

City of St. Helens
Planning Commission Meeting
July 11, 2017
Minutes

Members Present:

Dan Cary, Vice Chair
Greg Cohen, Commissioner
Sheila Semling, Commissioner
Audrey Webster, Commissioner
Kathryn Lawrence, Commissioner
Russell Hubbard, Commissioner

Members Absent:

Al Petersen, Chair
Ginny Carlson, City Council Liaison

Staff Present:

Jacob Graichen, City Planner
Jennifer Dimsho, Associate Planner

Others Present:

Carl Coffman	Ben Pry
Lauren Terry	Melissa Kyles
Mary, Mark, & Hawley Hubbard	Nancy Murray
Casey Mitchell	Jillian Gould
James Tierney	Cory Decette
Dave Carboneau	Cheryl Nicholson
Dan Brown	Margaret Magruder
William Lori	Joy Boren

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

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Consent Agenda

Approval of Minutes

Commissioner Webster moved to approve the minutes of the June 13, 2017 Planning Commission meeting. Commissioner Semling seconded the motion. Motion carried with all in favor.

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Topics From The Floor

There were no topics from the floor.

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Public Hearing

Community Action Team, Inc.

Conditional Use Permit & Variances (2) / CUP.3.17, V.2.17, & V.3.17

125 N. 17th Street, 124 and 134 N. 18th Street

It is now 7:01 p.m. and Vice Chair Cary 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 July 3, 2017 with attachments

Graichen introduced the Commission to the Conditional Use Permit, two Variance Permits, and the recommended conditions of approval as presented in the staff report. He noted a few of the issues the Commission needs to discuss tonight. Graichen said there is an existing sewer main along the property line that does not currently have an easement. The sewer line will need to be physically located, and an easement will be required as a condition. Graichen said N. 18th Street has a curb-tight sidewalk that is not in disrepair. Graichen said N. 18th Street is classified as a Collector Street, which requires a landscape strip, street trees, and a wider sidewalk. The Commission will need to decide if they want to require reconstruction of the existing sidewalk to meet the Collector Street standard or if the existing sidewalk is sufficient. Graichen explained that a shared parking agreement can be used when the peak times differ. In this case, Community Action Team's existing parking spaces may be used, if acceptable to the Commission. Graichen said the Commission will have to decide if they want to require tree preservation and/or if street trees would qualify as appropriate replacement.

Graichen said there are exterior elevation requirements that the proposal does not meet. He said the applicant argues that the intent of these requirements (visual interest) are met due to the orientation of the buildings. Graichen said the Commission can decide if the proposal meets the intent of the code, but this may be setting a precedent for future multi-dwelling unit site design reviews. Graichen said the proposal also does not meet separation requirements between the existing Community Action Team (CAT) building and the proposed multi-dwelling unit complex. Graichen said the Commission may utilize the "reasonable accommodation" clause to satisfy the unmet requirements if there is sound proof that the proposal serves people with disabilities as defined by the Federal government. This clause allows the approval body to waive certain requirements in order to reasonably accommodate people with disabilities if they do not create a fundamental alteration of the zoning scheme.

Commissioner Cohen asked what the maximum density would be for the two lots where the multi-dwelling unit is proposed. Graichen said it would be between five and six units if the applicant was not combining the existing CAT lots with this proposal. Commissioner Cohen asked if the Fire District had any concerns about building separation. Graichen said the Fire District's concerns were not related to building separation.

Commissioner Cohen asked how many off-street parking spaces would be required for the multi-dwelling proposal. Graichen said 24 spaces. Graichen said there are approximately 46 parking spaces available using CAT's existing parking lot and the on-street parking adjacent to the subject property along N. 17th Street. Commissioner Webster asked if there is a possibility to put two-hour parking signs in front of CAT to keep tenants from parking there all day. Graichen said this has been done before in other location, so it is a possibility if it becomes an issue in the future.

