



City of
PORTLAND, OREGON

Development Review Advisory Committee

Development Review Advisory Committee

Meeting Notes

Thursday, July 15, 2021

DRAC Members Present:

Bobby Daniels
Sean Green
Lauren Golden Jones
Eric Paine

Libby Deal
Michael Harrison
Steve Lee
Maurice Rahming

Paul Delsman
Holloway Huntley
Sam Miller
Martha Williamson

City Staff Present:

Seraphie Allen, Mayor's Office
Shannon Carney, Comm. Mapps' Office
Rebecca Esau, BDS
Elshad Hajiyeve, BDS
Kurt Krueger, PBOT
Erin Mick, Water
Phil Nameny, BPS
Yung Ouyang, Budget
Leesha Posey, BDS
Dory Robinson, BDS
Cassandra Scholte, BDS
Dave Tebeau, BDS
Josh Weeks, BDS

Beth Benton, BDS
Mark Feters, BDS
Sarah Huggins, Parks
David Kuhnhausen, BDS
Chariti Montez, Comm. Ryan's Office
Kyle O'Brien, BDS
Andy Peterson, BDS
Ken Ray, BDS
Jessica Ruch, BDS
Michael Silva, Fire
Gwen Thompson, Housing Bureau
Terry Whitehill, BDS

Ross Caron, BDS
Ami Fitzgerald, BDS
Casey Jogerst, Forestry
Aaron Scott Merriam, BDS
Doug Morgan, BDS
David O'Longaigh, Water
Colleen Poole, BDS
Elisabeth Reese Cadigan, BES
Jim Scerenscko, BDS
Kim Tallant, BDS
Nancy Thorington, BDS
Duane Whitehurst, BDS

Guests Present:

Richard Adams
Bradlee Hersey, Faster Permits
Suzannah Stanley, Mackenzie

Krista Bailey, Urban Renaissance Group
Zac Horton, Faster Permits
Susan Steward, BOMA

Rob Humphrey, Faster Permits
Dan Williams, Faster Permits

DRAC Members Absent:

Jeff Bachrach

Steffeni Gray

Handouts (all handouts are available at [Development Review Advisory Committee \(DRAC\) | Portland.gov](https://www.portland.gov/bds/permit-review-process/status-your-permit#toc-every-recent-permit-request-updated-daily-))

- Draft DRAC Meeting Notes 06/17/2021
- Inter-Bureau Code Change List
- Non-Cumulative Cost Recovery Report
- BDS Major Workload Parameters
- BDS Business Continuity Report Summary
- Permitting Services Update
- Building Official Determinations
 - Carports Under 200 sf
 - Habitable vs Non-Habitable Space
 - Fire Pump Room Access
 - Minimum Dwelling Unit Size
 - Guards at Occupied Roofs
- Empowered Communities Program Presentation
- Arts Empowerment Program Update
- Empowered Neighborhoods Program Update
- Small Business Liaison Program Factsheet
- Portland Action Tables

Convene Meeting

DRAC Liaison Mark Feters (BDS) convened the online meeting and welcomed DRAC members, City staff, and guests.

DRAC Business

June 17, 2021 DRAC Meeting Notes

DRAC Members reviewed and approved notes from the June 17, 2021 DRAC meeting.

Building Permit Timelines

Andy Peterson (BDS) shared information on BDS permitting dashboards and how to access them. Permit status and entry to the Permit Dashboard is at <https://www.portland.gov/bds/permit-review-process/status-your-permit#toc-every-recent-permit-request-updated-daily->. The webpage also includes permit dashboards that show current workload numbers and timelines for permit review processes. The information is updated hourly.

DRAC Chair Paul Delsman's company has received 2 permits in the last 60 days and used the permit status information for tracking. Delsman said there is a lot of information available, and it's overwhelming to try to figure out. Delsman suggested a rollout function for new users who want just high-level information, without having to dig deeply into the data.

DRAC Member Maurice Rahming asked if BDS has a dashboard that lists goals for the permit timeline ranges. This would allow customers to see the expected ranges and then compare actual performance against that. Peterson (BDS) said they have looked at goals for permit review times. However, the review process is a partnership between City staff and customers; while the City has review timelines, meeting those timelines also depends on customers' responses. The total length of the process is a reflection of both staff and customers' actions.

