



PLANNING COMMISSION

Tuesday, March 12, 2024, at 6:00 PM

APPROVED MINUTES

- Members Present:** Vice Chair Jennifer Shoemaker
Commissioner Charles Castner
Commissioner Ginny Carlson
Commissioner Brooke Sisco
Commissioner Scott Jacobson
- Members Absent:** Chair Dan Cary
Commissioner David Rosengard
- Staff Present:** City Planner Jacob Graichen
Associate Planner Jenny Dimsho
Community Development Admin Assistant Christina Sullivan
City Councilor Mark Gunderson
- Others:** Steve Toschi
Brady Preheim
Holcombe Waller
Andrew Niemi
Wayne Weigandt
Brad Hendrickson
Daryl Tinney
Huck Wilken

CALL TO ORDER & FLAG SALUTE

Chair Dan Cary was absent, so Vice Chair Jennifer Shoemaker was the acting Chair.

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

Toschi, Steve. Toschi was called to speak. He said he wanted to reiterate that he thought it would be a mistake to change the decision that the Planning Commission had made in the past to deny the Conditional Use Permit for the Police Station location. He hoped they would work together with the City Council to find a new location that meets the development code for a critical facility. He said there is a plan to redevelop the Houlton Business District and thought it would be the perfect opportunity for the Police Station to be located there. He said they should look for ways to cut costs..

Preheim, Brady. Preheim was called to speak. He said he wanted to express his protest against Commissioners Charles Castner and David Rosengard. He did not think they should be on the Planning Commission. He said he did not think there needed to be a new police station built. He said they needed storage and wanted to suggest revisiting the project and determining if a full rebuild was necessary. He also said the meeting with the City Council and the vacant storefronts should not involve Mainstreet as one of the buildings that is considered a vacant storefront belongs to a Mainstreet board member. He also said he would like to see the Planning Commission take on the redesign of the Plaza.

CONSENT AGENDA

A. Planning Commission Minutes Dated February 13, 2024

There was a discussion of a possible correction to a motion made about mirrored glass versus opaque. The Planning Commission agreed both items were discussed and there should not be a correction.

Motion: Upon Commissioner Carlson's motion and Commissioner Sisco's second, the Planning Commission unanimously approved the Draft Minutes dated February 13, 2024 as written. [AYES: Commissioner Carlson, Commissioner Sisco, Commissioner Castner, Commissioner Jacobson; NAYS: None]

PUBLIC HEARING AGENDA (times are earliest start time)**B. 6:05 p.m. Historic Resource Review at 175 S 1st Street - Wilken**

Vice Chair Jennifer Shoemaker opened the Public Hearing at 6:14 p.m. There were no ex-parte contacts, conflicts of interests, or bias in this matter.

Associate Planner Jenny Dimsho presented the staff report dated March 5, 2024. She shared with the Commission the location of the building. She said it was very visible from three different streets. She also said this building was a locally designated landmark and so any alterations made to the outside of the building require a review from the Historic Landmarks Commission. She shared the applicant submitted alterations to third story windows, a fire escape repair, and a new mechanical unit on the outside.

She mentioned the historic district nomination from 1984 noted that two dormer windows added to the building.

She said the proposal mostly applied to the third story of the building. She said the applicant is remodeling the third floor from two dwelling units to one unit to provide more space and livability to a future tenant. She said the east elevation showed the two non-original dormer windows and he proposed to change them from vinyl split pane windows to fiberglass simple double hung windows. They would remain the same size. She said on the south side there were single hung aluminum windows, and the applicant proposed to change them to similar size fiberglass casement double hung windows. She also said on the west side there would be a change in size. Currently the window has a piece of white plywood in it and the applicant proposed to change it back to the original size window.. There was a smaller window that would be removed, and the matching siding would be added. The applicant noted in the report there were issues with the mechanisms and mechanical workings of the windows which is why they needed replaced versus restored. There was also a window that the applicant proposed to replace with a slider window and restore the trim to the original style as the rest of the house. She also noted the casement windows were to provide more airflow in the space as well.

