

City of St. Helens
Planning Commission Meeting
February 14, 2017
Minutes

Members Present: Al Petersen, Chair
Greg Cohen, Commissioner
Sheila Semling, Commissioner
Audrey Webster, Commissioner
Kathryn Lawrence, Commissioner
Russell Hubbard, Commissioner

Members Absent: Dan Cary, Vice Chair

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

Councilors Present: Ginny Carlson, City Council Liaison

Others Present: David Coombs
Craig & Ronda Melton
Ray Ann Estrada
Bob Thomas
Doug Leveque

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

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Consent Agenda

Approval of Minutes

Commissioner Semling moved to approve the minutes of the January 10, 2017 Planning Commission meeting. Commissioner Webster seconded the motion. Motion carried with all in favor. Commissioner Lawrence did not vote due to her absence from that meeting. Chair Petersen 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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Public Hearing

Craig & Ronda Melton & David Coombs

**Comprehensive Plan Map & Zoning Map Amendment / CPZA.4.16
2554 & 2560 Columbia Blvd.**

It is now 7:00 p.m. and Chair Petersen opened the public hearing. There were no ex-parte contacts, conflicts of interest or bias in this matter.

City Planner Jacob Graichen entered the following items into the record:

- Staff report packet dated February 7, 2017 with attachments

Graichen introduced the Commission to the proposal as presented in the staff report, which is included in the packet. He discussed two items that were added to the record: a handout from the applicant about the proposal and a letter from the Fair Housing Council. Graichen said that Goal 10 of Oregon's Statewide Planning Goals requires that buildable lands for residential use be inventoried. He said the City's most recent buildable lands analysis was done as part of the state-mandated periodic review in the late 90s, which means the data is outdated and not very helpful. Graichen said if this proposal was suggesting a lower density, the letter from the Fair Housing Council may be more compelling, but since the proposal is for higher density, it does not make sense to delay a decision as they requested in the letter.

Graichen discussed the Comprehensive Goals and Policies related to housing, as presented in the staff report. Commissioner Cohen asked how large the two lots are. Graichen said together, the lots are a little over an acre. Commissioner Cohen asked if there is a minimum lot size for 4-plexes. Graichen said it is 8,000 square feet. Commissioner Cohen clarified that they could get to this density without re-zoning the property. Graichen said yes. Commissioner Cohen asked how the property will be accessed. Graichen said that since the applicant owns both properties, they will likely share access with the other property so that an additional driveway would not be added to Columbia Blvd. Commissioner Semling asked how many buildings they are proposing. Graichen said the applicant could address this.

IN FAVOR

Melton, Craig. Applicant. Melton described that the original development was built using a HUD program for low-income residents. He used to work for the previous owner of the existing 4-plex property. The units are 600 square feet, one-bedroom units with laundry facilities on-site. Melton said the previous owner operated this 4-plex for 32 years. When it went up for sale, both Coombs and Melton were interested in purchasing it. Melton said the units are basically senior living without assistance, although some residents have caretakers who visit regularly. The units are ADA-accessible. When the land next door to the existing 4-plex came up for sale, they bought it with a vision of expanding their facility in the future. They are only interested in developing the property for 65+ senior living. He said every day for the next 19 years, 10,000 people will reach age 65. Melton said there is a growing demand for this type of development.

Coombs, David. Applicant. Coombs said they purchased the existing 4-plex in late 2009. It was originally in a Rural Housing Program through the USDA. Once they purchased the property, it was no longer in that program. They had no intention of displacing low-income residents, so they worked with Community Action Team to get assistance through the Northwest Oregon Housing Authority for the residents. He showed the Commission photos of the existing development at 2560 Columbia Blvd. They are trying to apply what works well with the existing development to the new development and improve on it. The existing driveway will be widened by four feet and the sidewalk will be widened by one foot to meet the standards. He described that they could divide the property and build duplexes with current zoning, but they would rather continue the low-income, senior living model that they have on the existing 4-plex site. He does not feel this proposal is

spot zoning because the Comprehensive Plan should have the property across the street listed as General Residential (which includes Apartment Residential). There are 58 apartment units across the street.

