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To: Mayor, City Council, and Land Use Committee
From: City of Duvall Community Development Department
Date: June 30, 2021
Re: Fence Permits

Community Development Department is considering creating a fence permit for the City of Duvall. City Staff made a preliminary research and found the following:

- Nearby cities have their permits available in their city webpage in a pdf format, while other cities require applicants to go into MyBuildingPermit.com to register and send an application for a permit.
- Fence permits are required for installing, maintaining, repairing or replacing a fence.
- Some cities charge for fence permits while others don't.
- Some cities require a permit only within certain zones (like Snohomish) or after a certain height (3 feet in Sultan, 6 feet in Kirkland, 8 feet in Bellevue and Seattle)
- Site plans often require information on property lines, easements, abutting rights-of-way, adjacent driveways, fire hydrants, and power poles close by.

Background

Complaints and code enforcement requests associated with fences have become more frequent in Duvall. A fence permit could help ensure that the design, size, scale, material and location of fences are built to code and are safe for the public. The Municipal Code contains the following general provisions to regulate fences ([DMC 14.64.180](#)):

- Fences shall comply with sight distance requirements
- Fences shall not be located in public right-of-way
- Fences shall not be constructed of colors and surfaces that can cause discomfort or hazards
- Electric fences are only allowed in specific zones and with permission from the City
- Fences on top of retaining walls that exceed 6 feet need approval by the Planning Director
- Arbors that do not exceed 10 feet in height are allowed
- Fences located in the residential, mixed use and commercial, light industrial and public facility zones contain additional requirements.
- Fences in front yards are limited to 4 feet in height with the allowance up to six feet if set back with plantings along some road corridors.

Recommendation

Based on staff's findings, planning staff recommends that fence permits be limited to fences being erected adjacent to the right of way, open spaces (public and private), parks (public and private), trails and sensitive areas.

Next Steps

City staff will be looking for feedback from the Land Use Committee, Planning Commission and City Council on fence permitting. Staff will develop a fence permit form in the upcoming weeks.

Resources:

Monroe (permit includes a submittal checklist)

<http://monroewa.gov/DocumentCenter/View/4910/Fence?bidId=>

Sultan (permit includes design and code explanations)

<https://www.ci.sultan.wa.us/DocumentCenter/View/5362/Fence-Permit-PDF?bidId=>

Snohomish (permit includes example of acceptable site plan)

<https://www.snohomishwa.gov/DocumentCenter/View/149/Fence-Submittal-Checklist?bidId=>

Kirkland (explanations in webpage about code requirements)

<https://www.kirklandwa.gov/Government/Departments/Planning-and-Building/Applications-Checklists-and-Forms/Forms-Webpages-Planning/Fence-Requirements>

Bellevue (distinguishes between Residential, Commercial and Electrical Security fences)

<https://bellevuewa.gov/city-government/departments/development/zoning-and-land-use/zoning-requirements/fences>

Seattle (webpage tab dedicated to fences)

<https://www.seattle.gov/sdci/permits/common-projects/fences>

Bellingham (department brochure on fences)

<https://mrsc.org/getmedia/4c58da2e-fa3c-4d30-9f8f-319056ad8b62/b45fencewallinfo.pdf.aspx>