

PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Monday, June 8, 2020

6:00 PM, Held remotely

Attending: Planning Commission members PC Chair Valerie Hoy-Rhodehamel, Mike Beck, Jeff Breckel, Auguste Zettler

City Staff: City Administrator Leana Kinley

Other: Zachary Pyle

Audience: Kristi Versari, Mary Repar, Monica Masco, Brian McNamara, Kelly O'Malley McKee

Preliminary Matters

1. Chair Describes Public Comment Expectations for Remote Meeting

PC Chair Valerie Hoy-Rhodehamel requested people identify themselves prior to speaking.

Commissioner Beck recommended a motion to limit public comment to a defined time rather than allowing open comments and back and forth conversations throughout the meeting. PC Chair Valerie Hoy-Rhodehamel noted the Planning Commission agenda had a specific time set aside in the agenda for public comments. No motion was made.

2. Approval of Minutes from April 13th, 2020 PC Meeting

Motion to approve the Planning Commission minutes from April 13th, 2020 was provided by Commissioner Zettler with a second by Commissioner Beck. The motion was approved unanimously.

3. Public Comment Period (For items not located elsewhere on the agenda)

>Mary Repar suggested Planning Commissioners announce their name at remote meetings so it's known if there was a quorum available. She expressed dismay regarding the May 2020 City Council meeting where she felt the City Council's response to the 18 public comments regarding the issue of residences being used for business purposes was dismissive, and felt more consideration should have been given to opinions expressed by the people commenting. She urged the Planning Commission to deeply consider what they were looking at for the zoning amendment.

>Monica Masco commented regarding the proposed zoning amendment to the C1 area in downtown Stevenson regarding the reversion of businesses to residences and vice-versa. She advocated that residents and business owners should be allowed to use their property for either purpose and urged the Commission to listen to local residents.

>Brian McNamara voiced his concerns regarding the 2013 Commission plan and Plan for Success. He is a downtown property owner. He stated the two plans noted above both address protecting single-family detached dwellings in the downtown area under certain situations. He said he felt the recent moratorium initiated by the City Council at their May 2020 meeting was a foregone conclusion and he spoke in favor of dual usage of residences/businesses in the downtown area.

New Business

4. Shoreline Review @ 6:15

Rock Cove Hospitality Center Shoreline Substantial Development Permit

a. Review Purpose of Meeting (to review project and provide a recommendation to City Council)

Chair Hoy-Rhodehamel noted the similarity of the review to a public hearing, but reminded everyone the purpose was to provide a recommendation to the City Council regarding the project at Rock Cove. No members expressed concerns.

City Administrator Leana Kinley pointed to the memos provided by **Community Development Director Ben Shumaker** and briefly described the project and the role the Planning Commission provides. The City Council will hold a public hearing regarding the proposed project at their regular meeting on June 18th, 2020. Comments provided by the Planning Commission will be considered at the public hearing.

Four points of review were outlined and explained: Appropriate Order of Permit Approvals, Public Access Considerations, Scenic Vista and View Protections and Site Interpretations.

Commissioner Beck asked and was assured discussion could be held after the applicant made the presentation.

b. Appearance of Fairness Disclosures

Chair Hoy-Rhodehamel explained the Appearance of Fairness disclosures. The intent is to assure fairness and impartiality in the Planning Commission decision-making process. She asked each Commission member if they had had any ex-parte communication regarding the project, if they would be affected in any way financially by the project, and if there was anything that would limit their ability to make fair and impartial decisions.

All Commissioners reported no ex-parte discussions or communications, no financial concerns and all stated they could make a fair and impartial decision. **Chair Hoy-Rhodehamel** noted she had spoken with **Community Development Director Shumaker** regarding the shoreline application but had no challenges regarding her ability to act fairly.

c. Presentation by Staff

All Commission members had reviewed the applicant materials contained in the meeting packet, including the memo from Community Development Director Ben Shumaker.

d. Presentation by Applicant

Zachary Pyle, applicant, provided information on the proposal. He highlighted the features and gave a brief history of the site. The area is not considered a brownfield site. He noted it is a three-phase project with lodging and an event meeting space planned. The intent is to develop one phase per year. He explained the pedestrian pathway routes and described how the public would still have access to the shoreline for non-motorized boat launching. Public access will be blocked during construction phases for safety purposes but will be allowed in between work at the site.

