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HAILEY CREATES A SUSTAINABLE BUILDING AND PLANNING AD HOC ADVISORY COMMITTEE

(Hailey, Idaho) – Hailey’s City Council recently approved the creation of the Sustainable Building and Planning Ad Hoc Advisory Committee. The Committee’s make-up will consist of professionals from diverse fields within the community, related to or having an interest in sustainable development. Sought after members include architects, builders, developers, and non-profit representatives. The Committee will help promote sustainable building and development strategies by serving as a sounding board, recommending sustainable or “green” updates to the building, zoning, and subdivision codes, serving as the line of communication between the city and Hailey’s citizens, and researching various options and policy mechanisms and determining their feasibility.

The creation of the committee is in response to a recommendation by Hailey’s Environmental Leadership Program (HELP) that the city’s sustainability efforts would be most efficiently directed towards updating building and zoning codes. Buildings (both commercial and residential) account for 38% of the U.S.’s overall energy consumption – on average more than transportation. Therefore, it makes sense to curtail impacts where consumption is greatest.

HELP has been working towards creating incentives for commercial and residential projects, hoping to make green building easier and more attractive in Hailey, while promoting and incentivizing buildings and buyers to seek a higher standard of energy efficiency and sustainability than what is currently required. In addition to the recently passed ENERGY STAR for residential building program, it is HELP’s recommendation that more incentives be created, while moving towards requiring sustainable building and development standards, much like communities such as Boise, Teton County and Aspen, which have all adopted or are in the process of adopting various policy mechanisms and standards.

Developing a broader, more comprehensive range of green development incentives and requirements is a large task and will require buy-in from the building and development industries, as well as the public at large. In an effort to create practical incentives and requirements supported by the community, an ad hoc advisory group made up of professionals throughout the community will play an essential role.

The committee members will be selected in the coming weeks, with an introductory meeting scheduled sometime in mid-November.

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