Commissioner Cohen asked if there is a way to ensure the multi-dwelling units remain for low-income residents, especially if the Commission relies on the "reasonable accommodation" clause for exceptions to certain standards. Associate Planner Dimsho suggested asking the applicant if their funding source requires

this long-term guarantee.

IN FAVOR

Tierney, James. Former Executive Director of Community Action Team, Inc. Tierney is the former Executive Director of CAT. He is also a member of Columbia County Self Help Inc. which owns the property. He has spent 34 years working with affordable housing in Columbia County. During that time, the bottom 60 percent of the population has seen their income fall, while housing costs have gone through the roof. Tierney explained that CAT is an agency that utilizes federal and state funding streams to assist the homeless. There are some CAT representatives here tonight to talk about the homeless programs CAT manages. CAT often gives money intended to assist homeless individuals back to funders because there is no location to place homeless clients. Tierney said CAT helps combat homelessness with case management workers who work with homeless families to apply for assistance and services. Tierney said CAT's case managers have a 60 to 80 percent success rate of getting the homeless housed and stable. Many homeless might have a mental illness or a drug and/or alcohol problem. Case managers help overcome these issues once they are housed and stable. This proposal co-locates the case managers and residents on the same site, which will help the clients be more successful.

Tierney said this proposal is a partnership of three non-profits. The first is the most visible: CAT. The second is Columbia County Self Help, which formed in 1983. They are a real estate holding company that assists Columbia County non-profits afford needed real estate. Two board members of Columbia County Self Help are here. The third is the Columbia County Housing Authority, which was formed 1966. The Columbia County Housing Authority assists CAT with two other low-income housing projects in the County and they act as their loan board for CAT's rehabilitation program. Tierney said CAT will manage the property, but ownership will be between the Columbia County Housing Authority and Columbia County Self Help.

Tierney said 90 percent of the homeless population that they work with are consider disabled. Therefore, Tierney said this is a population that really deserves use of the "reasonable accommodation" clause.

Tierney said, in addition to the three non-profit partners, CAT is working with a for-profit housing developer called Home First. Home First was created by a board member from an agency called Join. Join's mission is to develop housing in an inexpensive way in order to serve homeless families. Tierney said they have developed units for \$70,000 to \$80,000 per unit. Tierney said that typical affordable housing units cost around \$200,000 to develop because of the red tape and strings associated with state and federal funding. Home First is working with CAT and other non-profits to lower the cost per unit. Tierney said the \$640,000 of funding that CAT received for this project came from the State of Oregon through the Local Innovation Fast Track (LIFT) Program. This is about half of the cost of the total project. Tierney said they will be borrowing the rest. The land will be donated from Columbia County Self Help. Tierney said the LIFT funding comes with a 20-year commitment with a 30-year extension if CAT continues to manage the facility in the same way.

Tierney said the co-location of the multi-dwelling unit with CAT is an enormous benefit to this proposal. In addition, the location within St. Helens is also ideal for very low-income residents. It has decent transportation, it is close to needed services, and it is within walking distance of a market.

Commissioner Cohen asked if the funding is tied to the federal government. Tierney said the funding is from the state, not the federal government. Tierney said that is one of the reasons they are able to build the housing cheaper. Tierney also clarified that the "reasonable accommodation" clause can be used for this proposal, even if the funding is not federal.

Carboneau, Dave. Home First (Developer). Carboneau said Home First is a partner with CAT for this

project. Home First is a mission-driven organization that has been in business for about five years. Their mission is to try to make affordable housing affordable. They have developed over 400 units at about a third of cost and a third of the time it has been taking other developers of affordable housing. In Portland, developers are building "affordable" units at about \$200,000 - \$300,000 per unit. Carboneau said they just finished a project in SE Portland. He said one of the individuals they were able to place in one of the units was a veteran who had been on the streets for over ten years with a pension of \$700 a month but was unable to find affordable housing. They were able to place him in a unit for \$400 a month. The LIFT funding was developed to stimulate creative solutions to get more people placed in housing. Portland has 16,000 homeless people and over a quarter of them likely have a disability. The only way to get them into a stable and safe environment is to get them into housing.