She shared the fire escape repairs. The applicant proposed to change the size of the window to the fire escape window to make it more functional. The applicant would also be extending the ladder to go all the way to the ground and make repairs to the railing to make it safer. She mentioned this fire escape was not visible from any of the streets.

She said the ductless heat pump was originally going to be placed with an attachment to the third story. She said she spoke with the applicant about placing it in a less visible location. She said the applicant found a location on the ground and run the coolant and wiring through the interior, as opposed to the exterior, which would make it less visible to the outside of the house.

Wilken, Huck. Applicant. Wilken is the owner of the property. He shared that the window from the fire escape is currently two windows and he wanted to put a single window in that would meet the minimum width for egress. He said the heat pump would be installed on the ground in the back as proposed or by the fire escape which is also not in a visible location. He said he planned to do a slider

on the small window as currently it opens with an interior awning, and he wanted something that did not take up all the space in the room. He did say he was willing to change the style though if it needed to be. He said wanted to do fiberglass so that the windows would last longer. The maintenance would be easier, and they were paintable.. He also mentioned they were more energy efficient and cost effective.

There was a discussion about photographs that will document the changes and how they will be archived.

In Favor

No one spoke in favor of the application.

In Neutral

No one spoke as neutral of the application.

In Opposition

No one spoke in opposition to the application.

Rebuttal

There was no rebuttal.

End of Oral Testimony

There were no requests to continue the hearing or leave the record open.

Close of Public Hearing & Record**Deliberations**

Dimsho mentioned there needed to be a determination about the deterioration of the windows and whether this required replacement versus restoration. The Commission did agree these windows required replacement to be functional.

Commissioner Scott Jacobson asked if there was a condition about color matching. This led to a discussion where Vice Chair Shoemaker said she did not agree with the condition that the windows be painted white. She mentioned in the historic photograph shows they were darker in color. She felt they should remove the condition of keeping them white so that if in the future, the applicant wanted to revert back to the dark color for all of the windows, they could The Commission agreed.

There was a discussion about the use of fiberglass. The Commission agreed that these were more sustainable.. There was also a discussion about the windows being changed to double hung. The Commission agreed they should be this way, as it would match the windows on the lower levels.

Vice Chair Shoemaker said she did not like the sliding window.. The window was currently operable, but it opened into the space which was awkward which is why the proposal was to change to a slider. The Commission agreed they should just condition it to not be a slider and then allow the applicant to determine what kind of window to place there instead.

There was a discussion about adding a condition to make sure the blacked-out window would have matching siding.

Motion: Upon Commissioner Carlson's motion and Commissioner Castner's second, the Planning Commission unanimously approved the Historic Resource Review with the added conditions as discussed with staff. [AYES: Commissioner Carlson, Commissioner Sisco, Commissioner Castner, Commissioner Jacobson; NAYS: None]

Motion: Upon Commissioner Carlson's motion and Commissioner Sisco's second, the Planning Commission unanimously approved the Chair to sign the Findings. [AYES: Commissioner Carlson, Commissioner Sisco, Commissioner Castner, Commissioner Jacobson; NAYS: None]

C. **6:30 p.m. Variance (x2) at 475 N 12th; Lots 22 and 23, block 5 Railroad Addition to St. Helens, which abut N 13th Street – 1771 Columbia Blvd, LLC**

Vice Chair Shoemaker opened the Public Hearing at 7:01 p.m. There were no ex-parte contacts, conflicts of interests, or bias in this matter.

City Planner Jacob Graichen presented the staff report dated March 4, 2024. He shared where the property was located, and that the property was neighboring Light Industrial and residential zones. When the applicant purchased the property, he demolished the single-family dwelling that was on the site. The applicant decided to move forward with the site as residential,, since there were strong opinions from neighbors about not adding any industrial development there. This is why the applicant rezoned the property to be residential.

Graichen said a duplex would normally be an outright permitted use on this property with the zone change, but the applicant proposes to put a duplex on each lot with a zero-foot yard on the shared property line making the two duplexes attached. This is why this proposal is before the Commission.

