

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



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

**Date:** 01.26.2022

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 multi building development on an approximate 19-acre site along McNulty Way owned by the Port of Columbia County. We've talked with the Port about this property off and on for many years.

## **PLANNING ADMINISTRATION—MISC.**

Support staff provided the required HB 4006 (from the 2018 Legislative Session) reporting to the state for permitted and produced residential units from the last year. This is required annually for cities in Oregon above 10,000 population.

City has started to look at future System Development Charge rates. Planning is involved as growth, development assumptions, and specific projects in adopted plans are components of this effort. Yikes! Initial numbers are big. Staff and the Council will have some challenging decisions to make.

As mentioned in the last two monthly reports, both the Thanksgiving and Christmas/New Year's holidays did not provide enough "slow down time" to work on Development Code amendments, namely, residential beyond duplexes. At this point this may be delayed significantly.

Both the Associate Planner/Comm. Dev. Project Manager and I sat in on interview panels for two engineering department positions this month: Engineer Manager and Engineer II/III.

Last two weeks of January were not the most productively efficient for me. In the second to last week, some network changes were made that created difficulties for many departments. Many people, including myself, did not have access to much of our data. The following week, the Associate Planner/Project Manager, was out on vacation.

## **DEVELOPMENT CODE ENFORCEMENT**

The issue at 264 N. Columbia River Highway continues to evolve since it first reporting in the July 2021 department report. There is strong evidence that the occupant will move to the old PGE building at 1771 Columbia Boulevard, which already has land use approval for the use contemplated.

Speaking of the 1771 Columbia Boulevard site, in last month's report I mentioned an unlawful use as a dwelling and unlawful outdoor storage in the parking lot on the corner of Columbia Boulevard and S. 18<sup>th</sup> Street. After the owner regained possession of the building last month (it was a squatter issue), the parking lot is now cleaned up too.

Starting in the June 2021 department report, an unlawful structure case on the 400 Block of Greycliffs Drive has been discussed in these reports. The owner has finally, as observed by staff, reduced the building to less than 200 square feet and moved it at least three feet from property lines. No charges imposed, but both staff and the judge noted the city will not be so nice if this happens again and will need to consider fines.

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

January 11, 2022 meeting (outcome): The Commission held a public hearing to consider annexation of property off Pittsburg Road, just east of Meadow View Drive. The Commission recommends approval to the Council. Interestingly, the "meadow," Meadow View Drive is assumed to be named after may not last long once the property is annexed and subdivided.

The Commission also considered and recommended approval of a right-of-way dedication off of Barr Avenue that would provide a southerly access point to the property subject to annexation noted above. The Council will see both in February.

The Commission also reviewed the annual summary report, selected chair and vice chair (status quo in this case).

February 8, 2022 meeting (upcoming): Two public hearings are scheduled. One is for the expansion of Columbia View Park and another is for a proposal to add a dwelling unit on the same level as a commercial use at 1370 Columbia Boulevard,

Staff may present some strategic plan information as it pertains to the Planning Department, time permitting.

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

Data updates for recent annexations.

The Council approved the Personal Services Agreement with GeoTerra for our aerial photo/data update process. GeoTerra has already started establishing control points on the ground in various places throughout the area, in preparation for flights anticipated in March.

**ASSOCIATE PLANNER**—*In addition to routine tasks, the Associate Planner has been working on:*  
**See attached.**

**From:** [Jennifer Dimsho](#)  
**To:** [Jacob Graichen](#)  
**Subject:** January Planning Department Report  
**Date:** Thursday, January 20, 2022 8:48:08 AM

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Here are my additions to the January Planning Department Report.

