



PLANNING COMMISSION

APPROVED MINUTES Tuesday, October 13, 2020 at 7:00 PM

- Members Present:** Commissioner Cohen
Commissioner Semling
Commissioner Webster
Commissioner Pugsley
- Members Absent:** Chair Hubbard
Vice Chair Cary
Commissioner Lawrence
City Councilor Carlson
- Staff Present:** City Planner Graichen
Associate Planner Dimsho
Community Development Admin Assistant Sullivan
- Others:** None

1. 7:00 P.M. CALL TO ORDER & FLAG SALUTE

Since both the Chair & Vice Chair were absent, the Commission nominated Commissioner Cohen to act as Chair for this meeting.

2. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Planning Commission Minutes dated September 8, 2020

Motion: Upon Commissioner Webster's motion and Commissioner Pugsley's second, the Planning Commission unanimously approved the Draft Minutes Dated September 8, 2020. [AYES: Commissioner Pugsley, Commissioner Cohen, Commissioner Webster, Commissioner Semling; Nays: None]

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

There were no topics from the floor.

4. DISCUSSION ITEM:

- B. Oregon House Bill 2001

City Planner Graichen explained that St. Helens was considered a medium city with a population between 10,000 and 25,000. This obligates the City to allow duplexes anywhere we allow single-family dwellings. He said all the amendments to the Development Code will need to be made by June 30, 2021. If the City does nothing, then the Oregon's Model Code would take over. He mentioned that staff recommended adopting something other than the model code. He also mentioned that other than looking at the Oregon House Bill 2001, the Commission could consider the St. Helens Housing Needs Analysis for our housing goals.

Graichen mentioned the residential zoning districts and all the different uses allowed currently. He then showed how that would change with Oregon House Bill 2001. The new bill requires permitting duplexes and single-family dwellings on equal terms.

Graichen talked about the Historic District and said the individually listed buildings were still subject to the historic standards for how they appear. He said where there are architectural guidelines to shape the area, this new house bill would not affect them, since single-family dwellings and duplexes are not allowed outright.

There was a small discussion on the difference between townhouses and attached single-family dwellings.

There was a small discussion on what the definition of a duplex is and how our code defines it. The Commission discussed whether the two dwelling units of a duplex should remain attached or if the Development Code should change to allow detached duplex dwelling units. The Commission agreed there should be some common wall that is attached, no breezeways.

Graichen discussed the current City standards for off-street parking. He said the State does not allow for more than two spaces for a duplex, which is two less than what the City currently requires. He said the option was to have zero to two spaces, and the Commission agreed that two spaces should be required.

He mentioned what the code currently allows for driveways and on street parking. He mentioned there could be a standard for one driveway or allow for two driveways. He did mention there was a standard for impervious surface and landscaping requirements.

The Commission had a small discussion on the limited parking for duplexes and that on-street parking was going to become an issue.

Graichen asked the Commission, since we cannot allow more than two spaces for duplexes, should we remove the Skinny Street standard that does not allow for on-street parking? He noted this is a difficult question, since many odd-shaped, infill developments required the use of Skinny Street standards to make them work. He added that the private street standards (private access easements) could also be amended to ensure they are wide enough for on-street parking if the Commission is worried about providing enough parking. The Commission agreed that the Skinny Street standard which does not allow for on-street parking on either side should be prohibited. Dimsho asked for clarity regarding the private access easement proposal. Graichen showed an example, and Commissioner Pugsley did not think they should change the private access rules. She said it allows for more affordable housing by increasing the number of lots that are possible. Commissioner Cohen agreed. The Commission decided not to propose changing private access easement rules.

There was a discussion about the issues with narrow streets, their standards, access easements and parking in the neighborhood.

The Commission agreed that the access easements should be kept.

Graichen discussed that duplexes cannot have different or exclusive standards and had to be treated the same as single-family dwellings. He talked about the setbacks and yard requirements and what the current standard is for the current zoning areas. He also talked about the lot size and dimension. He said there would need to be some updates since some zoning has different standards for duplexes or even none.

There was a small discussion about the lot size and dimensions for the different zoning areas. The Commission discussed the Apartment Residential zone and explored increasing the minimum lot size from 3,050 square feet to something larger, such as 4,000 square feet.

Graichen talked about the remaining standards with auxiliary dwelling units and caretaker residences. He also discussed design standards. He said currently there are not design standards. He mentioned that one idea for a duplex would be that at least one main dwelling entry shall face the street. The Commission agreed that this should be a requirement. They also discussed which street a corner lot entry should face. Graichen also mentioned glazing standards and there was a small discussion about the different types.

There was a discussion on when and how the Commission would need to have a draft code ready. Staff mentioned these matters will be reviewed with the City Council in November.

5. PLANNING DIRECTOR DECISIONS

- a. Subdivision (Final Plat) permit at N. 15th St - La Grande Townhomes
- b. Accessory Structure permit at 515 S 12th - Greg & Sue Fogle
- c. Sign permit at 105 S 12th - Columbia River Fire & Rescue
- d. Temporary Use Permit at 364 N 1st – Jana Brecht
- e. Temporary Use Permit at 305 S. Columbia River Hwy – Cheryl Breslin

6. PLANNING DEPARTMENT ACTIVITY REPORT

- C. September Activity Report

There was no discussion on the report.

7. FOR YOUR INFORMATION ITEMS

Commissioner Cohen asked how the City decides how many pedestrian crossings they can have on a street. He mentioned that between the high school on Gable Road and where Gable Road meets Columbia Boulevard, there was only one pedestrian crossing. He said he thought there should be more than one pedestrian crossing. Graichen mentioned it would have been a design decision with the County.

Associate Planner Dimsho mentioned that the next Planning Department Report to Council was on October 21. She mentioned that Commissioners could attend or watch from the City's website afterwards.

Dimsho also discussed how Arciform had come to review the Bennett building to assist with the design for it. She said they were very professional and had ideas to restore the historic façade.

8. NEXT REGULAR MEETING: November 10, 2020

There being no further business before the Planning Commission, the meeting was adjourned 8:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Christina Sullivan
Community Development Administrative Assistant*