



Planning and Zoning Commission Draft Land Development Code Work Session Summary and Planning Department Update

Press Release for Immediate Release

Driggs, Idaho July 13, 2021

A Letter from the Planning and Zoning Commission Chair

As chairman of the Teton County Planning and Zoning Commission I would like to take this opportunity to give you a brief update on where the commission is in the process of reviewing and updating the draft Land Development Code for the County. It has been seven weeks since the May 18th public hearing and I am guessing many of you are wondering what is taking so long to make the changes to the draft before it is sent to the County Commissioners for their consideration.

First off, I think it is important to understand that there were many written comments received from the May 18th meeting and it took some time to go through all of the submissions and identify where the Planning and Zoning Commission should begin with review and proposed changes to the draft code. It was determined that the commission needed to look at individual sections and the draft as a whole.

We started our work sessions on June 15th and have been meeting on a weekly basis since. We are now up to the fourth meeting and planning to continue on a weekly basis as our schedules allow. We have our regular monthly Planning and Zoning meetings which fall on the same day as the work sessions so we do not hold work sessions on those days so that we can focus on the applications which have been submitted for our consideration.

Our first work session was focused on how we planned to review and consider all of the comments we have received and how to show changes in the May draft. We also took a look at a couple of the comment items and made some recommendations on how to change the draft code where possible considering the comments.

The last two work sessions have involved working on the zoning and density section, Chapter 2, of the draft. This is one of the sections which will affect many other parts of the draft and was one of the most heavily commented sections. We still have some work to do on this section and will hopefully finish at our next work session and move along to other areas.

All of us on the Planning and Zoning Commission understand the importance of the Land Development Code and are taking the time to make sure we consider each section before we submit our recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners.

July 6, 2021 Work Session Summary

At the Planning and Zoning Commission Work Session that was held on July 6, 2021, the conversation that began during the previous meeting was continued and recommended changes to the average density for the RN-5, FH-10 and RR-20 zone districts were discussed as follows:

RN-5, Rural Neighborhood, which encompasses the area directly north of Driggs and directly north of Victor, was proposed to remain at a 5-acre average density for parcels 20 acres or less in size and allow for a reduction to 2.5-acre average density for parcels over 20-acre in size with a minimum of 25% of the total acreage maintained as undeveloped. This change was intended to promote clustering.

FH-10, Foothills, which is proposed along the foothills of the Big Hole Mountains to the west and the Caribou Targhee National Forest to the east and south, was recommended to be reduced to an average density of 5-acres, maintaining the minimum lot size of 1-acre. There was much discussion on the appropriate density in this zone district given that it has significant wildlife value but is constrained by steep slopes which may naturally limit the density.

RR-20, Rural Residential, which is proposed for the largely undeveloped area between the two RR-5 zone districts, was proposed to be reduced to an average density of 8-acres and maintain the minimum lot size of 1-acre. Given the proximity to the towns of Driggs and Victor, it was thought that 20-acre average density was too low and 5-acre average density was too high.

Next Steps

The next work session will be held on July 20th to discuss the two zone districts currently proposed at 35-acre average density, Rural Agriculture and Lowland Agriculture. If time permits, the discussion will extend to fences, beekeeping and home businesses.

The work session will be live streamed and recorded at:

<http://tetoncountyid.iqm2.com/Citizens/Default.aspx> You may also join via zoom at:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/701658496> Meeting ID: 701 658 496.

After the Planning and Zoning Commission makes a recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners, a public hearing with the Board of County Commissioners will be held. **Other**

Resources

Please visit the Land Development Code site for more information on the project:

<https://www.tetoncountyidaho.gov/additionalInfo.php?deptID=18&pkTopics=736>

Teton County Planning Department Update

The Teton County Planning Department is currently undergoing staffing changes. The Planning Administrator, Gary Armstrong, has accepted a position as the Planning Administrator for Madison County where he currently resides. Mr. Armstrong has served as the Planning Administrator for Teton County for 3.5 years and has brought years of professional experience that has greatly benefitted the Planning Department and the residents of Teton County. Mr. Armstrong indicated that he enjoyed his time with Teton County but the new position will eliminate a difficult commute and be better for his personal and family situation. Mr. Armstrong's last day with Teton County is Friday July 16, 2021.

Senior Planner Joshua Chase also resigned to pursue other career opportunities closer to his home in St. Anthony, Idaho. Mr. Chase worked for Teton County for 5 years, first starting as a contract planner and later transitioning into a full time Senior Planner.

Teton County wishes Mr. Armstrong and Mr. Chase well in their new endeavors and is diligently working to fill the two open positions. The Planning Services Assistant, Sharon Fox, is currently the only employee in the Planning Department however, during this transition, Teton County may pursue the assistance of a part-time contract planner to deal with current planning needs.

The department will continue to accept Planning and Zoning applications however there may be some delay in scheduling public hearings until an interim protocol for the department is established. Teton County appreciates your patience during this time and looks forward to continuing to serve our community for all Planning and Zoning needs. For more information regarding the open Planning Department positions please visit: <https://www.tetoncountyidaho.gov/jobs.php>