

City of St. Helens

Planning Commission Meeting

January 10, 2017

Minutes

Members Present: Dan Cary, Chair
Al Petersen, Vice Chair
Greg Cohen, Commissioner
Sheila Semling, Commissioner
Audrey Webster, Commissioner
Russell Hubbard, Commissioner

Members Absent: Kathryn Lawrence, Commissioner

Staff Present: Jacob Graichen, City Planner
Jennifer Dimsho, Assistant Planner & Planning Secretary

Councilors Present: Ginny Carlson, City Council Liaison

Others Present: Craig Melton

The Planning Commission meeting was called to order by Vice Chair Al Petersen at 7:00 p.m. Vice Chair Petersen led the flag salute.

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Consent Agenda

Approval of Minutes

Commissioner Cohen moved to approve the minutes of the December 13, 2016 Planning Commission meeting with the addition of Commissioner Semling voting in favor of the motion on page 3 and two small wording changes on page 4. Commissioner Webster seconded the motion. Motion carried with all in favor. Chair Dan Cary did not vote as per operating rules.

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Topics From The Floor

There were no topics from the floor.

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Chair/Vice Chair Selection

Chair Cary asked if someone else could take chair. He said he would not mind being vice chair. Commissioner Cohen moved to elect Vice Chair Petersen to chair and Chair Cary to vice chair. Vice Chair Petersen seconded. All in favor; none opposed; motion carries.

Assistant Planner Jenny Dimsho asked if someone from the Commission would like to be on the Branding and Wayfinding Advisory Committee to discuss wayfinding signage in St. Helens. The first meeting is tentatively scheduled for Thursday, February 2 in the afternoon. The Commission elected Commissioner

Hubbard to represent the Commission for this project. He will receive a formal email invite when the date and time are finalized.

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End of Year Summary Report

Vice Chair Petersen said he did not remember the Commission seeing the Melton and Coombs zone change. Dimsho said the file had been created in 2016 so it was included in the report, but it will actually go before the Commission next meeting.

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Framework Plan Discussion

City Planner Jacob Graichen led the discussion of the Framework Plan. The Commission received hardcopies of the Framework Plan and it is also uploaded to the City's website. He went through the Framework Plan and noted specific sections that apply to the following text amendment discussion.

Chair Cary questioned the use of the phrase "wildlife habitat" on page 31. He said from a biological standpoint, street trees do not fit into a strict definition of habitat. However, he noted that softening the riverfront bluff edge could help with Columbia River fish and wildlife habitat.

Commissioner Cohen asked how the City plans to fund public improvements. Graichen said that the City is in process of studying urban renewal as an implementation strategy. Commissioner Cohen asked if it is the City's goal to have the private developer responsible for public infrastructure and amenities. Graichen said yes, and it will likely be a negotiation process. Chair Cary cautioned the City against letting a future developer get away with anything for the sake of seeing development occur at all.

Chair Cary asked if the Framework Plan would allow a convention center to be located on the site. Graichen said the Framework Plan seems to align with that use, as long as the underlying zoning allows it.

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Framework Plan & Historic Preservation Text Amendments Discussion

Graichen briefly went over what was discussed during the last meeting. Then, he went through the draft text amendments, as included in the packet.

Vice Chair Petersen asked if the deletion of the "Additional Requirements" section in each zoning district would create an issue in the Mixed Use zones. Graichen said no. There was discussion about whether or not removing the section would be user-friendly.

In addition to the amendments included in the packet, Graichen discussed an additional change regarding the inconsistent terminology for animal sales and services between various zoning districts. The amendments will improve the consistency between similar uses across the zones in which they are allowed.

Vice Chair Petersen asked if this round of amendments would address the fact that the code has a definition for medical marijuana retailers and recreational marijuana retailers, but not manufacturing and processing. Graichen said no.

