

TO: Mike Smith, Community Development Director

FROM: Nancy Lillquist, Councilmember

SUBJECT: Draft Land Use Development Code Update comparison to NonMotorized Committee recommendations

DATE: September 12, 2011

I have reviewed article 4 of the Draft Land Use Development Code Update and have found the following areas inconsistent with the NonMotorized Transportation Committee's recommendations. The plan may be to cover some of this in the Public Works Standards, but I don't have those draft changes to review. I'm still working my way through article 5.

15.040.020-040 Streets. The NMT Committee recommended for all classes of streets: "A multi-purpose path near the street may be substituted for abutting sidewalks upon approval of the Director of Public Works."

15.40.040 Local Street Design. The NMT Committee's recommendations could be further explained in the caption (similar to the caption explanations for Arterial and Collector streets). The code needs to explain somewhere that the 20 ft street section has no parking, but paved off-street guest parking, at the rate of one space per dwelling unit, must be provided within the development in addition to the standard off-street parking requirements; that the 24 foot option has parking on one side; and that the 30 foot option has parking on both sides.

An additional NMT recommendation that I don't see in the draft code may address the Planning Commission's concerns about adjacent developments with different street designs. "Within each block, infill on existing streets will conform to the established street width." In other words, if there are multiple ownerships, the first development establishes the width for the block, but the width may vary block to block (as it does in established parts of Ellensburg, such as 3rd Ave). The NMT committee also recommended, "In neighborhoods where existing street width is ample, neighbors may choose to create a Local Improvement District to redevelop the streetscape to narrow pavement width to calm traffic or for other purposes."

Consider adding a 15.40.050, or a section under 15.41.020 to address multi-use paths, which are different than pedestrian accessways in that they are much longer (the planned trail from Dolorway to Faust Road for example), and are part of the public transportation system one-step down from a local street in the hierarchy. The Committee recommended: "Rights-of-way for multi-use trails identified in the NonMotorized portion of the Comprehensive Plan will be reserved or dedicated where they run through and/or adjacent to a proposed subdivision as a condition of development. Paths (*pedestrian accessways*) accessing multi-use trails from new subdivisions should be provided at 660 foot intervals, unless the trail is a State or County facility having different requirements." The Committee wanted legal advice regarding "reserve" or "dedicate." They did not recommend requiring construction and dedication of multi-use paths as is done for streets.

15.41.020 A. 3. Pedestrian Accessways. The Committee supported dedication of pedestrian walkways to achieve pedestrian circulation goals. We had originally said that could take the place of a local street at 660 feet, but revised the recommendation after public comment at the open house indicated that was too great an interval for auto traffic. The draft code requires the Pedestrian Accessway where a street is “impracticable” – mid-block or at the end of a cul-de-sac. The NMT Committee’s recommendation after the open house was block maximums 660 ft making any mid-block ped access less than 660 ft either voluntary, or because there is an obstruction (freeway, railroad, creek, slope, or existing development) – so unless there is some situation I’m not thinking of the obstruction would make the accessway as well as the street “impracticable.” The committee’s recommendation is to prohibit cul-de-sacs “except where it is demonstrated that development of a through street is constrained by natural features or existing plats and development.” An accessway at the end of a plat might be useful if the subdivision butts up to the John Wayne Trail or a creek, making a street crossing impracticable, but perhaps not a pedestrian accessway.

Members were concerned that the design of these pathways often created long tunnel-like un-used routes that feel unsafe because they are bordered on both sides by tall fences, and become neglected weed havens. To address those concerns, we recommended: “Pedestrian walkways shall be 20 feet wide and paved for the entire width and length with a permanent surface if fenced on both sides, or 10 feet wide paved surface if fenced on one side. Bollards may be placed at the ends of the walkway to prevent auto traffic.” The draft LDCU language may attempt to address maintenance and weed control issues. The “tunnel” issue does not appear to be addressed. NMT members recommended paved rather than concrete, and discussed, but did not include lighting in the recommendation. If the accessway is dedicated rather than private, the City would likely need to maintain it – something the committee was seeking to avoid.

The NMT committee did not contemplate departures identified I 15.41.020B, but they make sense – Ellensburg’s grid is interrupted by CWU, parks, schools, etc. The committee focused on block length in single family residential zones. Section 15.41.020C Commercial Zones is a good addition.

Figure 15.41.020(B)(1) modified grid. The example shown is great, except that it includes cul-de-sacs that could be avoided, and would be prohibited by the NMT Committee’s recommendations (unless there is a stream or steep slope there that I can’t see). Is it possible to find a different example or re-draw so as not to confuse.

Figure 15.41.020(b)(2) an Ellensburg example, appears to show a path along the canal. Unfortunately, the canal company has been opposed to trespass on their maintenance roads and may not want the suggestion of access in an official City document.

Section 15.41.030D Edges and fences. The NMT committee supported the 50% fence limit presented, and had additional options for interrupting the fencing, such as homes on corner lots face the arterial with side-loaded garages from a local street, homes on corner lots face the local street (side-yard facing the arterial) and only allow the back yard to be fenced, and shared driveways with on-site turn-arounds (hammerhead drives). These may not need to be in code, or may be part of the public works standards (driveways).

These comments are intended to describe areas for potential discussion as the Council, Planning Commission, and public reviews the draft code.