



PLANNING COMMISSION

Tuesday, December 14, 2021, at 7:00 PM

APPROVED MINUTES

Members Present: Chair Cary
Vice Chair Hubbard
Commissioner Webster
Commissioner Semling
Commissioner Lawrence
Commissioner Pugsley

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: City Planner Graichen
Associate Planner Dimsho
Community Development Admin Assistant Sullivan
Councilor Birkle

Others: Jacob Hanna
Brad Hanna
David Baxter
Michelle Eggers

CALL TO ORDER & FLAG SALUTE

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

There were no topics from the floor.

CONSENT AGENDA

A. Planning Commission Minutes Dated November 9, 2021

Motion: Upon Commissioner Semling's motion and Commissioner Webster's second, the Planning Commission unanimously approved the Draft Minutes dated November 9, 2021. Commissioner Pugsley abstained as she was absent from the November meeting. [AYES: Vice Chair Hubbard, Commissioner Lawrence, Commissioner Webster, Commissioner Semling NAYS: None]

PUBLIC HEARING AGENDA (times are earliest start time)

B. 7:00 p.m. Variance and Accessory Structure Permit at 2705 Columbia Blvd - Hanna

City Planner Graichen presented the staff report dated December 7, 2021. Graichen said this would be a variance to allow an accessory structure larger than the maximum standard allowed. He shared where the property was located. He mentioned it was accessed by a shared private driveway with a 20-foot-wide easement. He said it was a large parcel at 2.7 acres. He also said there was a significant portion of the property was protected wetlands (and wetland protection buffers).

He said because the property was greater than two and a half acres in size, the normal accessory structure maximum size increases from 600 to 1,000 square feet. The proposed unit was for 1,700 square feet in size. He mentioned because of how secluded the property was and on one side there was a substantial buffer from neighboring properties (due to wetlands), he supported the variance for the structure size. He also said the division of the property in the future was not very likely.

Graichen said he discussed the location of the new building with the applicant and based on where they hoped to place it, he felt there was a need to have an environmental assessment done of the wetland boundary to be sure they did not build in a protected zone.

Graichen said the code says any area traversed on by vehicles is supposed to be paved. He said, however, the code does have exceptions. Staff recommended not allowing gravel within 50 feet of the wetland or upland protection zone, and requiring the first 25 feet back from the private drive to be paved. The basis was the private drive is shared and paving it would create less debris to the neighboring units that share the drive.

Chair Cary asked about the grade and if it was higher towards the house. Graichen said yes it was. Chair Cary also asked if there was a DSL Wetland Land Use Notification submitted so they could have an official document for the wetland barriers. Graichen said no they had not. He mentioned there would not have been a delineation which is what they wanted.

Hanna, Jacob. Applicant. The applicant was called to speak. He said wanted to store a few RVs, a boat, and some trucks in the proposed structure. He said currently they are all outside under tarps and he was hoping the building would clean up the space. He said he has been working with the Planning Department on location. He did not want to affect his neighbors or any of the wetlands.

Commissioner Pugsley asked about the paving and what the applicant planned to use. Hanna mentioned he would like to use the existing gravel driveway that was in place, but he was ok with looking at other options if required.

In Favor

Fields, Nathan. Fields was called to speak. He is located at 2715 Columbia Blvd. He said he was in favor of the building as he felt it would establish a property line visually and physically. He said the owner should be allowed to build, as long as it did not impact his property and flooding..

Neutral

Baxter, David. Baxter was called to speak. He is located at 2725 Columbia Blvd. He mentioned some concern about where the building was proposed to be built. He was concerned that it would affect the creek and cause more flooding. He felt the water level would increase. He was concerned about the critters that live inside the wetlands.

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

There was a small discussion about the pavement requirements and where it would start and end on the property.

The Commission agreed with staff's recommendation for approval.

