently an attached dwelling unit (an apartment within the same structure as the primary dwelling unit) is considered a “customary accessory use” and is permitted in all residential districts.
- Lee indicated that maybe such apartments should not be allowed in the LRZD. Sue then indicated that on large lots, attached dwelling units might be ok, but perhaps detached dwelling units should trigger subdivision review.
- Todd mentioned the idea of a land trust owning land under structures in order to help the price stay affordable over time. He stated there are some great affordable housing programs to use as models and the committee decided to discuss this subject in more detail at its next meeting.

The committee plans to continue this discussion on November 19th from 1-3 p.m. in the Polson City Commission Chambers.