



PLANNING COMMISSION

Tuesday, July 08, 2025 at 6:30 PM
HYBRID: Council Chambers & Zoom (details below)

AGENDA

1. **6:30 P.M. CALL TO ORDER & FLAG SALUTE**
2. **TOPICS FROM THE FLOOR** (Not on Public Hearing Agenda): Limited to five minutes per topic
3. **CONSENT AGENDA**
 - A. Draft Minutes dated May 13, 2025
4. **DISCUSSION ITEMS**
 - B. Planning Commission Attendance Policy Discussion
5. **PLANNING DIRECTOR DECISIONS** (previously e-mailed to the Commission)
 - C. Sign Permit at 161 St. Helens Street-Dale Clark/Parjit Singh
 - D. Sign Permit at 50 Plaza Sq-Tom & Haley Borton/Herbert-Pugsley Living Trust
 - E. Temporary Use Permit at 735 South Columbia River Highway- Bethel Fellowship/Brandon Smith
 - F. Temporary Sign Permit at 2100 Block Columbia Blvd-Heather Epperly Agency
 - G. Site Development Review at 495 N. Columbia River Highway- John Odom
 - H. Sign Permit at 555 S Columbia River Highway Suite A-A to Z Signs
 - I. Site Development Review (Minor) at 1271 Columbia Blvd- David & Mindy Sass
 - J. Partition at 234 N 16th St- David Hiebert
 - K. Site Development Review (Minor) at 550 Milton Way-Haley Baker
 - L. Temporary Use Permit at 2295 Gable Rd-TNT Fireworks
 - M. Temporary Sign Permit at 2100 Block Columbia Blvd-Columbia County Fair and Rodeo
6. **PROACTIVE ITEMS**
 - N. Architectural Standards
 - O. Vacant and Underutilized Storefronts - St. Helens Mainstreet Alliance
7. **CITY COUNCIL LIAISON REPORT**
8. **FOR YOUR INFORMATION ITEMS**
9. **ADJOURNMENT**

NEXT REGULAR MEETING: August 12, 2025

VIRTUAL MEETING DETAILS

Join Zoom**Meeting:** <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85642107603?pwd=NKM2g7qMl6id2pA21OPICpbq90pvIp.1>

Meeting ID: 856 4210 7603

Meeting ID: 596482**Call in:** 1 253 215 8782

The meeting location is accessible to persons with disabilities. A request for an interpreter for the hearing impaired or for other accommodations for persons with disabilities should be made at least 48 hours before the meeting to City Hall at 503-397-6272.

Be a part of the vision and get involved...volunteer for a City Board or Commission! For more information or for an application, go to www.sthelensoregon.gov or call 503-366-8217.



PLANNING COMMISSION

Tuesday, May 13, 2025 at 6:30 PM

DRAFT MINUTES

- Members Present:** Chair Jennifer Shoemaker
Vice Chair Brooke Sisco
Commissioner Charles Castner
Commissioner Trina Kingsbury
- Members Absent:** Commissioner David Rosengard
Commissioner Reid Herman
Commissioner Scott Jacobson
- Staff Present:** City Planner Jacob Graichen
Associate Planner Jennifer Dimsho
Communications Officer Crystal King
Community Development Administrative Assistant Angelica Artero
- Others:** Brett McCoy
Brady Preheim
Chris Lucero
Aggie Peterson
Mary Anne Anderson
Jerry Harrison
Heather Harrison
John Peterson
Dale Clark
Karrie Nations
Will Uebelacker (Zoom)

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

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

Brady Preheim addressed the Commission with several concerns. He objected to Mr. Castner's participation on the Commission due to a documented issue and suggested he should resign or be removed. Preheim also noted that three Commission members were absent and urged action to ensure full attendance.

3. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Planning Commission Minutes Dated April 8, 2025

Motion: Upon Vice Chair Vice Chair Sisco's motion, Seconded by Commissioner Castner's second, the Planning Commission voted to approve the Planning Commission minutes dated April 8, 2025.[AYES: Vice Chair Sisco, Commissioner Kingsbury, Commissioner Castner, NAYS: None]

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

B. 6:30pm - Remand of Appeal AP.1.25 - AP.3.25 of the Planning Commission's denial of Variances V.1.25 - V.3.25 at 35732 Hankey Road – McCarter

Chair Jennifer Shoemaker opened the public hearing at 6:30pm. There was no bias, ex parte communications or site visits to declare. City Planner Jacob Graichen explained that the Variances allow the applicant to execute a partition later. He explained that the City Council had remanded the case back to the Planning Commission due to new considerations that arose during the appeal process.

Graichen outlined the requested variances, which included being below the 7,000 square foot minimum lot size, having a narrower lot width than typically allowed, and a reduced side setback.

