

# CITY OF ST. HELENS PLANNING DEPARTMENT ACTIVITY REPORT



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

Date: 8.24.2022

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.

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

## PLANNING ADMINISTRATION—NOTEWORTHY ADMINISTRATIVE DECISIONS

Issued decision for a Site Development Review for the Port of Columbia County for approximately 100K square feet of industrial floorspace divided into four separate buildings. This is along McNulty Way across from Pacific Stainless. This is significant as the Port has been talking with us about this property off and on for several years. They don't have any specific tenants yet, but their objective is to get as close to "shove ready" as possible. This is the purpose of this land use permit. Per a later discussion with the Port (this month) they intend to build the first of four buildings within a year or so

The other significant about this Port of CC file is it the last batch of the "Spring pile" that I finally got through, not in mid-summer. As is typical, much gets submitted in the Spring, which creates a log jam that slowly gets unjammed into the summer.

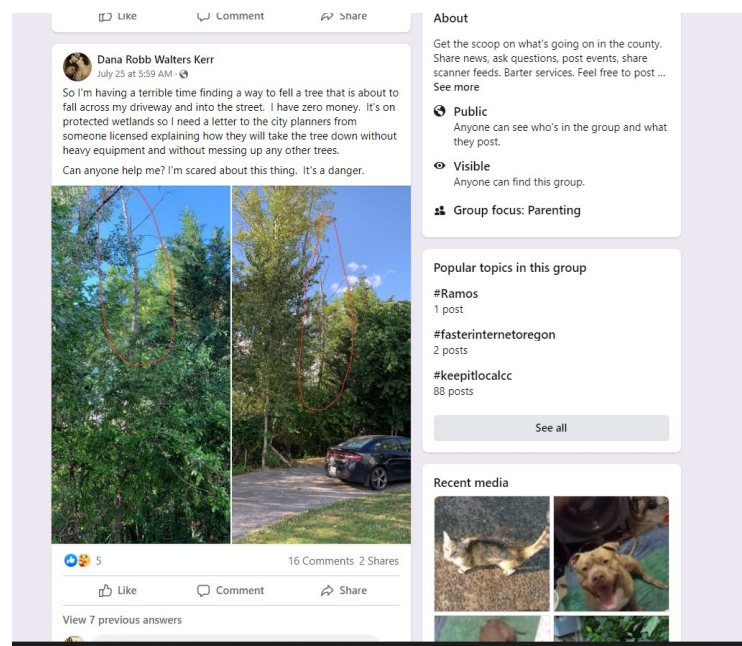
## PLANNING ADMINISTRATION—PREAPPLICATIONS MEETINGS

Conducted an early assistance meeting for a potential residential subdivision of the remainder of the former mill site that was not used by the County's Transit Center along Oregon Street and Deer Island Road.

## PLANNING ADMINISTRATION—MISC.

Allowed removal of some dead trees within a significant wetland area at 88 Red Cedar Street.

There was a Facebook post about this actually (see right).



I was able to deliver the final plat and associated documents for the Columbia Commons Subdivision on Aug. 3, 2022 as all requirements met in that day. This is the four commercial lot development where Burger King is proposed. I expect another driveway through restaurant application for one of the other lots soon.

Review the draft Mercury TMDL Implementation plan that city engineering is working on. This is another state mandate without the state providing resources. Planning's role will be to support review and implementation of ordinances and land development code updates. This will inevitably conflict with other code updates we hoped to do in the near to somewhat near future.

☺ The objective is to reduce Mercury in the waters of the Willamette Basin.

## **DEVELOPMENT CODE ENFORCEMENT**

Some work close to a significant wetland was discovered within the Meadowbrook Subdivision, after a complaint about a separate but related matter. This is a wetland that would have a 75' upland protection zone today, however Meadowbrook predates those rules that took effect December 2003. The separate matter (concrete chunks placed in the wetland area) has been resolved. The other issue, construction of a retaining wall immediately adjacent to the wetland (with apparent wetland impacts) is in process of being resolved.

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

August 9, 2022 meeting (outcome): The Commission discussed the order/conduct of public hearings (i.e., incorporating a testimony time limit) and decided to implement such by adding to its written procedures. They also discussed moving the time meetings/hearings start to 6pm beginning in January. The Commission also had a general discussion about Oregon's measure 109 related to Psilocybin.