## **GRANTS**

1. **OPRD - Local Government Grant – Campbell Park Improvements** - 6-month grant extension granted for the COVID-19 related delay of court surfacing materials. New deadline is April 2022. Concrete pad poured. Waiting on dry weather for PW to finish grading of stormwater area (plants ordered and pick up, soil delivered). Courts are complete. Conducted final walk through, created punchlist. Parking lot paving/stripping forthcoming.
2. **CDBG- Columbia Pacific Food Bank Project** – JH Kelly continuing \$1.6 million construction bid. Tracking all requests for information and submittals to ensure questions are answered. Received approval from state for ~16 Change Orders. Will need to submit a final budget amendment and timeline extension. Delay is mostly due to # of Change Orders and COVID-19 relayed lead times for construction materials. 6-month time extension approved. New completion is June 30, 2022.
3. **Safe Routes to School - Columbia Blvd. Sidewalk Project** – Construction timeline provided by David Evans, who is working through design/engineering process. Worked through change to schedule to allow an additional year for bidding the project to allow the County to replace a culvert which collapsed in 2020 during a heavy rainstorm. County IGA and contract amendment to add culvert in scope was approved in December. New schedule has bidding of the project and construction in 2022.
4. **Business Oregon – Infrastructure Finance Authority** – Application for a low-interest loan to fund streets, utilities, and a portion of the Riverwalk Project on the Riverfront property. Contract documents have been sent to legal counsel. Working with state on amending scope and budget to include updated 90 percent design work.
5. **Certified Local Government – Historic Preservation Grant Program** – Letters went out to eligible property owners on 5/24 announcing that there is \$12k available with a 1 to 1 match requirement and a grant deadline of 7/26. Only 1 incomplete application received, so Plan B work plan is for the City's Court/Utility Billing exterior roof and cornice work. Worked with SHPO on work plan and began working through scope with contractors to begin soliciting direct bids. Site visit from 2 contractors so far. Notice to proceed from SHPO received on 11/1. Council advised staff to reduce project costs at their 1/5 Council meeting. Contract approved at 1/19 Council for just roof parapet work (no cornice work) for 24k.
6. **Technical Assistance Grant with the Oregon State Marine Board** - To assist with design and permitting of an in-water facility at Grey Cliffs Park. A more detailed contract will be drafted for review and approval by Council for the assistance. Meeting on 12/22 with OSMB discussed design options for the non-motorized launch and fishing pier. Next steps will be to take options to the public for feedback, select a preferred alternative, and begin final design, and permitting process.

## **PROJECTS & MISC**

7. **Riverwalk Project (OPRD Grants x2)** – Held 12/15 Open House at the Recreation Center to celebrate and educate the public of the 30% design level. Developed communications strategy for sharing designs presented at the Open House. Working through archeological survey based on tribal feedback. Reviewed 30 percent cost estimates for Phase I and Phase II to provide feedback at 1/12 TAC meeting. Working on local Columbia View Park expansion permitting to assist with funding park improvements (SDC eligibility). Council approved concept. It goes before PC in February for approval. Additional design with Mayer Reed to re-design playground area on 1/19.
8. **Riverfront Streets/Utilities Design/Engineering** – 90 percent plan set received (205 pages of materials to review!). Began review and comments in preparation of an early February meeting with staff and OTAK.
9. **St. Helens Industrial Business Park (SHIBP) Public Infrastructure Design**– Work Order 1 approved (includes 30 % design for Phase I infrastructure). Kicked off project on 12/21. Coordinated with departments and various consultants to provide baseline data layers to Mackenzie.
10. **Millard Road City-Owned RFP** - Council directed staff to work through possible sale terms with Atkins & Dame. Assisting John with next steps.
11. **Waterfront Video Project** – Final version of the video to be premiered at the January 19 State of the City Public Forum!
12. **Urban Renewal Agency Presentation/Budget Adoption** – Organized staff, agenda, and presentation for the 1/5 URA meeting. Presentation included URA basics, transportation planning overview, funding options, and budget adoption for the next 4 years. Full recorded presentation is on the City's meeting page. Prepared and handed out new URA binders.

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