

NENA Annual Spring Meeting

May 14, 2025

NENA Annual Spring meeting minutes

NENA Business

Courtney Scott nominated as Secretary; Courtney was elected by unanimous consent.

NEHMU (Northeast Historic Mixed Use) zone – updates from Cathy Costakis & Susan Riggs on historical details of the district and the interest to change and integrate distinct coding in order to create an Arts & Cultural District. They referenced that the public comment period is now for the Unified Development Code (UDC) update, creating urgency for a comprehensive reassessment. There is interest in changing the name of the district and updating the purpose statement within the UDC. As a reminder there are standards for mixed-use development and residential use. Ultimately, they expressed the value of having a collective voice.

There was agreement among meeting attendees that a survey collecting community thoughts and contributions on desired coding toward NEHMU would be desirable. There was a comment encouraging NEHMU to not lose the word 'historic' in the name as she values the historical nature in this area, and deems it an important part of NENA. Cathy agreed.

UDC Update – Susan Riggs directs people to <https://www.engagebozeman.net> to see what work has been done so far, important future dates and deadlines, and City Commission work sessions. Amy encouraged NENA to remember the power of a collective voice during these important sessions.

Bozeman Water Adequacy Ballot Initiative (WARD) – Dan Carty, Lorre Jay, Zeth Stone, and Natsuki Nakamura are members of a grassroots group of homeowners and renters throughout Bozeman focused on gathering signatures to put this measure on the November ballot – they have the next 6 weeks to get this accomplished. See <https://www.wardbzn.com>

The measure would amend the Bozeman Municipal Code (BMC) to allow developers to provide cash-in-lieu of water rights (CILWR) *only* if they commit to designating 33% of new dwelling units as affordable. The affordable dwelling units are available to renters making 60% or less of

Bozeman's area median income (AMI) or available for sale to purchasers making 120% AMI or less. This initiative will address Bozeman's high use of cash-in-lieu, which allows developers to use Bozeman water without supplying new water rights to the city's supply. It also addresses the city's lack of affordable housing. -

During the City Commission's recent work session (on April 22, 2025) they expressed that the ballot initiative, if passed, would be an impediment to development and cause the city to sprawl. WARD believes this ballot requires developers to 'give back' for the privilege to build in Bozeman, rather than be incentivized to build affordable housing with increased height and tax incentives.

Q&A with Deputy Mayor Joey Morrison –

(Beth MacFawn) Q. Can you speak to the topic of developers paying for city water rights – cash-in-lieu water rights? Developers pay the same amount as citizens. A. Joey doesn't think water rights and development should be connected and that the WARD is not the right direction. Essentially he thinks this precludes developers from building and the city will just sprawl. This point mimics what the City Commissioners said in their working session. [Link to Commission Meeting Video. Clicking an agenda item will take you to that point in the meeting. bozeman.granicus.com/player/clip/2472?view_id=1&redirect=true]

(Angie Kociolek) Q. Canyon Ferry pipeline? – A. Joey said it is no longer being discussed by the commissioners. Engineers had taken the exercise seriously but in a closed basin system it would have resulted in an environmental disaster.

(Dave Chambers) Q. If WARD is passed and there's pressure for it to change back (or removed) – what has to be done? A. Brady Wiseman said it does not have to go to voters; the commission could amend the law. It is just an ordinance that is under the city commission control to administer.

(Angie) Q. I appreciate that the WARD initiative is seeking to get something of value for the community when development occurs. What is the City doing to ensure that the community gets something out of development projects and not just profit for the developer A. No real answer – Bozeman is subject to the free market and with not much authority to do any different. 'We' cannot mandate what is built.

(Amy Hoitsma with additional participants commenting) Q. What do you know about Bozeman's housing demand vs the amount of housing that has been created over the past few years? A. Bozeman will experience a surplus of housing to hit the market with an anticipation of rent going down, and some vacancy rates at 10-12% which opens the market for rate changes. Bozeman anticipates a slowdown of development but shares its cyclical nature and presumes it will start up again in a few years. Joey celebrates the UDC opportunity for communities to share their considerations of the neighborhood DNA. Can we grow but take care of the people who already live here? Joey aspires to finding that balance.

(Vickie Backus) Q. How are relations with the county and within the “Triangle”? A. PCC is a planning coordinating committee committed to the development and support of the Triangle (Belgrade/Three Forks, Four Corners, Bozeman). Not a lot on the PCC’s plate and they meet quarterly, formally. Joey is hoping for collaboration, and it feels most strong now. Mayor and the city managers of all 3 towns are meeting informally often to build relationships.

Neighborhood Updates

Inter Neighborhood Council (INC) (Angie appointed as rep [liaison between NENA and the city] since February) – exciting time because the public has reminded the INC of its intent to have the flow of information be from neighborhoods to the city. May 8th action item was to consider Centennial Park Neighborhood’s (CPN subarea of NENA) proposal. Angie recused herself because she is one of the CPN proposal authors. INC recommended to the city commission to grant CPN’s request to become R-A not R-C in the UDC update. Angie said if NENA members have a concern, to reach out to NENA leadership and they, in turn, will let Angie, as INC rep, know if it needs to be relayed to the INC or city.

Bozeman Tree Coalition (Angie) Shared group background, mission, and concerns about Bozeman urban forest, how the UDC needs strengthening because it is not working to protect mature trees during development. BTC email list is how to stay informed when there may be a need for public comment. Loss = West Lamme boulevard and mature trees due to Hotel Bozeman. Win? = Ponderosa Pine on 5th & Main still standing. BTC has submitted substantive UDC recommendations and is involved in Landmark Program/NCOD and the urban forestry management plan.

Northeast Urban Renewal District (NURD) – Amy summarized several projects currently being funded by the urban renewal district funds, and several projects that might be eligible for future funding. The City is considering forming a city-wide board to provide public input on future projects. Amy encouraged those interested in the urban renewal district to contact her.

New developments (Amy) – Wallace Works is underway, and responsible for earth-moving equipment near climbing rock (putting in sewer line in Aspen St. right-of-way). Bozeman Yards (next to RR depot) approved to receive \$3.5 million in TIF money reimbursement to complete infrastructure improvements. Phase 1 of the proposal would be a 5+ story building with mostly luxury for-sale units with 2 affordable housing units. Cloverleaf (formerly Bronken’s) is moving forward once again and getting neighborhood input on the development – they have proposed lowering the height and density from their original plan.

Parade of Sheds (Amy) – important event for NENA and helps us brand our neighborhood. This year it will be held on September 14 and NENA is looking for people to participate.