Rahming (DRAC) suggested perhaps a deeper dive into the timelines, asking whether staff reviewed within their goals and responded to customers within goal timelines; measuring staff activities, not customer responses, so the City measures what it controls. Peterson (BDS) said they've done that with the 1st and 2nd review goals, and they can look at putting the information in a different format to make it clearer.

DRAC Member Steve Lee said it's one thing to have a 20-day goal and get to 30 days, but it's another when it gets to 60 days. Lee asked if BDS can identify and address those permits. Peterson (BDS) replied that the Life Safety Review section runs reports showing how staff are doing relative to their goals, and use the information to re-assign permits as needed or provide additional resources for permits that are "stuck" and well past timeline goals. Peterson said that workloads vs. staffing levels continues to be an issue for some smaller work teams.

DRAC Member Sean Green said that for accessory dwelling unit (ADU) and systems development charge (SDC) fee waivers, some review groups seem to be using check sheets as a formality to keep the review from being released until the fee waiver is processed, as there isn't anything else that the applicant needs to do. It's not clear if it's a legitimate check sheet or if staff is just waiting for a waiver to be processed, and this is confusing for applicants.

Commercial Inspections

BDS Inspections Division Manager Dave Tebeau (BDS) gave a brief overview of the BDS Inspections Division and its sub-sections (see [Commercial Development Permitting and Inspections | Portland.gov](#) and [Residential Development Permitting and Inspections | Portland.gov](#) for more information).

Inspection Timelines

Tebeau (BDS) said that the entire Inspections Division receives 300-400 inspection requests daily. Residential Inspections is providing next-day service; Commercial Inspections provides same-day service if the request is received by 6:00 a.m., or otherwise next day service.

Livestreaming Inspections

Tebeau (BDS) said that video inspections are used heavily in Residential Inspections, and this will continue after the pandemic. Video inspections have been on a case-by-case basis for Commercial inspections, and they don't work in all cases. Customers schedule specific inspection times for video inspections, and they've said this is helpful, but it's challenging to BDS's approach to inspections; inspectors are trained to look holistically at the site, not just at the specific item being inspected. This allows them to see the larger context and look for issues that can be headed off before they become problems.

Josh Weeks (BDS) said that for Commercial Inspections, video inspections will always be used in the context of the relationship between the contractor and the inspector. The most frequent use of video inspections for Commercial is the inspection of corrections.

Services Update

BDS Permitting Services Manager David Kuhnhausen noted that the deadline for submitting permits under BDS's FY 2020-21 fee schedules ended July 1, 2021. Permits received by that date will need to be under review by August 31, 2021 in order to remain under the older fee schedule; thus for non-simple permits, intake fees will need to be paid by 5:00 p.m. on August 31. Kuhnhausen said they saw increased numbers of permit submissions in late June.

BDS Director Rebecca Esau shared the presentation ***Permitting Services Update***, which included the topics:

- Priority Tiers for Permit Review
- Online Services
- In-Person Services
- Small Project Permits
- Other Initiatives Underway

Green (DRAC) said that it would be great to re-establish a way for customers to do quick reviews with staff and make simple adjustments to permits, similar to the previous process in the permit center where customers could take permits around to different review groups and make adjustments then and there. Director Esau (BDS) said there isn't a way to do that currently with ProjectDox, but they're working on it.

Guest Rob Humphrey (Faster Permits) said that they always need to talk with multiple bureaus about permits, and the move to an appointment-based model will require setting up multiple appointments at different times. Humphrey asked if there is a way to make a single appointment with all the needed staff. Director Esau (BDS) suggested using early assistance (EA) appointments or trying to schedule 15-minute meetings consecutively, which might be a challenge. Humphrey asked whether customers will still have the ability to speak with reviewers from different bureaus in the permit center when it re-opens. Director Esau replied that staff from the different bureaus will be present in the permit center, but customers will see them by appointment only.

Kurt Krueger (PBOT) said that PBOT has heard from other bureau staff that the 15-minute appointments are a positive change as staff gets project information and questions in advance. This allows staff to provide better customer service and more detailed answers to customers, as they are more prepared to talk about a project with some advance project information.

Building Official Determinations

City of Portland Building Official Terry Whitehill (BDS) gave a brief overview of the Building Official's role and work. Whitehill reviewed the Building Official Determination handouts ***Carports Under 200 sf, Habitable vs Non-Habitable Space, Fire Pump Room Access, Minimum Dwelling Unit Size, and Guards at Occupied Roofs***. The determinations are also available online at <https://www.portland.gov/bds/codes-rules-and-guides>.