In Favor

McCarter, Katherine. Applicant. McCarter stated that the neighboring property was just over 5,000 square feet, smaller than the R7 zoning typically noted for the neighborhood. McCarter emphasized the steep topography of the area, suggesting it was unlikely for development to occur on the other side of the road.

Neutral

No one spoke as neutral of the application.

In Opposition

Preheim, Brady. Preheim stated that the Commission had made the correct decision initially. He expressed frustration with the process, arguing that the City Council should have made a decision rather than remanding it back to the Planning Commission.

Rebuttal

McCarter, Katherine. Applicant. McCarter defended the remand process, stating that the City Council had recognized new information and was willing to reconsider the case. She emphasized that the topography of the property was indeed new information that warranted review.

End of Oral Testimony**Close of Public Hearing & Record****Deliberations**

Chair Jennifer Shoemaker expressed that she could not find where the application met any of the criteria for approval. She was concerned about setting a precedent if they were to change their minds. Other commissioners echoed similar sentiments, with concerns about the setbacks and the self-imposed nature of the hardship.

Commissioner Kingsbury agreed the setback is far too close between buildings.

Motion: Upon Commissioner Castner's motion and Vice Chair Sisco's second, the Planning Commission moved to deny the application because they did not meet all the criteria for variances.

[AYES: Commissioner Castner, Commissioner Sisco, Commissioner Kingsbury, NAYS: None]

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

C. 7:00pm - Annexation at 35363 Fir Street - McFeron

Chair Jennifer Shoemaker opened up the hearing at 7:0pm. There was no conflict of interest or bias in this matter, no ex parte or bias was declared.

Associate Planner Jenny Dimsho presented the annexation request for the property at 35262 Fir Street. The property, owned by Greg and Amanda McFeron, was approximately 21,000 square feet (close to half an acre) and had previously filed a consent to annex in order to connect to city sewer due to a failing septic system.

In Favor

No one spoke in favor of application.

Neutral

Nations, Karrie. Nations is a property owner adjacent from the applicant. Nations inquired if this decision would affect her property taxes.

In Opposition

No one spoke in opposition.

End of Oral Testimony**Close of Public Hearing & Record****Deliberations**

The Commission discussed the appropriate zoning with some members leaning towards Moderate Residential (R7) based on the surrounding area.

Motion: Upon Vice Chair Sisco's motion and Commissioner Castner's second, the Planning Commission made a motion to recommend approval of the annexation to City Council. [AYES: Vice Chair Sisco, Commissioner Castner, Commissioner Kingsbury, NAYS: none]

D. 7:15pm - Annexation at 58909 Firlok Park – Pyl

Chair Jennifer Shoemaker opened up the hearing at 7:15pm. There was no conflict of interest or bias, ex parte or site visits declared.

Associate Planner Jenny Dimsho presented the annexation request for the property at 58909 Firlok Park Boulevard. The property, owned by Bradford and Teresa Pyl, was approximately 0.58 acres and had recently connected to city sewer in 2024 due to a failing septic system.

In favor

No one was in favor of the application

Neutral

No one spoke as neutral of the application

Opposition

No one spoke in opposition.

End of Oral Testimony**Close of Public Hearing & Record****Deliberations**

The Commission briefly discussed the request, noting that the change from county multifamily zoning to city apartment residential zoning was not a drastic change.

Motion

Motion: Upon Vice Chair Sisco's motion, and seconded by Commissioner Castner, the Planning Commission made a motion to recommend approval of the annexation to City Council.

[AYES: Vice Chair Sisco, Commissioner Castner, Commissioner Kingsbury, NAYS: none]

E. 7:30pm – Annexation at 58209 Columbia River Highway & 35369 Millard Road – Decker Chair Jennifer Shoemaker opened at the public hearing at 7:31pm. There was no conflict of interest, bias, ex parte communication, or site visits declared.

Associate Planner Jenny Dimsho presented the annexation request for two properties: 58209 Columbia River Highway (4.47 acres, currently Family Fun RV) and 35369 Millard Road (1 acre, residential). Both properties were owned by Paul Joe and Virginia Decker and had previously filed consents to annex in 2009 and 2011 respectively to connect to city sewer.

Dimsho explained the history of the properties, their current uses, and recent county-related land use decisions. She noted that both properties were currently zoned Columbia County Commercial General (C-3) and would be zoned City Highway Commercial (HC) upon annexation, with no other zoning options available.

In Favor

No one spoke in favor of the application.

Neutral

No one spoke as neutral of the application

Opposition

Anderson, Mary Ann. Anderson said she is representing Heather Harrison, the current owner of Family Fun RV and the sole owner of JH Rental LLC. Anderson argued that the current property owner had not applied for or consented to annexation, that the previous consent had expired, and that the city had not met proper notice requirements. She urged the Commission to take no action or deny the proposal.

