Zoning Ordinance Amendment

Listening Session Notes

**April 1, 2021**

Attendees: Caleb Hood (Meridian)

**What is and isn’t working well with the existing zoning ordinance?**

Caleb said he would like the County to adopt higher standards for street improvements and landscaping, in order to create a more seamless transition between City and County developments.

In particular, he suggested the County require sidewalk with more of its developments, require more of its parking lots to be paved, and look at updating fencing and landscaping standards to more closely align with those of the cities. He also said he would like the County to consider requiring more street lights.

He said requiring higher design standards was especially important on County properties which were near City limits and likely to be annexed in the near future. He felt lower design standards may be warranted in some instances for rural properties located far from existing services.

He noted that he didn’t have any complaints with the County’s architectural design guidelines for buildings.

Caleb said Meridian would like the County to allow fewer private roads, as subdivisions served by private roads are hard to redevelop at urban densities once they are annexed. He noted that private roads are difficult to extend or convert to public roads in the future, as changes such as this require the approval of all property owners utilizing the road. He also pointed out that private roads are generally not as well-maintained as public roads. He suggested the County look into adding provisions to new private roads which could require them to convert to public roads in the future.

**Are there any uses that are a concern, or that the Zoning Ordinance should do a better job of accommodating?**

Caleb said that in general, Meridian’s Title 9 agreement with the County should prevent incompatible uses in the Meridian Area of City Impact, as it requires new development to be compatible with Meridian’s Comprehensive Plan and Land Use Map.

He said he would like the County to require higher design standards for new cell towers. He also noted that Meridian prohibits new billboards within its boundaries, and as such, would like to see the County limit billboards within the Meridian Area of City Impact.

**Are zoning application processes meeting the needs of staff and the development community?**

Caleb said he appreciated the County inviting Meridian to its pre-application meetings, as this allowed the city to provide more input on upcoming applications within its Area of City Impact.

He said he would like to improve communication and coordination between Meridian and the County regarding waivers for street and utility easement plans, and sewer and water dry line requirements for new subdivisions in the Meridian Area of City Impact.

**What should the primary outcome of the zoning ordinance update be?**

Caleb said that ultimately, he would like the County Planning Department to essentially act as an extension of Meridian City staff when processing new land use applications in the Meridian Area of City Impact.

He also said he would like the new Code to include more pictures, exhibits and definitions in order to make it easier to use and understand.