Commissioner Hubbard asked how they are able to build the units so cheap. Carboneau said one of the ways is to avoid federal funding. He said they also work with qualified contractors who are cheaper than the average contractor. He said there are private lenders who want to support the community and they do not demand a 15 to 16 percent return on their investment. Carboneau said they have also standardized their design to make it efficient and cheaper. Commissioner Lawrence asked if these units will house families or only individuals. Carboneau said this proposal is targeted towards individuals, but there have been discussions about allowing a mother and a child.

Reed, Nina. 33854 East Kappler Rd. Reed is a board member of both Columbia County Self Help and Columbia County Housing Authority. She is excited to bring this project to St. Helens. She has been on both boards for over 20 years but has never seen grant funding available to help the homeless like this before. Reed said this County is growing, the homeless population is growing, and transitional housing is much needed. She hopes the Commission will approve this application.

Magruder, Margaret. 12589 Highway 30, Clatskanie. Magruder is a member of the Columbia County Self Help. She thinks this proposal is a very exciting opportunity for the partners of the project and for the City of St. Helens. This community is growing, yet CAT had to send back housing funds last year because there were no opportunities to spend it on. This proposal provides shelter and assistance on the same site. Magruder cannot imagine a better opportunity than this proposal to help solve the homeless problem. Part of the mission of the Planning Commission and the City of St. Helens is to help address the public health, safety, and welfare of its citizens, and Magruder feels this is a great opportunity to do just that.

Brown, Dan. Executive Director of Community Action Team Inc. Brown said CAT is grateful to serve the community through a project like this. Brown said this project is intended to take in homeless individuals for a short period of time. The intent is to stabilize them, help them become more self-sufficient, and help them succeed in finding more permanent housing. This proposal is ideal because CAT has connections and resources to help individuals receive the education, employment guidance, budgeting tools, and medical treatment they may need in order to succeed.

Commissioner Cohen asked how long a resident would live in the small units before transitioning out. Brown said up to 24 months maximum, but typically six to nine months. Brown said there are transitional apartments in the County, but none like this. Commissioner Cohen asked if they need to live in the County for a certain period of time before being eligible to live in the facility. Brown said they require a six-month residency in the County to be eligible unless they are returning veterans. Brown said the funding for the housing is not federally subsidized, but most of the programs CAT offers while they are housed in the facility are associated with federal funds.

Kyles, Melissa. 2625 Sykes Road. Kyles has been a housing case manager with CAT for 11 years. In the past four years, she has seen the housing crisis first-hand. Kyles said residents who are on a fixed pension or a social security income cannot afford rent increases. People can no longer find one-bedroom or studios

for under \$500. These have doubled in cost. Kyles said rental income requirements are no longer one and a half times rent, but upwards of three times rent. This forces populations on fixed incomes to be forced out. Kyles said they are living in RVs or on property they should not be living on just trying to survive. Kyles said all subsidized housing in Columbia County has a waiting list. During the 24 months the resident can live in transitional housing, there are case workers working with social security to get them income, putting them on subsidized housing waiting lists, Section 8 housing, or with other Northwest Oregon Housing Authority (NOHA) housing.

Regarding the parking requirements, Kyles said these individuals do not own vehicles. They are either solely relying on social security or have no income. Kyles said they cannot afford the vehicle, license, registration, insurance, and upkeep of a vehicle. This location is ideal because of its proximity to services without needing a vehicle to get there.