End of Oral Testimony

Close of Public Hearing & Record

Deliberations

The Planning Commission engaged in discussion about the validity of the previous consent to annex, the change in ownership, and the procedural concerns raised during testimony. They also considered the potential impact of denying the annexation or allowing it to proceed. Associate Planner Dimsho did state that there was a consent to annexation filed by a previous owner.

Motion Upon Vice Chair Sisco's and Commissioner Kingsbury's second, the Planning Commission made a motion to recommend to the City Council to deny the application.

[AYES: Vice Chair Sisco, Commissioner Castner, Commissioner Kingsbury, NAYS: none]

5. DISCUSSION ITEMS

F. Architectural Review at 161 St. Helens Street – Clark Signs

Associate Planner Jenny Dimsho presented an architectural review for a new neon sign at 161 St. Helens Street for Sherlock's Grocery. The proposed sign was 12.5 square feet, within the allowed size limits, and featured neon lettering on a white background. Dale Clark from Clark Signs was present to answer questions. The Commission discussed the design, particularly the white background and lack of a border. They suggested adding a border to give the sign a more finished, historic look.

Motion: Upon Commissioner Kingsbury's motion seconded by Vice Chair Sisco, the Planning Commission made a motion that the sign was compliant with the architectural guidelines. [AYES: Vice Chair Sisco, Commissioner Castner, Commissioner Kingsbury, NAYS: none]

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

- G. Extension of time (Temporary Use Permit) – 2225 Gable Road – Paintner
- H. Extension of time (Temporary Use Permit) 555 S. Columbia River Highway-Hacienda Las Juanita's
- I. Sensitive Lands Permit (Amended) – 134 S. 6th Street – Scholl
- J. Temporary Sign Permit - 2100 Block of Columbia Blvd – Kiwanis
- K. Temporary Sign Permit - 2100 Block of Columbia Blvd – Epperly
- L. Partition - 234 N 16th Street – Hiebert

There was no discussion on any planning director decisions.

8. PROACTIVE ITEMS

M. Architectural Standards

City Planner Jacob Graichen led a discussion on developing architectural standards, focusing on windows. The Commission agreed to consider standards for the entire city, not just the downtown area. They discussed potential elements to address, including window trim, placement on building sides, and minimum glazing standards.

N. Vacant and Underutilized Storefronts

This item was not discussed as Commissioner Jacobson, who was leading this initiative, was absent from the meeting.

9. CITY COUNCIL LIAISON REPORT

There was no discussion on City Council Liaison Report.

10. FOR YOUR INFORMATION ITEMS

Graichen discussed a sign permit for 50 Plaza Square, which was consistent with a previous Commission decision. The Commission agreed.

Graichen also provided an update on the construction at 325 Strand (formerly Gracie's Annex). Graichen explained that the project, which was supposed to be a phased remodel, had progressed to a point where it could potentially be considered new construction. This raised concerns about maintaining the property's parking exemption, which does not apply to new construction. Owner of Artis Construction, Brett McCoy and Chris Lucero, and architect Will Uebelacker were present to explain the situation. Graichen discussed history and the approved plans and phasing of project and requested guidance from the Commission

Commissioner Sisco asked Graichen what the parking variance codes were. Chris Lucero with Artis gave a statement about sub-contractor scheduling issues and roof structure was not safe. It has been their intent to comply with the phasing plan. Safety has been their number one priority with this project, and they are asking for leniency and grace.

Commission Shoemaker stated this is a new construction. Artis Construction stated it was always going to be a new construction for final product. Commission Caster said he liked the project, but the issue was with the parking variance. Commissioner Sisco does not like that the stop work order to leave the building the way it is now. Chair Shoemaker stated that she did not like the neglect of the original building which resulted in basically demolition by neglect.

Artis Construction explained if the stop work order has not been issued, the next phase in construction would be completed in a few days.

Chair Shoemaker and Commissioner Kingsbury were not in favor of considering the project a remodel. Vice Chair Sisco and Commissioner Castner are in favor of allowing the project to move forward as a remodel. With a split decision for the sole purpose of providing staff guidance, Graichen will decide how to proceed at future time.

11. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Planning Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 9:15 p.m.

*Respectfully submitted,
Angelica Artero
Community Development Administrative Assistant*



CITY OF ST. HELENS PLANNING DEPARTMENT

M E M O R A N D U M

TO: Planning Commission
 FROM: Jacob A. Graichen, AICP, City Planner
 RE: Absenteeism discussion
 DATE: June 26, 2025

Key provisions that address Planning Commission absenteeism include:

- SHMC 2.08.040:

Appointments to fill vacancies shall be for the remainder of the unexpired term. A member may be removed by the city council after a hearing for **misconduct** or **nonperformance of duty**. A member who is absent from three consecutive meetings without an excuse as approved by the planning commission is rebuttably presumed to be in **nonperformance of duty**, and the city council shall declare the position vacant unless finding otherwise following the hearing.