Commissioner Cohen asked if they would leave the existing home on the property. Coombs said it would be partitioned off. Commissioner Cohen asked if the existing 4-plex structure would stay. Coombs said yes. Commissioner Semling asked how many units and how many buildings they will propose. Coombs said they would like to keep it to one building with eight units, but they have not prepared drawings for the site design review process yet. Coombs said they need land use approval first.

Thomas, Bob. 135 Ogan Lane. Thomas lives next to the development. He wanted to make sure that the new access is paved to keep the dust down. Graichen said it is a City requirement to pave the access.

Doug, Leveque. 125 Ogan Lane. Leveque lives next to the development. Leveque asked if the applicant could put a privacy fence between the two properties. Leveque bought the property with the understanding that the empty lot next to him would not be developed. He feels the one-story will block their view of the park, and he would prefer to have a privacy fence. Commissioner Cohen said that this request is for a Zoning/Comprehensive Plan Map Amendment and that a fence is not pertinent to this discussion. That is a Site Design Review concern. Graichen said there will be a notice area of 100 feet when the Site Design Review decision is made, so Leveque will be notified of the decision at that time.

IN OPPOSITION

No one spoke in opposition.

END OF ORAL TESTIMONY

There were no requests to continue the hearing or leave the record open.

CLOSE PUBLIC HEARING & RECORD

The applicant waived the opportunity to submit final written argument after the close of the record.

FURTHER QUESTIONS OF STAFF

Commissioner Semling asked if this zone change is approved, will the properties across the street also be re-zoned. Chair Petersen said they are already properly zoned Apartment Residential; it is the Comprehensive Plan Map that is incorrect. Graichen said the Comprehensive Plan Map will likely be critiqued in the future, especially as affordable housing becomes more of an issue. The Comprehensive Plan Map was created over 30 years ago. Chair Petersen asked about Community Action Team's affordable housing study. Assistant Planner Jenny Dimsho said the complete report is not complete, but she would send the draft analysis which contains the economic analysis to the Commission.

DELIBERATIONS

Commissioner Cohen is concerned that the site is not big enough to accommodate eight units. Chair Petersen pointed out that the number of units is not involved in the Commission's decision tonight. Chair Petersen said that tonight's discussion should revolve around zoning. Commissioner Hubbard said they can look at the well-kept, existing development and be assured that the applicant wants to do the same thing on the new property. Chair Petersen pointed out the letter from Don Patterson that the applicant included in their proposal about the lack of affordable housing. Commissioner Webster feels this proposal is a no-brainer. Commissioner Semling said she has no issues with this request, but she does not understand why

the apartments across the street are not also being changed. Chair Petersen said he does not disagree with her, but the Commission cannot make a change on someone else's property with this proposal. Commissioner Semling said she would like to see it be addressed in the future.

MOTION

Commissioner Webster moved to recommend approval of the Comprehensive Plan Map Amendment. Commissioner Lawrence seconded. All in favor; none opposed; motion carries.

Commissioner Webster moved to recommend approval of the Zoning Map Amendment. Commissioner Cohen seconded. All in favor; none opposed; motion carries.



Proposed Temporary Use Medical Hardship Amendments

Graichen explained that these proposed temporary use medical hardship changes will be included in the next batch of text amendments along with the Riverfront District changes. Graichen also explained the conversation the Commission had last time that temporary use medical hardships were discussed, which was back in September 2015. These text amendments cover some of the issues the Commission had back then.

Graichen said although there are rules to allow a manufactured home on a property for medical hardship, he does not think the City has ever issued a temporary medical hardship. He noted, however, that there have been *many* requests to use an RV for this purpose.

Graichen said the duration for Temporary Use Permits would be for six months with a single renewal. You may re-apply for another Temporary Use Permit after the renewal. Chair Petersen explained that the permitting cost adds up quickly for renewals in the County. He thinks the renewal should be cheaper than the County's especially since the staff time needed to process the permit is so minimal. Commissioner Cohen asked what the permit fee is currently. Graichen said the current Temporary Use fee is \$155 and \$104 for a renewal. Chair Petersen said that fee does not seem too onerous.

Commissioner Cohen asked why the proposed duration is only six months if the County is one year. Graichen said City Council was interested in the six-month duration in case the RV becomes a nuisance.

