

Project Re:Code
Landscape Group
Meeting Notes
January 25, 2018

1. Welcome and Introductions.

Members of the Landscape group introduced themselves and then were asked to elaborate on their interest in being part of the group. Several points were brought out to the group.

Understanding of regulations, reason for the code. Need context in code. Environmental common sense, reasonable, 13 inches of precipitation a year. Sustainability of design, smart design. Water conservation, enforcement of code. Public support of code, community inclusion. Reasonable, encourage business, accommodate users.

2. Election of Chair and Vice Chair.

Members of the working group elected Darell Tunnicliff as Chair and Neil Kiner as Vice Chair.

3. Identification and Prioritization of Landscape Issues

- a. Review Landscape regulations and other items relevant to Landscape challenges.

There was some discussion of current regulations that are in place. It was pointed out that one zoning type in particular, entryway zoning, was particularly onerous with requirements that do not make sense.

Again discussion centered on the need to make the regulations reasonable and to make them more sensitive to context. Business owners buy land in areas where they can get the most exposure for their product and to have them be required to block views with landscape is not a reasonable request. Regulations also need to take into consideration parking and snow storage needs.

Some action items were discussed to compare other cities similar to Billings to find out about their regulations to see how they work and if they could be used as a basis for new regulations here. Sacramento, California has a similar low precipitation climate as Billings. Also Boulder Colorado was suggested as a comparative city. There have been some water shortages in different parts of Colorado and Billings landscape requirements should be taking into account water use. Bio-swales and different natural water capture techniques could be incorporated into the landscape. Also options for ground covers other than grass. More opportunities for drip irrigation systems rather than spray irrigation. The group talked about landscaping requirements being based on street types. Landscaping could be based on street classifications. There are Arterial, major and minor, Collector streets, Local streets and Interstate 90. Chairman Tunnicliff asked if Neil Kiner, Jeff Spooner and Mike Pigg could come to the next meeting with some suggestions for different types of landscaping ideas. Dave Green will be contacting Boulder Colorado and Sacramento, California to ask about their landscaping requirements.

4. Public Comment.

A member of the public, Denise Joy, spoke to the group and said she was encouraged with the discussion and the process that was beginning and thought the group would be able to provide a positive outcome for new regulations.

5. Set Next Meeting Date and Time.

The next meeting was set for the 4th Wednesday of February, 28th, at 3 pm.