Nicholson, Cheryl. 59400 Barr Ave. Nicholson is also a case manager with CAT. She discussed some of the extreme homeless individuals who may have been in the woods for ten years and do not have the skills to meet with a potential landlord, budgeting skills, or soft skills to be a good neighbor, etc. This transitional housing offers them the ability to re-learn skills that are lost while being homeless for a prolonged period of time. Commissioner Cohen asked if these units could house a child. Nicholson said it could happen, but these small units are really not appropriate for a family.

Mitchell, Casey. Community Action Team. Mitchell is representing the applicant with CAT. He is prepared to answer any technical questions related to the proposal, but first he wanted to discuss the "reasonable accommodation" clause. Each of their three housing programs requires verified documentation of disabilities. Mitchell said averaged between the three housing programs, about 87 percent of the individuals served are classified as disabled.

Mitchell said CAT has 300 low-income rental units available. He said they are turning units over all the time, but there is a long waiting list. That is why this transitional housing facility is needed. Mitchell said the proposed units are small. They are not meant to be permanent. They are meant to be a transition into something more permanent.

Regarding parking, Mitchell said CAT's staff is in at 9 a.m. and out at 5 p.m. The parking lot is empty on weekends. This is in addition to the fact that most clients served at the facility cannot afford their own vehicles.

Mitchell described the lot line adjustment that would separate the office from the housing units. This will allow the bank to lend on the office portion of the proposal. Regarding the separation requirements on the side with windows, only three of the units will look into CAT's conference room. Mitchell feels that because this is not permanent housing, this should not be an issue. Vice Chair Cary asked if landscaping could be installed to help block the windows. Mitchell said they would work with Public Works to pick landscaping that will not impact the sewer line. Vice Chair Cary suggested frosting the windows of CAT's conference room.

Mitchell described the issue of getting handicapped individuals from the parking lot into the ADA-accessible unit. If they remove one unit from 17 to 16 units, they can solve many issues. This allows them to build the handicap-accessible path from the parking lot, the 20-foot front setback variance would be unnecessary, and the trash enclosure can be located on the residential lot instead of the lot that will house the office. Mitchell said they do not want to remove a unit, but they are leaning towards this as a solution to most of the problems Graichen mentioned in the staff report.

Vice Chair Cary asked why they do not build over two stories to get higher density. Mitchell said an elevator for the third floor raises the cost of the units substantially. Vice Chair Cary asked if they could alter the design to meet the standards, rather than remove a unit. Mitchell said they tried to create a centralized

courtyard that was visible from the street and was as big as possible. He said the rendering reflects a much better image than most people think of when they think of low-income units. Mitchell feels it will actually be one of the better-looking developments on the street when it is developed.

Commissioner Cohen asked about wheelchair accessible units. Mitchell said the ground floor units will be used for individuals in wheelchairs. Commissioner Hubbard asked why a unit could not be attached to the office space. Mitchell said if a housing unit was attached to the office space, the state's LIFT funding could not be used.

Mitchell said that the proposal meets all of the design criteria from N. 18th Street, but does not meet all of the criteria where the building abuts the CAT offices. The general public will not see that side of the building. Mitchell said they would love to keep the existing mature tree if the development allows it. The site plan looks like it may be possible. Mitchell said the transitional housing will allow tenants to build a track record for the competitive rental market. Without a rental history, it is near impossible for their clients to find housing.

Murray, Nancy. 2715 SW Huber Street, Portland. Murray is CAT's attorney. She said LIFT funding requires that the housing lot is encumbered with a restrictive covenant for 20 years and an additional 30 years with affordability restrictions. Murray said regardless of who owns the property, these restrictions run with the land. Regarding the density restrictions, Murray said there will be a restrictive covenant on the two lots that are to be developed, as well as CAT's existing facility and parking lots. This covenant will restrict any additional residential development. Murray said these restrictions will also run with the land. Murray described how the housing units will be used, encumbered, and financed as a completely separate project than the office. The office building will be financed with a commercial loan which is very different financing than the housing portion. Murray said this is why the design dictated complete separation and a lot line adjustment.

