

JGD – 2021-2022 Planning Commission Priorities

Hopefully a review of the Yachats Municipal Code regarding Fences, Hedges, and Walls can be completed at the June 2021 meeting.

As I understand it The Wetlands Inventory was completed in 2011 with only paperwork needing to be done. This is something that staff should be able to finalize without much, if any, input from the Planning Commission.

Again, as I understand it, a Street Light Plan seems to be more in-line with what the Public Works and Streets Commission would be doing. As far as the lighting ordinance is concerned almost all the streetlights are governed by ODOT and/or Lincoln PUD so the connection with the ordinance is slight.

Parking has been an issue for some time so working with Laura Buhl on the workshops and parking inventory review as soon as possible would be appropriate. The summer months are the busiest time of the year, and we will get the best data by doing this work now. Once we have the data, we can move into integrating it into our larger planning processes.

Moving forward, priorities of the Planning Commission need to incorporate current and future planning needs. Every element that currently is on our list of items is contained within the Comprehensive Plan making a review of the Comprehensive Plan of the utmost importance. Whether it is water conservation, building heights, architectural standards, or housing and ADUs. Before any of these items can be fully discussed and revised basic data is needed. The current Yachats Zoning Map is decades old. Lots have been divided and built on and that information is needed to move forward. A Buildable Lands Survey is another piece of missing data. Without a current survey trying to plan becomes a guessing game. For instance, water. Without knowing how much land is available for development, and for what uses it is zoned for, we can only guess how much water will be needed, how to conserve it and how to move forward with growth.

Housing. Housing is probably the biggest issue Yachats is dealing with now. The lack of housing choices in varying types and affordability is affecting the quality of life for many people who call Yachats home and many more who would like to call Yachats home. This isn't an issue of "affordable" housing it is an issue of equitable long-term planning needs and the economy of Yachats into the foreseeable future. Addressing the potential of ADUs is only a small, although significant, portion of the discussions needed. A Housing Needs Assessment was done by Lincoln County and Yachats can, and should, build a local needs assessment using that existing report as a base.

Significant long-term planning has not been done in Yachats. The recent increase in growth has exposed the deficiencies in our Comprehensive Plan and Municipal Code. Our priority should be to address this void in long-term comprehensive planning. This is a large and time-consuming project but without strong comprehensive planning growth will happen "to" Yachats rather than with input by and for the Yachats Community.

Several factors are all in place: A twenty-year water plan was recently completed, a drinking water protection plan has been developed, along with an effort at creating a water protection partnership, the 2020 census numbers will be coming in soon, Yachats is financially well situated and has received federal COVID relief funding, an effort is being made to develop a partnership with South Lincoln Water PUD that would share resources, a proposal that could have large implications to Yachats' land use planning and the availability of assistance from DLCD. All these developments are happening at a time when Yachats and the central coast are experiencing dramatic growth in construction and real estate sales.

Right now, we have a chance to really make a positive difference for this community. By creating a Citizen Involvement Subcommittee that could work with us and the other Commissions on the different critical planning areas such as water, infrastructure, housing and economic development, and transportation/circulation planning we could develop a cohesive planning process that brings all the City Commissions together to move Yachats forward.