

City of Fircrest

October 2018

Town Topics



CITY COUNCIL

Hunter T. George, *Mayor*
Denny Waltier, *Mayor Pro Tempore*
David M. Viafore
Shannon Reynolds
Brett L. Wittner
Blake L. Surina
Jamie Nixon

Mayor's Message



I can think of 39 reasons why Fircrest is such a great place to live. They are the 39 year-round employees of the City of Fircrest.

You see some of them fairly often — the police officers, the Parks and Recreation team, and the Public Works crew members who maintain our streets and utilities.

Then there's a group that you may see only on occasion. Our Planning and Building staff work with residents and businesses on construction permits, code enforcement, etc. Our Municipal Court staff are fair and professional, even though many of the "customers" they encounter aren't there because they want to be (unless they're coming in to get a passport).

And finally, there's a group of employees you'll probably never see, but who are crucial to the City's operations. They work behind the scenes to handle the City's finances, process criminal records, maintain our buildings, manage administrative services, and keep our information technology systems functional, among other key tasks.

These employees really know our city. Twenty employees have worked here for at least a decade — and seven of those have been here at least 30 years! That's a lot of institutional knowledge. Police Chief John Cheesman tops the list as he approaches his 36th year of service to the City of Fircrest. Public Works Foreman Jeff Davis is only a year behind the Chief.

I'm also glad to see new hires come in. They bring fresh ideas and experiences. Twelve of our 39 employees have worked here less than two years.

At the time of this writing (in early September), our newest employee is named Lindsay and she works in our Finance Department. Who knows — maybe a future mayor of Fircrest will congratulate Lindsay on her 30th work anniversary in 2048.

Hunter T. George
Mayor

Pool and Community Center Update

The City Council, the Pool & Community Center Steering Committee, and City staff have been busy working with ARC Architects on the Pool and Community Center schematic design.



The response to the online survey was excellent, with over 580 completed surveys. The Steering Committee has reviewed the survey results, discussed proposed options, and will present a recommendation to the City Council on what pool design to move forward with, and whether or not to proceed to the next phase with the pool and community center, or just the pool. ARC's presentation to the City Council and the recommendation from the Steering Committee will take place at the regularly scheduled City Council meeting on **October 23rd at 7:00 pm**. Please join us.

Upcoming Tentative Schedule

- September 2018
City Council Review and Guidance
- October 2018
Project schematic design complete
- October / November 2018
City Council decision on project and bond
- November 2018 – April 2019
Update contract, design development, & public meetings
- April 2019
Ballot measure
- Spring/Summer 2019
Permits and Bidding
- Fall 2019
Construction begins

Please visit the City's website at www.cityoffircrest.net for more information.

October 6th & 13th
Fall Clean UP
Westside Disposal



October 25th 7-8:30pm
Haunted Trails
Thelma Gilmur Park

October 31st 6-8pm
Pumpkin Patch
Community Center



November 17th & 18th
10 am-5 pm
Holiday Bazaar
Community Center

Like us on Facebook



Serving the community since 1925

City Manager's Corner



Hello Fircrest Residents,

Have you ever wondered, "why can't we get a restaurant or grocery store in that vacant space?" It's a common question. For this edition of Town Topics, I want to talk a little bit about how development occurs, along with a few specifics regarding current developments in town.

The State of Washington requires cities to establish a comprehensive plan and land development code, along with other various rules for cities. The City then works with the Fircrest Planning Commission (comprised of 5 citizen volunteers) and the City Council to determine the zoning and development rules around which various kinds of development can take place.

Each type of development will have various requirements. Residential development requirements will be a little different than commercial development requirements, for example. In essence, the City gets to set the stage for development, but developers, businesses, and property owners get to the fill in the details.

Depending on the size of the development, reviews by staff and the Planning Commission may be required. A site development review, for example, is required at the Planning Commission level for larger developments such as the golf course condos and Chick-fil-A, which are 2 current developments in Fircrest. These types of developments require notification to neighboring properties as part of the

public process for approval. If the project complies with the development code, it must be approved, and if it does not meet the code, it is denied. The commission is not in a position to determine how desirable the development may be, although there are situations where conditions of approval can be applied.

This leads me back to where we started, and the questions about why we let something get built or why we don't get certain businesses. The main answer is simply that the City doesn't own the commercial property and other than determining our zoning laws and rules, the City can't tell a property owner which business to put on their property. And you likely don't want the City to have that power.

That said, the City Council and staff want to work with our business community in developing the best possible commercial options for Fircrest. As we continue to update the City's development code, we want feedback from businesses, property owners and residents so we can retain and recruit quality businesses in our commercial areas.

I have been visiting local businesses with Angelie Stahlnecker, our Planning and Building Administrator. If you haven't seen us yet, you will soon. Getting to know each other will help us create a business-friendly climate that benefits everyone.

Scott Pingel
City Manager

Planning Hot Topic: ADUs

Planning Hot Topic: ADUs

There is interest both locally and nationally with the retro idea of accessory dwelling units (ADUs). ADUs are more commonly known as mother-in-law apartments, granny flats, or backyard cottages. These units can be detached like a converted garage or attached like a basement apartment. People build them for many reasons, but the most common goals include providing housing for a family member or gaining income via rent.

What is the difference between an ADU and...

Cohabitation?

An ADU is the creation of a complete independent living facility that includes permanent provisions for living, sleeping, eating, cooking and sanitation. If there are no permanent cooking facilities (i.e. a stove) then it is not an ADU and you are just cohabitating. No extra regulation is required.

Short-term rentals?

The two main differences between ADUs and short-term rentals, like Airbnb, are the duration of the stay and the rules. Short-term rentals are limited to 30 days or less and are not allowed to have separate cooking facilities. So, while the

ADU is a fully independent living facility, a short-term rental is intended for a weekend room rental or for renting a whole house to a family for a week-long getaway. Both are regulated by the City.

Duplex?

Duplexes include two principal dwelling units and are treated as two separated houses. ADUs are intended to be secondary – think inconspicuous – in single-family neighborhoods. The property owner must live in one of the two units, separate front entrances are not allowed, and the total number of occupants may not exceed the maximum number established by the State's definition of "family." Many of the City's zones prohibit duplexes but allow ADUs.

Tell me more...

ADUs provide great flexibility in housing and living options, while still protecting neighborhood stability and values. They are regulated by the City and must meet standards and criteria. If you are interested in learning more, contact the Planning and Building Department, 253-564-8902 or planning@cityoffircrest.net.

City Offices Will Be Closed:

November 12th-Veteran's Day Observed

November 22nd & 23rd-Thanksgiving Holiday