

CITY OF ST. HELENS PLANNING DEPARTMENT ACTIVITY REPORT



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

Date: 07.26.22

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.

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

PLANNING ADMINISTRATION—PREAPPLICATIONS MEETINGS

Conducted a pre-application meeting for the potential public safety facility (police station, etc.) at Kaster Road/Old Portland Road.

PLANNING ADMINISTRATION—MISC.

Gave permission to remove a tree in a protected wetland for property along Alderwood Drive. Leaning growth and rotting base.

Public improvement (civil) plans submitted to the Engineering Dept. for review. Planning provides comments too for consistency with the conditions of approval.

Gave permission to remove two medium size trees based on the imminent threat provisions of the Development Code within protected wetlands by Alderwood Court. This subdivision was before the wetland rules and if done today, this would include a 75' upland protection buffer. But such rules did not exist when the subdivision was created, putting improved yards and buildings in close proximity to the protected wetlands.

DEVELOPMENT CODE ENFORCEMENT

Started communication with the St. Helens Community Bible Church on Millard Road about an RV being lived in on the premises. Church is cooperating to abate the issue in a reasonable timeframe.

PLANNING COMMISSION (& acting HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION)

July 12, 2022 meeting (outcome): The commission held three public hearings: Planned Developed (overlay zone) and Subdivision for the Comstock property, and a wall/fence height Variance. The Planned Development was recommended to the Council with a restricted approval, the Subdivision was denied and the wall/fence Variance was approved. Meeting was 7pm to just before 1am!

August 9, 2022 meeting (upcoming): At a minimum, the Commission will discuss the order/conduct of public hearings (i.e., incorporating a testimony time limit) and Oregon's measure 109 related to Psilocybin.

As the Historic Landmarks Commission, they will consider proposed changes to the non-historic portion of the county's courthouse annex at 230 Strand.

COUNCIL ACTIONS RELATED TO LAND USE

The Council upheld the Planning Commission recommendations for the Comstock property Planned Development Overlay Zone.

The Council authorized the Mayor's signature for the Columbia Commons Subdivision (commercial not residential) final plat.

The Council discussed 2020 Oregon Measure 109 legalizing psilocybin (magic mushrooms) for limited non-recreational use. As allowed by the measure, the Council will put a two-year moratorium on implementation of this for our community as a referendum in the upcoming General Election, to allow time to see how things play out elsewhere in the state, to better gauge and have proper time to determine what time, place and manner rules are appropriate for St. Helens within the limitations of the measure.

I passed Measure 109 information and the city's intent on to the County's Planning Manager, since land use in the UBG but outside city limits has a county component but can still impact our citizens. The County's Board of Commissioners is anticipated to talk about this at their July 27 meeting.

GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS (GIS)

Reviewed the new GIS data and aerial photos, and 5' x 5' printed enlargement for the Council Chambers. Much to look at and a some back and forth with the folks preparing the final products. We got the final deliverables and sent the final payment.

A 5' x 5' photo enlargement has been installed in the Council Chambers and the 2nd floor city hall conference room (i.e., the St. Helens room).

The remaining part of the data update project is internal organization. Hope to get caught up on normal planning duties before this final step.

From: [Jennifer Dimsho](#)
To: [Jacob Graichen](#)
Subject: July Planning Department Report
Date: Monday, July 25, 2022 11:33:39 AM

Here are my additions to the July Planning Department Report.

GRANTS

1. **CDBG- Columbia Pacific Food Bank Project** – Contract completion deadline was 6/30. JHK submitted final invoicing. Working with COLPAC to process final report paperwork for CDBG. Final disbursement request from state is anticipated in late July. Final Occupancy is pending work items in progress. Held 7/20 Public Hearing and adopted Resolution for project closeout.
2. **Safe Routes to School - Columbia Blvd. Sidewalk Project** – Held meeting with County on 7/7 to discuss separation of the culvert project (County) with the sidewalks project. 90% design anticipated soon. Submitted quarterly Report on 6/1. Bidding is anticipated late Fall 2022 with construction in Spring/Summer 2023. Amendment approved to push completion deadline from November 2022 to February 2024.
3. **Business Oregon – Infrastructure Finance Authority** – Contract documents finalized. Will submit first reimbursement once design work is complete for Riverwalk project.
4. **Technical Assistance Grant with the Oregon State Marine Board** - To assist with design and permitting of an in-water fishing dock and paddlecraft launch facility at Grey Cliffs Park. Feedback summarized submitted to OSMB to move forward. They would like to hire their permit specialist before starting moving this project forward. Hiring is anticipated in August 2022.

PROJECTS & MISC

5. **Riverwalk Project (OPRD Grants x2)** – Reviewed all staff comments of 60% design at 7/19 TAC meeting. Reviewed 60% cost estimate. Moving into 90% design. Held a construction strategy session on 7/25 with PW to see what in-kind work can be done as part of the project. Inventoried splash pad equipment for determining salvageability of existing equipment for consultants. Discussed Flying Eagle canoe placement with Council on 7/20. For permitting, stage and structure will require architectural review before the PC (anticipated in the early fall with the building permit). Submitted letter of support for the NPS (and subsequently the LWCF) to be included in a 6-month exemption from Buy America/Build America Program. This could have major financial impacts to our funding source for the Riverwalk if we are subjected to Buy America/Build America requirements.
6. **Riverfront Streets/Utilities Design/Engineering** –Streets/Utilities Project went to bid on 6/30. Attended mandatory pre-bid meeting/project walkthrough on 7/19. Bid opening scheduled for 8/2.
7. **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 with Mackenzie. 2nd meeting with PGE to further sub-station facility design held on 6/30. Anticipated land use applications include: CUP for sub-station facility, SDRm for modifications to mill site (impacts to parking lot, buildings, access, etc), Partition for the land division, and Sensitive Lands permitting for transmission lines which may impact

- wetlands or riparian areas/protection zones. Preparing for a pre-application meeting with Mackenize and PGE to prepare for these applications. Goal is for PGE to be able to buy the parcel from the City.
8. Organized attendance (and attended myself) for any volunteer commissioners to attend a virtual **OAPA/DLCD Planning Commissioner Training** on 7/14. It was very informative and worth the very small registration fee!
 9. **Safety Committee** – I've been serving as alt for Mike DeRoia as the City Hall rep on this committee, but I've never attended a meeting until 7/19. Conducted safety walk-through of City Hall and the Court/UB buildings on 7/26 with Mike.

Jenny Dimsho, AICP

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