

CITY OF ST. HELENS PLANNING DEPARTMENT ACTIVITY REPORT



To: City Council
From: Jacob A. Graichen, AICP, City Planner
cc: Planning Commission

Date: Feb. 22, '22

This report does not indicate all *current planning* activities over the past report period. These are tasks, processing and administration of the Development Code which are a weekly if not daily responsibility. The Planning Commission agenda, available on the City's website, is a good indicator of *current planning* activities. The number of building permits issued is another good indicator as many require Development Code review prior to Building Official review.

PLANNING ADMINISTRATION—PREAPPLICATIONS MEETINGS

Attended a Columbia County pre-application meeting for a proposal for the old Bing's Restaurant property on the corner of Millard Road and US30 to eliminate the restaurant use and add an RV service component with parts sales, including a new building. The property is outside of city limits but within St. Helens' Urban Growth Area.

Attended a Columbia County pre-application meeting for a proposal to expand the Ford/Chrysler/Dodge/Jeep/Ram dealership expansion along US30. The property is outside of city limits but within St. Helens' Urban Growth Area.

Conducted a pre-application meeting for a potential subdivision (between 40 – 50 lots) of property (Comstock property) currently subject to annexation review between Pittsburg Road, Sykes Road, Mountain View Drive, and Barr Avenue. I anticipate this being the second residential subdivision for St. Helens this year.

PLANNING ADMINISTRATION—MISC.

St. Helens is required to become a Designated Management Agency (DMA) per the updated (2019) Willamette River Basin Mercury Total Maximum Daily Loads originating in 2006. St. Helens is on the northly reaches of this area. The key issue are high levels of mercury in the Willamette (via Multnomah Channel). This will result in additional reporting, code amendment, updated practices, pre and post development requirements and such in the coming months/years. Largely a burden of the Engineering Department, the Planning Department is anticipated to help with code amendments, and to support review and implementation of land development.

Kavanagh (or Kavanaugh) Ave v. Street. Assessor records for some streets are inconsistent. Kavanagh Avenue is one of those. It is called street sometimes and is spelled with a "u" other times. Spent some time this month discussing this with Columbia 9-1-1 (who initiated the dialogue), the County Public Works Department (county road) and Columbia County Land Development Services (who assigned addresses in the county) on this. Ultimately, county sent a letter out and it does not change the one address the city has assigned along Kavanagh Ave.

DEVELOPMENT CODE ENFORCEMENT

The issue at 264 N. Columbia River Highway should finally be resolved. This was first reported in the July 2021 department report and the last entry should be this month. Tennent moved to

the “back half” of the 1771 Columbia Boulevard as anticipated. Auto/RV and food truck repair is already permitted there.

As noted in the December 2021 report, ACSP / Ogrotech (the occupant / owner) of the parcel divided from the St. Helens Industrial Business Park site has a number of sheds subject to local permitting requirements. Staff has had productive dialogue, but has not received the updated information yet.

Another day, another dollar. And when you work for a city, another group of neighbors not quite getting along. In this case a driveway/private property dispute on S. 10 Street right off Old Portland Road. Code enforcement has been involved off and on and I got a bit involved this month regarding no-trespassing signage. I suspect the issue will resolve itself and this will not need any more attention.

PLANNING COMMISSION (& *acting* HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION)

February 8, 2022 meeting (outcome): The Commission approved a Conditional Use Permit for a dwelling unit on the same level as a non-residential use at 1370 Columbia Boulevard (the old and now former Soot Busters business). The Commission also approved the expansion of Columbia View Park.

Staff gave a brief presentation of the strategic plan and intended planning department goals.

As the Historic Landmarks Commission, they considered if some tourism related additions for sponsorship signage constituted an “alteration” as it relates to the city’s historic preservation rules. The Commission felt that is did.

Staff discussed this with the Council at the February 16, 2022 work session and, though already removed, the Council seemed to agree. Note that the bolts holding these features were cut-grinded rather than simple unscrewed, reinforcing the argument that the features were not temporary



Left: The Plaza as viewed from S. 1st Street before the Planning Commission discussed the metal business sponsor sign features on either side that they determined constitutes and “alteration.” **Right:** Those features were removed shortly after.