Commissioners asked a number of questions, including the proposed rental rates, estimated ROI (return on investment), if operators were in place for Phase 1, possible options for public ownership of the fourplexes, and the expected start time of the project.

A number of concerns were expressed over the design of the pedestrian pathways and the proposed 7-year timeline for maintaining public access to the water.

Zachary described the need for extensive grading at the site. Upgrading the sidewalks and installing pathways are part of the plans for phase 2. The 7-year timeline was put in place by **Community Development Director Shumaker** to allow for delays during construction.

In response to the question from **Commissioner Breckel** regarding options for private ownership and permanent residences, Zachary explained they do not intend to operate the site as anything other than a hospitality complex. Under existing regulations condos are allowed at the site. They do not plan to withdraw the option, but it is unlikely due to the Stevenson Municipal Code and the plat amendment conditions. Subdivisions are not allowed due to the shared driveway provisions. He answered questions from **Commissioner Zettler** regarding the loss of public access via the southern

peninsula by explaining the desire for privacy and sense of seclusion for guests. The shoreline designation as it currently stands does not allow sidewalk construction.

He anticipates starting work in July following the June 2020 City Council meeting and public hearing.

Commissioner Beck asked for additional information regarding imagery and information for Phase 2 and 3. He stated he was hesitant to review and make recommendations for the full project as they were not as well defined as Phase 1.

He clarified that if the project reverted to a condominium partialization would not be required. He asked also about shoreline setbacks and if variances would be needed as some of the trails appear to be within a 50' buffer area.

Zachary related that the Department of Ecology is reviewing updates to the Shoreline Management Plan and may reduce the requirement regarding setbacks for pathways to 35'. He did agree that conceptual plans for Phase 2 and 3 were not in place. The project will need to go through another permitting process and they will be available then.

e. Public Comments

Chair Hoy-Rhodehamel noted that since it was not a public hearing, she would not proceed with the public comments section.

>Mary Repar noted she had sent in comments regarding improving interpretive signage for better awareness of public access points. She reviewed the project map and prefers the existing easement with more public walking sites. She advocated for permeable pavement materials. She asked about the Natural Resource Conservation Service report on the site's sediment and formations, and noted she did not see a wildlife survey. She reminded everyone that Rock Cove is part of the Audubon southwest birding loop.

She asked about the source of rip-rap on the site and if it had to be removed. She suggested the City fire hall may be impacted due to more dwellings.

Zachary responded by stating the property was all man made by the Hegewald family. It can be cleaned up, with non-native plants removed. The rip-rap will stay for stabilization. A stormwater management plan is in place and derelict impervious surfaces will be removed.

He addressed the wildlife survey, noting it was part of the complete critical areas application. No birds were observed the day of the survey. NRCS-full geo-tech report was not included, but he provided some details regarding soil types at the site.

Regarding the easement he noted there will be give and take when land goes from publicly owned to private. He noted a change in the areas may take some access away, but what will be available will be more accessible to all.

>Mary Repar reiterated keeping the easement as is. She described a number of bird species known to be in the area and suggested further surveys. She will write up comments for written record. Thanked Zachary for input.

>Kelly O'Malley McKee, Executive Director of the Stevenson Downtown Association. She asked about parking for those wanting to use the boat launch. Zachary pointed to the map and noted the circular drive area would only be restricted to parking during events.

>Brian McNamara also stressed the importance of an environmental assessment due to the site's fish and bird species. He asked what impact the project would have to the Waste Water Treatment Plant.

City Administrator Leana Kinley responded regarding the question about the WWTP and noted that Phase 1 would not have an adverse affect on the plant.

Chair Hoy-Rhodehamel asked if an Environmental Impact Statement would need to be done. It was explained only if an adverse impact is expected. A State Environmental Policy Act is needed. Zachary noted one was completed.

f. Commission Discussion

Following an extensive discussion, the Planning Commission determined the following areas needed to be further addressed:

- Ensuring public access to the water and along pathways is critical.
- Plans for undisturbed areas need to be developed.
- A landscape design with plant species, elements and other information would be beneficial.
- More detailed plans for Phases 2 and 3 would be helpful.
- Concerns about potential conversion to condominiums were expressed.