Commissioner Cohen suggested that pawn shops move from a permitted use to a conditional use in the proposed Plaza Sub-district. The Commission concurred. Commissioner Cohen also suggested that drive-up

businesses and funeral homes be removed as conditional uses in the proposed Plaza Sub-district. The Commission concurred.

Commissioner Hubbard asked about food carts. Graichen said these are addressed with a Temporary Use Permit, not through zoning. Graichen said he also said he wants to update the Temporary Use Permit chapter to better address food carts in the future.

Vice Chair Petersen suggested crossing out section 5(a) on page 18 because it is redundant. Vice Chair Petersen asked about the requirement of 500 square feet of non-residential per one dwelling unit in 5(b) iii on page 19 for the Plaza Sub-district. Graichen did not know how that specific ratio was decided. He noted that the ratio did seem to work with redevelopment of the Muckle Building, but so far, that has been the only development that tested the ratio. The Commission is concerned that the square footage is too arbitrary and not flexible enough. It was decided that since this standard has been in place for the current Riverfront District since 2007 and it is not getting carried over to the proposed new Mill Sub-district, they would leave it alone.

Graichen asked if the Architectural Design Guidelines should apply to the Mill Sub-district. Chair Cary said it would be great for the new development to be cohesive with the existing historic district, but he is concerned it may hinder development. Vice Chair Petersen recommended including the Architectural Design Guidelines for the Mill Sub-district since consistency with the guidelines is just a recommendation to the approval authority. The Commission agreed.

Commissioner Cohen left at 9:07 p.m. due to inclement weather.

The Commission made a number of small changes throughout the Mill Sub-district, including the removal of pawn shops from permitted uses and funeral homes from conditional uses.

Vice Chair Petersen asked about the removal of the parking lot section in the Mill Sub-district. Graichen said parking lot landscaping, screening, and other landscaping requirements (including frontage improvements) will be covered with Chapter 17.72.

The Commission decided not to specify a maximum building height in the Mill Sub-district initially because economics and/or public input at future hearings will likely limit building height anyways. Commissioner Hubbard asked if it was the goal of the Council to have a single developer for the entire waterfront site. Graichen said it depends on who proposes plans through the Request for Proposals process.

Graichen said the text related to ensuring public access along the water will change from what is included in the packet. He said consistency with the Framework Plan will need to be met, while also not creating potential legal issues.

The Commission agreed that pole signs should not be allowed in the Riverfront District.

Vice Chair Petersen requested to remove the word "affected" from Section 17.36.040 on page 31. Graichen asked if documentation should also be required if the historic structure is being relocated. Vice Chair Petersen said yes. Vice Chair Petersen also suggested adding "historical documentation" in Section 3(k) on page 33.

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Acceptance Agenda: Planning Administrator Site Design Review

- a. Site Design Review (Major) at vacant lot adjacent to the east side of 134 N. 2nd Street - Triplex on vacant lot

Commissioner Webster moved to accept the acceptance agenda. Vice Chair Petersen seconded. All in favor; none opposed; motion carries.

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Planning Director Decisions

- a. Home Occupation (Type I) at 195 N. 5th Street - Transportation business
- b. Lot Line Adjustment at 204 Crouse Way - Bells Drafting & Construction
- c. Sign Permit at 745 S. Columbia River Hwy - Replace gas station pole sign
- d. Home Occupation (Type I) at 733 Rockwood Dr. - Home-based house cleaning business

There were no comments.

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Planning Department Activity Reports

There were no comments.

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For Your Information Items

There were no for your information items.

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There being no further business before the Planning Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 9:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Dimsho
Planning Secretary

2017 Planning Commission Attendance Record

P=Present A=Absent Can=Cancelled

Date	Petersen	Hubbard	Lawrence	Cohen	Cary	Semling	Webster
01/10/17	P	P	A	P	P	P	P
02/14/17							
03/14/17							
04/11/17							
05/09/17							
06/13/17							
07/11/17							
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