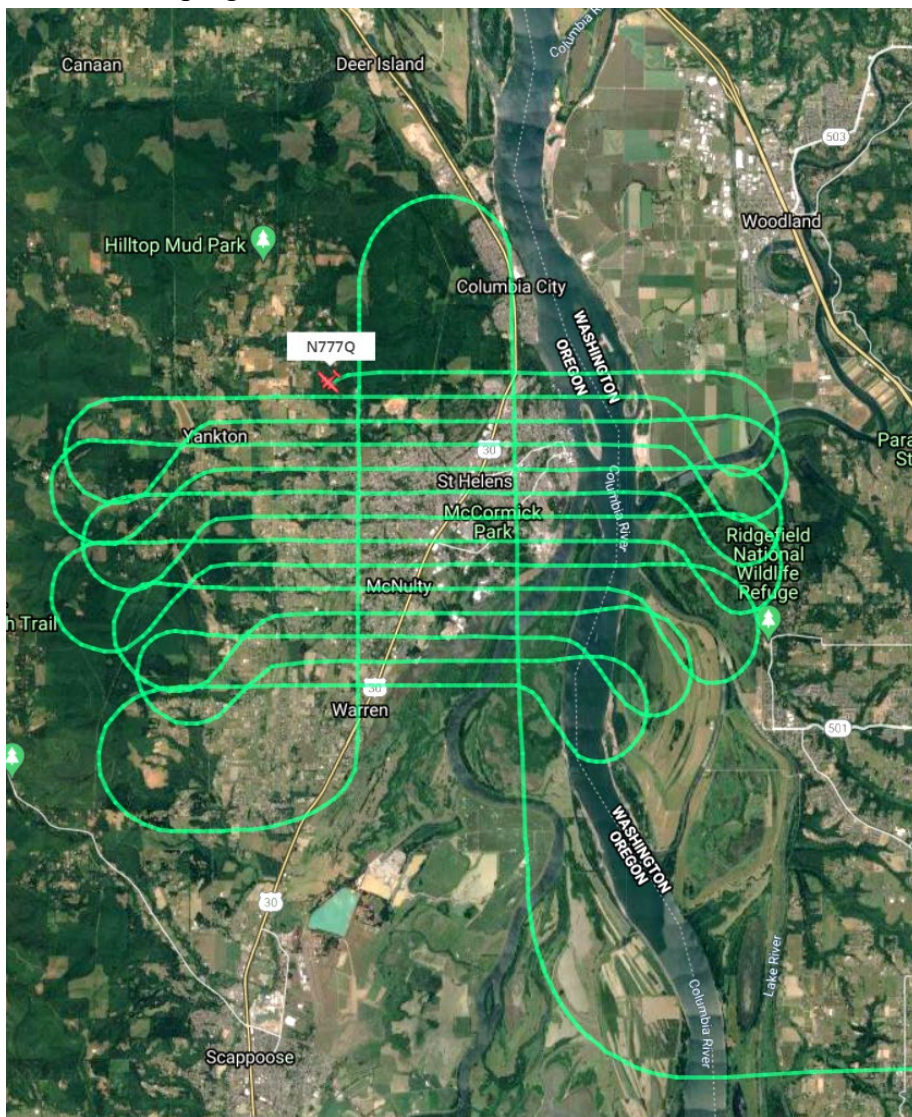
March 8, 2022 meeting (upcoming): The Commission have a few public hearings scheduled. One is for a setback variance for a property along S. 2nd Street for a deck overlooking the cliff abutting the Riverfront District expansion area (i.e., the veneer mill property). The second is for a Planned Development overlay zone for property at the end of N 8th and 9th Streets, north of Deer Island Road. The third is for the same property but for a subdivision preliminary plat and related files for a 66-lot development.

There will also be an agenda item for discussion about the Commission being proactive.

GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS (GIS)

Quarterly data updates this month.

Our renewed data efforts progress. On Feb. 11, GeoTerra collected the LIDAR. Here is the flight path:



ASSOCIATE PLANNER—*In addition to routine tasks, the Associate Planner has been working on:*
See attached.

From: [Jennifer Dimsho](#)
To: [Jacob Graichen](#)
Subject: February Planning Department Report
Date: Friday, February 18, 2022 8:52:20 AM

Here are my additions to the February Planning Department Report.

