

CITY OF ST. HELENS PLANNING DEPARTMENT ACTIVITY REPORT



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

Date: 06.29.2023

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 a potential division of the Village Inn property.

Conducted a condensed pre-application meeting for a potential auto parts retail establishment along US30 towards the north side of town. We had a pre-application meeting for the same location and use back in 2014 too.

PLANNING ADMINISTRATION—MISC.

With five ordinances having their 2nd reading at the June 21st regular session, all related to the Planning Department's efforts, we had a burst of post adoption tasks to do. Three annexations and their normal post adoption process, post adoption notice for the Wapama Way matter, and post HB3115 stuff. Post HB3115 stuff included creating a map since all previous one's were intended to help with discussions (not necessarily be stand alone to make sense) and training for SHPD management staff per request from the Police Chief. Also helped SHPD with the notice require to be posted before a campsite is removed.

Conducted final inspection for building G of the Broadleaf Arbor (Gable Road apartments) development. D (community building), E and F (multi-family buildings) inspected previously. G is the 4th of ten buildings.

The Council authorized signature for a Donation Agreement for property proposed to be donated at the US30/Pittsburg Road intersection at the June 21st regular session. Planning Dept. has been assisting with this matter; the donor is the same person who owned and created the 4-lot commercial subdivision where Burger King, Quick Lube, and Dairy Queen are proposed. Given the subdivision effort, Planning staff was already engaged in conversations with the donor.

PLANNING COMMISSION (& *acting* HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION)

June 13, 2022 meeting (outcome): The chair person resigned, so we'll need to select a new chair and vice chair at the July meeting and recruit a new commissioner.

The Commission deliberated on a Sensitive Lands Permit from May. This was for a large retaining wall of a lot along the 200 block of N. 15th Street. The Commission denied the matter.

Commissioner Hubbard and Pugsley volunteered to be on the Planning Commission Interview Committee for filling the vacancy due to resignation.

As the Historic Landmarks Commission, they approved an architectural change revision to 353 S. 1st Street related to Crooked Creek Brewery. They had reviewed it more comprehensively previously, but there was a change since to a door.

July 11, 2023 meeting (upcoming): The Commission will hold a public hearing for a Conditional Use Permit for consideration of a storage business use at 1955 Old Portland Road, the old Ralph's wrecking yard.

As the Historic Landmarks Commission, they will consider the gateway design for the S. 1st Street/St. Helens Street intersection.

COUNCIL ACTIONS RELATED TO LAND USE

The marathon task for the Planning Commission which was HB3115 has finally concluded with the passage of Ordinance No. 3296 at the July 21st regular session.

GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS (GIS)

Data updates related to the three annexations and right-of-way dedication and vacation finalized by ordinance at the June 21st regular session of the City Council.

FLOODPLAIN MANAGEMENT (NFIP)



FEMA reopened the comment period for an additional 32 days of public input on proposed changes to the implementation of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) in Oregon. These changes may have significant impacts on Oregon communities, individuals, and businesses that intend on developing in the floodplain. FEMA encourages participation during the comment period.

Following findings that the NFIP in Oregon may harm salmon, steelhead, Southern Resident Killer Whale, and other endangered and threatened fish species, FEMA was required to make changes to how the NFIP is implemented in the state. In accordance with the

National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, FEMA is currently developing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to identify potential social and economic impacts of the proposed changes.

As part of the process, FEMA seeks public input relevant to proposed actions and reasonable alternatives to addressing the EIS. The initial Notice of Intent (NOI) to prepare an EIS was published on March 6, 2023 and opened a 60 day public scoping process that ended May 5, 2023. To accommodate additional public input, the comment period will reopen May 25, 2023, for an additional 30 days, **closing June 26, 2023**.

FEMA staff will conduct four in-person community meetings in Oregon next week about the National Flood Insurance Program – Endangered Species Act Integration in Oregon. Additional information on these and future in-person meetings is available on the project website. FEMA will provide an overview of the Proposed Action and the environmental issues that FEMA should consider in the Environmental Impact Statement. The public will have the opportunity to submit public comments.

ST. HELENS INDUSTRIAL BUSINESS PARK PROPERTY

The HB3115 efforts put a monkey wrench into getting other things done. Working with PGE, the city will start the partition process to help create a new parcel for a new PGE substation to serve the SHIBP. Due to the unexpected magnitude of the HB3115, this task is a victim of that and is delayed.

Towards the end of this month Group Mackenzie (consultants) have submitted a new land use permitting package for the police station project for completeness review and, eventually, a public hearing room near you!

