STAFF REPORT

TO: Hailey Planning and Zoning Commission

FROM: Beth Robrahn, Planning Director BR

RE: Text Amendment – Zoning Code, Article 6A, Design Review

HEARING: October 19, 2009

Notice
Notice for the public hearing was published in the Idaho Mountain Express and mailed to public agencies and area media on September 30, 2009.

Proposal
Amendments to the Zoning Code, Article 6A (Title 17 of the Municipal Code) were drafted by the staff in order to remove redundancy, clarify and reorganize the design review standards.

These amendments were noticed for a public hearing, however the intention is that the amendments be considered in a more informal workshop format in order to generate ideas on how to approach the issues brought forward in this initial effort.

Procedural History
The existing design review standards are a combination of "should" and "shall" statements, making it difficult to discern what is intended to be required and what is preferred but not actually required. This project was originally conceived as amending Sections 6A.7.2.1 (guidelines for non-residential buildings), 6A.7.2.2 (guidelines for non-residential buildings in the LI, SCI, TI, and A districts) and 6A.7.2.3 (guidelines for multi-family buildings) in order to remove redundancy, clarify and reorganize the design review standards.

I approached this project in three steps. It was difficult to track every change due to the amount of reorganizing involved, however the documents associated with each step are attached for the record.

Step 1. Compared the existing 3 sets of design review standards in table format
Step 2. Identified "should" and "shall" statements
   a. Copied "should" statements to a narrative section
   b. Copied "shall" statements into a standards section
Step 3. Reorganized standards
   a. Combined different standards that dealt with the same issue
   b. Grouped standards that were common to each building type to eliminate repetition of the same standard multiple times
   c. Edited standards to clarify, but did not create or eliminate any standards, some standards that had multiple items were broken out into separate standards which added to the overall number of standards.

At this time I would like feedback on the concept of creating a "narrative" section (principles/guidelines/intent) that describes the intent of the standards and then having standards without any explanation within the standard itself. If we proceed with this approach, it will be important that we are careful to be sure the standards do implement the intent described.

Principles of Standards [or Guidelines or Intent]. These are the basic principles that the following design standards are based on.

A. The small scale of the historic residences and shops is an important characteristic of Hailey. New development should be designed to recognize Hailey's historic architectural heritage. However, the image of "false western" storefronts are not appropriate. Creative architectural elements are encouraged and should be compatible with existing structures. Building design should engage the interest of pedestrians, bicyclists and drivers at the street level and at intersections in the case of buildings on corner lots.

B. Building design involves combinations of width and height proportions and architectural elements. The appeal of Hailey's streetscape will be enhanced through the addition of buildings which complement rather than dominate their surroundings. The use of the human scale helps to create a comfortable and friendly atmosphere and a "sense of place". This can be achieved by utilizing voids and masses, as well as details, textures, and colors on building facades. All sides of the building, not just the main façade, should be attractive and interesting. Doors, windows, roof shapes, siding and lighting should all be considered carefully in order to create a pleasant streetscape. Long building walls should incorporate design features that create interest and avoid boxy, bland appearance. The setbacks of walls facing the street should be varied on large projects that occupy several parcels. Extensive repetition of similar forms on large surfaces that would lead to the perception of a massive building is inappropriate. Repeating design elements such as colors, window shapes and building materials of adjoining properties should also be avoided. Buildings that are not human scale are structures that are typically massive, simple forms with little or no undulation, fenestration and detail. Such buildings are not acceptable in Hailey's business districts.

C. Pedestrian circulation should be an integral part of the site layout and circulation patterns of all buildings. The site should be organized so that buildings frame and reinforce pedestrian circulation; buildings should be welcoming to pedestrians and provide convenient access from all street sides. Pedestrians should be able to walk along building fronts rather than along or across parking lots and drives. The building should relate to the sidewalk and incorporate pedestrian amenities and encourage pedestrian activity. Buildings designed for multi-family residential use should create a neighborhood feeling and have their own identity within the community.

D. Conflicts between vehicle and pedestrian circulation needs should be minimized. New buildings should be planned with consideration to their relationship to adjacent properties. The use of common or shared streets and circulation patterns is encouraged when ever possible. Delivery trucks should be able to operate safely without blocking pedestrian rights-of-way or other streets.

