**Wheeler Citizens Advisory Committee**

**Waterfront Revitalization 2024**

**Date: May 16, 2024 @ 12:10 PM to 1:30 PM**

**Attendees:** Karen Matthews, Council/Citizen

Katie Brow, Property and Business Owner

Anna St. John, Planning Commission/Property Owner

Pax Broder, City Manager

**Absent:** Theresa O’Quinn, Business Owner

Marc Johnson/Business

Deanne Ragnell, Council/Citizen

**Guest:** No guests

**Location:** Wheeler City Hall, Wheeler, Oregon

**Roll Call** – Karen, Katie and Anna present, as well as Pax.

**Reviewed 5/02/2024 Minutes –** Reviewed, adopted with some changes, and will be posted to City website

1. **Review Status of Draft Document**

Karen and Deanne continued assembling First Draft of Proposed Waterfront Architectural Design Elements and Standards

See handouts.

**NOTE**: Pax noted that when recommendations for policy changes are being proposed, they need to be made during meetings open to the public (e.g., need to start having policy meetings open to the public in person and via Zoom).

**Homework**: Committee will review draftdocument. A St. John will check current Zoning Ordinance (e.g., Design Review and possibly individual zones) to see where these elements and standards might apply.

1. **Historical District Status Update**

* Katie shared that she has been pursuing a historic designation on National Register of Historic Places for the Old Wheeler Hotel (12 years so far, still compiling additional information, and has not submitted the application yet). National Register of Historic Places is US list of buildings, districts, structures, sites and objects important to local, state, and national history. The review process includes Oregon Parks and Recreation with the review timeframe to be determined. After the designation is approved by the State, then it will be presented to the City Council.
* Katie also shared information about the Oregon Mainstreet Revitalization Grant - Would need a citizens’ advisory board. Form 501(3c) or other non-profit until Historic District established. Use Katie’s building as an anchor and then identify 4-5 additional buildings for a proposed project. Goal would be to preserve the core of downtown. Examples include La Pine and Willamette Falls projects.
* She also mentioned Visit Tillamook Coast regarding possible funds for historic signs (Coverdale mentioned as an example - murals and walking tour pamphlet). Katie is working with the Tillamook County Historical Society on this project.
* Question about the difference between a Historic District and Urban Renewal District:
  + Some definitions for Historic Districts:

a historic district is: a geographically definable area, urban or rural, possessing a significant concentration, linkage, or continuity of sites, buildings, structures, or objects united by past events or aesthetically by plan or physical development.

* + Some definitions from the internet for Urban Renewal Districts:

<https://www.oregon.gov/DOR/forms/FormsPubs/urban-renewal-circular_504-623.pdf> **Oregon Revised Statute Chapter 457 describes how the system works. This law gives each city and county the ability to activate an urban renewal agency with power to propose and act on plans and projects to remove “blight.” Examples of blight include buildings that are unsafe or unfit for occupancy or the existence of inadequate streets. The area where the work is to be done is known as a “plan area.”**

* + **An urban renewal agency is activated when the city or county governing body declares by ordinance that a blighted area exists in the city or county and there is a need for an urban renewal agency to function in the area. The urban renewal agency proposes a plan for improving the area. Following public notice and hearing, and after considering public testimony and planning commission recommendations, the city or county may approve the urban renewal plan by ordinance. Unless required by local law, no public vote is necessary.**

Urban renewal districts are areas within a city or county that undergo revitalization efforts to encourage economic development and improve community conditions. Here’s how they work:

Purpose and Goals:  
The primary goal of urban renewal is to support economic development and enhance the community.  
Urban renewal districts aim to attract private-sector investment by addressing blighted conditions and creating an environment conducive to growth.

Activation and Planning:

When an area is identified as blighted (e.g., unsafe buildings, inadequate streets), the city or county can establish an urban renewal agency.  
The agency proposes a plan for improving the designated “plan area.”  
After public notice and hearings, the city or county may approve the urban renewal plan by ordinance.

Funding:  
Most urban renewal plans are funded through local government property tax levies.

**Next Steps**: City Manager has set up a workshop for City Council with Planner for June 2024.

**Wheeler Waterfront Objectives Update**

* 1. **Railroad Property**

Katie shared some historical (1990?) deed/assessors records indicating that right-of-way was historically 30 ft to either side of the centerline (vs current 50 ft to either side pursuant to Port of Tillamook records)

* 1. **Studies Required**

**Brownfield** - Regarding BMLLC property, County received an EPA Brownfields Grant and used some funds to update a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) (to include more than the previous area assessed) and most recently submitted a Phase II ESA work plan to collect soil and water samples in areas that were not previously sampled. Apparently, some activity was recently observed on this property.

**Waterfront Setbacks** – Currently, shoreline setback for non-water dependent uses is 30 ft. State safe harbor setback = 75 ft with ability for developer to build within setback with mitigation/habitat enhancement.

**Current Grants related to Waterfront Projects:**

* Bathroom upgrades
* Salmonberry Grant
* Additional ones?