



COUNCIL PUBLIC FORUM

Wednesday, June 16, 2021

APPROVED MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT

Mayor Rick Scholl
Council President Doug Morten
Councilor Patrick Birkle
Councilor Stephen R. Topaz
Councilor Jessica Chilton

STAFF PRESENT

John Walsh, City Administrator
Matt Brown, Deputy City Administrator
Kathy Payne, City Recorder
Jenny Dimsho, Associate Planner/
Community Development Project Manager

Mouhamad Zaher, Public Works Director
Jacob Graichen, City Planner
Crystal King, Communications Officer
Sue Nelson, City Engineer

OTHERS

Kaitlin North, OTAK
Don Hanson, OTAK
Jason Morris
Keith Buisman

OPEN PUBLIC FORUM VIA ZOOM - 6:00 pm

TOPIC

1. Riverfront Redevelopment: S. 1st Street / Strand Street Alignment Alternatives

City Engineer Sue Nelson introduced Don Hanson and Kaitlin North from Otak. A copy of their presentation is included in the archive packet for this meeting.

Don talked about the importance of putting the roadways in the right place. He summarized the interviews with the potential developers who submitted proposals. Minutes of those interviews are included in the packet. All four are very interested in developing this property.

Kaitlin reviewed proposed conceptual plans.

- West alignment
 - S. 1st Street is closer to the bluff
 - Parallel parking in the middle
 - Angled parking on the ends
 - Creates five deeper blocks of development potential along the waterfront
 - Potential development
 - Hotel
 - Commercial/retail/office
 - Townhomes and/or flats
 - Multi-family buildings
 - Multi-use path on the bluff side

- Looped trail around the entire property
 - Future pedestrian access points
 - Location for a future pump station
 - Trail head parking
 - Live/work units
 - Larger parcel opportunities and greater development flexibility
 - Recommended as preferred alignment
- East alignment
 - S. 1st Street was moved further down, halfway between bluff and waterfront
 - Same parking configurations
 - Creates four narrower blocks on the waterfront side and one block of development on the bluff side of the street
 - Potential for complete street with buildings on both sides of the street
 - Potential development
 - Hotel
 - Commercial/retail/office
 - Primarily townhomes in the middle
 - Slightly smaller multi-family building at the end
 - Townhomes on the bluff side
 - Meandering multi-use path around the site
 - Pedestrian access ways
 - Location for a future pump station
 - Trail head parking

Don prefers the west alignment. It offers a beautiful greenway against the bluff. It makes sense to value that.

Councilor Topaz talked about the problems with both of the alignments.

- He wants to see a street near the river for people to enjoy the view as they drive by.
- Need ADA access. Handicap will not use the foot paths.
- Working from home has a downside. He wants people to come to businesses to spend money. At some point it is going to go away.
- Need some type of industry.
- Not enough parking for events.

Don responded to Councilor Topaz:

- Parking - purposely do not have any development along Strand Street. Configured the road to allow for parking on both sides. When people come down, they will be able to view the river from Strand Street and also park on Strand Street. It is the closest parking to the active park area. He is comfortable with the proposed parking. He did not want to overpark it.
- The plans are very conceptual.
- Bringing tourism dollars into the community is on point. The sites are configured to accommodate that.

Councilor Topaz repeated his desire to be able to drive along the river, have additional parking during events, and provide handicap access to the river. Don responded that handicap accessible parking spaces can be created along Strand Street near the river. Those comments will be considered moving forward.

Councilor Chilton is also concerned about public access along the river. The community survey showed a desire for public space and there does not appear to be much of it. She read all of the developers' answers. She was very impressed with Roy Kim's responses and his focus on St. Helens as a

community. He was spot on with a vision. Don agreed that he was also impressed with Roy Kim's comments.

Councilor Birkle wants to make sure they are giving priority to citizens and residents to speak. The Council will have more than ample opportunity to discuss the development.

Mayor Scholl reminded everyone that this is about road alignment. He likes that the park has been expanded even more than he had anticipated. The entire boardwalk that circles the property is public land, which is what people are used to walking now. He prefers the west alignment.

- ◆ Jason Morris. He works at a clinic down here and experiences difficulty with limited parking for residents, businesses, and restaurants. How will the proposed parking improve that?

Don responded that they are proposing all on-street parking. They have not really thought about putting big civic parking lots in the area. They think the on-street parking can handle it. Parking will need to meet Code for any development parcels. For example, new residential development will be required to provide off-street parking. Kaitlin added that the parking shown in white is roughly 215 spaces. It is about the same for each alignment.

Discussion of additional parking. The City owns the lot where '3' and '4' are shown on the map. That could potential be parking or more development area.

Councilor Topaz asked how easy it will be to move 100 cars in and out. This looks like a residential area as opposed to a commercial or industrial area. Don thinks there will be at least three or four driveways coming onto S. 1st Street. Their hope is that would distribute those access points.

Councilor Topaz talked about problems with delivery trucks double parking. Don acknowledged there is a lot more delivery vehicles, but they are usually quick in and out. Buildings are typically required to provide a loading space when they reach a certain number of spaces. That is something to keep in mind.

Mayor Scholl likes the bulb-out. It could also be a great wheelchair drop-off. Don agreed. It was the best solution in that location.

Councilor Birkle acknowledged that both options are pretty solid.

- He was initially attracted to the east alignment because he loves greenspace. But with the west alignment, he thinks it might provide more greenspace closer to the river.
- He likes the idea of coming down the stairs below Tualatin Street into greenspace.
- Is absolutely opposed to having a road along the river. It interferes with the riverwalk. As they add access, people of all abilities will be able to access the river.
- What is the parking deck on parcel D?

Don responded that they thought that parcel is big enough to provide two levels of parking. They do not want to dig down because they will hit water. They would do it under or between the building footprints. The parking would be concealed by buildings that wrap around it. Councilor Topaz told Don that the area was built on fill. The fill was slabs of wood. Don agreed, which is why he is not proposing to excavate for a parking garage. He would rather stay above that.

Councilor Birkle heard desires for people to park closer to the river to enjoy views, like at the courthouse parking lot, which looks like it has been done. There was a mention about zoning options. Don can provide that to him.

Mayor Scholl thanked Don and Kaitlin for the presentation.

CLOSE PUBLIC FORUM – 6:46 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Lisa Scholl, Deputy City Recorder.

ATTEST:

/s/ Kathy Payne
Kathy Payne, City Recorder

/s/ Rick Scholl
Rick Scholl, Mayor