



COUNCIL PUBLIC HEARING

Wednesday, October 18, 2023

APPROVED MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mayor Rick Scholl
Council President Jessica Chilton
Councilor Mark Gundersen
Councilor Russell Hubbard
Councilor Brandon Sundeen

STAFF PRESENT

John Walsh, City Administrator
Kathy Payne, City Recorder
Lisa Scholl, Deputy City Recorder
Jacob Graichen, City Planner
Jenny Dimsho, Associate Planner
Suzanne Bishop, Library Director
Crystal King, Communications Officer
Bill Monahan, Contracted City Attorney
Tina Curry, Contracted Event Coordinator
Brian Greenway, Police Chief

Jose Castilleja, Police Sergeant
Evin Eustice, Police Sergeant
Doug Treat, Police Sergeant
Matt Smith, Police Corporal
Dylan Gaston, Police Detective
Jeremy Howell, Police Officer
Jamin Coy, Police Officer
Adam Hartless, Police Officer
Kolten Edwards, Police Officer
Brandon Haflich, Police Officer

OTHERS

Steve Topaz	Jennifer Shoemaker
Brady Preheim	Jane Garcia
Steve Toschi	Adrienne Linton
Michelle	Scott Jacobson
B. Gaston	Debbie Parsons
Hayley Starkey	Judy Thompson
Matt R.	Jesse Lagers
Iris Wu	Brian Varricchione
CCMH	Alex Tardiff
Catherine Hager	Tony Fleming
Cody Feakin	Jim Coleman
Al Petersen	Kellie Jo Smith

Adam St. Pierre	Peter Hautt
Thomas Peck	Kathy Thomas
Mary Anne Anderson	Suzie Dahl
Jen Massey	Leila Wilson
Sabrina Moore	Allison Anderson
Brianna Boice	Todd Jacobson
Jeff Humphreys	Arthur Leskowich
David Lintz	RLT
Matt	James Shober
Sid Hariharan	Eddie Dunton
Jerimy Kelly	Kai Cater
Shauna Stroup-Harrison	Nicholas Helmich

OPEN PUBLIC HEARING – 8:29 p.m.

TOPIC

1. Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Map Amendment (CPZA.1.23) at 58646 McNulty Way (Columbia Community Mental Health)

Associate Planner Jenny Dimsho covered preliminary matters. She asked if any member of the Council wishes to declare an actual or potential conflict of interest or bias in this matter.

Councilor Gundersen declared that he is employed by Columbia County Mental Health (CCMH). He will abstain from participating in the discussion and decision.

Council President Chilton declared that she is a former employee of CCMH. She will also abstain from participating in the discussion and decision.

Dimsho pointed out that a former Planning Commission member, who is now a City Councilor, made a recommendation. Attorney Bill Monahan explained that he can participate as long as he does not have a conflict of interest.

Dimsho asked if there was anyone in the audience who wanted to object to the ability of a Councilor to make a fair decision.

Brady Preheim objected to Councilor Hubbard participating because he has already heard this.

Motion: Motion made by Mayor Scholl and seconded by Councilor Sundeen to allow Councilor Hubbard to stay and be a decision maker.

Discussion. It is not a question of bias on a legislative issue.

Vote: Yeah: Mayor Scholl and Councilor Sundeen; Abstain: Councilor Hubbard

Council President Chilton and Councilor Gundersen stepped out.

Dimsho went on to review the staff report, a copy of which is included in the archive packet for this meeting. A few highlights were:

- Request to rezone the property from Light Industrial (LI) to General Commercial (GC).
- Request supports their expansion of facilities.
- The Economic Opportunities Analysis (EOA) shows that there is a surplus of industrial land and shortage of commercial land.
- Planning Commission voted four to one to recommend denial of the application. They felt the reduction of LI land would negatively impact available land for industrial development. It could also create a conflict with the LI land across the street on Gable Road. Staff feel there is no evidence of that. Their adopted document supports the rezoning.
- Reviewed traffic impacts. They are aware that the Highway 30 and Gable Road intersection is already overloaded. However, the decision tonight is whether this will create a significant impact to the transportation facility. With a condition of a trip cap, staff feels the TPR rule is met.
- Staff recommends approval.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY

Applicant/Applicant Representative

- ◆ Al Petersen, AKAAN Architecture and Design and Todd Jacobson, Executive Director of CCMH.

Al talked about CCMH's traffic engineer meeting with City staff and ODOT staff. When the transportation consultant proposed their analysis of the trip cap, they heard nothing from ODOT. They assume there are no objections. He went on to review his PowerPoint presentation. A copy is included in the archive packet for this meeting. A few highlights were:

- Reviewed current uses
- Reviewed future uses – additional office space, counseling rooms, additional supporting facilities, crisis receiving center, transitional supportive housing center
- There is a lack of commercial land and an abundance of industrial land.
- Reviewed all the industrial businesses that closed the last few years and how much surplus industrial land that provides.
- Reviewed the Comprehensive Plan section that recognizes the need for housing for special needs and additional commercial zones.

