

LID Community Workgroup Meeting #2

Notes

Thursday, Aug. 27, 2015 – 10AM-Noon
Thurston Regional Planning Council – 2424 Heritage Ct. SW, Suite A, Olympia, WA
Conference Room A (first floor)

Attending: *Mike Burnham, Veena Tabbutt and Paul Brewster -- TRPC; Pat Allen, Allison Osterberg, Heather Saunders Benson – Thurston County. Ron Thomas, Alex Smith, Donna Weaver, Troy Nichols, Steve Swan, Amy Head, Richard Davis, Art Castle, Mark Kitabayashi.*

Brewster began a greeting and review of the meeting agenda. He then asked workgroup members to introduce themselves.

Burnham ensured workgroup members had collected handouts for their binders. Among the handouts were notes from Meeting 1, which he reviewed. Parking and Buildings, which were among the topics that garnered the most interest from workgroup members at Meeting 1, were on the agenda for this meeting. (See Meeting 1 notes for additional details)

BMP PRESENTATION

Allen then provided a 20-minute presentation about LID Best Management Practices, or BMPs. (workgroup members provided printout of the PowerPoint slides). The presentation discussed changes to the County's Drainage Design and Erosion Control Manual, the proposed LID Performance Standard, and types of BMPs (e.g., preserve existing vegetation, limit impervious surfaces, rain gardens, green roofs).

A key takeaway is that the NDPES municipal stormwater permit's LID requirements can be satisfied by using a menu of LID BMPs or by meeting the LID Flow Duration Standard. Workgroup members discussed the merits of various BMPs presented on slides.

Osterberg then handed out LID issue papers related to Buildings and Parking; the papers provided an overview of what questions and code sections the County LID Workgroup considered, as well as the workgroup's draft recommendations.

Osterberg provided a PowerPoint and printed presentation of each topic.

BUILDINGS

Osterberg's presentation showed how building-related LID practices, including low-impact foundations (a.k.a., pin foundations), cisterns/rain barrels, and green roofs. She explained that such practices are allowed by Thurston County's existing codes.

The issue paper explained that the County LID Workgroup considered whether Thurston County should adopt some or all of the International Green Construction Code (IGCC) as a way to reduce stormwater impacts and encourage buildings' use of green roofs, cisterns and other LID practices. To the same end, the County LID Workgroup also considered whether and how Thurston County should offer incentives and education.

The IGCC, developed by the International Code Council (ICC), is the first model code to include sustainability measures for the entire building project — from design through construction, certificate of occupancy and beyond. According to the issue paper, the [IGCC](#) establishes minimum green requirements for new and existing buildings, and it acts as an overlay to the existing set of ICC codes, including the International Building Code and International Existing Building Code.

Ultimately, the County LID Workgroup decided not to recommend that Thurston County adopt the IGCC as a code overlay, the issue paper noted. The IGCC is highly prescriptive in some cases (e.g., soil and water quality protection) and could potentially conflict with the DDECM. In other cases, the IGCC is overly broad (e.g., with regard to cisterns) so as not to be of much guidance. The DDECM already lists vegetative roofs as a BMP and references the same ASTM (American Society for Testing and Materials) standards as referenced in the IGCC.

Osterberg noted that the County LID Workgroup recommended amending the DDECM to reference appropriate aspects of the IGCC as well as the Puget Sound Partnership LID Technical Guidance Manual for Puget Sound's design specifications and other requirements for vegetated roofs, minimal excavation foundations, and rainwater collection systems. The County workgroup also recommended creating outreach tools for building developers, owners and operators that reference technical details about vegetative roofs, minimal excavation foundations and rainwater collection systems.

Osterberg asked Community LID Workgroup members how the County should incentivize such practices. The Buildings issue paper concluded with a list of incentives offered by other municipalities.

On the subject of pin foundations, Castle noted that they work best with production (at least 4-6 unit at a time) housing. There are high engineering costs, so mass production leads to economies of scale.

The issue paper noted that non-residential properties that implement any stormwater BMPs and document their water quality benefit can receive a 25 percent credit. Despite a lot of outreach, few property owners utilize this incentive, she added.

