



PLANNING COMMISSION

Tuesday, March 11, 2025 at 6:30 PM

APPROVED MINUTES

Members Present: Chair Jennifer Shoemaker
Vice Chair Brooke Sisco
Commissioner Charles Castner
Commissioner Reid Herman
Commissioner Scott Jacobson
Commissioner Trina Kingsbury
Commissioner David Rosengard (ZOOM)

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: City Planner Jacob Graichen
Associate Planner Jenny Dimsho
City Councilor Mark Gunderson
City Councilor Russell Hubbard
Communications Officer Crystal King

Others: Dan Hatfield
Ken Bowen
Beth Goodman

1. 6:30 P.M. CALL TO ORDER & FLAG SALUTE

Chair Shoemaker called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. Chair Shoemaker welcomed Commissioner Herman, apologizing for not doing so at the previous meeting. She also introduced new Commissioner Trina Kingsbury.

2. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Planning Commission Minutes dated February 11, 2025

Motion: Upon Commissioner Castner's motion and Commissioner Jacobson's second, the Planning Commission unanimously approved the Draft Minutes dated February 11, 2025, with corrections on Page 2, under Item D. [AYES: Vice Chair Sisco, Commissioner Herman, Commissioner Kingsbury, Commissioner Rosengard, Commissioner Caster, and Commissioner Jacobson, NAYS: None]

3. TOPICS FROM THE FLOOR (Not on Public Hearing Agenda): Limited to five minutes per topic

There were no topics from the floor.

4. PUBLIC HEARING AGENDA (times are earliest start time)

B. 6:35 p.m. - Remand of Appeals (x5) of the Planning Commission's denial of Conditional Use Permit and Variances (x4) at NE corner of the Wyeth and N. 5th Street Intersection - Hatfield

Chair Shoemaker opened the Public Hearing at 6:35 p.m. Chair Shoemaker asked if any commissioners had conflicts of interest or ex-parte communication. Commissioner Herman declared a conflict as Dan

Hatfield, the applicant, was building a house for him. He stepped out for this matter. Commissioner Jacobson disclosed he had driven by the property.

City Planner Graichen provided background on the case. He explained that the Commission had denied the application in December, the applicant appealed to the Council, and the Council remanded it back. Graichen clarified that the original application was for a triplex on a lot too small for current rules, requiring four Variances and a Conditional Use Permit. Based on previous discussions, there seemed to be little support for the triplex concept from both the Commission and Council.

City Planner Graichen explained that based on conversation at Council, they shifted the focus towards seeking approval for a duplex rather than a triplex, which still requires two of the original four Variances, and no Conditional Use Permit. A recommended condition of approval was for the footprint of the duplex to be the same as the triplex. The two key variances were a setback variance along Wyeth Street and an off-street parking variance.

Regarding the setback variance along Wyeth Street, City Planner Graichen noted almost all the buildings on adjacent properties and blocks are close to the property lines along the north side of Wyeth Street. He said the variance setback would mirror what is happening at adjacent properties. He said Hatfield would like to use the oversized right-of-way to meet the off-street parking requirements. Duplexes require two parking spaces.

Jacobson asked if anyone would be able to park in the on-street parking or if it would be reserved for the duplex. City Planner Graichen said anyone could still use the on-street parking.

In Favor

Hatfield, Dan. Applicant. Hatfield noted everyone is already utilizing parking the same way as in his current proposal along the street. He said it is the same with the setbacks. All the other properties around his property have reduced setbacks.

Neutral

There was no neutral testimony.

Opposition

Bowen, Ken. Bowen said he lives across the street. He is opposed to a parking variance. There is a lot of parking congestion in the area. He does not have a problem with parking on the property. With it being duplex, it will create more congestion and possible vehicle accidents if the only parking is on the street. He said there is a fire hydrant on the corner near the parking. He said often the sidewalks and bike lanes are blocked with people parking. He also said the applicant cannot dictate how the tenants will park. He also pointed out the historic basalt rock wall next to the property.

Rebuttal

Hatfield, Dan. Applicant. Hatfield said if he could mark the on-street parking spaces as parallel spaces, it would leave more room for the travel lanes. Chair Shoemaker asked if he was planning to keep the basalt wall. Hatfield said yes. Commissioner Jacobson asked about disability designation. City Planner Graichen clarified that accessible parking requirements do not kick in until you meet a certain threshold of dwelling units. Hatfield is not required to provide ADA parking for a duplex.

End of Oral Testimony

Close of Public Hearing & Record

Deliberations

Vice Chair Sisco has no problem with the setback variance because it does not differ from the surrounding homes.

Chair Shoemaker clarified that parking needs to be at least 10 feet from the nearby fire hydrant regardless of this proposal. Chair Shoemaker clarified that the sidewalk would stay in approximately the same location and would be slightly wider when/if rebuilt.

