

GUNNISON COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
PRELIMINARY AGENDA: FRIDAY, JANUARY 15, 2021

- 8:45 a.m.**
- **Call to order; determine quorum**
 - **Approval of Minutes**
 - **Unscheduled citizens:** A brief period in which the public is invited to make general comments or ask questions of the Commission or Planning Staff about items which are not scheduled on the day's agenda.
- 9:00 a.m.** **Building Official Crystal Lambert:** Public Hearing to take public comment concerning a proposal to fully implement the air leakage limit section of the International Residential Code, 2015 edition.

Gunnison Com Dev is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: Planning Commission Meeting 1-15-21

Time: Jan 15, 2021 08:30 AM Mountain Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://zoom.us/j/94524065518?pwd=REI1QUUp5SGxLTFBiRkhuOWh4dEFVUT09>

Meeting ID: 945 2406 5518

Passcode: 150939

One tap mobile

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Find your local number: <https://zoom.us/u/ael4Y59DBW>

ADJOURN

NOTE: Unless otherwise noted, all meetings are conducted by ZOOM meeting until further noticed. This is a preliminary agenda; agenda times may be changed up to 24 hours before the meeting date. If you are interested in a specific agenda item, you may want to call the Planning Department (641-0360) ahead of time to confirm its scheduled time. Anyone needing special accommodations may contact the Planning Department before the meeting.

**GUNNISON COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
Friday, January 15, 2021**

The Gunnison County Planning Commission conducted a regular meeting using the Zoom platform. Present were:

Chairperson-AJ Cattles	Director of Community and Economic Development-
Vice-Chairperson- Jack Diani	Cathie Pagano
Commissioner-Laura Puckett Daniels	Senior Planner – Rachel Sabbato
Alternate Commissioner-Andy Sovick	Manager of Administrative Services- Beth Baker
Alternate Commissioner- Scott Cox	Others present as listed in text

Recused/Absent/Seated:

Absent: Commissioners Vince Rogalski and Diego Plata

Seated: Alternate Commissioners Andy Sovick and Scott Cox

With a quorum present Chairperson Cattles opened the regular meeting of the Planning Commission.

Moved by Diani seconded by Cox to approve the Planning Commission meeting minutes of, December 18, 2020 as amended, the motion passed unanimously.

Building Official Crystal Lambert conducted a public hearing with the Planning Commission to take public comment concerning a proposal to fully implement the air leakage limit section of the International Residential Code, 2015 edition.

With a quorum present Chairperson Cattles opened the public hearing.

Chairperson Cattles seated alternate commissioners Andy Sovick and Scott Cox for the meeting and the vote.

Manager of Administrative Services Beth Baker confirmed adequate public notice.

Building official Lambert explained the air leakage regulations pertain to reducing air leakage in new residential dwellings being constructed. The building code has been amended, and in force for three years. But, a builder was not required to pass the blower door test during that time period. The past three years have been used to work with the building community to ensure they have the knowledge required to construct a building able to pass a blower door test. The building department has collected three years of testing data. A builder is asked to construct a building that will allow a maximum of three air exchanges per hour. The building department has worked with contractors to help them understand construction methods and the results have consistently improved. Many of the new structures are coming in at less than three air changes per hour. She added because the standard was not formally adopted some contractors have not taken the

necessary steps to limit air leakage. Lambert explained the blower door testing is conducted by a third party, not Gunnison County.

Lambert said it is now time to enforce the code, paying attention to air leakage and the whole assembly. She pointed out the ventilation can be controlled by the occupant. She said there have been two work sessions and now a public hearing with the Planning Commission, we are asking for a recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) for adoption. The BOCC will then conduct a work session and a public hearing. The Planning Commission would include recommending additional mid-build inspections and continued education, to ensure success of the projects.

Sovick spoke to the Planning Commission noting his concerns with the implementation of the air leakage limit section of the International Residential Code, 2015 edition. He cited his concerns:

- We have a relatively small number of new residences built each year; implementation of this would not result in a large green house gas reduction.
- The cost of housing, in particular work force housing has increased significantly. Adding new regulations will increase the cost of building.
- The cost of fuel could go up in the future, but there is not an end in the foreseeable future for affordable methane.
- The need for additional mid-build inspections could increase the cost of a building permit.
- With the increasing cost of work force housing, we could end up with no middle class, only wealthy homeowners.

Sovick recommended staff continue to educate and encourage, rather than regulate. He said this regulation will not create an equitable community, and is not in favor of the implementation.

Cox agreed with many of Sovick's issues. He added allowing smaller lots would also help lower work force housing costs. He said we may also need to deal with existing homes. He agreed with Sovick that this would be a very small green house gas improvement, because of the limited number of new residences built each year.

Sovick added the costs of materials keep going up. The price of lumber can't be changed. The addition of regulations will not help lower the cost homes.

Puckett-Daniels suggested educating the builders could limit the number of additional inspections needed. She asked if government could be nimble enough to help those builders who really need it. Lambert noted that is what we currently do, we are already there. Lambert added we know the contractors in need of extra help and extra walk throughs. Someone new to the building community will get more attention. The inspectors already do air barrier inspections whenever on site. Lambert said the building department can handle any additional inspections.

Building Inspector Charlie Dominguez agreed sometimes inspections can be doubled up, adding this shouldn't be a large burden on the department.

AJ Cattles noted when building an entry level house, one must save money a little at a time. More regulations increase costs. The new electrical code regulations could increase the electrical costs by an estimated 20%. Those really impact the first-time homeowners and entry level owners.

Diani asked how much a blower door test costs; it was noted approximately \$400. He pointed out \$400 could be made up in heating and energy costs fairly quickly.

Building contractor Brett Akins supported Sovick. All the new regulations continue to add to entry level building costs. The cost of materials has increased. When a blower door test is conducted the job site is closed down, increasing costs.

Sustainable Operations Director John Cattles said this is a two-sided argument. Much of the insulating etc. is already being done. The code has been adopted this is enforcement of the code. This is about the consumer, not enforcing the code is not fair to the homebuyer. Balance enforcing the regulations with the life cycle costs for consumer protection. Leaky homes can be the sick homes with mold. Enforcing the regulations could ensure the houses perform as they are intended to. This is really about the end user of the home

Contractor Andy Tocke does blower door testing. He agreed the consumer protection side is very important. He noted a home that does not pass the blower door test can be very expensive to heat. He added enforcement is vital. There are more cost-effective methods to build a tight house. He said more attention to detail would be beneficial.

Community Development Director Cathie Pagano stated consumer protection is a part of our job and we take it very seriously. An energy efficient house is important for the life of the house.

Lambert explained three air exchanges per hour is a strict requirement. It is a goal most of the local builders actively work for. She said during the construction process the building department motivates the contractors with the enforcement of codes. The majority of the local building contractors achieve the desired result. The other component is the new contractors building in the county, they need more supervision.

Sovick said there are other ways to achieve these goals. We need to address exactly how the cost of housing will be impacted as a direct result.

Dominguez noted for the past three years, contractors have paid a lot more attention to detail for air tightness.

Cattles closed the public hearing.

Moved by Puckett-Daniels seconded by Diani to recommend the implementation of the residential code limit for air leakage in new residential construction to the Board of County Commissioners for their consideration. The motion passed three yes- Diani, Puckett-Daniels and Cox and two no- Cattles and Sovick.

/S/ Beth Baker

Manager of Administrative Services

Gunnison County Community Development Department