Commissioner Cohen asked how the code defines a recreation vehicle (RV). Graichen said an RV is defined as "towed or self-propelled vehicle such as motor homes, pick-up campers, and travel trailers intended for human occupancy for vacation and recreational purposes." He said the code defines a travel trailer as "portable vehicular structure not built to UBC, Manufactured Housing Construction and Safety Standards Code or the Mobile Home Design and Construction Standard designed for travel, recreational camping, or vacation purposes either having its own motor power or mounted onto or drawn by another vehicle, fully licensed and ready for highway use, and included but not limited to, travel and camping trailers, truck campers, and motor homes."

Graichen asked the Commission if they want the caretaker to be allowed to live in the RV or if the person needing the care can live in the RV. Commissioner Webster and Commissioner Cohen both feel that the RV should be allowed for the person needing the care **or** the caretaker. The Commission agreed.

The Commission did not see the benefit in requiring the caregiver to be an immediate family member. Councilor Carlson recommended having the caregiver listed on the application. Chair Petersen agreed and

suggested that if the caregiver changes, that information must be relayed to the City. The Commission agreed that the caregiver(s) do not have to be an immediate family member and that listing the person by name on the application is a good idea.

Graichen explained that the placement of the RV cannot be within the vision clearance area. Commissioner Cohen asked if this would allow RVs to be placed on the street. Graichen said no, and he will add a clarification about that. Graichen also explained that there is a requirement that the off-street parking available not be reduced below the minimum. He explained that this requirement will be a deal-breaker for many applicants who want to place the RV in the driveway and do not have other parking available. The Commission would like to keep this requirement.

Commissioner Cohen hopes that people do not illegally try to tie into the City sewer. Graichen said Public Works did not seem too concerned. Water hook up will just be with a hose, and no new meter is needed. Commissioner Lawrence is concerned about the sewer. Chair Petersen said most properties will not have the ability to hook up to sewer, but some homes happen to have a clean out available nearby. Most will have to go to a dump station to clean out once in a while. Chair Petersen said for the cases where sewer is nearby, the proposed code will require a permit for connection to ensure all requirements are met.

There was a discussion about limiting the number of people living in the RV. Councilor Carlson said she knew of a situation where a daughter and two grandchildren were living in the RV before the grandmother died. Once the grandmother died, the RV left. Commissioner Webster recommended removing the number of people living in the RV. Chair Petersen agreed. Commissioner Cohen disagreed. He felt not having a requirement would lead to six people living in the RV. Councilor Carlson brought up a situation where a family only slept in the RV and used the restrooms and kitchen in the house. They were not hooked up to sewer or water. The mother was a hoarder and the family living in the RV were actually cleaning up the property and the house. Carlson feels it does not make sense to limit the number of people living in the RV, especially with the increased housing needs.

Graichen suggested adding language about the ability to retract the permit if the applicant violates any of the rules or is otherwise a threat to public health, safety and welfare. The Commission expressed interest in this addition.

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Planning Director Decisions

- a. Sign Permit (Banner) at 2100 Block of Columbia Blvd - Columbia County Bridal Expo
- b. Sign Permit at 115 N. Columbia River Hwy - Wall sign on existing gas station store
- c. Sign Permit (3) at 2295 Gable Rd. - Wall signs on an existing Wal-Mart
- d. Sign Permit at 1914 Columbia Blvd. - Wall sign on an existing commercial suite

There were no comments.

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Planning Department Activity Reports

There were no comments.

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For Your Information Items

Graichen handed out the State Historic Preservation Office playing cards to the Commission. He also mentioned that Laurie Oliver, the Scappoose Planner, reached out to him regarding a training for transportation traffic studies on March 9 at 7 p.m. in the Scappoose Council Chambers. They are asking to share the costs if any commissioners want to go. Chair Petersen said he may be interested in attending.

Assistant Planner Jenny Dimsho mentioned the Urban Renewal Open House on February 21 at 6 p.m. in the Council Chambers. The presentation will begin at 6:30 p.m. and the doors will be open until 7:30 p.m.

Carlson mentioned that there will be an informational Open House regarding the lagoon repurposing project in the spring. A date has not been chosen yet.

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There being no further business before the Planning Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 8:45 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	P	P	P	P	A	P	P
03/14/17							
04/11/17							
05/09/17							
06/13/17							
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