Graichen mentioned if this Variance was granted it would only apply to the specific plan the applicant had proposed (recommended condition of approval). He said the sum of their minimum side yards together (5' x 4 side yards or 20 feet total)_under normal standards versus the proposal (7' x 2 side yards or 14 feet total) would be a difference of only about six-feet. He said this would allow for a specific type of housing option as well, as the applicant would be able to move forward with single level living. This is generally better for the aging population.

Commissioner Ginny Carlson asked why this proposal was not considered a four-plex and a multi-family complex. Graichen said the code considers multi-family to be three or more units on a lot and in this proposal, it was only two units on each lot. He also said if this was considered a four-plex there would be a much greater array of standards that would apply to it. Allowing the duplex keeps the standards simple.

Weigandt, Wayne. Applicant. Weigandt is the owner of the property. He mentioned this property used to be zoned Light Industrial and he tried to work on development that would maximize the value of the space. He said after speaking with neighbors, he decided it was best to rezone the lots to residential. He also shared some of the nice architectural features of his proposal and how it would allow all ages of life to move into the space. He felt this proposal offers something different than the allowed row-homes. He said he had met with the City Building Official on how to make sure this design would meet all fire code and building design as well. He said each unit would be about 750-square feet and would not have any steps which allows for age in place living.

There was a small discussion on the access areas and exterior walkways.

In Favor

No one spoke in favor of the application.

In Neutral

No one spoke as neutral of the application.

In Opposition

No one spoke in opposition to the application.

Rebuttal

No rebuttal was given.

End of Oral Testimony

There were no requests to continue the hearing or leave the record open.

Close of Public Hearing & Record**Deliberations**

Commissioner Carlson said she thought this was a four-plex and said the design and application for a Variance was just a way to get around the rules for multi-family. She said they needed to follow the rules for a Variance and make sure the Commission was enforcing the rules they already had to prevent these types of developments. Graichen said if this was considered a four-plex different code would apply and a Conditional Use Permit would need to be applied for to allow that type of housing type in the zone.

Vice Chair Shoemaker said if this was considered a four-plex it also changes who can own that property. She said with a duplex there could be someone who purchased the property and could live on one side of the home and rent out the space on the other side. She said it also put in density where density belongs and that there was not enough single-level living in the city. Commissioner Sisco mentioned she thought the design fit the area. She liked the idea, but wanted to be sure once the Variance was granted this is the way it would be built. Dimsho mentioned this was specific to this type of build (a recommended condition of approval). She also said there was a time limit to the Variance as well, so the applicant would be required to act, or the Variance would expire. Graichen also mentioned there were conditions in the report that would also make clear it was specifically for this proposal and developed as the presented design.

Commissioner Charles Castner said he said he thought the Variance request met most of the criteria for approval except he did not think it met the criteria of a unique circumstance. He said the lots were purchased knowing there would be these difficulties. He said this is a self-imposed issue.

There was a discussion about adding two-hour separation in each unit. Dimsho said this was not a condition that could be mandated. They would have to change the type of development being added here.

There was a discussion about changing the design to attached single family dwellings versus two duplexes.

Motion: Upon Commissioner Sisco's motion and Commissioner Jacobson's second, the Planning Commission approved the two Variances with conditions as recommended by staff. [AYES: Commissioner Sisco, Commissioner Carlson, Commissioner Jacobson; NAYS: Commissioner Castner]

Motion: Upon Commissioner Carlson's motion and Commissioner Sisco's second, the Planning Commission unanimously approved the Chair to sign the Findings. [AYES: Commissioner Carlson, Commissioner Sisco, Commissioner Castner, Commissioner Jacobson; NAYS: None]

D. 7:00 p.m. Appeal of PT.1.24 & LLA.1.24 at 80 S 21st Street – Tinney

Vice Chair Shoemaker opened the Public Hearing at 7:38 p.m. There were no ex-parte contacts, conflicts of interests, or bias in this matter.