Thomas called 25 percent a "token amount" that should be increased to 50-75 percent. Cost is a major issue, he explained. ... Thomas also suggested creating an impervious surface credit for projects with bike and motorcycle parking.

Head asked about the County's stormwater fee schedule. Project staff explained that there are initial and annual stormwater fees; the revenue is used for capital projects, inspections, staff salaries and

other needs. There was general concern that there may be a “disconnect” between who pays and who benefits from the credits.

If stormwater credits are increased, there is the question of whether there will be adequate stormwater fee revenue to meet growing needs. More LID projects will require more inspections, Osterberg noted. Weaver said faster permit review and fee credits could help incentivize building-related LID practices. Osterberg cautioned, however, that theoretically every project could warrant expedited permit review if LID is to become the “preferred and commonly used approach” to site development, as noted in the Ecology LID permit.

Kitabayashi said better education is needed about the benefits (economic and environmental) of such LID practices. “Green-Built” homes is a niche market today, he contended. Education and incentives could help broaden consumer demand for homes featuring the BMPs noted above and offset any associated premium costs. There was general discussion about what factors spur a person to buy a particular home; there was disagreement about how big a factor is environmental sustainability.

In terms of commercial buildings, Davis said a major criterion for Evergreen when constructing a project is that the green features are affordable, sustainable and durable, not just “green for the day.”

Again, the duration of incentives came up. Smith said the Port of Olympia is considering environmental incentives for developers – for example, discounts in lease fees associated with Port-owned properties. She wonders, however, when such incentives should end if LID is to become common practice.

PARKING:

Osterberg’s presentation provided an overview of the County LID Workgroup’s process for reviewing parking elements of the Thurston County Code. She noted that required off-street parking is one of the largest sources of new impervious surfaces on a site. Further, many existing sites are overbuilt for parking needs.

The Thurston County Code currently requires minimum – but not maximum – parking standards. Project staff reviewed national and local standards to consider changes to overcome this and other LID barriers.

The County LID Workgroup recommended the following:

- Make maximum = minimum requirement
- No change to most categories: residential, hotels, hospitals, restaurants
- Decreased amount: auditoriums, high schools, offices, recreation facilities, warehouse, manufacturing

- Medical/Dental/Banks: 1 stall/200 sq ft → 1 stall/250 sq ft
- Retail: 1 stall/200 sq ft → 1 stall/300 sq ft
- Warehouse: 1 stall/800 sq ft → 1 stall/2,000 sq ft
- New categories: senior housing, shopping center, ministorage, mixed use
 - Senior housing: 1 stall/2 dwelling units, plus guest spaces
 - Shopping center: 1 stall/250 sq ft up to 200,000 sq ft plus 1 stall/300 sq ft above 200,000 sq ft.

The County LID Workgroup’s draft recommendations would also provide greater allowances for shared parking and joint parking, according Osterberg’s presentation.

- Greater allowances for shared parking and joint parking
 - Up to a 50% reduction for joint parking
- Less than minimum allowed:
 - access to transit
 - sufficient on-street parking
 - parking demand study
- More than minimum allowed:
 - Above or underground structure
 - Parking demand study

