

**MINUTES
CITY OF LANGLEY
PLANNING ADVISORY BOARD
July 2, 2014**

The meeting was called to order at 3:00 PM.

ATTENDANCE: Gail Fleming, Dominique Emerson, Aaron Simpson, Roger Gage

Absent: Sue Walsh, Paul Goldfinger

Staff: Jeff Arango, Emily Ritchie.

Motion by Roger to approve the June 18 minutes, seconded by Gail. Motion passed provided 4-0.

DISCUSSION – Historic Overlay – Demolition of Historical Buildings

Jeff summarized the previous meeting, stating that there is a consensus on the board to move forward with creating standards for the demolition of historic structures. He supports developing a conservation district in the future, but does not recommend this strategy to address the Doghouse dilemma, as it would be difficult to accomplish within the 6 months of the current moratorium. Jeff described the three qualifications that would allow for the demolition of a historic structure: economic hardship, structural integrity or community benefits from the redevelopment of the site. The Historic Preservation Commission would hold the process for reviewing any application for the demolition of a historic structure, instead of the Hearing Examiner. Design standards for the downtown will also be developed and integrated into the update of Langley's comprehensive plan.

Both Dominique and Gail queried how the case for economic hardship would be determined, expressing concern that the owners of a historic structure would not be able to claim this qualification without having supporting evidence. Jeff reassured that the owners would have to provide documentation that demonstrated they had explored all options to make their building economically viable.

Bob Waterman, chair of the historic preservation commission, inquired about the possibility of adding historic buildings to a local register, but Jeff warned that this additional qualification may blur the lines too much between the two proposals for implementing standards for the demolition of historic structures and the future creation of a conservation district. Jeff sought assistance from the Historic Preservation Commission to lead outreach to property owners about creating the conservation district.

Aaron provided an example demonstrating his opinion regarding the profit the Doghouse owners could receive from the building, figured by average rent gained per square foot, would prevent them from arguing they have to tear down the building due to economic hardship.

Jeff described that the design standards for the downtown can incorporate simple revisions into the code to preserve the human scale of first street. Maintaining the 30' width that creates visual repetition will preserve the town's current experiential quality. These are design considerations everyone knows are

intuitively important but aren't currently reflected in the code. This will protect the visual fabric of the city from being disrupted by mega building projects, like Francisco's.

Aaron requested that the language surrounding maintenance of historic structures be clarified, asking if the owners have 30 days to fix the structural problem or 30 days to come to an agreement with the city about resolving the issue. Jeff replied as long as the owners are working in good faith to resolve the structural maintenance of the building, the specific issue would not need to be resolved within 30 days.

Gail agreed with Sue's suggestion to have the first statement of the ordinance concerning the demolition of historic structures pack more of a punch.

Jeff will provide the PAB with a redraft of the ordinance that includes these comments.

DISCUSSION – Comprehensive Plan Update

Jeff told the PAB that the comp plan update is beginning and public outreach will be a big piece of the process. He presented three questions to get the conversation going:

- 1 What are important issues facing Langley over next 20 years?
- 2 What things do we want to preserve in Langley?
- 3 What things do we want to change?

These questions were posed to the PAB for discussion but will also be distributed to the community through town meetings and workshops. Roger proposed administering a survey to elderly people through their water bill.

Aaron queried what sort of businesses are viable to support in the upcoming 20 years? He proposed that the comp plan update include economic regulations that are supportive of types of businesses that can actually survive. He wondered how connections between businesses can be supported to increase pedestrian circulation and activity within the central business district. He asked how we would create more space for business and commerce to take place and the possibility of creating a second business district in Langley.

Dominique stated she likes the central core of businesses in Langley and debated that the low projection for population growth within Langley would not justify the cost of infrastructure to create a new business district development. We should instead first fill in any gaps within the existing business district.

The group discussed Langley being self sufficient in the kinds of businesses, goods and services and whether it should be a priority.

Gail is interested in the comp plan update including provisions for an interconnected trail system.

Bob agreed that having a trail system in place around the city would strengthen resistance against surrounding development. He described the vision for the town's character being stuck between the

world's best retirement community or a haven for tourists and that this can be a difficult combination to cater to simultaneously.

Jeff described the difficulty of attracting younger generations and families due to the lack of rentable spaces and housing options.

The current low projection of 100-200 additional people moving to Langley over the next 20 years caused the group to consider shrinking the urban growth area.

Gail voiced interest in creating greenbelts around the current urban areas, but Jeff cautioned this can't be easily implemented through zoning. Dominique described the unintended consequences of surrounding a city with greenbelts, like Boulder, that renders the space within the greenbelts out of reach to low or middle income families.

Aaron voiced interest in creating a big park for Langley and clustering development close by to it. The group agreed that providing a loop trail that took visitors from the town to the marina would be a great idea.

Dominique asked the group to consider what core services are missing from Langley that could be supported through the comp plan update.

The next meeting will be on August 6, 2014.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:50 PM.