

City of St. Helens City Council

Public Hearing Minutes

August 12, 2015

Members Present: Doug Morten, Council President
Keith Locke, Councilor
Susan Conn, Councilor
Ginny Carlson, Councilor

Members Absent: Randy Peterson, Mayor

Staff Present: John Walsh, City Administrator
Kathy Payne, City Recorder
Margaret Jeffries, Library Director
Neal Sheppard, Interim Public Works Co-Director
Sue Nelson, Interim Public Works Co-Director
Jennifer Dimsho, Assistant Planner

Others:	Brenda Fielding	Cheryl VanDomelen	Mandy Sill
	Cassidy Jones	Larry VanDolah	Jen Plahn
	Jason Brasmer	Oscar Nelson	Baylee Crawford
	Jeanne Crawford		



Public Hearing

Petitioner: Brett & Brighton Brooksby

Proposal: Vacation of public right of way

Location: Portion of West Street at N. 10th Street

At 6:30 p.m., Council President Morten opened the public hearing.

Staff Report

City Planning Assistant Jennifer Dimsho presented her staff report dated July 31, 2015.

Based upon the facts and findings, staff recommends denial of the street vacation petition.

Engineering does not support this vacation for three reasons:

- 1) West Street has an untouched 80 foot right-of-way (ROW). No other street vacations have been granted along West Street.
- 2) For purposes of the Public Works crew performing maintenance, ROW consistency along West Street is efficient and desirable. Since the intent of this vacation is to build a future addition, staff also noted if the applicant builds out to the edge of their property line (even with setbacks), the addition will be the only building along the corridor at that distance from the street.
- 3) Vacating this portion of the West Street ROW could potentially trigger adjacent properties to consider street vacations.

Dimsho pointed out that the original intent of the applicant was to build an addition for a prospective buyer. That buyer has backed out and they do not intend to follow through with

the addition. However, they would still like to gain the additional property.

Council President Morten spoke of a possible future overpass on West Street to cross the railroad. That would warrant a wider ROW.

Public Works Operations Director Sheppard spoke of the negative impact street vacations would have on West Street related to water meters and maintenance.

Testimony in Favor

◆ Brenda Fielding. This is her daughter's property. She's also a broker for Oregon First. The house sits far back from the road. Granting the street vacation will not hinder any road work. Brenda hopes more people request street vacations and build garages. It will improve the home values and aesthetics in the area. What they are requesting is reasonable and will improve the city.

Testimony in Opposition

None received.

Councilor Locke pointed out that West Street is the only main street in that area. We have to look at long-term future development.

Brenda said she was under the impression that there are vacations granted all over St. Helens. It seems ridiculous that they can't build to the fence. Thinking down the road 50 years does not seem reasonable.

Councilor Locke pointed out that he personally applied for a street vacation and was denied. Councilor Carlson added that not all street vacations are granted.

Brenda asked if we are holding back St. Helens or moving forward. Council President Morten said they are trying to move forward.

Close Public Hearing – 6:49 p.m.

Deliberations will be held during the regular session following this hearing.

ATTEST:



Kathy Payne, City Recorder

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Doug Morten, Council President