City Planner Graichen shared some feedback from an arborist that was given by the Applicant. He said this property has a house on it, and it was proposed to be divided into four lots. One of those lots will retain the house on it and the other three lots would be developable. He said there would be a shared

paving access. He said staff originally approved the proposal and it was appealed for a tree issue. He said when it was appealed, Columbia River Fire and Rescue and City Engineering had already provided comments that could have warranted the decision be amended, but given the appeal, those comments are now incorporated into the new appeal decision .

Graichen said the development code requires a minimum pavement for access of ten feet. He said the Fire Department, after looking at the proposal, said they would require a twelve-foot wide to mitigate the limited access. Graichen said this was added as an additional condition.

He also said the City Engineering Manager also added conditions for storm requirements.

He shared a photo to show the property and where the tree that was in question was located. He said there was a tree plan required and, in this case, they would be removing only the trees wholly on the property, but the tree subject to this appeal was predominantly on the neighbor's property. However, the root system crosses over to the subject property, as do overhead limbs. So it is on the subject property, only partially.

He mentioned an easement as a potential conditional of approval and that this would be a way of alerting future property owners of the issue (i.e., future tree root protection).

He said the applicant did obtain an Arborist to assess the tree and that was added to the record.

Niemi, Andrew. Applicant. Niemi is the architect for the owner of the subject property. He shared they were not against changing the paved access area to the recommended size by the Fire Department. He also said they work with licensed storm water engineers and would work to meet the criteria asked of them from the City Engineering Department. He said as far as the tree is on the neighbor's property, he felt they were working to try and appease the neighbor and not harm the tree in place. He said they hired an arborist to assess the safety of the tree during development and the will have an arborist present during excavation to make sure the tree was not harmed. He mentioned the applicant wanted to work with the neighbor to meet whatever needs he wanted. He said they were willing to compensate the neighbor for the tree or pay to remove it. He also said they were willing to hire the arborist to make sure the tree was protected during development. He said they were not in favor of an easement. He did not think it was appropriate to have a tree on a neighbor's property to determine how the property could be developed.

Tinney, Daryl. Appellant. Tinney is the owner of the neighboring property that the tree is on. He said he was concerned about the safety of his tree. He said he had roots on his side that were very large in diameter. He said if the roots are cut the stability of the tree will be altered. He said if the roots were cut there could be safety concerns for his house and neighboring houses that it could fall on. He said he did not want the tree removed. He wanted to say he was not against someone building a house, he just did not want to have to worry about the tree falling over because it was compromised.

In Favor

No one spoke in favor of the application.

In Neutral

No one spoke as neutral of the application.

In Opposition

No one spoke in opposition to the application.

Rebuttal

Niemi, Andrew. Applicant. Niemi was called to speak. He said the only reason for the proposal to remove the tree was because the neighbor was concerned about the safety of his property. He said the only way to make sure there was full safety was to completely remove the tree. He said they offered to pay to remove it and compensate him for the tree to see if that was even an option. He said they would like to see the tree stay and they are willing to continue to use the arborist and allow the tree to be safely developed around. They were willing to work with the neighbor to make sure the tree was cleaned up before development as well.

Commissioner Sisco wanted to be sure the arborist helped with the limbing of the tree as well to make sure that did not cause any rot or harm to the tree. Niemi said yes, they would involve the arborist during limbing.

End of Oral Testimony

There were no requests to continue the hearing or leave the record open.

Close of Public Hearing & Record

Deliberations

Commissioner Carlson said she liked that the arborist would be on site to assess the tree during development. She wanted to be sure this was a condition added.

There was a small discussion about the tree and the best way to preserve the tree. The Commission agreed there should be an arborist involved.

