

BLACK DIAMOND CITY COUNCIL MINUTES
Council Special Meeting of May 13, 2021
Virtual Meeting Via Zoom

CALL TO ORDER, FLAG SALUTE:

Mayor Benson called the special meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and led us all in the Flag Salute.

ROLL CALL:

PRESENT: Councilmembers Deady, Oglesbee, Wisnoski, Mulvihill, de Leon, O'Donnell, Page.

ABSENT: None

Staff present: Mona Davis, Community Development Director; David Linehan, City Attorney; and Brenda L. Martinez, City Clerk/HR Manager.

PUBLIC HEARING

1) AB21-027 – Public Hearing Regarding the City's Proposed Housing Action Plan

Community Development Director Davis gave Council a brief overview of this item.

Mayor Benson opened the public hearing at 7:07 p.m.

Phil Acosta, Black Diamond stated sending in written comments on this item and noted enjoying the Planning Commission meeting that was held earlier in the week. He noted his concern on this draft Housing Action Plan is that it recommends policies to encourage more low-cost housing development as infill in Black Diamond and ignores the reality the City is already experiencing growth far beyond what our schools and roads can handle. He spoke being all about a slower pace growth with infrastructure before development and gave the example of the 288th corridor. He talked about the receptor lane that is being planned there and fears that it is more dangerous. He wanted to know why there is this temporary fix with all the buildup when we know there will be a light installed in five years and to him this is a waste a money. He discussed the Ten Trails houses and sales being above expectations and touched on the other communities with large developments under construction and how all this will affect volumes along 288th. He touched on the defect at 288th and it not being addressed in the receptor lane. He stressed having strong concerns with this receptor lane and noted what is needed now is a traffic signal. He gave the suggestion of adding flashing lights as warning like they do near Enumclaw at 416th. He stated that in the long run money and possibly lives will be saved by completing this

project in one step. In closing, he state these continue to be his concerns and thanked Council for being here tonight and entertaining his thoughts.

Kristen Bryant, Bellevue stated that she was giving testimony tonight on behalf of herself and her dad. She also noted sending an email to Council outlining her concerns with the plan. She stated her top issues are one, ensuring the affordability goal is met and added this one not having any teeth. She pointed out that it didn't ensure when all was said and done that income qualified individuals or families would be the ones placed in more affordable housing and it didn't ensure that housing would be actually affordable. She added that the second thing is services and noted there are a number of links in the document she sent and encouraged Council to check them out. She read a quote from one of the analysis she sent. She also spoke about the additional commute burden of the additional people who would move here and encouraged Council to look at the table at the end of the document she sent. She referred to page 11 of the Housing Action Plan having a section that appears to justify not enforcing agreements that require Oakpointe to provide its fair share of affordable housing and this is putting the responsibility on other areas of the city. She noted another point is public transportation and stressed it not being a viable option. She then referred to a sentence on page 12 that says city should begin work on updating the land use code to remove any barriers to housing development - she thinks that sentence is poorly worded. She added page 13 notes some pressure to redevelop older homes and doesn't think this gives very well. Page 16 talks about property tax concerns of residents and pointed out that the plan fails to address one of the major property tax concerns - the rise in school tax costs. The Housing Action plan should include the need to carefully forecast housing growth as input to the school district's capital facilities plans, and the need to adequately increase developer-paid school fees as a way to reduce the property tax aspect of housing costs. She noted on page 21 there is a conclusion the Housing Action Plan makes that those earning below 80% of AMI, housing should be encouraged, but that doesn't address why not other percentages were used such as 50% AMI or 30% AMI. She then addressed the table on commuting in her written comments.

Angela Fettig, Black Diamond shared comments she made at the Comprehensive Plan meeting with the Planning Commission as they are relevant to the City's consideration of affordable housing. She noted that safety of our roads is important for residents and affordable housing. When adding new housing in general, adding new sidewalks isn't really enough – we have to connect our existing city, or we are not helping our low incomes residents who may want to save money by walking or biking. She thinks more would like to walk or bike to support the local businesses, but it's just not safe, and we need to make it safe for residents. She shared living in the Morgan Creek development and the Ravensdale Road being unsafe for walking and there is no way for her family to enjoy the City of Black Diamond without getting into the car and driving. She touched on pedestrian safety at the new Roberts Drive tee was ignored when it was suggested to add crosswalks for pedestrian safety – those were ignored. She feels that pedestrian projects have been repeatedly delayed or ignored in the TIP. She touched on the roundabout project at the Ravensdale Road providing some limited pedestrian and bike improvements might help, but as found out in her records request to WSDOT this is being delayed. She discussed the

bicycle accident on Lake Sawyer Road and the response time it took for aid to arrive. She asked if it's right to move people to this area in the name of affordable housing and then make them choose between poor emergency services or raise their taxes for improved service. She commented on the Hwy 169 and Baker Avenue accident that happened during the t-intersection construction, and it being unsafe in that area. She stressed needing a policy to do more about our delayed pedestrian and safety projects. She encouraged Council to adopt docket item 2021-16 to prioritize safety. She talked about the length of time to get 911 service in her area. She stated we need better transportation before we need more people served with those services. We should not be relying on growth to fix safety or pedestrian problems and gave the example of the 169/Ravensdale intersection. She stated the most recent measure of vehicles shows about an average of five minutes during rush hour, and it is unsafe to cross this intersection, and there are no pedestrian improvements; they keep getting pushed out. She stated Ten Trails is not meeting their commitment on affordable housing. More housing will exacerbate the safety problem and recommends that docket item 14 on the Housing Action Plan ensures that future Ten Trails revisions include the affordable housing the city needs and not spreading it out to other parts of town. She urged Council to not add to our transportation problems, and this means not taking action to further increase housing beyond our already massive growth and our traffic problems. She thanked Council for hearing her tonight.

Mayor Benson closed the public hearing at 7:25 p.m.

All Councilmembers thanked the public for their time and input on this agenda item.

2) Council Deliberations on the Proposed Housing Action Plan

Community Development Director Davis stated that tonight is to get input from Council so she can come back with a final document for Council consideration in June. She noted the objectives need some work and would like to see what they feel the objectives should be.

The focus of Council deliberations was being clearer in the plan as the objectives are vague.

City Attorney Linehan suggested the following revisions based on Council conversation:

Objective 1

Monitor housing needs to ensure housing supply and necessary infrastructure are aligned with demand.

Objective 2

Preserve the city's hometown identity and cultural history as a welcoming community.

Objective 3

Create opportunity for affordable housing for all demographics.

Also suggested was the action section needing more meat, factoring in AMI, and adding monitoring ridership as a good goal to get to more creative solutions.

Director Davis mentioned needing to do a deep dive for where our children will go as they cannot afford housing now and will do this for our housing element in our comp plan.

In closing, Director Davis noted getting a lot of good information for revisions to the document and reminded Council she will be bringing this back to Council in a final form the middle of June.

ADJOURNMENT:

Councilmember Wisnoski **moved** to adjourn the meeting; **second** Councilmember Deady. Motion **passed** with all voting in favor (7-0).

The meeting ended at approximately 8:47 p.m.

ATTEST:

Carol Benson, Mayor

Brenda L. Martinez, City Clerk