*As the Historic Landmarks Commission*, they reviewed and recommended approval of minor exterior changes to the non-historic portion of the county's courthouse annex at 230 Strand.

September 13, 2022 meeting (upcoming): At a minimum we will talk about upcoming term expirations for two Planning Commissioners, both who has stated they will not seek new terms.

A Commission has submitted a proactive item for Commissioner consideration regarding Oregon HB 3115.

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

The Council adopted the Planned Development (overlay zone) for the Comstock property with the same modifications as recommended by the Planning Commission.

The Council held the public hearing for the Comstock subdivision and started deliberations. Deliberations were continued to the September 21<sup>st</sup> due to late additions to the record. The full staff report and record can be found by:

- Go to <https://www.sthelensoregon.gov/citycouncil/page/council-public-hearing-55>
- Click on the Details tab
- Scroll down to 'Agenda Packet Supplement – Uploaded 8/18/2022'

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

The Engineering and Planning Departments have started to reorganize our data now that we have a fresh new batch of updates. Some of this organization is long overdue, so I am happy about this in-process milestone. Time consuming though. Some of the utility confirmation, such as confirming catch basins (old v. new and attribute data) has to be done at a per feature basis and there are more than a thousand catch basins. This is engineering's burden that may take months if not years. Thinking final organization as it pertains to Planning will be concluded by end of year.

Data update related to adoption of Comstock Planned Development.

Routine data updates.

## **MILLARD ROAD PROPERTY**

Chase road easement agreement originated in 2009 with an 11-year window for development. We extended this for two years in 2020. Still no development. The extended two-year window ended in March. A little behind (but since on my mind), I finally created a revised agreement extension for the grantor's consideration. I mentioned this previously in May's report.

**From:** [Jennifer Dimsho](#)  
**To:** [Jacob Graichen](#)  
**Subject:** August Planning Department Report  
**Date:** Wednesday, August 24, 2022 2:22:06 PM

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Here are my additions to the August Planning Department Report.

## GRANTS

1. **CDBG- Columbia Pacific Food Bank Project** – Final project closeout letter received from the state! Will pay retainage invoice once all certified payroll information confirmed and final occupancy is granted by the Building Official.
2. **Safe Routes to School - Columbia Blvd. Sidewalk Project** – Culvert project (County) will be a separate project than the sidewalks project, but the City's IGA still stands. 95% design received and reviewed with a followup meeting on 9/1. 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 environmental permit specialist before starting moving this project forward. Hiring is anticipated in August 2022.

## PROJECTS & MISC

5. **Riverwalk Project (OPRD Grants x2)** – Moving into 90% design, continued regular PM meetings and TAC meetings. For permitting, stage and structure will require architectural review before the PC (anticipated in the early fall with the building permit). LWCF grant contract will be subject to the America/Build America requirements. We are likely going to apply for a waiver for our project, as this could have significant cost increases for our project. Working with County/NOAA for potential impacts near Tide Gauge Station.
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 extended to 8/18. Received 3 bids, with notice of intent to award granted to Moore Excavation.
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. Preparing for a pre-application meeting with Mackenzie and PGE to prepare for land use applications. Goal is for PGE to be able to buy the parcel from the City. Met with Paper Union president to discuss PUE needs for their property.
8. Planned/Registered for **OAPA conference** in Pendleton, OR on 10/26-10/28
9. **PSU 2022 Annual Housing Unit and Population Survey** – Worked with the Building Department and all group housing (like senior housing, jail, treatment facilities, etc) within city limits to fill out the 2022 AHUPS.
10. **Business Oregon/DLCD/DEQ Discussion** – About 15 state employees from different agencies (DLCD, Business Oregon, DEQ) came to St. Helens on 8/8 for a tour and

- discussion of the waterfront-related projects and the community as a whole
11. **Met with new Mainstreet Alliance coordinator** – Met monthly with Amara to discuss City projects/Mainstreet projects
  12. Issued **parklet renewal** at CCB/BRB on Strand Street for 6 months. Beyond 6 months will not be approved given construction impacts for the streets/utilities extension project underway

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