

ELLENSBURG ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

**November 17, 2021 Regular Meeting
(5:15 p.m. to 6:45 p.m.)
Hybrid Meeting In-Person and Zoom**

Members Present: Laura Busby, Christina Wollman, Daphne Condon, James Rivard, and Steve Luten

Members Absent: Andrea Sledge, Kristine Steinkoenig

Also present: Nancy Lillquist, Council Liaison; Laura Wilson, Planner; and Jon Morrow, Stormwater Manager

CALL TO ORDER

Commissioner Wollman called the meeting to order at 5:15 p.m.

AGENDA

The agenda was acknowledged with no changes.

MINUTES

Commissioner Busby moved to approve the September 15, 2021 regular meeting minutes as presented. Commissioner Luten seconded the motion. The motion passed with all in favor.

CITIZEN COMMENT

There was no citizen comment.

NEW BUSINESS

Stormwater Presentation

Jon Morrow, Stormwater Utility Manager, introduced himself and gave a brief history of his employment with the City of Ellensburg. Mr. Morrow's purpose was to start with the basics and discuss *low impact development (LID)* and how it was implemented on the east side of Washington state. He noted the conditions underground and weather were completely different than the west side of Washington. He had input in developing the 2019 Eastern Washington Stormwater Manual. He explained that every developer, engineer, and designer must use the manual. They incorporated a lot of a things in the manual and how things are designed for development.

Low Impact Development refers to best management practices for structural and operational but they are things that can be used in their design to mimic the natural process of what was there before a development and how to get the stormwater filtered into the ground and improve water quality for surface and groundwater. The groundwater element is new in the 2019 manual. There are 118 jurisdictions that have a Stormwater Municipal Permit with Department of Ecology. There are many programs the city must operate and run, and one of them is construction site stormwater runoff and post construction site stormwater runoff for new development and redevelopments. Mr. Morrow stated developers must adhere to the 8 core elements of the manual. Of those elements, he focused on 2: treatment of stormwater and how the 25 year on-site water is retained. He explained the purpose of porous pavements and how they don't provide treatment only flow control. Mr. Morrow described how stormwater treatment and retention works and provided examples to include the Willow Street improvement and the Gateway 1 & 2 projects on University Way.

There was a slide that covered the R-tec used in some projects and then he described the Gateway projects and the way the city takes care of the stormwater when doing improvements. Mr. Morrow described the LID strategies that can be used. Permeable pavements are really good for trails and parking lots but it isn't always very good roads, because they can get plugged or they breakdown quickly. Swales are the most used in Ellensburg, but they take up a lot of space and maintenance and the R-Tec can be placed in the ground and be covered and used for parking. During construction is the time when most pollution happens. Mr. Morrow reiterated that permeable pavements are great for getting the water off the road way but it needs to be filtered in some way. The city is going to try the permeable pavement on both Gateway projects and will be evaluating how well it does in our weather conditions.

He then asked if any of the commissioners had questions.

Commissioner Rivard asked if we know that the permeable options doesn't work very well, does that mean we are going to try it anyway? Mr. Morrow noted that part of the evaluation of permits is to find out if the permeable surfaces will work in the specific project. Commissioner Wollman asked about the paths and trails. Mr. Morrow went back to the picture of the Gateway project and noted that the sidewalk will be porous pavers and the bike trail will be a permeable surface, which works because it is not a high pollution use area. The bike trail will need to be swept several times a year to make sure it doesn't get plugged. Commissioner Wollman asked about the Water quality grant that the commission approved for the glass cooperative. If the glass sand is approved by Ecology it would only help to take care of metals not any of the other things that you want to try to filter out. Commissioner Wollman also asked if there was sand in the compost mix the city uses in swales. Mr. Morrow replied that yes there is sand in the 60/40 mix of compost used. If the glass sand is approved by ecology then there would be another process to be approved to become part of the 60/40 mix in the future. Commissioner Wollman asked how much rain is in a 25 hour storm. He noted that it is 1.25 inches in 24 hours. Commissioner Wollman asked about the SEPA checklist and if there is ever a time that you need additional mitigation or if you can manage the stormwater in a development just using the city regulation and the stormwater manual. Mr. Morrow noted that if the plan submitted can't manage the stormwater by our regulations and the manual, the developer's plans are sent back for revisions until they can. Sometimes there are problems when there are engineers being used for projects that are outside of the state or based on the west side of the state.

BICYCLE ADVISORY

May 2022 Bicycle Month & Bike to Work

Councilor Lillquist noted that the Environmental commission is also the Bicycle Advisory Committee and she wanted to know if there was any interest in promoting the Bicycle Month in 2022. Commissioner Wollman commented that the bicycle month shouldn't be in May because it is so windy in May. Commissioner Wollman asked who would be organizing the events and Councilor Lillquist noted that volunteers would be needed to make it work. Parks and Rec would be able to maybe take on a small part but wouldn't take over the whole thing. The commission could also talk to the COE information officer to promote it. Commissioner Wollman asked about what has been done in the past. Commissioner Luten asked if there was an environmental club at CWU? Commissioner Condon said there was, there was also a sustainable transportation club too. Commissioner Condon would make contact with them to see if they are interested. Commissioner Luten thinks maybe the group may want to work with local businesses. Councilor Lillquist said that the High school also had a environmental club and that the Chamber of Commerce also worked to get the Bike city designation and possibly the EDA would be interested in helping. Commissioner Luten thinks that maybe we can make it a contest for ride a bike to work between different entities (including KVH, school District, CWU, downtown business etc). Commissioner Luten asked what would be the next step? Councilor Lillquist is looking for someone to spearhead the ideas and make it happen. Commissioner Luten thinks it should be on the agenda for next month so that it can be discussed some more.

STAFF UPDATE/DISCUSSION ITEMS

Energy Related Comprehensive Plan Amendment

Councilor Lillquist updated the commission on the recommendations for rebates that are going to be allowed starting January 1, 2022. The other amendments are not being addressed in this cycle at this time. There will

be a budget amount to hire a consultant to help the city figure out more about the climate change and what the next steps for the city to take in the future for the climate commitment. Commissioner Condon asked what the consultant would do for the money. Councilor Lillquist said that has not been decided yet. Councilor Lillquist noted that the information about the plan is at the Utility Advisory Commission (UAC) agenda packet. Planner Wilson asked commissioners to think about potential new members for the commission since Commissioners Rivard and Busby will be stepping down at the end of the year.

ADJOURNMENT- The meeting adjourned at 6:45 pm.

Respectfully Submitted by
Laura Wilson
Recording Secretary (Drafted 11/18/2021)