

CITY OF ST. HELENS PLANNING DEPARTMENT ACTIVITY REPORT



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

Date: 2.23.2021

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 extension of Shore Drive from the Graystone Estates Subdivision.

Later this week will conduct a pre-application meeting for a potential renovation to the St. Helens High School.

Later this week, will attend a Columbia County pre-application meeting for a proposal to redevelop some of the Dahlgren's Building Supply within St. Helens' Urban Growth Area.

PLANNING ADMINISTRATION—MISC.

Continue to work on the 2021 Development Code amendments. With a big push at the end of January, we were able to get documents to the state one day ahead of the Feb. 2nd deadline to keep on schedule for March and April hearings with the Planning Commission and City Council. See this page for more info: <https://www.sthelensoregon.gov/planning/page/2021-development-code-amendments>

Mailings go out for the 2021 Development Code amendments this month. This will go out to approximately 4,000 property owners of the zoning districts were detached single-family dwellings area a permitted use. We worked with MetroPresort for the mass mailing. MetroPresort also does the city's utility billing stuff. The notice can be found on the link at the end of the paragraph just above this one.

The Department of State Lands is seeking comment on an update to Oregon's essential salmonid habitat map, as well as a proposed process for more regular map updates. See <https://www.oregon.gov/dsl/Laws/Pages/Rulemaking.aspx>. The Columbia River, Multnomah Channel, Scappoose Bay, Milton Creek and McNulty Creek are all currently shown as essential habitat and that is not changing. I don't see any changes *within the St. Helens Urban Growth Boundary*. There are changes outside of the UGB however.

DEVELOPMENT CODE ENFORCEMENT

Back in 2011-2012 the city cited the property on the corner of US30 and Pittsburg Road for multiple violations, a key one being unlawful use of property for a wrecking/junkyard. It was cleaned up some but has worsened significantly over the years. Being overwhelmed the past

several years (5+) dealing with growth we were challenged to have time to think about this further. Recently, we've received multiple complaints and the Code Enforcement Officer and I have been revisiting this issue including taking a closer look at the site. There is no question this property presents visual blight to the norther entrance to St. Helens. We sent new enforcement correspondence this month to see if this can be abated.

PLANNING COMMISSION (& *acting* HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION)

February 9, 2021 meeting (outcome): The Commission recommended approval (to the Council) of a couple routine annexations. The Commission also reviewed the parcellation plan for the City's St. Helens Industrial Business Park as an FYI. The Commission also discussed the 2021 code amendments (last discussion before public hearings).

March 9, 2021 meeting (upcoming): The Commission has two public hearings scheduled. One is a land partition application on Belton Road. This is a reboot of a previous application that ended up at the Land Use Board of Appeals (LUBA), but was withdrawn from LUBA. The other public hearing is for the 2021 Development Code Amendments. We anticipate both of these hearings will be more time consuming than normal.

GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS (GIS)

Data updates this month.

ST. HELENS INDUSTRIAL BUSINESS PARK PROPERTY

Staff has been working with Group Mackenzie to see if we can amend the floodplain maps where the police station is proposed. They are helping us select hydrologist consultants for this work. Hydrologist firm consulting estimates range from \$30,000 + to \$200,000+, with some potential surprises (e.g., if a biologist is needed if FEMA requires Endangered Species Act findings for flood map amendments). Consultants also noted that if we need to use fill to elevate the site from floodplain compliance it would be \$200,000+.

MILLARD ROAD PROPERTY

Staff has been working with ECONorthwest to help with solicitation for development of this property. Scheduled for first Council work session in March.

RIVERFRONT DISTRICT WATERFRONT PROPERTY

Efforts continue on the street development and Riverwalk design. Associate Planner Dimsho mentions some of this in her report (*attached*).

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: Monday, February 22, 2021 10:30:21 AM

Here are my additions to the February Planning Department Report.

GRANTS

1. **DLCD 2019-2021 Technical Assistance Program** – Prepared for final presentation and adoption by resolution on 1/20/21. Council adopted unanimously. Final closeout and reimbursement request accepted by DLCD. Presentation to Planning Commission on 2/9.
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. Sue and I working on a direct bid process that was DJC/Chronicle and a public hearing. Soil conditions are requiring a different approach to ensure that the concrete pad will not settle. Sue is working with a Geotech and a contractor to apply a concrete amendment to the stabilize the soil.
3. **EPA – CWA Grant Program** – Final report and reimbursement due 12/31/20. Submitted final report, budget, and cost reimbursement request. EPA Project manager approved final report and we received our final reimbursement!
4. **CDBG- Columbia Pacific Food Bank Project** – Selected contractor for \$1.6 million bid. Contract documents signed on 01/04/21. Two pre-construction meetings held in January. Work to begin in March. Applied for 1-year time extension and budget modification to accommodate the overage of the estimated construction cost.
5. **Safe Routes to School - Columbia Blvd. Sidewalk Project** – 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. Submitted a full application in February for board approval in April 2021.
7. **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. 2nd Meeting on 2/2 to discuss grant timeline and scope of work. Continued tracking all in-kind contributions from the City on this effort.
8. **OPRD – Local Government Grant Program** – 500k request submitted back in May 2020 for Riverwalk construction. Large grants require a presentation to the board. These presentations were delayed due to COVID until now. Our presentation in 02/04/21 via ZOOM. Updated and practiced presentation due on 01/27/20. These grants will be **highly competitive** this cycle as the funds were reduced due to COVID-19. *OPRD Commission will review and approve projects at their 2/25 meeting.*

MISC

9. **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. Site visit/measurements on 01/08/21 for Phase I work which includes all new window replacement. Selected black high gloss paint color for the wooden windows. Submitted building permit. Windows ordered. Working on receiving Building Permit.
10. **Riverwalk Design/Engineering Consulting Services** - Contract negotiation authorized by Council on 1/20/21. Contract negotiation meetings with Mayer Reed to finalize scope and budget on 1/21, 2/5, 2/11, 2/18, and 2/24. Contract to go before City Council for approval on 3/3.
 11. Annual **U.S Census Bureau Boundary & Annexation Survey** prepared and submitted for two boundary changes (annexations into the City) that occurred prior to January 1, 2021 but after January 1, 2020.
 12. Attended Pre-Construction Meeting for the **Millard Road/US 30 ODOT Signalization Project** on 1/25. Work expected to begin in early March 2021. This is a \$7.5 million safety improvement project which will increase the turning radius of the right turn lane from U.S. 30 to Bennett Road by widening and restriping the roadway near the intersection, restrict left turns onto U.S. 30 from Bennett Road by creating a median, add a traffic signal at U.S. 30 and Millard Road and widening Millard to provide access to U.S. 30 that will relieve traffic pressure upgrade the rail crossings at both Bennett and Millard Roads.
 13. **Millard Road City-Owned Property Request for Proposals** - Working with EcoNorthwest to prepare a scope of work for them to assist drafting an RFP and assist with solicitation of developers who want to submit a development proposal for the property. The scope of work will include drafting City goals in conjunction with feedback from Council for the property and prioritizing them so that a scoresheet for ranking proposals can be developed. Council approved work on 2/3. Kicked off project on 2/12.

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