Commissioner Cohen asked for the CAT case worker to answer additional questions.

Kyles, Melissa. 2625 Sykes Road. Commissioner Cohen asked what the residents typically do during the day. Kyles said it depends on the individual. It ranges from job training, vocational rehabilitation, medical appointments, counseling, Veterans Court, volunteer hour requirements, etc. Vice Chair Cary asked if this facility will draw more homeless to the area. Kyles said their clients are currently mostly long-term residents of Columbia County, and it is anticipated this project will serve the same clientele. Kyles reminded the Commission that there is a six-month requirement they have lived in Columbia County to be eligible (except for returning veterans).

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.

DELIBERATIONS

Commissioner Webster asked if the proposal is for 16 units, instead of 17 units. Graichen said that is possible. He said the applicant seems to be okay with this. This would eliminate the need for a front setback variance. Commissioner Cohen said this solution seems to address problems. He would lean towards approval with 16 units.

Vice Chair Cary asked the Commission what they think about the frontage improvements. Graichen said in most cases, previous developments have not triggered re-construction to the new standard if the sidewalk is in good repair. Street trees are already proposed. The Commission was comfortable with this.

Graichen asked the Commission about parking. The Commission was comfortable with the shared parking concept. Commissioner Webster suggested including 2-hour parking signs in front of the existing CAT complex. Graichen asked if the internal pedestrian path should be required. The Commission agreed that with the removal of one unit, the path should be required. Graichen asked the Commission if they should require preservation of the existing tree. The Commission was okay with not requiring preservation as a requirement. Graichen asked if the Commission wants to use the "reasonable accommodation" clause to make an exception to the design standards with the variance permit. Graichen said the standards are intended to make the building aesthetically pleasing. He said the applicant's argument is that the rear side of the building is not visible from the street. Vice Chair Cary said the development is already visually interesting because it is dense, has varied siding, and other architectural features. The Commission agreed.

MOTION

Commissioner Webster moved to approve the Variance Permit for design standards, approve the Conditional Use Permit with revised conditions as discussed above, and deny the Variance Permit (front setback) because it is no longer needed with the removal of one unit. Commissioner Semling seconded. All in favor; none opposed; motion carries.

Commissioner Cohen moved for Vice Chair Cary to sign the Findings and Conclusions once prepared. Commissioner Semling seconded. All in favor; none opposed; motion carries.

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Public Hearing

Relevant Housing Company

Conditional Use Permit / CUP.3.17

245 N. 7th Street

It is now 9:26 p.m. and Vice Chair Cary opened the public hearing. There were no ex-parte contacts, conflicts of interest or bias in this matter.

Graichen entered the following items into the record:

- Staff report packet dated July 3, 2017 with attachments

Graichen introduced the Commission to the proposal and discussed the recommended conditions of approval, as presented in the staff report. Commissioner Cohen asked if there are special requirements for conex boxes. Graichen said there is the exterior feature requirements for extensions and recesses that applies to multi-dwelling units. Commissioner Cohen asked if the flat roof would cause any issues. Graichen said the pre-application meeting did not raise any concerns. Commissioner Cohen asked if ADA requirements would need to be met for the second story. Graichen said the building code addresses this. Vice Chair Cary asked if the City desired to have a certain number of spaces available for public

use. Graichen said there is no specific number, but the City and the applicant have been working to maximize the remaining spaces available for public parking.

IN FAVOR

Coffman, Carl. Relevant Building Company. Coffman would like to address parking first. He said that the connection to Wyeth Street from 7th Street could be widened and improved, which would offer more public parking. Coffman feels he is providing at least the same amount of spaces as the existing gravel area is currently providing.