GRANTS

1. **OPRD - Local Government Grant – Campbell Park Improvements** - 6-month grant extension granted for the COVID-19 related delay of court surfacing materials. New deadline is April 2022. Concrete pad poured. Waiting on dry weather for PW to finish grading of stormwater area (plants ordered and pick up, soil delivered). Courts are complete. Conducted final walk through to confirm punchlist items completed on 2/18. PW to stripe parking lot.
2. **CDBG- Columbia Pacific Food Bank Project** – JH Kelly continuing \$1.6 million construction bid. Working through 4 deferred submittals. Will need to submit a final budget amendment to state for all change orders. 6-month time extension approved. New completion is 6/30.
3. **Safe Routes to School - Columbia Blvd. Sidewalk Project** – Construction timeline provided by David Evans, who is working through design/engineering process. Worked through change to schedule to allow an additional year for bidding the project to allow the County to replace a culvert which collapsed in 2020 during a heavy rainstorm. County IGA and contract amendment to add culvert in scope was approved in December. New schedule has bidding of the project and construction in 2022. Responded to media inquiry about this project.
4. **Business Oregon – Infrastructure Finance Authority** – Application for a low-interest loan to fund streets, utilities, and a portion of the Riverwalk Project on the Riverfront property. Contract documents have been sent to legal counsel. Legal reviewed anticipated by 2/22 to get contacts before Council in March.
5. **Certified Local Government – Historic Preservation Grant Program** – Notice to proceed from SHPO received on 11/1. Council advised staff to reduce project costs at their 1/5 Council meeting. Contract approved at 1/19 Council for just roof parapet work (no cornice work) for 24k. Slated for March to begin work.
6. **Technical Assistance Grant with the Oregon State Marine Board** - To assist with design and permitting of an in-water facility at Grey Cliffs Park. A more detailed contract with be drafted for review and approval by Council for the assistance. Meeting on 12/22 with OSMB discussed design options for the non-motorized launch and fishing pier. Next steps will be to take options to the public for feedback, select a preferred alternative, and begin final design, and permitting process.
7. **Portland Garden Club/Nob Hill Nature Park Grant Application** – Assisted/edited application for Friends of Nob Hill Nature Park to the Portland Garden club for native plants and supplies.
8. **Columbia Arts Guild** – Provided letter of support from the City for their application for a “Columbia River Renaissance through Art” project. They would like to align an art show with a grand opening of Riverwalk Phase I.

PROJECTS & MISC

9. **Riverwalk Project (OPRD Grants x2)** – Working on local Columbia View Park expansion permitting to assist with funding park improvements (SDC eligibility). Council approved concept. PC approved Site Development Review for park expansion. Additional design with Mayer Reed to re-design playground area approved by Council on 1/19. Kickoff held, and follow-up meeting held on 2/11 to discuss preliminary playground design.
10. **Riverfront Streets/Utilities Design/Engineering** – 90 percent plan set received - 205 pages of materials to review! Reviewed and provided comments to OTAK. OTAK working on revisions. Held follow-up meetings on aspects of design (pump station, intersection treatments). Kickoff with Kittelson to revise and edit St. Helens/1st Street intersection which was at a 90 percent design. Design to be altered to match OTAK design. Started organizing a Joint PC/CC meeting to discuss 90 percent streets/utilities project update.
11. **St. Helens Industrial Business Park (SHIBP) Public Infrastructure Design**– Work Order 1 approved - 30 % design for Phase I infrastructure & permitting/grading work for Phase II. Held 2nd stakeholder meeting on 2/17 to discuss utility and transportation needs for Phase I infrastructure. Follow-up meeting with PGE to coordinate new substation footprint and location scheduled for 3/14.
12. **Millard Road City-Owned RFP** - Council directed staff to work through possible sale terms with Atkins & Dame. Assisting John with next steps of negotiation.
13. **Riverfront Redevelopment RFQ** – On City Council agenda 2/16 for approval. Approved by Council. RFQ went public on 2/18 and will close on 4/1. More to come!
14. **US Census Annual Boundary & Annexation Survey (BAS) 2022** – Reviewed annexations that occurred and finalized throughout 2021 and compiled new boundary to send to US Census by deadline of March 1.
15. **US 30/Marshall Street Closure** – Property owners initiated road closure for safety reasons. ODOT provided approved permit and authorized work. They will reimburse City for closure with a fire access/PW access only gate. Pre-construction visit with contractor scheduled for 2/22. Gate has been fabricated and is ready for install.

Jenny Dimsho, AICP

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