



Advisory Group Meeting Summary

August 14, 2008

Members Present:

Dick Ainsworth
Lee Clemmensen
Lori Davidson
Dennis Druffel
David V. Gray
Jan Hoem
Giovanna McLaughlin
Heather McMilin
Judy Smith

Others present in the audience: 5 citizens

Note: These notes supplement the presentation given during the Advisory Group Meeting on August 14, 2008. They are not meant to duplicate the presentation and they are not verbatim.

Overview of the meeting:

- ◆ Lot line houses
- ◆ Height of districts
- ◆ Lot coverage and massing
- ◆ Cost and affordability
- ◆ Cluster conservation/Ag preservation
- ◆ Next steps

LOT LINE HOUSES:

The meeting started out with discussion on the lot line house concept. Kirk described these as detached houses that are shifted to one side of the lot (at or very near one side lot line), with ample building setback on the other side of the lot. Lot line houses would only be allowed as part of a lot line development project and would not be allowed to be placed next to a house not in the (lot line) project. The purpose of this type of development is to make a more usable side yard on

a smaller size lot. A lot line house development appears no different than a conventional detached house project when viewed from the street. Other modules will provide additional standards for the lot line house concept.

Group discussion included:

- The need to regulate windows on the lot line side of the structure.
- Lot line houses could not be placed abutting an alley because all zoning districts require a rear setback.
- This type of development could go into single family areas; however, a single lot line house would not be feasible using the proposed conditions for lot line projects.
- Most of the group seemed to agree that lot line residential projects had at least a possibility of working in Missoula.

Discussion turned to the possibility of veto power of any one person or group of persons in the Advisory Group to remove an item because they didn't like it. Kirk responded by saying that the Advisory Group was NOT created as a consensus group. The group is not going to vote on items but individual input is valued and he hopes that individuals and the group as a whole would be supportive of the overall effort at the end of the process. The group serves as a "sounding board with influence." He then asked the group to discuss items they thought were not workable, not desirable, and things that may work with conditions.

The zoning district side-by-side comparison provided to the group only looks at residential uses at this point. There is not enough time to cover it all, residential uses are "incentivized" in the commercial areas and the residential zoning districts are of greater interest to the group. Some of the highest density residential districts look at convenience based businesses as an attempt to craft neighborhood commercial uses into something to be applied in or near residential neighborhoods.

HEIGHT OF DISTRICTS:

The second most popular topic at the last meeting was the proposed 35-foot height limit for most of the residential districts. The next module will contain proposed measurements and calculations. Where the group ends up on how to measure height will have a large impact on what the height will be. Duncan Associates is recommending the removal of the modified height option.

Group discussion included:

- Height should be measured from existing grade not from finished grade.
- Window wells and stair wells need to be addressed, and should not be included in the overall height calculation.
- Residences in the A zoning district have historically been built at a height of less than 40'. Area residents may not realize that the zoning district allows a 40' height.
- The side yard setback in many districts is a minimum height or one-third the height of the structure, this calculation helped to promote the use of the modified height option.
- Most people don't know the "1/3 the height" option exists.
- The "1/3 the height" option can result in tall skinny buildings.
- Suggestion: step back from the property lines as the building gets taller. The taller a building goes the further from the property line the upper stories are removed from the property line.
- The character of existing neighborhoods needs to be protected; the northside may be greatly impacted by a height change.
- The change in energy prices may affect the way homes are being built by lowering ceiling heights.

LOT COVERAGE AND MASSING:

Kirk discussed approaches to address building scale and massing used in other communities.

Group discussion included:

- The need to work toward specific design standards.
- Standards that tie back into what exists in the neighborhood.
- When reviewing standards make sure that single family standards are different than multi-family standards, be sure they apply differently to different buildings.
- Additional standards of this type could increase the cost of housing.

Kirk commented that the consultant team was not recommending the additional scale and massing controls at this time. Instead, the neighborhood conservation district was created as a tool.

COST AND AFFORDABILITY:

Mayor Engen currently has a task force looking into the affordable housing issues of Missoula. If the Mayor's task force recommends specific policy directions then the zoning ordinance can implement them. Some proposed actions currently include recommending reduction in lot area, moving away from bedroom density calculations in multi unit areas, and removal of density calculations in commercial and multi use districts. Currently Missoula does not have a policy direction in place for inclusionary zoning.

Group discussion included:

- Concern that so many hurdles currently exist that take more time and cost more money but don't get any better development. This process needs to make the overall process better, faster and save costs.
- A request was made to Kirk if he could show the Advisory Group how many additional units could be located in what locations. Kirk explained that numbers could be applied to various sites, but he is open to other ideas from the group that may be help.
- A discussion was held between Lee Clemmensen and Lori Davidson about whether the current "B" zoning district would be heavily impacted. Clemmensen suggested these areas should be canvassed. Kirk indicated that this suggestion might be impractical and that the process will continue with well advertised public meetings.

CLUSTER CONSERVATION/AG PRESERVATION:

Group discussion included:

- Minimum lot area permitted when using the Cluster Development option seems to low. Discussion led to the idea that the cluster option is meant to place all of the proposed density into one area of the property and leave a large amount of open space on the rest of the parcel.
- The public involvement process in the Conservation District will be through the subdivision process not as a rezoning or PUD.
- Townhouse would be allowed in addition to single family uses in R10, R20, R40, R80, and R200 zones and multi-dwelling would be allowed only in the R10 zone with the Conservation Development Option.
- The PNC process has been removed from the zoning ordinance.
- The ordinance should keep the good intentions of the PNC process in other areas of the proposed zoning update.
- The agricultural uses that are conditional in some zoning districts are geared toward livestock uses.
- Existing agricultural uses need to be protected against new development encroachment. Make sure the new use mitigates its impact on the existing agricultural uses and not the other way around.

NEXT STEPS:

Module 3 will be distributed to the Advisory Group in late August or early September. A notice of date and time of the next AG meeting will be announced in the coming weeks.