- Addressed the Riverfront Connector Plan and the safety that a curb and landscape buffer give to pedestrians.
- Recommend the rezoning, otherwise they wait for an industrial user to come along. There is a lot of other land available.

Todd added that they serve all Columbia County residents, mostly who are indigent or on the Oregon Health Plan. Columbia County is only going to grow. They will have more people with addiction and behavioral health issues. This is an ideal location to expand and meet the demands of the community. The people are not coming from Portland. They are our citizens in Columbia County. They need to take care of people in the County. They had a detox facility in the past, which was very successful, but it closed due to Covid and shortage of nursing. The arguments he has heard in opposition are the exact reasons why they need this facility. If the zoning doesn't change, the property will sit there not being used.

In Favor

- ◆ Judy Thompson, NAMI Chair for Columbia County. They are excited about this project. It's logical and sensible. They need to help people and offer care in the community.
- ◆ Kellie Jo Smith, speaking as a business owner. These are our community members, our siblings, and our parents. Anyone going through a mental illness or substance use disorder needs a steppingstone to be successful and that is not available. She hopes they follow the recommendation of staff.
- ◆ Nicholas Helmich. He works at Community Action Team (CAT) and works closely with CCMH. With the amount of mental illness and drug addiction, ignoring it is the wrong approach. They need more facilities and the ability to help people get back on their feet. He understands the argument of needing industry, but there is plenty of industrial land.

Neutral

- ◆ Adam St. Pierre. When industry comes in, they want 100s of acres. Rezoning is permanent. The new apartments brought a lot of traffic issues. This will bring even more traffic. They need a tax base, which industry would provide.
- ◆ Leila Wilson and Suzie Dahl. Leila owns the 20 acres across the street. Suzie, daughter of Leila, is here to speak on her behalf. The last transportation study was done in 2011, which was prior to the apartments. There is a lot of congestion between there and Railroad Avenue. Leila owns 10 acres across the street to the north and has a rail spur access agreement. It is also zoned LI and could be served by rail. She owns another 7.5 acres off Milton Way. They just want what's best for the community and the safety of the community.
- ◆ Allison Anderson. She serves on the Board of Directors for CCMH. She was the Sales Director for Portland & Western Railroad. They tried to sell that 10-acre piece of property with a rail spur but were unable to because it was too small.
- ◆ Shauna Stroup-Harrison. The Planning Commission was not in favor of this. The Riverfront Connector Plan does not seem applicable here with the lack of space for a tree line median. If CCMH doesn't get it zoned the way they want, they'll sell it. She is confused why they are unable to use the building that is already there. A training facility, like Riverside, would be more community uplifting than bringing in dollars for beds. There is a huge traffic influx right there with a lot of growing pains as the apartments are developed. They need to look at what services

are available to provide for this kind of expansion. They don't have a surplus of land; they have a lack of industry. This town no longer supports living and working families. Jobs have left and they're not bringing in more.

Opposed

- ◆ Sabrina Moore. The mapping lumped all the light and heavy industrial land, but they serve different uses. Looking at all the uses, they end up with about the same amount of land for LI and GC. The last traffic impact study done was for Broadleaf Arbor, which was over 1,700 trips per day. The proposal has a cap of 1,100 per day. There is a problem there. How will they enforce the traffic cap and ensure people take different paths? She argued that this does seem to be a spot zone. Most of the surrounding property is LI and that is what it is used for. CCMH is proposing to bring a residential use into an industrial neighborhood. She recommends denial of the map amendment and zone change. They should develop the Mixed Use and Residential lots they already have in St. Helens.
- ◆ Brady Preheim. Al did a good job in his presentation. There is a need for congregate housing, but there is enough low incoming housing that does not bring in taxes. The huge development across from Walmart is tax-free. CCMH is also a not-for-profit. They cannot afford to lose more tax base. They are already struggling for police services. Adding more congregate housing will only add to the need for more police.

Rebuttal

- ◆ Todd Jacobson. He understands the argument about zoning, but they are not selling. This is not housing that will be open to anyone. This is shelter and care with staff on site. Law enforcement will rarely be needed, and if they are, staff will be onsite to support them. It's a treatment program that is transitional and not permanent. They receive care and then go back into the community.
- ◆ Al Petersen. CCMH knows they have a large frontage and will have to improve it to City standards. All the Riverfront Connector Plan standards are safer than what they have now. It will improve Gable Road. Letters from the Moore's don't address the criteria. His presentation addresses the criteria and they must make a decision based on the criteria. Traffic and safety issues will have to be addressed. CCMH is not proposing anywhere near a 300-unit complex. A trip cap of 1,000 is more than generous for what CCMH plans to do.

Councilor Hubbard asked what he envisions as a buildout. Al said originally it was half offices and half detox. In the future, they would add a different form of transitional housing. This is all new and an attempt to deal with the mental health and homelessness issues here.

Mayor Scholl thanked them for being clear about the property.

CLOSE PUBLIC HEARING – 9:41 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Lisa Scholl, Deputy City Recorder.

ATTEST:

/s/ Kathy Payne

Kathy Payne, City Recorder

/s/ Rick Scholl

Rick Scholl, Mayor