Twitter Thread by Shay Castle



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Another Friend suggestion: Do we want to require all new buildings to be electric, like other cities have done? Seems like the time given our Xcel partnership.

Weaver also had this on his list.

Jonathan Koehn: This is ongoing work. We've been thinking about it as part of the Climate Action Plan coming to council for an update this year.

"We really do need to be mindful of costs and equity," Koehn says.

Lindsey back to talk about the next update to energy codes. The next one is two years away.

Boulder all requires residential development over 3,000 sq ft to be net zero (producing as much energy as they consume, or else paying into a carbon offset fund)

Lindsey: There are larger decisions that have to be made about regional approaches and whether or not we want to pursue a punitive approach, like a natural gas ban.

"If this can be included in the work we're doing on CMAP (Climate Mobilization Action Plan) that would be great for me," Weaver says.

Koehn talking a bit about how changes in state law might help, like removing the limits on how much solar energy properties can produce. Xcel agreed to lobby with Boulder to change that.

So this is folded into current work. We're taking a break now until 10:23 a.m.

"Coffee up, whatever up, and we'll see you back here lickity split," says facilitator Bergman.

Back to the sounds of Bill Withers' Lovely Day. https://t.co/1F6mBDYfMx

Picking up where we left off: Possible new workplan items.

A Brockett suggestion and recommendation from the Arts Commission — reducing the permitting process for public art

Already underway, so that's all that needs to be said.

"I don't want to underestimate the amount of work that's going into this," Lindsey says, but it's happening.

One I missed: Neighborhood infill pilot projects. This is also from Brockett. It's written into the 2015 BVCP and there is a neighborhood that's interested. Planning Board recommended starting as well.

But planning staff are at capacity. Brockett says use tables work could be potentially slowed down. I don't see that flying with the rest of council.

Linsdey: The way neighborhood infill was defined is more or less the same level of subcommunity planning. ... From a staff standpoint, it's a new major workplan item.

"That is something we could take on, but I think it's going to require reprioritization," Lindsey says.

Charles Ferro adds, "We'd probably have to make some pretty significant shifts" internally.

Weaver: "In general, I'm supportive of the infill pilot, which is focused in a particular neighborhood, but I certainly don't want to delay any major workplan items to do this."

Use tables is across the city and addresses many, many issues. Neighborhood infill is just in one area "I certainly would not delay or derail the use tables (work) for anything at this point."

Friend: "There's a neighborhood that apparently wants to do it. Can they help us do the work?"

Lindsey: The BVCP criteria on this is very specific. You do engage the community to do that work — engaging the neighborhood, saying yes we're going to do this.

Ferro: "It really kind of equates to an area planning effort, which has a pretty significant regulatory" piece. ... It's probably pretty technical nature of work.

Wallch: "I would not want to make that tradeoff on the use tables, nor would I want to slow down work on CU South or East Boulder Subcommunity Plan for this project. ... It's not a bad project, I just think it needs to get in line."

So that goes into the "check back in" bucket.

Another Brockett suggested add: BOZA code modifications

This is not for staff to do, Brockett clarifies. It would be council tasking BOZA to do something. That board asked for this in its annual letter, to ID ways to streamline the BOZA process.

BOZA = Board of Zoning Adjustments

"I'd love to empower them to go see what they are, create a list and eventually bring them back to us," Brockett says.

Lindsey: Many of the variances BOZA is seeing are related to ADUs. Staff is already working on an analysis of ADU regs and how they're working (report to come to council in April)

Firnhaber: The Housing Advisory Board is also working on recommendations around tiny homes (which are kinda treated like ADUs in Boulder, since you can't really put more than 1-2 on a lot in town)

Ferro: Aside from ADUS — which tend to make up the bulks of BOZA-reviewed variaances — there are some other little code changes that could be addressed.

Young: We get code change recommendations from the Planning Dept every year. Can BOZA's list fit into that?
Ferro: I think so.

Brockett: It sounds to me like the ADU work is underway. The new thing would be to greenlight BOZA to start this work.

He also brought up a related item about HAB doing research/reports on tiny homes. "I'm not saying it needs to be on the council workplan for 2021, but to give a greenlight to HAB to make a recommendation about way to allow more tiny homes in Boulder."

That's already underway, too, Firnhaber says.

Another HAB and another Brockett item: How do we better incorporate HAB into councils' work?

"I just want to make sure we're taking advantage of their expertise," Brockett says.

HAB also asked for this in its feedback to council. Friend included it on her list as well.

Firnhaber: "I would agree with all that Brockett has said."

Next item: Cannabis hospitality - also a Brockett item

CLAB brought this up in feedback. They wanted to know if Boulder wanted to explore this — biz where ppl can use cannabis on-premise — which the state legislature OK'd but is still not allowed here.

Brockett just thinks CLAB *should* talk about it and come back with a recommendation. The board was afraid to start the work without council OK.

Young, Wallach agree

Friend: I want to make sure they have a robust public process. Boulder County's DA has said he's against this, so I want to make sure they're taking everything into consideration.

Pattelli: Cannabis delivery is underway already. It's a bigger lift for staff than the hospitality biz. It would be a new work item; not big, but moderate.

"If the hospitality piece and the delivery piece came at the same time, I think that would be difficult bc I do expect a lot of new licenses. ... As long as they are spaced out, it would work."

Carr: "This will be a lift for council as well. ... If you do them together, it's at least one meeting with a long public hearing."

Brockett: "I'm not dictating a particular timeline here. I just want to give the green light ot HAB that they should consider (it)."