Misconduct is not defined. Per <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/misconduct> misconduct means:

1. mismanagement especially of governmental or military responsibilities
 2. intentional wrongdoing
 3. improper behavior
 4. a penalty (as in ice hockey) for improper behavior or abusive language (as toward an official)
- The Planning Commission is supposed to meet monthly per SHMC 2.08.070(1).
 - The Planning Commission serves as the Historic Landmarks Commission, who are required to meet at least twice a year per SHMC 17.36.020(5).
 - And somewhat related, Resolution No. 1648, Committee/Commission Guidelines (*attached*).

City of St. Helens
RESOLUTION NO. 1648

**A RESOLUTION ESTABLISHING GUIDELINES FOR THE APPOINTMENT
OF ST. HELENS BOARD, COMMITTEE AND COMMISSION MEMBERS,
SUPERSEDING RESOLUTION NO. 1521**

WHEREAS, the City Council wished to establish the same guidelines for recruitment, interviews and appointments for all City boards, committees and commissions, and adopted Resolution No. 1521 on August 12, 2009; and

WHEREAS, Resolution No. 1521 established general recruitment, selection and appointment guidelines for appointments to the City of St. Helens boards, committees and commissions; and

WHEREAS, the Council wishes to update the guidelines adopted in Resolution No. 1521 to better meet the needs of the City.

**NOW, THEREFORE, THE COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ST. HELENS
RESOLVES AS FOLLOWS:**

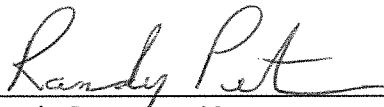
1. The City Recorder shall send a press release to the local newspaper of record announcing all board, committee and commission vacancies as they become available. A "vacancy" is defined as an unoccupied position, resulting from a voluntary resignation or involuntary termination. A member whose term expired does not create a vacancy, unless that member is resigning at the end of his/her term or the majority of the board, committee or commission wishes to terminate said member.
2. Any individual or group is encouraged to submit names for consideration to the City.
3. All new applicants shall submit a written application to the City Recorder's Office.
4. Members wishing to continue their appointment for another term will inform the City Recorder but need not submit a new application. If a member has served two consecutive full terms, a press release shall be sent to the local newspaper of record, each subsequent term expiration thereafter, to solicit new applications for that position. The incumbent may be reappointed at the discretion of the interview panel and City board, committee or commission. If an individual has been off a City board, committee or commission for a year or more, they must complete a new application.
5. The recruitment period to the board, committee or commission shall be for a finite period. At the end of the advertising period, the Council liaison shall determine if the pool of candidates is sufficient to continue with the selection process or may continue the recruitment period for a set or unlimited period until it is determined there is a sufficient pool of candidates.
6. The Council liaison to the board, committee or commission shall be responsible to assemble an interview committee. The interview committee shall be responsible to make recommendations via the Council liaison to the Mayor and City Council.
7. Appointments must comply with any ordinances, bylaws, Charter provisions, or state or federal laws concerning the board, committee or commission. In the event of any inconsistency between these policies and a chapter relating to a specific board, committee or commission, the specific chapter shall control.

8. In order to become more familiar with each applicant's qualifications, the interview committee may interview all or a shortlist of applicants for a position. The number of applicants to be interviewed is at the interview committee's discretion. The interview committee also has the discretion to reject all applications in favor of re-advertising if no applicants are found to be suitable for the board, committee or commission.
9. Reappointments to a City board, committee or commission shall be considered in accordance with the guidelines listed in this section, together with the type of service the individual has already given to the board, committee or commission and his/her stated willingness to continue.
10. Consideration should be given to residents outside the City when the board, committee or commission or function serves residents outside City boundaries.
11. Board, committee or commission members shall not participate in any proceeding or action in which there may be a direct or substantial financial interest to the member, the member's relative or a business with which the member or a relative is associated, including any business in which the member is serving on their board or has served within the previous two years; or any business with which the member is negotiating for or has an arrangement or understanding concerning prospective partnership or employment. Any actual or potential conflict of interest shall be disclosed at the meeting where the action is being taken.
12. Board, committee or commission vacancies are filled by appointment of the Mayor with the consent of Council. Board, committee or commission members shall serve without compensation except the Planning Commission that may receive a monthly stipend at the discretion of the City Council.
13. Individuals appointed to one City board, committee or commission shall not serve on any other City board, committee or commission during the term of their appointment; provided, that the Council may waive this limitation if it is in the public interest to do so.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the City Council on this 18th day of December, 2013, by the following vote:

Ayes: Locke, Carlson, Conn, Morten, Peterson

Nays: None


Randy Peterson, Mayor

ATTEST:


Kathy Payne, City Recorder