Commissioners were appreciative of the project's positive affect to the community and local economy.

City Administrator Kinley asked the Commissioners to not send emails solely to **Community Development Director Shumaker**, include her as well. She pointed out a landscape/screening plan was a condition on page 15 of the draft permit. Restoration and site improvement is addressed as well. She cautioned the Commission that decisions need to be based on location of structures and not necessarily the look or aesthetics of buildings. **Commissioner Breckel** responded by noting architectural designs were not being requested, but plans consistent with policies contained in the Stevenson zoning code re commercial residential areas. **Kinley** replied they would be addressed when the project submits its application for a building permit. **Breckel** asked to what extent a landscape plan would be reviewed as well. Kinley stated it would likely be part of an administrative review performed by **Community Development Director Shumaker**. **Zettler** also spoke in favor of landscape plans to determine what mitigation efforts would be put in place.

>Mary Repar commented on the landscape plan, noting protected species on a property need to be mitigated. She stated it is an important point.

Chair Hoy-Rhodehamel asked Commissioners to reflect on the guidance points detailed in **Shumaker's** memo.

- Order of permits: Is everything in order? All Commissioners responded affirmatively.
- Public access: **Commissioners Beck and Breckel** stated they would like to see the timeline reduced to one year from seven, with access maintained except during construction. **Administrator Kinley** clarified their comments to note during much of the project there would be no formal established path, but access would still be maintained. **Commissioner Beck** noted the existing path needed better connectivity and suggested revisions to the pathways at the project center and north end. He advocated for a loop within the dedicated public easement, without a dead end at the fire pit as shown in the current plan.
- Scenic vista/view protection: **Chair Hoy-Rhodehamel** noted previous comments from **Commissioner Zettler** regarding the tree cover to maintain the view from the fairgrounds point of view. Mary Repar had provided the only comment regarding the issue.
- Site interpretation: **Commissioner Breckel** noted it would be nice to have something similar to what is on the existing path regarding historic use of property.

>Brian McNamara asked if property owners across the way had been notified about the project, and what efforts had been made to contact them. It was noted the city had posted details at the Stevenson Post Office and had provided information to the Skamania County Pioneer. **City Administrator Kinley** will confirm letters were sent to adjoining and adjacent property owners.

g. Recommendation

City Administrator Kinley will summarize the above points and recommendations made tonight. She will follow up with **Community Director Shumaker** regarding who is established as point of contact.

Zachary Pyle stated he appreciated the comments and thanked everyone for their input.

Old Business

None.

Discussion

5. Staff & Commission Reports

City Administrator Kinley provided the following updates:

- On Russell Street the power lines are down and the poles are coming out. The decorative lamps will be installed within a few weeks. Sidewalks are being done with detailing. Construction is still one month ahead of schedule.
- First Street is progressing. Surveys are taking place.
- Columbia Street is moving forward. The intent is to improve safety at the intersection.
- Governor Inslee's Modified Public Meeting Guidelines have been extended to June 17th. Still does not allow personal meetings, but regular actions can take place. City Administrator Kinley shared a meeting was planned with Rep. Gina Mosbrucker. It was noted it would be nice to have the state guidelines extension align with the various opening phases.
- The June 2020 City Council meeting will be online, but may also be open to the public at City Hall resulting in a hybrid meeting.
- She asked if the Planning Commission wanted her to advertise and hold interviews in July to fill the vacancy on the PC Board and was given approval to do so.

Commissioner Beck related **Community Development Director Shumaker** had asked for a PC representative to attend the June 2020 City Council meeting and present the PC recommendations regarding the Rock Cove Hospitality project. He agreed to attend.

He congratulated the staff and the contractor regarding the work on the Russell Street project.

Commissioner Breckel commented it will add a lot to the downtown plan.

6. Thought of the month

None.

Adjournment

Planning Commission Chair Hoy-Rhodehamel declared the meeting adjourned at 8:08 p.m.

Minutes recorded by Johanna Roe