E. Existing trees greater than 6" in caliper are considered a resource and the removal should be avoided unless the tree is unhealthy or poses a safety hazard. New construction and landscaping should respect and be compatible with existing vegetation and buildings should be sited in a manner that preserves significant vegetation.

Design Standards.

A. The following design standards are intended to implement the design principles stated above and apply to any non-residential, multifamily or mixed use building located within the City of Hailey.

1. Site Planning

a. The location and orientation of buildings shall maximize sun exposure in exterior spaces to create spaces around buildings that are usable by the residents and allow for safe access to buildings. Buildings, vegetation and land forms cast shadows and block sunlight; the surface of a building, including color and material, reflects sunlight into adjoining exterior spaces.

b. All existing plant material shall be inventoried and delineated, to scale, and noted whether it is to be preserved, relocated or removed. Removal of trees larger than 6 inch caliper proposed to be removed require an arborist review. Any tree destroyed or mortally injured after previously being identified to be preserved, or removed without authorization, shall be replaced with a species of tree found in the Tree Guide and shall be a minimum of 4 inch caliper.

c. Site circulation shall be designed so pedestrians have safe access to and through the site and to building entrances without being forced to walk within any vehicular circulation areas.

d. Loading areas, trash storage/pickup areas, service areas and utility boxes shall be located at the rear or side of a building, shall be screened with landscaping, enclosures, fencing or by the principal building, shall not interfere with each other or other uses, such as snow storage, and parking and access shall not be obstructed by snow accumulation.

e. Where alleys exist, or are planned, they shall be utilized for loading areas, trash storage/pickup areas, service areas and utilities.

f. Vending machines located on the exterior of a building shall not be visible from any street.

g. On-site parking areas shall be located at the rear of the building and screened from the street.

h. Access to on-site parking shall be from the alley or from a single approach to the street to confine vehicular/pedestrian conflict to limited locations, allow more buffering of the parking area and preserve the street frontage for pedestrian traffic.

i. Snow storage areas shall be provided on-site where practical and sited in a manner that is accessible to all types of snow removal vehicles of a size that can accommodate moderate areas of snow.

j. Snow storage areas shall not be less than 25% of the improved parking and vehicle and pedestrian circulation areas.

k. A designated snow storage area shall not have any dimension less than 10 feet.

l. Hauling of snow from downtown areas is permissible where other options are not practical.

m. Snow storage areas shall not impede parking spaces, vehicular and pedestrian circulation or line of sight, loading areas, trash storage/pickup areas, service areas or utilities.

n. Snow storage areas shall be landscaped with vegetation that is salt-tolerant and resilient to heavy snow.

2. Building Design

a. The proportion, size, shape and rooflines of new buildings shall be compatible with surrounding buildings.

b. Standardized corporate building designs are prohibited.

c. At ground level, building design shall emphasize human scale, be pedestrian oriented and encourage human activity and interaction.

d. The front façade of buildings shall face the street and shall include design features such as windows, pedestrian entrances, building off-sets, projections, architectural detailing, and change in materials or similar features to create human scale and break up large building surfaces and volumes.

e. Any addition onto or renovation of an existing building shall be designed to create a cohesive whole.

f. All exterior walls of a building shall incorporate the use of varying materials, textures and colors.

g. Exterior buildings colors and materials shall be integrated appropriately into the architecture of the building and be harmonious within the project and with surrounding buildings.

h. Roof design shall reduce the mass and scale of buildings and add visual interest and prevent reflective glare. Flat-roofed buildings over two stories in height shall incorporate roof elements such as parapets, upper decks, balconies or other design elements.

i. All buildings shall minimize energy consumption by utilizing alternative energy sources and/or passive solar techniques. At least three (3) of the following techniques, or an approved alternative, shall be used to improve energy cost savings and provide a more comfortable and healthy living space:

i) Solar Orientation. If there is a longer wall plane, it shall be placed on an east-west axis. A building's wall plane shall be oriented within 30 degrees of true south.

ii) South facing windows with eave coverage. At least 40% of the building's total glazing surface shall be oriented to the south, with roof overhang or awning coverage at the south.

iii) Double glazed windows.

