

City of Portland
Bureau of Development Services
Alternative Technology Advisory Committee
Meeting Notes
August 23, 2018

Attendees: Joshua Klyber, Bob Sweeney, Jeff Cordial, Terry Whitehill, Nancy Thorington, David Posada, Angel York, Darin Wick, Donna Ruark (notes)

1. Welcome/Introductions

The meeting began with Joshua thanking the applicants for submitting such good follow-up information and also for coming back to the group. Terry also commented that there were good drawings submitted with the follow-up information.

1. Continuing discussion of Application 11-01, Composting Toilet System

Joshua began the discussion by asking if there was any requested information that was not submitted. The group decided that the additional information was pretty complete. Bob Sweeney commented that he thought the submittal was very thorough.

Bob asked the question: is there government interest in any kind of follow-through, or is it just complaints. Terry explained that BDS inspections is pretty much complaint-driven. He said it would be good for the applicant to be proactive and send test results to the City.

Donna brought up the notes from the last meeting (on the big-screen TV) and the group went over the list of recommendations from the last meeting, to see if there were any questions or additional requirements to add to that list.

There was some discussion regarding #11 – “Note the house is owner-occupied and will not be used as a short-term rental.” Joshua said the idea was to prevent the possibility of renting out the entire house as an Air BnB. He wondered whether it should be specified that the house is owner-occupied. It was decided that the specifications could include long term rentals (a year or more). Nancy likes the idea of specifying that the use is not Air BnB or short-term rental. Short-term guests are still ok. Angel and Darin reassured the group that they would provide signage and placards for visitors and guests.

Joshua then brought up the issue discussed at the last meeting regarding connecting with a Multnomah County Health official. Terry said that he had occasion to talk to a Multco Health official last week; he discovered that they take a hands-off approach to plumbing code issues. Terry also talked to the City Sanitarian. He said that from those conversations, it appears there is no need to talk to the County Health Official. The toilet will have to go through the plumbing

process and a permit will be necessary. And the compost can be spread anywhere but the vegetable gardens.

Joshua asked if there were any other comments or questions on the application and additional information. Since there wasn't, Joshua proposed a motion to approve the application and have BDS (Terry and Nancy) draw up a final proposal for the appeal board. They will bring that proposal back to the committee for discussion before finalizing it.

There was some discussion whether this first application and the second one could be combined into 1 application. Joshua pointed out that the main difference between the two applications is that this one is for a single family, while the second application is multi-family. Bob recommended keeping the applications separate; one application could hold up the other, and the group agreed.

Bob seconded the motion to approve the proposal and move forward on it, and it was a unanimous approval, except for Aron, who was not present.

Joshua congratulated the applicant and applauded them for their quick response.

2. Preliminary discussion of Application 12-01, Composting Toilet and Urine Diversion System

The group decided that this second application is appropriate, and very similar to the first application. As with the previous proposal, there are things that need to be addressed, like site diagram, and site specific information. What the group is looking for is a site-specific application, not a broad application. Here is the list of information that was listed on the previous application that the board will need on this application also:

1. Detailed plans for the commode (location in bathroom, volume, etc.)
2. Site plan – where containers will be stored, location of plants, etc.
3. Obtain plumbing permit for greywater and other plumbing installations in house
4. Spillage plans
5. Protocol for adjusting carbonation level of compost
6. Diagram of vents
7. Create operations manual - Each step of the process should be outlined in detail, from toilet to the compost bin to spreading the finished product
8. Detail minimum space requirements and financial obligations
9. Dimensions of toilet/bucket including materials, cleaning, and replacement

plan

10. Composting bins should be labeled and dated.
11. Note the house owner occupied and will not be used as a short term rental
12. The buckets and the lids for collecting human waste in the bathroom and transferring the waste to the compost bins should also be labeled to avoid being used for any other purposes
13. the type of buckets and lids (material, capacity, dimensions, examples of typical brand or product name) should also be mentioned
14. height of toilet seat should be indicated on drawings
15. the typical quantity of “carbon-rich additives” to be added to the toilet collection chamber (bucket) after each person’s use, whether that’s the same for urine or feces, or different

In addition to the above issues, the committee would like to see the following things addressed:

1. Site specific application – since it is a multi-use application, who would be doing the checking and dumping of the toilet
2. Since this application has a urine diversion system, there are more issues to be reviewed, specifically, does the application meet the WeStand requirements? Pictures of tanks would be helpful, along with information regarding the treatment (pasteurization or other method) and time limit of that treatment
3. The applicant presented a couple of different options; it needs to be clear which option is being used (for urine diversion)
4. Since this is a multi-family application, the tenants/users need to be specified
5. Multi-user calculations
6. Details of the composting bin/chamber, specifically sealant around the cinder blocks
7. Sump pump and urine processing details--what systems they want to use, specific site data, calculations on production and process.

Joshua made a motion to accept the application for review. The motion was unanimously approved, with Aron absent.

3. Discussion regarding date/time of next meeting

Donna will type up the notes, get a response from the second applicant, and schedule the next meeting when the applicant can be present for the discussion