Aside from the parking issue, Coffman would like to discuss affordable housing. He was impressed with the previous presentation regarding the homeless population. Coffman said his clientele is a little different. He is targeting the population that is ready to purchase a home for less than \$1,000 a month, including all other homeowner association fees. He does not want to be a property owner of the site. He wants the City to own the lot and lease it to the condo owner. A long-term lease would provide a stable, ongoing revenue source for the City. Coffman said property is expensive and if the City retains ownership, it helps lower the cost to the buyer. Coffman proposed a larger version of this on the waterfront site, but the City Council suggested this property instead. He said a portion of his clientele is the retired population looking to downsize.

Coffman said this is a pilot project. He has paid for immense structural engineering to take two conex boxes, saw the middle wall out, and put them together. Coffman prefers the flat roof design over the sloped roof design. Coffman said the multi-dwelling structure can be moved to meet the front setback. The decks can be extended an additional foot to meet the criteria. He feels his design meets the intent to create visual interest on the face of the building, but that is up to the Commission. Coffman said the street is developed very close to the property within the right-of-way because much of the right-of-way includes the park. The proposal includes three on-street parking spaces. Coffman said he is leaving the existing trees as much as possible on the property. He feels the area with trees could be a community space to be used for a community garden, gathering, etc. Vice Chair Cary asked if he tried to add additional parking in the rocky area with trees. Coffman said he considered it, but only got about three spaces out of it. Vice Chair Cary asked if he tried to separate the public parking from the private parking. Coffman said yes, he tried very hard to separate it, but it just did not work from a design standpoint.

Commissioner Lawrence asked if the flat roof would be an issue in the rainy environment. Coffman said the Muckle Building is a flat roof. The conex boxes will have a sloped roof on top of the flat conex box roof. Coffman said there is one ADA unit on the bottom floor. Coffman said the insulation is the most expensive piece to meet building code. He also said the units will be sprinkled. Commissioner Hubbard asked how lenders will view these units. He said he has not gone that far, but there are local credit unions willing to discuss. He is not concerned about finding lenders to finance the units. Coffman said these units are amazingly strong. He said this land use application is not for any building code exceptions. Coffman reiterated that the issue of affordable housing is not going away.

Terry, Lauren. Relevant Building Company. Terry has been managing the Waterside Apartments in the Muckle Building for the last year and a half. She has heard countless testimony about the lack of housing options for renters in St. Helens. Millennials have so few options for purchasing homes. Terry is from Roseburg, Oregon and she sees a lot of similarities between St. Helens and Roseburg. Terry said in Roseburg, the declining timber industry caused very similar economic issues. This housing does look different from the typical American neighborhoods, but times are different too. There are not enough natural materials for all of the housing we need. The idea of spending the same amount she is spending on rent to purchase a home would allow her to pay off student debt and build equity at the same time. Terry said we need radical change to conquer the homeless problem and housing shortage. She said home ownership has become a privilege and it really should be a right.

NEUTRAL

Lang, William. 295 N. 7th Street. Lang lives next to the proposal. He has lived there since the early 2000s. When he first moved in, the parking was so bad that his driveway would be blocked. Lang said he has seen up to 18 cars parked in the gravel lot. He said there was a proposal in the past to move the park fence and make the street a one-way and provide additional parking for the park. Lang said this would be a permanent solution to the parking problem at the park.

Decette, Cory. 607 SW Arboretum Circle, Portland. Decette said Richard Hunter was a former landowner of the property proposed for development. Richard Hunter wished to develop the land in the past, but was not allowed to due to a depression and collection of stormwater. The City purchased the property in 2010, the house was torn down, and fill was added to the depression. This caused water to flood his property at 275 N. 7th Street. The City has since corrected the issue. This will be an issue that the developer should be aware of. Decette is not for or against container homes, but he is concerned about how high density and low-income development will impact the value of his property and surrounding homes. North 7th Street is fairly quiet, serving only seven residences and the occasional ball game. Adding eight more units will more than double the car traffic and foot traffic. Decette said the developer should develop sidewalks and curbs on the west side of N. 7th Street spanning from West Street to the end of the last house. Decette also requested a privacy hedge on the north end of their parking lot to mitigate late night headlight glare into the house that he owns.

