

CITY OF ST. HELENS PLANNING DEPARTMENT ACTIVITY REPORT



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

Date: 11.23.2020

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

Conducted a pre-application meeting for a potential microbrew facility (not a brew pub) off the 200 block of N. 18th Street.

Conducted a pre-application meeting for a potential land partition of the property with the recently completed veterinary clinic in the Houlton area.

PLANNING ADMINISTRATION—MISC.

Assisted with business license related code amendments that went before the Council this month.

During the most recent fiscal quarter (July-September 2020) the city issued 21 single family housing permits. This is a 5-year high of all quarters. The quarter right behind that one is April-June 2020 with 17 such permits. Most quarters in the past five years are single digit or zero.

The conex box apartments on city owned property along N. 7th Street (by the 6th Street Park) is making progress for permit issuance locally. But they are still working on the State permit too, which I believe would pre-certify the units from a building code review standpoint. The Commission originally approved this back in July of 2017.

Assisted City Engineering with information for their wastewater and stormwater plan update efforts.

Port renewed their wetland delineation for their properties along McNulty Way. They are good for five years and the last effort was in 2015. No word on when they may develop those properties.

The Northwest Housing Authority apartment project along Gable Road renewed their non-city permit to impact wetlands on that property.

PLANNING COMMISSION (& *acting* HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION)

November 10, 2020 meeting (outcome): The Commission approved a Lot Line Adjustment / Minor Modification Conditional Use Permit to adjust a boundary between a lot and open space tract within the Meadowbrook Planned Development.

The Commission also approved a reduced yard Variance and an Access Variance for a proposed 2-unit attached single-family development at the south terminus of S. 2nd Street.

December 8, 2020 meeting (upcoming): The Commission will hold two public hearings. One will be for a pair of Variances related to the proposed apartment complex along Gable Road by US30. *As the Historic Landmarks Commission*, they will consider a potential alteration of the John Gumm School building for an accessible ramp at the second public hearing.

The Commission will also review a proposed right-of-way vacation at the south terminus of S. 2nd Street for recommendation to Council.

The Commission will also consider potential requirements for distances between two detached single-family dwellings on the same property as we continue to work through the “duplex rules” triggered by Oregon HB 2001.

COUNCIL ACTIONS RELATED TO LAND USE

The Council authorized execution of the final plats for Graystone Estates and Hanna Place. These two subdivisions will add 88 new attached single-family dwelling lots and two commercial lots. Residential builders have been anxiously anticipating this—we will see a new wave of building permits for these lots.

I presented the Oregon HB 2001 requirements for St. Helens, largely dealing with duplexes, to the City Council at the November 4, 2020 work session. The Council and Planning Commission (who had a similar presentation at their meeting on October 13th) seem to be of a similar opinion on the various issues, though there are some differences such as whether a duplex should be a single building (the Commission’s unanimous opinion) versus the potential of having two separate buildings on one lot (the majority Council opinion).

GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS (GIS)

As we start a new era with the new State’s e-permitting for our building permits, we continue to deal with the kinks. I have had to deal with some APO data issues for this effort since we help generate the data from our GIS.

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

From: [Jennifer Dimsho](#)
To: [Jacob Graichen](#)
Subject: November Planning Department Report
Date: Monday, November 23, 2020 9:59:36 AM

Here are my additions to the November Planning Department Report.

GRANTS

1. **DLCD 2019-2021 Technical Assistance Program** – Grant contract with DLCD authorized to prepare a *Boise White Paper Industrial Site Master Plan* which will include a parcelization framework and an infrastructure finance planning for the former mill site. Final Parcelization Plan completed. Received final Infrastructure Estimates & Phasing Plan from 3J. Received drawing Funding Plan from ECONW. Began compiling staff comments on the document to receive final submittal in December.
2. **OPRD - Local Government Grant – Campbell Park Improvements** (\$187k) includes replacement of four existing tennis courts and two basketball courts with two tennis flex courts and one flex sport court, adds a picnic viewing area, improves natural stormwater facilities, expands parking, and improves ADA access. Grant deadline is October 2021. 2nd Sport Court bid closed on 10/15 – no bids received again. Working with Sue and legal counsel on a different procurement process that still complies with state laws to solicit bids directly from contractors.
3. **EPA – CWA Grant Program** – Final reporting due within 90 days of 9/30. Began preparing final report, budget, and cost reimbursement request.
4. **CDBG- Columbia Pacific Food Bank Project** – Bids are being accepted until 12/1. Three mandatory pre-bid meetings held in November. Attended two of these. Prepared and uploaded two addenda, which included Q/A summaries, planholders lists, and revisions to construction drawings.
5. **Safe Routes to School - Columbia Blvd. Sidewalk Project** – Kicked off engineering with David Evans. Survey/topo complete. Construction timeline provided by David Evans, who is working through design/engineering process.
6. **Business Oregon – Infrastructure Finance Authority** – Accepted our intake form. Invitation to apply received for a low-interest loan to fund the streets, utilities, and Riverwalk on the Riverfront property. Deadline to submit in January 2021 for board approval in February 2021 or February 2021 for March 2021.
7. **ODOT Community Paths Program** – Submitted letter of interest (due October 31) for a regional trail planning/initial refinement effort for an off-street trail between St. Helens and Scappoose. Grant ask will be around \$172,000 with a required 10% match which can be in-kind (staff time). Application available on 11/1. Went through the application materials with a contractor who will assist with sections of the grant application.
8. **BUILD Grant** – Attended de-brief meeting on 11/24 to discuss scoring of our 3rd application to the program.
9. **Oregon Watershed Enhance Board** – Awarded grant (approximately \$12k) to the Scappoose Bay Watershed Council in a partnership with the City for natural enhancements of the 5th Street trail and Nob Hill Nature Park. Will hire a crew in 2020-2021 to remove invasive species and re-plant native species in the oak woodland habitat. Kicked off the project with a meeting on 11/30.

MISC

10. Urban Renewal Amendment – Prepared to record the final document with the County on second week of Dec. Published notice of adoption in the Spotlight.
11. Bennett Building (Water Department/ UB) – Arciform presented as-built drawings, and two proposed alternatives. Discussed how to prioritize and phase the work and prepared for a presentation to Council at their 12/2 meeting.
12. Working with the Wellness Committee on a City-wide volunteer program to repair surplus Police Department bicycles for a community bicycle and helmet giveaway.
13. Riverwalk and Streets/Utilities design/engineering consulting services RFQs published on 10/22! Answered several detailed contractor questions. Bids will be accepted until December 8, 2020.
14. Transitioned Meeting Minutes for the Urban Renewal Agency to the new Municode system online
15. Adjusted temporary office location in the upstairs conference room while renovations upstairs at City Hall occur.

Jenny Dimsho, AICP

Associate Planner

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