Motion: Upon Vice Chair Sisco's motion and Commissioner Jacobson's second, the Planning Commission unanimously voted to uphold the original denial for the density variance, the multi-dwelling architectural standards variance, and the Conditional Use Permit. [AYES: Vice Chair Sisco, Commissioner Kingsbury, Commissioner Rosengard, Commissioner Caster, and Commissioner Jacobson, NAYS: None]

Motion: Upon Commissioner Castner's motion and Commissioner Jacobson's second, the Planning Commission unanimously voted to approve the setback variance with conditions as recommended by staff. [AYES: Vice Chair Sisco, Commissioner Kingsbury, Commissioner Rosengard, Commissioner Caster, and Commissioner Jacobson, NAYS: None]

Motion: Upon Vice Chair Sisco's motion and Commissioner Jacobson's second, the Planning Commission unanimously voted to approve the parking variance as recommended in the memo with the additional conditions about no impacts to the basalt wall and a minimum of two marked parallel parking spaces in the right-of-way. [AYES: Vice Chair Sisco, Commissioner Kingsbury, Commissioner Rosengard, Commissioner Caster, and Commissioner Jacobson, NAYS: None]

Motion: Upon Vice Chair Sisco's motion and Commissioner Jacobson's second, the Planning Commission unanimously voted for the Chair to sign the Findings when prepared. [AYES: Vice Chair Sisco, Commissioner Kingsbury, Commissioner Rosengard, Commissioner Caster, and Commissioner Jacobson, NAYS: None]

- C. 7:00 p.m. - Amendments to the Comprehensive Plan including adoption of the EOA and related amendments - City of St. Helens

Chair Shoemaker opened the Public Hearing at 7:35 p.m. Chair Shoemaker declared that she was on the Economic Opportunity Analysis (EOA) Technical Advisory Committee.

In Favor

Goodman, Beth. Applicant's Representative. Beth Goodman introduced herself as a consultant from ECONorthwest who prepared the EOA for the City. She reviewed the process with the Commission that was used to develop an EOA. She also reviewed the buildable land inventory, employment data, economic advantages and disadvantages, potential growth industries, and estimated total employment to determine employment lands sufficiency. The full EOA is included in the packet.

Neutral

There was no neutral testimony.

Opposition

There was no testimony in opposition.

End of Oral Testimony

Close of Public Hearing & Record

Deliberations

Associate Planner Dimsho reminded the Commission that this matter will go before City Council after a recommendation from the Commission. She also pointed out that in addition to the adoption of the

EOA, this includes adoption of the City's Wastewater Master Plan, Water Master Plan, and Stormwater Master Plan. This is more of a housekeeping item since these plans were already adopted by Resolution years ago. She noted that the best practice is to adopt these into the Comprehensive Plan by Ordinance, instead of just by Resolution.

Motion: Upon Commissioner Castner's motion and Commissioner Rosengard's second, the Planning Commission unanimously recommended approval of the Comprehensive Plan Amendment to City Council. [AYES: Vice Chair Sisco, Commissioner Herman, Commissioner Kingsbury, Commissioner Rosengard, Commissioner Caster, and Commissioner Jacobson, NAYS: None]

5. DISCUSSION ITEMS

- D. Joint City Council / Planning Commission Joint Meeting date in September

City Planner Graichen explained that Mayor Massey proposed moving the September Joint Council Planning Commission meeting date to September 24th. The Commission agreed to the change without objection, to be discussed further at the joint meeting.

6. PLANNING DIRECTOR DECISIONS (previously e-mailed to the Commission)

- E. Sign Permit (Temporary) – 2100 Block of Columbia Blvd – Amani Center
- F. Site Development Review (Minor) – 205 Brayden Street – Linares
- G. Sign Permit (Temporary) – 2100 Block of Columbia Blvd – Columbia Pacific Food Bank
- H. Site Development Review (Major) – 161 St. Helens Street – Parjit & Harinder

Commissioner Jacobson asked about the language included in the Site Development Review (Major) for 161 St. Helens Street.

7. PLANNING DEPARTMENT ACTIVITY REPORT

- I. Planning Department Activity Report – February

There was no discussion about Planning Department Activity Report.

8. PROACTIVE ITEMS

- J. Architectural Standards
- K. Vacant Storefronts
- L. The Plaza Square

City Planner Graichen said these items will be discussed at tomorrow's Joint City Council Planning Commission meeting. He said he prepared a memo for Architectural Standards intended to help the Commission take "baby steps" forward.

9. FOR YOUR INFORMATION ITEMS

Commissioner Jacobson brought up the upcoming webinar on Oregon public meetings law scheduled for March 20th at 2:00 PM. Associate Planner Dimsho encouraged commissioners to attend and bring questions.

10. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Shoemaker adjourned the meeting at 8:28 p.m.