BDS Equity Program

BDS Equity & Policy Development & Communications Manager Leesha Posey will be sharing about the BDS Equity Program over the next few DRAC meetings, beginning with a presentation on the program's work with external customers. Equity Program staff Cassandra Scholte (BDS), Dory Robinson (BDS), and Ami Fitzgerald (BDS) shared the presentations ***Empowered Communities Program Presentation, Arts Empowerment Program Update, Empowered Neighborhoods Program Update***, and ***Small Business Liaison Program Factsheet***.

Rahming (DRAC) noted that the Portland Housing Bureau, Oregon Housing and Community Services, and other funders currently prioritize projects that can commit to a 12-month timeline from Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) award to construction start. Rahming said that this is currently impossible for many affordable housing developers based on long building permit times; there are only a couple developers, both California based, who have balance sheets that will allow them to take the risk on design costs entailed in committing to this timeline.

Rahming (DRAC) also expressed concern that the current Metro Bond Opportunity Solicitation (M-BOS) award process will result in many affordable housing projects all going in for building permit simultaneously and there being a logjam, even with the expedited process for affordable housing. This could be an even bigger issue for the second round of M-BOS funding because all funds must be spent by the end of 2025, per the bond language.

Samuel Miller (DRAC) expressed appreciation for the presentation and thanked the team and leadership for their intentional and focused efforts to include the BIPOC and underserved community with support and assistance with navigation and guidance, helping to remove some of the roadblocks that the BIPOC community has systemically been subjected to.

Portland Action Tables

Seraphie Allen is the Director of Jobs, Housing, & Economic Equity in Mayor Wheeler's Office. Allen shared the presentation **Portland Action Tables**, which can be found at <https://www.portland.gov/wheeler/tables#meeting-materials>.

Delsman (DRAC) asked if the various Action Tables are fully staffed and meeting on a regular basis. Allen (Mayor's Office) said they are mostly being led by Mayor's Office staff. They are working on getting more administrative support, and the Commissioners' offices are also supporting them. Allen noted that the Action Tables aren't meant to go on forever.

Delsman (DRAC) expressed appreciation for how clean downtown Portland is, and wondered whether that is a reflection of the Action Tables work. Allen (Mayor's Office) said that the Business Action Table work includes a survey that shares public perceptions about downtown, and then the reality when those same people visit downtown, and this may be changing perceptions.

Green (DRAC) expressed excitement for the Ankeny West project, which involves multiple bureaus, non-profits, industry, and the County.

Eric Paine (DRAC) asked whether there is increased activity downtown with the easing of COVID restrictions. Allen (Mayor's Office) said they are seeing an uptick of activity, and that restaurants are crowded, particularly at night. They haven't done a statistical analysis yet. Paine has observed the same, and said it's good to see people coming back.

Allen (Mayor's Office) said that it's clear that restaurants and similar industries are struggling to get workers, and it's hoped that financial support to restaurants will help bring more people back to work.

Other Discussion/Updates

BDS Land Use Services Manager Kim Tallant noted that the Interim Private Street Rule [interim-private-street-administrative-rule_final-7-29-21-signed-web_0.pdf \(portland.gov\)](#) will go into effect on August 1, 2021. The rule is interim and only effective for 6 months, at which time a Permanent Rule will need to be adopted. During the 6-month interim period, BDS will be taking feedback from customers on the rule changes or other rule requirements to consider for the Permanent Rule.

Tallant (BDS) said that key changes in the interim rule include:

- Updated references to other bureau's codes;
- Updated submittal requirements;
- Amended on-street parking requirements for single dwelling zones to require one space for every two lots, and added language for an exception to that requirement;
- Amended to apply sidewalk requirement exception only to lots that can only be developed with a house and accessory dwelling unit (ADU), or a duplex;
- Amended exceptions to required street trees;
- Amended the easements section to align with current BES requirements;
- Removed the Stormwater Technical Rule, as the Stormwater Management Manual should be used.
- Amended Figure 3 related to roadway width.

The next DRAC meeting is scheduled for Thursday, August 19, 2021.

Meeting notes prepared by Mark Feters (BDS).