Motion: Upon Commissioner Webster's motion and Commissioner Semling's second, the Planning Commission unanimously approved the Variance and Accessory Structure Permit as written by staff. [Ayes: Vice Chair Hubbard, Commissioner Semling, Commissioner Webster, Commissioner Lawrence, Commissioner Pugsley; Nays: None]

Motion: Upon Commissioner Webster's motion and Commissioner Semling's second, the Planning Commission unanimously approved the Chair to sign the Findings when prepared. [Ayes: Vice Chair Hubbard, Commissioner Semling, Commissioner Webster, Commissioner Lawrence, Commissioner Pugsley; Nays: None]

C. 7:30 p.m. Annexation at 58389 Columbia River Hwy – Eggers

Associate Planner Dimsho presented the staff report dated December 1, 2021. She mentioned the applicant wants to use the Development Code and connect to City utilities. She said the property was small and has street frontage on two sides of the property. She said there was no history of land use on the site so anything that happens on the property will require a Land Use Permit. She said City utilities were located very close to the property. Dimsho said Columbia County is in support of the annexation because this property was already located inside the Urban Growth Boundary. She said the only option for zoning was Highway Commercial upon annexation.

Eggers, Michelle. Applicant. The applicant was called to speak. She said she hopes to place a coffee drive through in the location. She thought the property was very visible and on the commuting side of St. Helens. She was interested in connecting to the City utilities. She said the space was very small, so a coffee shop drive through was desired.

In Favor

No one spoke in favor.

Neutral

No one spoke as neutral testimony.

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

The Commission agreed with staff's recommendation for approval.

Motion: Upon Commissioner Semling's motion and Commissioner Pugsley's second, the Planning Commission unanimously recommended approval of the Annexation to City Council as recommended by staff. [Ayes: Vice Chair Hubbard, Commissioner Semling, Commissioner Webster, Commissioner Lawrence, Commissioner Pugsley; Nays: None]

DISCUSSION ITEMS**D. "Acceptance Agenda" v. "Planning Director Decisions" on Planning Commission agendas starting 2022**

Graichen discussed that there is no difference between the Acceptance Agenda and Planning Director Decisions as has been on the Commission's agendas for many years. He did not see the need to have two different sections for the agenda. Graichen said that all the decisions were sent to them through email, and he did not see the need for a formal vote on some of the decisions and not others.

The Planning Commission agreed with the decision to eliminate the formal vote by eliminating the "Acceptance Agenda" category and keep the "Planning Director Decisions" category for all administrative (staff level) decisions.

Motion: Upon Commissioner Webster's motion and Commissioner Pugsley's second, the Planning Commission unanimously approved combining the Acceptance Agenda and Planning Director Decisions on the future Planning Commission agendas. These will be just "Planning Director Decisions" henceforth. [Ayes: Vice Chair Hubbard, Commissioner Semling, Commissioner Webster, Commissioner Lawrence, Commissioner Pugsley; Nays: None]

ACCEPTANCE AGENDA: Planning Administrator Site Design Review**E. Conditional Use Permit (Minor) at 174 Sunset Blvd - Snoopeeland**

Motion: Upon Commissioner Webster's motion and Commissioner Pugsley's second, the Planning Commission unanimously approved the Acceptance Agenda. [Ayes: Vice Chair Hubbard, Commissioner Semling, Commissioner Webster, Commissioner Lawrence, Commissioner Pugsley; Nays: None]

PLANNING DIRECTOR DECISIONS (previously e-mailed to the Commission)**F. Partition at 35111 Six Dees Lane - McCullough****G. Home Occupation at 555 Matzen Street - Gun Toting Granny, LLC****PLANNING DEPARTMENT ACTIVITY REPORT****H. Planning Department Activity Report - November****FOR YOUR INFORMATION ITEMS**

Graichen mentioned they had two interviews for the vacancy on the Planning Commission. He said originally there were four, but two were from a long time ago and they lost interest. He said of the two interviewed one had an attorney background, and one had an archeological background and were both great candidates for the Commission. He said the interview committee felt that the attorney, Steven Toschi, was the better fit at this time.

Motion: Upon Commissioner Webster's motion and Commissioner Semling's second, the Planning Commission unanimously approved the recommendation to City Council of Steven Toschi to fill the vacancy on the Planning Commission. [Ayes: Vice Chair Hubbard, Commissioner Semling, Commissioner Webster, Commissioner Lawrence, Commissioner Pugsley; Nays: None]

Dimsho mentioned there was a Riverwalk Project open house tomorrow at 5:30 p.m. for all individuals to review the renderings of the design.

ADJOURNMENT**NEXT REGULAR MEETING: January 11, 2022**

There being no further business before the Planning Commission, the meeting was adjourned 8:27 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Christina Sullivan
Community Development Administrative Assistant*