Doesn't get majority council support, so it will be revisited midyear.

Next one is a big one: HRC proposals. You can read more about them here: https://t.co/L728jMdJBM

Young narrowed those to three items:
Analysis of city language (link below)
Data collection on people who can't/don't use the shelter
Scope out possibility of "regional coalition" to lobby for higher level gov't action on homelessness

https://t.co/V3ok4fHuUH

I *thought* HRC's third thing was establishing an oversight board for the city's homelessness policies....?

Weaver: The first two can be handled by HRC/HAB. The regional coalition, I'm not sure we need to talk about establishing one. There is work going on to start one now, so we could talk about joining it.

"The third item isn't starting from ground zero," Weaver says. "I'm very supportive of this."

Firnhaber RE: data collection. "That's already underway" with Boulder's new BTHERE program. "We don't keep a data spreadsheet on this information; it's feedback."

The county is in the process of doing a survey of individuals who are experiencing homelessness at various service connections as well and "asking a lot of these questions," Firnhaber said.

Firnhaber has talked with the Metro Denver Homeless Initiative, who said they would "be happy to meet with" the HRC.

This group has criticized some of Boulder's policies in the past, which may preclude us joining any regional cohort.

Brockett: HRC has some "really significant concerns" with how homelessness is dealt with. I appreciate their collaboration.

Moving on: Young suggested Boulder do a Juneteenth recognition/resolution. They did a declaration in 2020, but Young says a resolution will actually have "teeth behind it"

Not really sure how.... Boulder has passed a ton of resolutions.

Firnhaber: "We would certainly want to be able to support that."

Oh, shoot, I got kicked out of the meeting for a second. idk what I missed.

Oh, it's the start of occupancy limits: Council agreed to look at these when a majority decided not to place the Bedrooms Are For People petition on the ballot.

That group submitted new language for this year.

Brockett brought it up: "This would not be a small thing. This would be a major workplan item." Suggests shifting use tables work to accommodate.

Friend: Much like Gunbarrel, this is something we said we would look at. It's our responsibility to let the community where we are on this.

Friend references the Bedrooms petition: "I imagine that will get on the ballot. ... Assuming it passes, we will have done a good thing for the community if we've worked on" some of their concerns "in tandem" with that citizen initiative.

Council DID say they would take this up BUT I would not be surprised if it doesn't happen.

Joseph: "Are you asking us to think of a counter measure" (for the ballot)? For me, after hearing from Bedrooms, I've become a little bit less inclined to support this item ... they already have a ballot measure, and it is likely to be successful."

Brockett: "I'm not imagining a ballot measure here. This is something council would take on that would lead or an ordinance or ordinances ... I know Bedrooms are working to get on the ballot. That may or not pass. My idea is it would be complementary" to the work we do.

Weaver: "I think the subject needs to be addressed. ... We are almost certainly going to have a ballot item that is going forward." Council's work on this would take at least 1.5 years.

"A lot of that work has been shortcut by the ballot initiative," Weaver says. "We're going to have a fork in the road when the election happens."

The NEXT council will have to deal with that, depending on the outcome, Weaver says.

We should set the stage for the next council.

"Gather the info" for next council to either implement the ballot initiative (if it passes) OR take up the issue itself (if it fails)

Wallach's with Weaver on this.

Young: "If the project could be scoped in an outcome-neutral manner" I would support it. "It's an issue of community interest that needs to be addressed one way or another."

Joseph: I agree with Weaver, but I do have some concern about some of his suggestions. Mostly that council's contribution is a report on what's being done elsewhere.

"I know we look to other cities as best practice, but in this particular interest, I'm not sure how that would be helpful to us. ... We might have the opportunity to do some community engagement. ... Get the pulse" here.

Lindsey: "I think from the staff side, we could be ready to give robust support to council should the ballot measure fail."

We can do research on peer cities, and outreach locally to get the community's feedback. "We could certainly look at how to scope this" in the planning dept.

Carr: "I just, my ask would be that if council at all starts contemplating a competing ballot measure, that council do that sooner rather than later. ... Something of this complexity .... it would be fine with me" if council didn't do a competing ballot measure.

"This is real," Carr says of the new petition. "I would suspect they get the signatures fairly quickly through the electronic system."

LOL Carr "This is real" sounding like a widow after her husband has died in war or something.

Friend: "I'm concerned if we don't commit to something ... November will roll around" and we'll have nothing.

"I think we're missing an opportunity to work with Bedrooms."

Brockett agrees with Friend.

Meschuk echoing Friend: "There was discussion council had on this." ... There's two paths we could take: A legislative change, or baseline research/outreach.

We can do the baseline work, Meschuk says. But prob not the legislative approach, without impacting other work. "It does give me some pause to try and consider a code change in what would be a fairly short amount of time."

"I'm just worried a topic this complex, to scope it down to a size we could achieve this year, I'm worried it would not be achieving what council would desire," Meschuk says.

Ferro: It would seem to me we'd need to pause the work on use tables AND community benefit in order to do a legislative/code change for occupancy limits.

Only Friend and Brockett in favor of that. No one else.

But unanimous support for the "baseline" approach

Or maybe not even that... Brockett says "by not doing it now" we're essentially waiting on the outcome of the election. "I think you just want to get rid of it," he says to Bergman. So she chucks it.

Yeah, it wasn't even put in the "parking lot" for revisit .... ? So the city will do... nothing?

I'll get clarity on that for you. Story next week.

@threadreaderapp please unroll. Thank you.