Motion: Upon Commissioner Castner's motion and Commissioner Castner's second, the Planning Commission unanimously upheld the original decision with the added conditions to have an arborist present during development for the protection of the tree (root impact and limb removal) and conditions addressing the concerns by the CRFR and City Engineering. [AYES: Commissioner Carlson, Commissioner Castner, Commissioner Sisco, Commissioner Jacobson; NAYS: None]

Motion: Upon Commissioner Carlson's motion and Commissioner Sisco's second, the Planning Commission unanimously approved the Chair to sign the Findings. [AYES: Commissioner Carlson, Commissioner Castner, Commissioner Sisco, Commissioner Jacobson; NAYS: None]

DISCUSSION ITEMS

E. Architectural Review at 71 Cowlitz Street (The Klondike Tavern)

Dimsho shared an additional update to the Klondike Tavern building plan. She said the property is subject to Riverfront District guidelines. She said there had been two reviews previously for an addition of the porch patio and a new basement entry. She said this proposal was to change from an ADA lift to an elevator to serve all levels of the hotel and restaurant. She said there would be a huge visual impact on the elevations of the building. She said the new elevator requires bridges to each level to connect the shaft of the elevator to the different levels of the building. She said there would be new windows on each of those bridges.

Holcombe Waller, the owner of the property, came forward to share some of the design changes. He said they received a grant to install the elevator which is why they had changed the design. He said the elevator tower would have to be tall and he wanted to be sure that the tower matched the architectural guidelines of the district. They said they went off the Historic Courthouse and designed the tower to be like the clock tower on the courthouse. Since this building is part of the Special Assessment Program and receiving Mainstreet grant money, the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) asked him to remove the clock from the elevator shaft tower and they would approve the elevator as part of their preservation plan for the building. He said they wanted to be similar to the

building, but also have it stand out to bring attention to the whole structure itself. He said the windows would be wood, but not double hung. He also said the roof would be a metal split seam matte black to match the covered patio. He said the top level would have more of a solarium feel. He said there was a shallow slope of the roof and made it too low for code. To meet this requirement, they did a solarium window instead and would be tucked away into the building. He also mentioned they added a fiber cement panel towards the top of the tower to add some architectural interest and detail.

There was a small discussion about the lighting and how the tower will be lit.

Motion: Upon Commissioner Castner’s motion and Commissioner Jacobson’s second, the Planning Commission unanimously recommended to staff that this proposal meets the Riverfront District Architectural Guidelines. [AYES: Commissioner Carlson, Commissioner Castner, Commissioner Sisco, Commissioner Jacobson; NAYS: None]

F. Joint Planning Commission / City Council Meeting Discussion Items

Graichen shared the discussion items on the agenda for the meeting and reminded the Commission to attend.

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

- G. Sign Permit at 2250 Gable Road – Broadleaf Arbor
- H. Temporary Use Permit at 175 Bowling Alley Lane – CCPOD, LLC
- I. Site Design Review (Minor) at 373 S Columbia River Hwy – Weigandt
- J. Sensitive Lands Permit at 373 S Columbia River Hwy – Weigandt
- K. Temporary Sign Permit (Banner) at 2100 Block of Columbia Blvd – Columbia Economic Team – Columbia County SBDC
- L. Sign Permit at 1911 Columbia Blvd – Clark Signs

There was no discussion on the Planning Director Decisions.

PLANNING DEPARTMENT ACTIVITY REPORT

- M. Planning Department Activity Report – February

Graichen shared that they had sent a letter to the O’Reilly’s corporate office and the torn-up sign in front of their location. He said he hoped this would encourage them to fix or remove it.

He also discussed some lots in the Ridgecrest subdivision that were finally able to move forward.

Dimsho mentioned there were four bids that came in for the Riverwalk and they are moving forward with the lowest bidder. She said construction should start in May.

PROACTIVE ITEMS

- N. Architectural Standards

There was no discussion on Architectural Standards.

- O. Vacant Storefronts

Vice Chair Shoemaker said the reason they were coordinating with Mainstreet was at the request of the Mayor. She said it had already been a positive experience and there was a lot of research done and seems to be a good relationship that will help this move forward.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION ITEMS

There were no For Your Information Items.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Planning Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 9:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Christina Sullivan
Community Development Administrative Assistant*