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Subject: Citizen Involvement in Yachats

To: Lance Bloch <lancebloch1@gmail.com>, Lee Elliott <citymanager@yachatsmail.org>

Hello Lance and Katherine, hope you're both enjoying the holidays and winter weather! As you requested at the P.C.'s December meeting, Lance, here are some of my thoughts regarding citizen involvement in our fine city. Feel free to share this email with your fellow Commissioners!

I believe that Yachatians have ample opportunities to participate in city government based on the number of available City commissions and committees, as evidenced by the high level of resident participation. However, several Planning Commissioners have said that the City could improve its outreach and education efforts as there are those who are not aware of, or understanding of, or able to successfully provide input to, the City's various activities and decision-making.

I think that the Planning Commission could form its own Committee for Citizen Involvement (CCI) to help address this need. Or, if other City commissions/committees find they have a similar need for improved education and outreach, the Mayor and Council could create a City-wide CCI. I do not see the need for, or benefit of, more than one CCI in the City.

The Planning Commission could improve how it educates and engages the Yachats community (residents and business owners/operators) on land use planning issues/activities through a CCI. Council-appointed CCI members would, ideally, be overseen by the City planning director and have their activities guided by the Planning Commission. In general, CCI activities would involve performing community outreach to Yachats residents and the business community around one or more Planning Commission projects and providing valuable feedback to the Commission by organizing/facilitating public forums and conducting community surveys, among other possible tasks. I think this committee would be most effective if free of City staff or existing Planning Commissioners as members. Both already have enough work on their respective plates!

Some Planning Commission projects that might benefit from the efforts of a CCI include:

- 1) The DLCDC-funded Housing Needs Assessment and Housing Implementation Plan, which could benefit from greater public outreach and involvement through the efforts of a CCI. However, these two grant funded projects also include the formation of a local task force comprised of diverse housing stakeholders to help guide the plans' development.
- 2) The DLCDC-funded Parking Study, particularly in obtaining public input and explaining the results and next steps.
- 3) A major update or rewrite of the City's comprehensive plan.
- 4) Annual work plans. For example, the CCI could formally survey the community on a list of possible Planning Commission projects/activities to learn which rank the highest in importance based on survey responses, and share its findings with the Planning Commission for consideration when preparing its annual work plan for Council approval.

If one City-wide CCI was formed by our Mayor and Council, it should fall under the direction of the City manager. Regardless of how many commissions/committees this CCI serves, it should have a CLEAR purpose and objectives, such as:

Purpose: Complete tasks relating to community outreach as directed by the commission(s)

- Core Objectives
 - Outreach and Education – Educates the community on the workings of the commission(s) and ongoing and upcoming projects and initiatives.
 - Community Input Process – Assists commission(s) with collecting community feedback and provides community feedback updates to the commission(s).
- The CCI operates as a support body for the commission(s), it does NOT have an oversight role and it must support the decisions and directives of the commission(s).

So these are my thoughts. If appointed as a new Planning Commissioner by our Mayor and Council in early January, I look forward to continued discussions with you and your colleagues at your next work session and/or regular meeting.

Happy New Year!

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Yachats