Boren, Joy. 771 West Street. Boren is concerned about parking. On weekends especially, she is concerned about the lack of parking and the increased traffic the new development will cause. Boren is also concerned about how the stormwater runoff will be addressed because of the presence of bedrock in the area.

IN OPPOSITION

No one spoke in opposition.

REBUTTAL

Coffman, Carl. Relevant Building Company. Coffman said he feels bad about the parking issue, but every place has parking issues. He did not come tonight to resolve the public parking problem. Coffman said there are improvements that can be made within the right-of-way to increase parking. There are also improvements that can be made further down in the N. 7th Street right-of-way that would increase parking availability. Regarding stormwater, he has an excavation company and has been doing this kind of work for over 35 years. Coffman discussed the catch basin location and how he plans to convey the water in a slightly different location than it is currently conveyed. Graichen said the City is aware of the stormwater issue and an enhanced stormwater condition is included in the staff report. Coffman also said he is okay with installing a barrier to prevent headlight glare into the adjacent residence.

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.

DELIBERATIONS

Graichen asked the Commission if the four-foot off-set every 16 feet is appropriate as proposed, instead of the code's requirement of an eight-foot off-set every 30 feet. Commissioner Hubbard said it works better as proposed. The Commission agreed. Regarding the other exterior elevation requirement, Commissioner Webster noted the applicant indicated he would be okay with making the patio extensions eight feet instead of seven.

Commissioner Cohen is conflicted about not requiring sidewalks, despite the new development increasing the traffic on N. 7th Street. Graichen said the City does push for installation of sidewalks, but the recommendation in this case is for the fee in lieu of frontage improvements.

MOTION

Commissioner Cohen moved to approve the Conditional Use Permit with the amendments to the exterior elevation requirements as discussed. Commissioner Webster seconded. All in favor; none opposed; motion carries.

Commissioner Cohen moved for Vice Cary to sign the Findings and Conclusions once prepared. Commissioner Semling seconded. All in favor; none opposed; motion carries.

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Public Hearing

Hubbard Construction Corporation

Conditional Use Permit and Variances (2) / CUP.5.17, V.4.17, & V.5.17

N. 12th Street & Columbia Blvd.

It is now 10:47 p.m. and Vice Chair Cary opened the public hearing. Commission Hubbard is the developer and property owner of the property. He recused himself from the public hearing.

Graichen entered the following items into the record:

- Staff report packet dated July 3, 2017 with attachments

Graichen introduced the proposal to the Commission and went through the recommended conditions of approval, as presented in the staff report. The proposal includes two variances, one for yard setbacks and one for density. Graichen said the elevation plans did not demonstrate how the proposal will meet the exterior elevation requirements. Graichen said maybe the applicant can demonstrate how the building will meet the intent of the code. Since the Commission has never consider a density variance before, Graichen went through some of the logic behind the density variance, as noted on page 15 and 16 of the staff report.

Commissioner Cohen asked why the placement of the building was not further back from the front property line. Graichen discussed the spacing requirement from Columbia Boulevard to the driveway as one potential reason, but he said the applicant could address the site design in more detail. Commissioner Cohen asked what Graichen was thinking on page ten when he discussed additional privacy between the commercial and the residential units. Graichen said he was just enlisting the Commission to brainstorm ways to potentially increase privacy for residents from the commercial unit if they thought it was warranted. The Commission noted that there is already a setback between the side-by-side units.