iv) Windows with Low Emissivity glazing.

v) Earth berming against exterior walls

vi) Alternative energy. Solar energy for electricity or water heating, wind energy or another approved alternative shall be installed on-site.

vii) Exterior light shelves. All windows on the southern most facing side of the building shall have external light shelves installed.

j. Gabled coverings, appropriate roof pitch, or snow clips and/or gutters and downspouts shall be provided over all walkways and entries to prevent snow from falling directly onto adjacent sidewalks.

k. Downspouts and drains shall be located within landscape areas or other appropriate locations where freezing will not create pedestrian hazards.

l. Vehicle canopies associated with gas stations, convenience stores or drive-through facilities shall have a minimum roof pitch of 3/12 and be consistent with the colors, material and architectural design used on the principal building(s).

m. A master plan for signage is required to ensure the design and location of signs is compatible with the building design and compliance with Section 8.

3. Accessory Structures, Fences and Equipment/Utilities

a. Accessory structures shall be designed to be compatible with the principal building(s).

b. Accessory structures shall be located at the rear of the property.

c. Walls and fences shall be constructed of materials compatible with other materials used on the site. The use of chain link is prohibited.

d. Walls and fencing shall not dominate the buildings or the landscape. Planting should be integrated with fencing in order to soften the visual impact.

e. All roof projections including, roof-mounted mechanical equipment, such as heating and air conditioning units, but excluding solar panels and Wind Energy Systems, shall be shielded and screened from view from the ground level of on-site parking areas, adjacent public streets and adjacent properties.

f. The hardware associated with alternative energy sources shall be incorporated into the building's design and not detract from the building and its surroundings.

g. All ground-mounted mechanical equipment, including heating and air conditioning units, and trash receptacle areas shall be adequately screened from surrounding properties and streets by the use of a wall, fence, or landscaping, or shall be enclosed within a building.

h. All service lines into the subject property shall be installed underground.

i. Additional appurtenances shall not be located on existing utility poles.

4. Landscaping

a. Only drought tolerant plant species and/or xeriscape specific plant materials shall be used, as specified by the Hailey Landscaping Manual or an approved alternative.

b. All plant species shall be hardy to the Zone 4 environment.

c. A landscape plan shall include but are not limited to: proposed plant materials, timeline for establishment of the plantings, maintenance of the planting beds and the type of irrigation proposed.

d. At a minimum, a temporary irrigation system that fully operates for at least two complete growing seasons is required in order to establish drought tolerant plant species and/or xeriscape specific plant materials. Features that minimize water use, such as moisture sensors, are encouraged.

e. Landscaped areas shall be planned as an integral part of the site with consideration of the urban environment. A combination of trees shrubs, vines, ground covers and ornamental grasses shall be used. New landscaped areas having more than 10 trees, a minimum of 10% of the trees shall be at least 4-inch caliper, 20% shall be at least 3-inch caliper, and 20% shall be at least 2½ inch caliper and a maximum of 20% of any single tree species may be used in any landscape plan (excluding street trees). New planting areas shall be designed to accommodate typical trees at maturity. Buildings within the LI and SCI-I zoning district are excluded from this standard.

f. Seasonal plantings in planter boxes, pots, and/or hanging baskets shall be provided to add color and interest to the outside of buildings in the LI and SCI-I zoning districts.

g. Plantings for pedestrian areas [on-site and w/in the ROW?] within the B, LB, TN and SCI-O zoning districts shall be designed with attention to the details of color, texture and form. A variety of trees, shrubs, perennials, ground covers and seasonal plantings, with different shapes and distinctive foliage, bark and flowers shall be used in beds, planter boxes, pots, and/or hanging baskets.

h. Storm water runoff should be retained on the site wherever possible and used to irrigate plant materials.

i. A plan for maintenance of the landscaping areas is required to ensure that the project appears in a well maintained condition (i.e., all weeds and trash removed, dead plant materials removed and replaced).

j. Retaining walls shall be designed to minimize their impact on the site and the appearance of the site.

k. Retaining walls shall be constructed of materials that are utilized elsewhere on the site, or of natural or decorative materials.

l. Retaining walls, where visible to the public and/or to residents or employees of the project, shall be no higher than four feet or terraced with a three foot horizontal separation of walls.

m. Landscaping should be provided within or in front of extensive retaining walls.

n. Retaining walls over 24" high may require railings or planting buffers for safety.

o. Low retaining walls may be used for seating if capped with a surface of at least 12 to 16 inches wide.