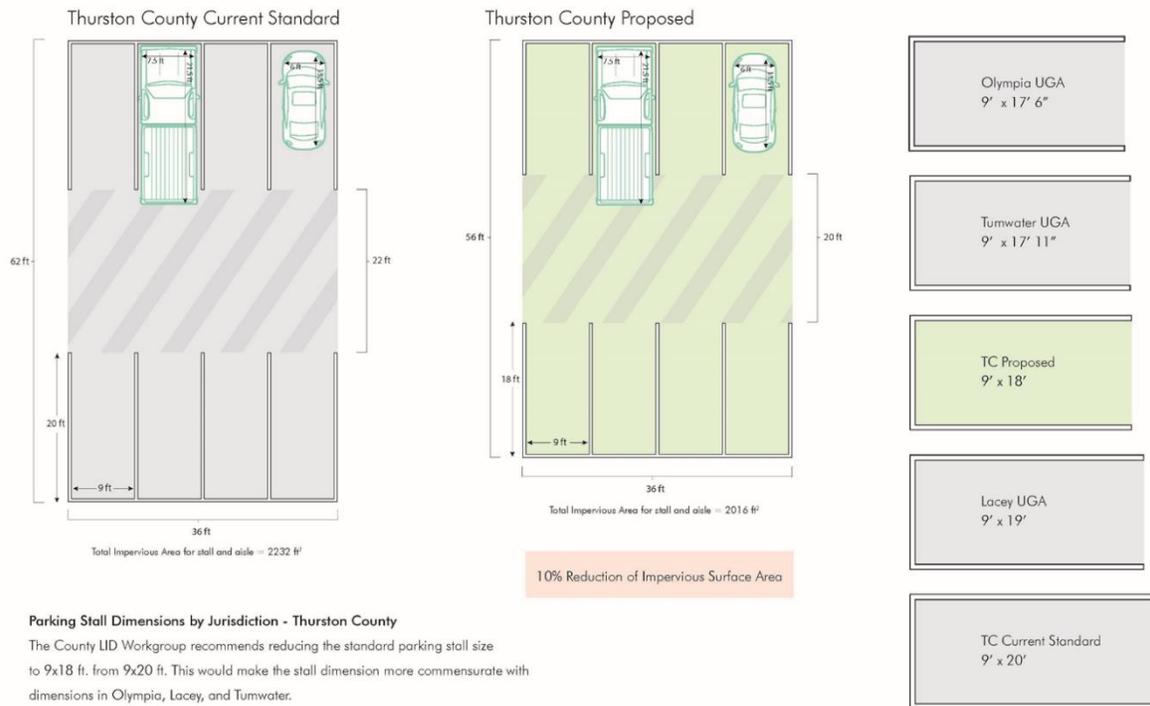
In terms of parking lot landscaping and surfaces, the County LID Workgroup recommended the following:

- Parking areas larger than 5,000 sq ft will need to have 10% set aside for internal landscaping
- Landscaping shall be designed to provide detention and treatment of stormwater, wherever possible
- Parking areas may be surfaced with any approved hard surface (includes pervious materials)
 - Except: no gravel in Grand Mound UGA
- Parking stalls above the maximum required to use a pervious surface, unless site makes this infeasible

The County LID Workgroup also recommended changing parking stall dimensions:

- Stall width stays the same
- Stall length shrinks from 20 ft to 18 ft
- Aisle width shrinks from 22 ft to 20 ft
- 35% of stalls can be “Compact” (7.5 x 15 ft)
- 10% of stalls can be “Oversize” (9 x 20 ft)

Osterberg handed out a graphic of the changes (below):



Workgroup members walked to a lot adjacent to TRPC; the lot had the existing and proposed stall dimensions marked with chalk. A mid-size and large vehicle were parked in the stalls to show how they would fit actual vehicles.

There was general support for the recommended changes. Several workgroup members commented that the proposed stall dimensions are adequate and essentially commensurate with those required by Olympia, Tumwater and Lacey.

Thomas remarked that he liked the 10 percent reduction shown in the graphic above. Further, he liked that there would be the allowance of oversize stalls to support larger vehicles.

Davis suggested, however, that the County study vehicle registration statistics to ensure the stall dimension recommendations comport with the actual fleet of vehicles on the road. He also advocated leaving some discretion for building owners regarding the number of parking spaces, and even the design of those spaces. He added that he does not oppose having parking minimums and maximums, so long as they are not equal.

Ben Alexander, who could not make the meeting, e-mailed a list of comments regarding the proposed parking recommendations. Davis also e-mailed comments related to the draft recommendations and Alexander's comments. Following the meeting, Burnham forwarded the e-mails to the full workgroup.

Burnham noted that the next meeting will be Sept. 24. The workgroup will take a tour of two projects -- commercial and residential -- that feature LID elements that the workgroup will be discussing at future meetings. Workgroup members should arrive at TRPC and load into two vans to visit the sites: Olympia Regional Learning Academy (ORLA); Habitat for Humanity "Deyoe Vista" cottage housing.

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