

CITY OF ST. HELENS PLANNING DEPARTMENT ACTIVITY REPORT



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

Date: 04.24.2023

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—MISC.

Broadleaf Arbor (Gable Road apartments) conducted final inspection for Building E. D, the community building (no residential units) inspected previously. E is the 2nd of 10 buildings and the first one with families moving into the site.

Helping City Engineering with review of their CAD standards manual. The intent of this is to standardize the electronic data received for projects.

Conducted annual performance evaluation for Associate Planner/Community Development Project Manager.

Prepared and conducted semi-annual report to the City Council.

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

April 11, 2023 meeting (outcome): The Commission recommended approval of three annexations, which will go before the Council soon. The Commission also spent much time hammering out their recommendation to the Council to address Oregon HB 3115. They also selected who will represent the Commission for the gateway project at 1st and St. Helens Street.

As the Historic Landmarks Commission, they reviewed proposed changes to the Klondike Tavern at 71 Cowlitz.

May 9, 2023 meeting (upcoming): The Commission will have two public hearings: one for an appeal of a Sensitive Lands Permit for a large retaining wall and a Site Development Review modification/Variance for the Skinny's Texaco complex parking lot addition.

The Commission will also consider its annual report to the Council and possibly review of the architectural changes to the mixed-use building proposal on the corner of N. 6th Street and Columbia Boulevard to meet a condition of approval.

Also possible, more Oregon HB3115 review, depending on how quick legal counsel review occurs and the outcome of that.

COUNCIL ACTIONS RELATED TO LAND USE

The Council considered the Planning Commission recommendations to address Oregon HB 3115 and, generally, agreed with the approach with a couple considerations as we move closer to the final draft, including not specifying designated camping sites in the ordinance itself (but retaining the ability to designate sites) and giving law enforcement the latitude to allow longer camping stays instead of that being a burden falling squarely on the council. More to come with legal counsel review.

GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS (GIS)

Annual software license renewals for Planning and Engineering this month.

2020 – received original electronic wetland data for the SHIBP delineations. **March 2023** – after working with the data more closely (due to workload this was the first opportunity since 2020) noted some errors. Reached out to firm who did the work and received revised data.

April 2023 – edited raw data for use in the city's GIS system. Done 😊.

From: [Jennifer Dimsho](#)
To: [Jacob Graichen](#)
Subject: April Department Report
Date: Monday, April 24, 2023 9:22:11 AM

Here are my additions to the April 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** – Low-interest loan for Streets & Utilities Project and Columbia View Park improvements that are not covered by grants and Parks SDCs. Will submit 1st reimbursement request design work is complete for Riverwalk project.
3. **Riverwalk Project (OPRD Grants x2)** – Submitted 2 Quarterly Project Reports for each LGGP and LCWF grant. Submitted time extension for LGGP. Prepared for Council presentation on 4/5 to review updated stage rendering. Given notice to proceed into final design which should be completed by May 5. Attended 2 interpretive signage review meetings, compiled feedback for signage content in coordination with the CCMA. Compiled City feedback on the Mayer/Reed Bid Assistance/Construction Mgmt scope of work for final approval on 5/3 Council meeting.
4. **Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)** – Submitted application for \$2.5 million for a design-only project to fund sanitary sewer design/engineering/permitting. CDBG apps include over 30 attachments/narrative/budget/etc. Coordinated initial review of application with state prior to the deadline of 4/30.
5. **Certified Local Government Historic Preservation Grant Program** – Received our contract for 17k in funding. Mailed announcement letters to 93 eligible property owners. Updated project materials on website and coordinated social media outreach. Began answering questions from property owners about potential projects.
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 and writing our grant application this August.
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.

PROJECTS & MISC

8. **Riverfront Streets/Utilities Project** – 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. Reviewed 50% design and cost estimate for Undergrounding utilities.

9. **S. 1st Street & St. Helens St. Gateway Project** – Created a stakeholder group based on Council feedback. Coordinated and attended internal kickoff meeting with LCE. Prepared for and coordinated stakeholder group kickoff meeting on 4/28 (first of 3 total design meetings). Prepared project schedule with LCE. Anticipated completion date of design is 7/10.
10. **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. Kicked off Phase II grading work effort.
11. **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! 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.

Jenny Dimsho, AICP

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