

**Polson Development Code Update  
Advisory Committee Meeting Notes  
November 19, 2009, 1:00-3:00 p.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  
Joyce Weaver, Polson Building and Planning Official  
Todd Crossett, Polson City Manager

DISCUSSION

Polson Area Parks Map

- Dave read an email message from Sue Shannon stating Karen Sargent is putting together a committee to develop a park planning map. Karen has a baseline map with parcels and landowners identified and will set up a meeting to get the project rolling soon.

Highway 93 Bypass/Alternate Route

- Todd told the committee negotiations between the CSKTs, MDT, Lake County and Polson to fund a bypass/alternate route study and also a more widespread transportation study are ongoing.

Polson Planning Area Boundaries

- Dave informed the committee he has sent letters to Ned Banning and Lonnie Haack, the two majority landowners in the Stone Ridge Zoning District, to inquire whether they would be interested in replacing the current zoning on their properties with RRZD and CIZD or similar designations. This would require annexing their properties into the Polson Development Code area.
- Dave indicated the plan to try to work with the landowners in Section 30, T23N, R20W to annex their properties into the Polson Planning Area was still on track. The committee indicated this would be a good idea given the rapid land use change that has taken place there recently. Dave mentioned it will be important to

approach the landowners in some way to gauge the level of interest. Dennis said perhaps Sue could help with this effort.

## Affordable/Workforce/Special Needs Housing

### Accessory Dwelling Units

- Bob asked the committee whether they wanted to continue to allow attached accessory dwelling units as a permitted use in LRZD. He stated it seems like most people expect single-family development in a single-family district instead of the possibility two families could be living in a single home. Bob questioned what the term “functionally separate” (from the definition of accessory) means. Dennis said it means the ability to live there, including a bathroom, bedroom and kitchen, but does not necessarily mean a separate access or separate sewer or water hookup, or that the accessory dwelling would necessarily be walled off from the primary dwelling.
- Lee and Bruce cited examples of abuse, where there are two rentals in a single dwelling within a single-family residential area. Dennis said there will be abuses from time to time and they require enforcement. But given our aging population, and financial limitations, families seem to want to live together longer. Lee said when a family takes care of an aging parent it is often for a fairly short time period. Dennis replied that life expectancy is increasing rapidly so these arrangements could go on for a long time in the coming years.
- The committee discussed what goals they were trying to achieve and Todd reminded the committee that accessory dwellings can help provide affordable housing. He also said it is important to plan for and encourage neighborhoods that are demographically mixed.
- After further discussion and at Lee’s suggestion, the committee asked Dave to provide some options for the public, planning board and elected officials to consider regarding accessory dwelling units.

### Affordable Housing Barriers

- Dennis told the committee that lands cost is the biggest barrier to creating affordable housing. He said a home can be built for \$80 per square foot, but if a lot costs \$60,000 lower-income people are priced out from the beginning. Dennis said increasing density is the key to encouraging affordable housing.
- Joyce said that if a developer is given incentives such as lesser parking space and lot coverage requirements, smaller minimum lot sizes and increased building height allowances, she wanted a guarantee that the developer would build affordable housing. Dave responded that there are affordable housing programs that require guarantees in exchange for density bonuses and other incentives. These programs are complex and he is working on providing an analysis and recommendations for the committee’s next meeting.

- Joyce said that a lot of people don't want to live right up against their neighbors. Dennis said that is a function of the market. If people can afford to live with more elbow room they can choose to. But our job is to figure out how to encourage the development of all types of housing, particularly more affordable housing.
- Todd said increased density can be beneficial, but also said there must be amenities such as parks, trails and other things to make higher density living desirable.

#### Manufactured Homes

- The committee discussed that manufactured homes are not allowed in the LRZD. Joyce noted this decision was made by the City Council in 2003. Todd said he thought the stigma with manufactured homes was pretty much gone, given the advances in building design, materials and quality over the last several years. Lee said it will be very important to clearly define and differentiate between manufactured, mobile and modular homes to prevent confusion. Dennis, Todd and Joyce said they thought allowing manufactured homes in all residential districts was acceptable so long as the homes look like site-built homes.

#### Mobile Homes

- Dave indicated mobile homes are currently only allowed in MRZD and he was not recommending a change in policy.
- Joyce said that lots within a mobile home park can be as small as 5,000 square feet. Lee asked what would happen if a mobile home or a mobile home park went away and someone wanted to build a stick-built home on a 5,000-square foot lot. Joyce responded that this would require a variance. Todd asked what we were trying to accomplish with requiring a variance in this situation. He indicated this would cost the applicant a \$600 fee, it would cost the City and board members resources by way of review time and costs, and might not accomplish anything.

#### Lot Sizes

- Dennis then asked what the "magic" behind a 7,000 square foot lot is, and suggested that making smaller lots available could support the goal of encouraging affordable housing. The committee discussed examples of smaller lots as well as newer development types and suggested they look into this further at the next meeting.
- Bob said the committee should look into the current building setback requirements as well. He mentioned that fire fighting was the historical argument for both setback and building height requirements and perhaps the abilities of the fire department has changed over time. Joyce said she has heard fire fighters say structural fires are much more common in older structures than more modern ones that meet current building codes.

### Building Heights and Views

- Dennis said it is necessary to increase the maximum building height in the MRZD. The committee discussed how this could impact the views from existing development and seemed to agree there is no inherent right to a view easement, but such easements can be purchased. Todd said this can be a politically hot issue. The committee asked Dave to look into the current wording regarding view preservation in the PDC and address this subject as necessary.

**The committee plans to continue this discussion on December 1st from 1-3 p.m. in the Polson City Commission Chambers.**