IN FAVOR

Hubbard, Russell. Hubbard Construction Corporation. Hubbard said the property is very difficult to

work within. It is highly sloped. He said that building at the street level suits the site much better. Hubbard said if the economy was booming, he would be developing units with commercial below and living space above. He said now, housing demand is just too high. He said the lending for this is all private. Hubbard designs projects to fit each unique site, so these units are not cookie-cutter. Hubbard said it will be easy to demonstrate turning radius because the parking spaces are wider than required. Regarding the exterior elevation requirements, Hubbard feels he can meet at least two of the three standards listed in the staff report as required.

Commissioner Cohen asked if storm drainage modifications have been made. Hubbard said he will work with the Engineering Department to meet stormwater requirements. Hubbard also said he is considering using pavers to allow greater on-site water retention.

Hubbard said the living and kitchen area is in the front of the units, and the bedroom and sleeping area is in the rear to allow for privacy and reduced noise. Commissioner Webster clarified that the parking is lower than the units. Hubbard said yes, you will have to walk up to the units from the parking lot. Vice Chair Cary asked how the commercial space will be accessed. Hubbard said it will only be accessed off of Columbia Boulevard. Hubbard said the on-street Columbia Boulevard parking spaces will be used most commonly for the commercial space. Hubbard said the space is already tentatively leased to a wine shop, so the customers will be in and out fairly quickly.

Commissioner Cohen asked if any of the trees are older than 50 years old. Hubbard said he did not know, but he will be planting substantially better street trees. Vice Chair Cary asked what type of trees he was considering planting. Hubbard said he is interested in native plants if they will grow. He said he has had good luck in the past with Italian Cypress.

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.

DELIBERATIONS

Graichen recommended reviewing the two Variance Permits first because the project relies on their approval. Vice Chair Cary noted that the development is street-level access and urban, so the setback variance makes sense. Commissioner Webster also noted the steep slope makes development challenging. Vice Chair Cary has no problem with approving the density variance. Commissioner Semling likes that the units are located in the center of the City. The Commission is okay with utilizing the existing Columbia Boulevard sidewalk instead of requiring re-construction to the Corridor Master Plan and Minor Arterial standards.

MOTION

Commissioner Cohen moved to approve the two Variance permits and the Conditional Use Permit as written. Commissioner Webster seconded. All in favor; none opposed; motion carries.

Commissioner Cohen moved for Vice Chair Cary to sign the Findings and Conclusions once prepared. Commissioner Webster seconded. All in favor; none opposed; motion carries.

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Acceptance Agenda: Planning Administrator Site Design Review

- a. Site Design Review (Minor) at 144 Marshall Street - Paving graveled parking area

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

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Planning Director Decisions

- a. Sign Permit (Banner) at 2100 Block of Columbia Blvd. - Columbia County Fair
- b. Temporary Use Permit at 2295 Gable Rd. - Fireworks sales tent/stand
- c. Partition at 2554 Columbia Blvd. - Coombs
- d. Temporary Use Permit at 735 S. Columbia River Hwy - Fireworks sales tent/stand
- e. Tree Removal Permit at 35121 Roberts Lane - Removal of a hazardous tree within a wetland
- f. Accessory Structure Permit at 144 S. 4th Street - New storage shed
- g. Home Occupation (Type I) at 58844 Parkwood Dr. - Home office for cleaning services
- h. Lot Line Adjustment at 225 N. 3rd Street, 360 Wyeth Street, & 214 N. 4th Street - Reynolds Land Surveying, Inc.

There were no comments.

□

Planning Department Activity Reports

There were no comments.

□

For Your Information Items

Dimsho said that the Certified Local Government (CLG) periodic review has been scheduled for July 18 at 10 a.m. at City Hall if anyone from the Commission would like to ask any questions or talk to the Coordinator with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO).

□

There being no further business before the Planning Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 11:39 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Dimsho
Associate Planner

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	P	P	A	P	P	P	P
04/11/17	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
05/09/17	P	P	P	A	P	P	P
06/13/17	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
07/11/17	A	P	P	P	P	P	P
08/08/17							
09/12/17							
10/10/17							
11/14/17							
12/12/17							