B. In addition to the standards listed in A., the following design standards also apply to any non-residential building located within the B, LB, or TN zoning districts.

1. Site Planning

a. The site shall support pedestrian circulation and provide pedestrian amenities. Sidewalks shall be provided along building fronts.

b. Wider sidewalks are encouraged to provide additional amenities such as seating areas and bicycle racks.

2. Building Design

a. The main facade shall be oriented to the street. The main entrance(s) to the building shall be located on the street side. If the building is located on a corner, entrances shall be provided on both street frontages. Buildings with more than one retail space on the ground floor are encouraged to have separate entrances for each unit.

b. Multi-unit structures shall emphasize the individuality of units or provide visual interest by variations in roof lines or walls or other human scale elements. Breaking the facades and roofs of buildings softens the institutional image which may often accompany large buildings.

c. Buildings located within the Business District shall be located directly at the back of the sidewalk. In other zoning districts buildings may be separated from the sidewalk by landscaping or plazas with benches, bicycle racks, trash containers, and other pedestrian amenities.

d. Building designs shall maximize the human scale of buildings and enhance the small town "sense of place". This can be achieved by utilizing voids and masses, as well as details, textures, and colors on building facades. Human scale can also be achieved by incorporating structural elements such as colonnades and covered walkways, overhangs, canopies, entries, and landscaping. Particular attention should be paid to creating interest at the street level.

e. Buildings that exceed 30 feet in height, the entire roof surface shall not project to the highest point of the roof. The Commission shall review building height relative to the other dimensions of width and depth combined with detailing of parapets, cornices, roof, and other architectural elements.

f. Livable outdoor spaces in multi-story buildings that create pleasing elements and reduce the mass of taller buildings are encouraged.

g. Fire department staging areas shall be incorporated into the design elements of the building.

h. New buildings adjacent residential areas shall be designed to ensure that building massing and scale provide a transition to adjoining residential neighborhoods. Possible mitigation techniques include, but are not limited to the following:

i) Locating open space and preserving existing vegetation on the sites edge to further separate the building from less intensive uses;

ii) Stepping down the massing of the building along the site's edge; and

iii) Limiting the length of or articulating building facades to reflect adjacent residential patterns

3. Landscaping

a. When abutting the LR, GR or TN zoning districts, a landscape buffer between the project and the residential property shall be provided. The buffer shall be at least an eight foot wide to create a year-round visual screen of at least 6 feet in height. The buffer shall be designed to avoid the appearance of a straight line or wall of uniform plant material and shall be wide enough to accommodate the planted species at maturation.

C. In addition to the standards listed in A., the following design standards also apply to any non-residential building located within the LI, SCI, TI or A zoning districts.

1. Site Planning

a. Adjoining parcels shall be considered when planning building configuration, vehicular circulation and access, parking, and drainage.

b. Reciprocal vehicular ingress and egress, circulation, and parking arrangements are required when the adjacent site(s) allows in order to facilitate the ease of vehicular movement between adjoining properties

c. Vehicle circulation, parking and loading shall not block pedestrian access ways.

D. In addition to the standards listed in A., the following design standards also apply to any Multi-Family building located within the City of Hailey.

1. Site Planning

a. The location of buildings shall respond to the specific site conditions such as topography, street corners, open space and existing and planned adjacent uses.

b. Site plans shall include a convenient, attractive and interconnected pedestrian system of sidewalks and shared pathways to reinforce pedestrian circulation within a site.

c. Buildings shall be organized to maximize efficient pedestrian circulation and create gathering places.

2. Building Design

a. Buildings shall incorporate massing, group lines and character that responds to single family homes. Buildings may also include the use of varying materials, textures and colors to break up the bulk and mass of large multi-family buildings. Front doors should be

individual and visible from the street. Windows should be residential in scale and thoughtfully placed to provide for privacy and solar gain.

b. At ground level, buildings shall present a setting that is visually pleasing to the pedestrian and that encourages human activity and interaction.