Thurston County Green Development Stakeholders Group  
Stakeholders Meeting #6  
July 7, 2010 - 3:00 to 5:00 p.m.  
Thurston County Courthouse, Bldg 1, Rm. 152

Meeting Summary

Project Purpose: Thurston County seeks to engage key stakeholders to craft a regional strategy for fostering green development across the County.

Members in Attendance  
Angela White, Olympia Master Builders  
Graeme Sackrison, TCAT  
Joseph Becker, Ion Ecobuilding  
Scott Bergford, Scott Homes  
Daimon Doyle, Doyle Custom Homes, Inc  
Kellene Richards, Prodigy Energy  
Tessa Smith, The Artisans Group

Staff in Attendance  
Tony Kantas, Resource Stewardship

Agenda items:
- Discuss Cottage Housing
- Briefly discuss topics for Meeting #7

Tony introduced himself and started the meeting with a round of introductions. The discussion began by discussing the benefits of having a Cottage Housing Ordinance, which include energy efficient dwellings based upon their maximum size and the affordability it provides. It was mentioned that the City of Olympia does have a Cottage Housing Ordinance but is difficult to follow because the requirements are spread through-out the ordinance. A copy of a Cottage Housing Development study prepared by the King County Housing Alliance was emailed to all stakeholders a few days prior to the meeting to update them on the cottage housing concept.

A copy of the City of Lacey Cottage Housing Ordinance (Chapter 16.62) was given to each of the stakeholders for their review at the meeting. Graeme Sackrison gave an overview of his...
discussions with the City of Lacey regarding cottage developments that have occurred within the City. There have been no cottage housing developments in the City in the time the ordinance was adopted in 2008. However, there are a couple cottage types of developments within the City that were constructed in the 1980’s. It was decided by the group to read through the Lacey Ordinance together to see if the standards make sense, to analyze the usability of the ordinance, and if the ordinance should be used as a model to draft a County Cottage Housing Ordinance.

Some of the questions raised in the review of the Lacey Ordinance include:

1. 16.62.030(F)(2) requires each cottage to abut at least two sides of the common open space.
   Comment: It may be difficult to design every cottage dwelling to be adjacent to open space on two sides of the structure.

2. 16.62.030(H)(1) states cottages that face the common open space or common pathway must feature a roofed porch at least eighty square feet in size with a minimum dimension of eight feet on any side.
   Comment: Some stakeholders believe 80 square feet may be too much.

3. 16.62.020 puts limitations on zones that permit cottage housing developments.
   Comment: Should there be limitations to what residential zones that permit cottage housing, to host residential infill?

4. 16.62.030(J) requires the setbacks of the underlining zone to be complied with for cottage housing development.
   Comment: Most residential zones require a 20-foot front yard setback, unless the frontage is a private road. A 10-foot front yard setback may be more appropriate to all cottage housing development situations.

5. 16.62.030(B) allows a density increase of two cottage units for each regular dwelling unit allowed under the subject properties zone.
   Comment: It may be more beneficial to only give the density bonus if the construction is built to the standards of a recognized green certificate building program. The code could also be written to give x amount of bonus if a green building certificate program is utilized, x amount of a bonus if low impact development stormwater techniques are utilized, and x amount of a bonus is allowed if an alternative energy source is used.

6. 16.62.030(N) requires all cottage housing developments to utilize low impact development (LID) techniques.
   Comment: Some properties may be difficult to utilize LID techniques as a result to soil types, topography, and/or the drainage basin the property may be located.
Daimon Doyle stated that there are a few other good ordinances such as the City of Langley, City of Seattle, City of Redmond, and the City of Shoreline to name a few that could also provide good guidance in writing a Cottage Housing Ordinance. Prior to the meeting, Daimon had sent an email link that provided pictures and biographies of cottage housing developments that have occurred in each of these cities. The email link was sent to all stakeholders. www.rosschapin.com/Projects/PocketNeighborhoods/PocketNeighborhoodsOpener.html

It was decided for Tony to write a draft ordinance for the stakeholders to review at the next meeting.

Joseph Becker expressed his interest in co-housing and accessory dwellings. Further research needs to be completed by the county regarding co-housing. Accessory dwelling units (ADU’s) are permitted in each of the urban growth area’s but are not permitted in the rural portions of the county. The rural zoning ordinance does permit family member units and guest houses. County staff is going to do further research on the subject of accessory dwelling units within the rural portions of the county and ensure if they were permitted it would be in compliance with the Growth Management Act.

It was determined that that we will review a draft cottage housing ordinance at the next stakeholders meeting. Once it is drafted by the stakeholders it will be presented to the Thurston County Planning Commission for a recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners.

Daimon Doyle thinks it would be a good idea for the stakeholders group to discuss PACE loans at a future meeting. Information regarding PACE loans can be found at www.pacenow.org. Daimon stated further that we don’t currently have any statewide enabling legislation on the table, but he has spoken to a handful of representatives that are interested and believe that we could move a bill as early as this coming session. He believes Thurston County should be poised to not only adopt but be a leader in this program presuming our legislature puts the vehicle in place.