

# City of St. Helens Planning Commission

Approved Minutes

June 11, 2019

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**Members Present:** Chair Hubbard  
Vice Chair Cary  
Commissioner Lawrence  
Commissioner Semling  
Commissioner Stenberg  
Commissioner Webster

**Members Absent:** Commissioner Cohen

**Staff Present:** Councilor Carlson  
City Planner Graichen  
Associate Planner Dimsho

**Others:** Glen Miller  
Jim Turner  
Fred Hines  
Jake Hines  
Julia Jackson  
Pebbles Stone  
Lindsey Jones  
Mike DeRoia

- 1) **7:00 p.m. - Call to Order and Flag Salute**
- 2) **Consent Agenda: Approval of Minutes**  
2.A Planning Commission Minutes Dated May 14, 2019

Chair Hubbard was absent during the last meeting, but he wanted to clarify and make comments regarding some of the discussions. He feels Commissioner Cohen's suggestion about requiring an additional bond for certain size projects to prevent violations would hinder development. He prefers additional oversight and enforcement, not additional costs to developers. Chair Hubbard asked about the City's fill on Wyeth Street. He said there is no erosion control, and the soil has objects in it, which means it cannot be compacted properly. City Planner Graichen said there was a citizen asking about that at the last Council meeting. Graichen said now that the underlying storm line is fixed, the City has been filling it again. He will ask staff about the soil quality and erosion control.

**Motion:** Upon Commissioner Semling's motion and Commissioner Stenberg's second, the Planning Commission unanimously approved Planning Commission Minutes dated May 14, 2019 as written. [Ayes: Vice Chair Cary, Commissioner Lawrence, Commissioner Semling, Commissioner Stenberg, Commissioner Webster; Nays: None]

3) **Topics from the Floor: Limited to 5 minutes per topic (not on public hearing agenda)**

There were no topics from the floor.

4) **Public Hearings (times reflect earliest start time)**

4.A 7:00 p.m. - Conditional Use Permit at 500 N. Columbia River Highway - GA Miller Architecture PC on behalf of Columbia Community Mental Health

Chair Hubbard opened the Public Hearing at 7:06 p.m. There were no ex-parte contacts, conflicts of interests, or bias in this matter. Graichen entered the staff report dated June 4, 2019 into the record. He said this proposal is for a Conditional Use Permit to establish a 16-bed residential facility that provides a 90-day drug and alcohol treatment and a 16-bed medical detox facility that provides a five to seven day detox treatment in what used to be the Legacy Health Clinic. Graichen said the staff report notes a lack of screening in some areas around the parking lot and a lack of trash enclosures. The land owner is receptive to the conditions as presented in the staff report. He noted that there are other existing uses in the commercial complex, so the Commission can consider ways to make this use more compatible with the surrounding uses. Graichen said the Commission has a copy of a letter that was entered into the record in opposition to the proposal. Chair Hubbard asked if the Conditional Use Permit runs with the land or the lessee. Graichen said the permit will run with the land. If a different agency wanted to continue the use, they could.

**In Favor**

**Jackson, Julia. Applicant.** Jackson is the Executive Director of Columbia Community Mental Health (CCMH), who will be operating the facility. Jackson said CCMH is a non-profit contracted by the Oregon Health Authority as the main behavioral health provider for the county. They have become a tri-county hub for certain services that are lacking in Tillamook and Clatsop County. They would like to move their existing facility on Columbia Blvd. and 4th Street to this new location. The existing facility is a house, has little room for administrative staff, and they often have four to five patients in a single room. When she took this role, one of her goals was to create a higher quality, more therapeutic facility. They want to reduce recidivism, which means they want to see a decrease in the patients who use their services multiple times. The detox program currently only offers nine beds, so this proposal would expand services to 16 beds. This new facility would also allow walk-in admission, which they do not currently offer. This means that people who need a bed immediately now are spending the night on the street, getting jailed, or getting transported to services in Portland.

Jackson said the new facility will be under 24/7 sight and sound supervision. The residents cannot leave without staff. The facility is non-smoking. The program and campus will be tobacco free. Their staff cannot be anywhere near the campus if they choose to smoke. They also cannot smell like smoke when they come back to work. This facility will not have crowds of people out front like some locations in Portland. This rural facility runs very differently than those in urban environments. Jackson said the letter submitted in opposition demonstrates a need for education. Regarding distance from public schools, she thinks the citizen may have been referring to sexual offender treatment. Jackson added there would be no reason for their clients to be near the childcare entrance. Regarding economic development, she said if we are going to improve the city, we need to provide services to treat people who are ill. Jackson said if we do not provide these services, these citizens are going to be out on the streets and in our parks.

We need to prioritize mental health and wellbeing of our community in order to promote economic development.