From: [Jennifer Dimsho](#)
To: [Jacob Graichen](#)
Subject: June Planning Department Report
Date: Thursday, June 29, 2023 3:27:59 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Here are my additions to the June Planning Department Report.

GRANTS

1. **Safe Routes to School - Columbia Blvd. Sidewalk & County Culvert Project** – Mobilization and construction to begin July 17, starting at the culvert near Gable Road. Sensitive Lands Permit conditionally issued. Trees to be identified on site for saving/removal. Submitted quarterly report on 6/7. Attended pre-construction meeting on 6/26 with TFT contractor.
2. **Business Oregon – Infrastructure Finance Authority** – Low-interest loan for Streets & Utilities Project and Columbia View Park improvements that are not covered by grants and Parks SDCs. 1st Reimbursement request is being processed (which included over 30 invoices). Submitted an amendment request (for scope of work changes and cost increases). Met with state staff who said an amendment involve going before the IFA board in Salem OR in October. The state began working on a staff report to support the request.
3. **Riverwalk Project (OPRD Grants x2)** – 100% design completed. Submitted building permit revisions to respond to comments on 6/29. Continued interpretive signage review meetings with the CCMA. Preparing for bid documents and final plans for bidding in July.
4. **Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) – RECEIVED NOTIFICATION OF SUCCESSFUL \$2.5 MILLION GRANT AWARD** for a design-only project to fund design/engineering/permitting for the City's Sanitary Sewer Improvement Project! This project covers 3 sanitary sewer basins which were identified as deficient and priorities for improvement in the adopted Wastewater Master Plan. Contracts are expected in August. Construction will be funded by a \$16.4 million loan (with up to \$4.5 million in loan forgiveness) from DEQ's revolving loan fund.
5. **Certified Local Government Historic Preservation Grant Program** – Received our contract for 17k in funding. Grant deadline is July 24 for eligible property owners to apply. ~95 property owners received notifications. PC will review and select projects for funding in August.
6. **DLCD Technical Assistance Program** – Grant cycle will likely open in August and closes in October. DLCD Regional Rep thinks updating our Economic Opportunities Analysis (EOA) could be funded. Compiled resources to assist with scoping our EOA update.
7. **Veterans Memorial Grant Program - RECEIVED NOTIFICATION OF SUCCESSFUL ~\$33k GRANT AWARD** for an expansion at McCormick Park Veterans Memorial. Project includes 7 branch of service monuments and corresponding flags. The project includes matching funds of \$28,130 through in-kind labor and donations. The in-kind match includes the donation of flags and hardware from the local VFW Post 1440, labor and equipment use from the St. Helens Public Works Department, engineering and design donated by Lower Columbia Engineering, LLC, and in-kind labor from City staff to manage the grant.
8. **ODOT Transportation Growth Management Grant** - Providing assistance to Engineering

with TGM grant materials to fund a new Transportation Systems Plan (potentially). Our last TSP was from 2011 and the Engineering Department would like to initiate an update.

PROJECTS & MISC

9. **Riverfront Streets/Utilities Project** – Attending weekly check-ins to stay in tune with project schedule and any construction delays/issues. Held another public open house for residents/businesses impacted by construction on June 6. Undergrounding utilities notice to bidders July 5. Joint utility trench coordination continues.
10. **S. 1st Street & St. Helens St. Gateway Project** – Stakeholder committee has met 3 times to narrow down final direction for gateway. Plans will go before PC during July 11 meeting for compliance with the Architectural Guidelines. Anticipated completion date of design will be end of July 2023. Footing detail has been difficult to coordinate location with proximity to sewer.
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 provided preliminary PT for PGE parcel. City will facility partition, PGE will prepare other land use applications. Kicked off Phase II grading work effort.
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! 2023 Oregon Heritage grant opportunity opens August 2023 which could fund the design and cost of materials for the replica, a kiosk, and signage. Work would be completed in-house by Public Works staff.
13. **Preserving Oregon Grant Review** - SHPO asked me to participate on the Preserving Oregon grant review committee which is a statewide historic preservation and archeological grant. We scored ~23 applications and met on 6/7 to select projects for funding.
14. **Citizens Day in the Park** - Held on June 24 - City managed a booth to discuss waterfront-related development. I spoke with people about the Riverwalk and Streets/Utilities Project.
15. **Columbia County Board of Realtors** - Participated in a City-led class for continuing education for realtors in the County on June 15. The class was attended by about 35 realtors and was focused on infrastructure for the Waterfront Redevelopment Project, which included the Streets/Utilities Project, Columbia View Park improvements, and the Riverwalk.

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