

# **CITY OF ST. HELENS PLANNING DEPARTMENT ACTIVITY REPORT**



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

**Date:** 03.27.23

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.

**ASSOCIATE PLANNER/PROJECT MANAGER**—*In addition to routine tasks, the Associate Planner/Community Development Project Manager has been working on: See attached.*

## **PLANNING ADMINISTRATION—MISC.**

Inspection of Skinny's parking lot addition conducted this month. Observed noncompliance with the approved plan and city standards. Other requirements not met. After July 5, these issues become matters of enforcement. Hoping things can be resolved outside of formal enforcement effort.

After months of discussion, we finally received an application to develop a lot along US30 as a Dairy Queen. It will be by the new Burger King currently under construction at US30/Howard Street.

Family Fun RV is still working on their plans for a new service building and some site improvements. This is not within city limits but is within our UGB, so these county projects subject to land use review take some city staff attention. Some of March's attention was spent on this.

Continue to work on HB 3115 et. al. stuff. Conducted a few interviews, including one with CAT with a couple Planning Commissioners to help with the effort. April will be a key month for this effort.

Budget season and related efforts as is typical around March.

The Planning Commission conducted a "retreat" meeting the day after their normal meeting. Some good teambuilding and such but between those two meetings but both planners had about 24 hours of work time in two days as a result.

## **DEVELOPMENT CODE ENFORCEMENT**

Code enforcement received a complaint about a fire pit along Milton Creek for a home along Shore Drive. Being a concrete pad with cinderblock type bricks really close to the creek if a clear violation.

## **PLANNING COMMISSION (& acting HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION)**

March 21, 2023 meeting (outcome): The Commission approved a Conditional Use Permit/Sensitive Lands Permit to allow 1810 Old Portland Road to be a public facility. The Commission also approved a Conditional Use Permit/Variances (x3) for a mixed use development at the NW corner of N. 6<sup>th</sup> Street and Columbia Boulevard.

In part, *as the Historic Landmarks Commission*, they considered some names to replace Mill Street in the Riverfront District to provide recommendations to the City Council.

April 11, 2023 meeting (upcoming): The Commission will have a few annexations and maybe architectural review in the Riverfront District. Otherwise, the bulk of the meeting is anticipated to be discussing recommendations to the Council for HB 3115 et. al.

## **COUNCIL ACTIONS RELATED TO LAND USE**

We had the quarterly joint meeting with the City Council and Planning Commission this month. We were fortunate to have our legal counsel for the HB 3115 et. al. matters present as well. Though I hoped to have more discussion about HB 3115 at this critical point, we still got input on key issues.

## **GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS (GIS)**

Trying to get the correct data from our wetland delineation efforts from 2020 from AKS. Looking at this data recently to help with the continued efforts at the St. Helens Industrial Business Park, it was apparent we revived data that was not 100% up to date. This is one of those things that can cause problems in the future.

## **ST. HELENS INDUSTRIAL BUSINESS PARK PROPERTY**

PGE parcel/substation efforts made noteworthy progress this month.

**From:** [Jennifer Dimsho](#)  
**To:** [Jacob Graichen](#)  
**Subject:** March Department Report  
**Date:** Monday, March 27, 2023 11:41:39 AM

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Here are my additions to the March Planning Department Report.

## **GRANTS**

1. **Safe Routes to School - Columbia Blvd. Sidewalk Project** – Culvert project (County) will be a separate project than the sidewalks project. Will process a sensitive lands permit for this work as soon as property owner signs application. Construction on sidewalk to begin June 2023. County working through acquiring construction/slope easements for affected property owners.
2. **Business Oregon – Infrastructure Finance Authority** – Loan Contract documents finalized for streets/utilities construction and Riverwalk project not covered by OPRD grants. Will submit first reimbursement once design work is complete for Riverwalk project.
3. **Riverwalk Project (OPRD Grants x2)** – 90% design received. 90% cost estimates received on 1/23. Amendment with M/R to include an additional rendering of the stage design was approved and completed. Review with stakeholders is ongoing. City Council will review rendering and 90% plans on 4/5 during their WS.
4. **Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)** – Public Hearing #1 held to apply on 3/1. CDBG request will be for \$2.5 million to fund design/engineering and permitting/environmental review only. Received approval of our initial project intake on 3/16. Began compiling application materials, working with Engineering Dept. Deadline of 4/30.
5. **Certified Local Government Historic Preservation Grant Program** – Submitted our application for 15k to fund the pass-through grant program, as discussed during the Jan PC meeting. Award contracts will come in April. Received news from the state of additional funding. Additional award of \$1,500 to \$2,000 may be possible because of surplus state funding!
6. **DLCD Technical Assistance Program** – Grant cycle will likely open in August and closes in October. DLCD Regional Rep thinks our Economic Opportunities Analysis update will be a great candidate for funding. Coordinated a meeting with the Scappoose Planning Director to discuss their EOA update. Compiled resources to assist with scoping our EOA update and writing our grant application this summer.
7. **Veterans Memorial Grant Program** - In partnership with the local VFW, we submitted a grant to fund a flag/monument expansion at the McCormick Park veterans memorial. Grant was due March 31. Request was for \$33k, with a match \$28k of in-kind labor/management/VFW donations.
8. **Oregon Mainstreet Grant Review** – Invited to participate on Mainstreet Alliance's Grant Program review committee which met on 2/8. Scored 3 applicants and selected our top candidate to move forward with an application for funding.

## **PROJECTS & MISC**

9. **Riverfront Streets/Utilities Project** – Construction contract granted to Moore Excavation. Attending weekly check-ins to stay in tune with project schedule and any construction

delays/issues. Attending a joint utility coordination meeting for all franchise utilities and to discuss undergrounding project as it relates to the project.

10. **1<sup>st</sup> Street & St. Helens St. Gateway Arch**– Worked with 2 local firms to prepare scopes to design a gateway arch/entry just south of the intersection of St. Helens Street on S. 1<sup>st</sup> Street. Introduced the project at the 2/15 Council meeting. Electrical is being run to the location of future posts for the archway as part of the Streets & Utilities project. Council selected LCE for the design/engineering work 3/1 meeting. Will coordinate a project kickoff soon.
11. **St. Helens Industrial Business Park (SHIBP) Public Infrastructure Design** – 30% design for Phase I infrastructure & permitting/grading work for Phase II with Mackenzie. Mackenzie revised footprint to accommodate feedback from Cascades regarding use of the existing mill buildings. PGE said no further reduction in size is possible for the sub-station, so we are moving forward with design as presented. Planning for grading work for Phase II is kicking off this month as well.
12. **Warrior Rock Lighthouse Replica Project** – Restoration of the warrior rock lighthouse replica on County-property near Columbia View Park. Councilor Sundeen was able to locate original Warrior Rock lighthouse plans from the Army Corps. Coordinated a meeting with SHPO to discuss the 2023 Oregon Heritage grant opportunity which opens this August 2023. This could potentially fund the design and cost of materials for the replica, a kiosk, and signage. Work would be completed in-house by Public Works staff.

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