Chair Hubbard asked if they will keep the 4th Street facility. Jackson said yes, they would like to use it for sober transitional housing. It would be low and affordable rent for residents in recovery. Chair Hubbard asked what happens if someone leaves against the advice of medical professionals. Jackson said if a client leaves, law enforcement is usually notified. Commissioner Semling asked about their repeat clients. Jackson said medical detox has a higher rate of recidivism (about 30 percent). In the residential facility, it is a little less, but they cannot track if they received treatment elsewhere. Jackson said they have lengthened the stay from 30 to 90 days to help reduce recidivism. Vice Chair Cary asked if residents would feel comfortable in the green space without screening. Jackson said they do not plan on putting up signage that identifies the facility as a treatment facility, but they do not plan to screen it. They may install some attractive benches. Jackson said the location of the driveways and entrances to other businesses make the confidentiality risk low for clients who use the greenspace. There will not be a lot of traffic near their facility.

**Hines, Fred. Property Owner.** Hines is the manager of Columbia Commons LLC, who owns the property. They have been the owners for about 16 years. They have five other tenants: the State of Oregon (Department of Motor Vehicles, Department of Human Services, and Employment Security), a massage clinic, a daycare, a kidney dialysis clinic, and a dentist. He said there is crossover between Department of Human Services and CCMH's clients. Hines said they want all tenants and facilities to be safe and sound. They have addressed any concerns that the other tenants have about the proposed new use.

### **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 of Public Hearing & Record**

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

### **Deliberations**

Vice Chair Cary clarified the locations where screening was lacking. Commissioner Lawrence said she is impressed by what she has heard. Commissioner Webster and Stenberg agreed. Chair Hubbard and Commissioner Webster said they live near the existing 4th Street facility and have no problems. Vice Chair Cary said the location is easily accessible, so law enforcement can respond quickly. The Commission would like to see a trash enclosure for all tenants and screening from the residential lot, as presented in the staff report. Vice Chair Cary asked what type of screening. Graichen said the condition can require landscaping of trees and shrubs of various heights to soften the impact of the parking lot.

**Motion:** Upon Commissioner Webster's motion and Vice Chair Cary's second, the Planning Commission unanimously approved the Conditional Use Permit with the conditions requiring trash enclosures for all tenants and landscaping/screening along the southwest boundary to soften the impact of the parking lot to the residential area. [Ayes: Vice Chair Cary, Commissioner Lawrence, Commissioner Semling, Commissioner Stenberg, Commissioner Webster; Nays: None]

**Motion:** Upon Commissioner Lawrence's motion and Commissioner Webster's second, the Planning Commission unanimously approved the Chair to sign the Findings & Conclusions once prepared. [Ayes: Vice Chair Cary, Commissioner Lawrence, Commissioner Semling, Commissioner Stenberg, Commissioner Webster; Nays: None]

**5) Acceptance Agenda: Planning Administrator Site Design Review**

- a. Site Design Review at 1899 Old Portland Road - Outdoor storage business expansion
- b. Site Design Review at 526, 530, & 534 Milton Way - Expansion of equipment storage/parking area and fencing

Chair Hubbard asked about the 1899 Old Portland Road expansion of outdoor storage. Graichen said it was for an expansion of Storage Pal, LLC. Vice Chair Cary issued a letter on behalf of the Department of State Lands, so he requested to recuse himself from approving 5a.

**Motion:** Upon Commissioner Webster's motion and Commissioner Stenberg's second, the Planning Commission approved the Acceptance Agenda: Planning Administrator Site Design Review - **Item A**. [Ayes: Commissioner Lawrence, Commissioner Semling, Commissioner Stenberg, Commissioner Webster; Abstain: Vice Chair Cary; Nays: None]

**Motion:** Upon Commissioner Webster's motion and Commissioner Semling's second, the Planning Commission unanimously approved Acceptance Agenda: Planning Administrator Site Design Review - **Item B**. [Ayes: Vice Chair Cary, Commissioner Lawrence, Commissioner Semling, Commissioner Stenberg, Commissioner Webster; Nays: None]

**6) Planning Director Decisions**

Associate Planner Jenny Dimsho noted that the Lot Line Adjustment at 34759 Sykes Road & 59401 Yarmer Lane (Planning Director Decision 6h.) was not yet approved, even though it was prematurely put on the agenda. She said it does not require any Commission action. There were no other comments.

**7) Planning Department Activity Report**  
7.A May Planning Department Report

There were no comments.

**8) For Your Information Items**

Councilor Carlson said there was a recent article in The Spotlight regarding the lagoon repurposing project. She said what they alleged was not entirely true. The media was invited to the meeting. They chose not to attend. She said there was nothing voted on during that meeting. It was information gathering and question asking. Vice Chair Cary asked if the scope of work would include information on the lining of the lagoon. Councilor Carlson said yes.

Commissioner Lawrence said she does not want to see hazardous waste in the lagoon from Portland. Councilor Carlson said Armstrong has cleanup as well. Chair Hubbard would like the Commission to be involved in the public outreach to come.

The Commission discussed updates in the waterfront redevelopment project. Dimsho discussed the upcoming BUILD application deadline, and Graichen discussed the Urban Renewal Area.

9) **Next Regular Meeting - July 11, 2019**

10) **Adjournment**

*There being no further business before the Planning Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 8:31 p.m.*

*Respectfully submitted,*

*Jennifer Dimsho  
Associate Planner*