



PLANNING COMMISSION

Tuesday, July 08, 2025 at 6:30 PM

APPROVED MINUTES

Members Present:

Chair Jennifer Shoemaker
Vice Chair Brooke Sisco
Commissioner Charles Castner
Commissioner David B Rosengard
Commissioner Scott Jacobson
Commissioner Reid Herman

Members Absent:

Commissioner Trina Kingsbury

Staff Present:

City Planner Jacob Graichen
Associate Planner Jennifer Dimsho
Community Development Administrative Assistant Angelica Artero

Council Members:

Councilor Russel Hubbard
Councilor Mark Gunderson

Others:

Brady Preheim
Marci Sanders
Erin Salisbury
Steven Toschi
Robin Toschi

1. 6:30 P.M. CALL TO ORDER & FLAG SALUTE

2. TOPICS FROM THE FLOOR (Not on Public Hearing Agenda): Limited to five minutes per topic

Preheim, Brady. Preheim objected to Commissioner Castner and Commissioner Rosengard being on the Commission. He expressed approval of the attendance policy discussion and hoped it would be enforced. Preheim criticized the recent decision to grant grace to a developer for the 325 Strand project after the fact, arguing it sets a bad precedent.

Toschi, Steve. Toschi raised concerns about the accuracy of the May 13th meeting minutes, particularly regarding testimony about unsafe construction conditions on the 325 Strand project. Toschi argued that the 325 Strand project did not meet the definition of a remodel and should have required a new review. Toschi also mentioned the need for a notice of decision on the grace given by City Planner Graichen and that he did not receive one.

3. CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Draft Minutes dated May 13, 2025

Chair Shoemaker noted two corrections on the May 13, 2025, Minutes.

Motion: Upon Commissioner Rosengard's motion to approve the minutes with the corrections as outlined by Chair Shoemaker, Commissioner Herman seconded the motion. [**AYES:** Vice Chair Sisco, Commissioner Castner, Commissioner Rosengard, Commissioner Herman, Commissioner Jacobson]

NAYS: none.

4. DISCUSSION ITEMS

- B. Planning Commission Attendance Policy Discussion

Chair Shoemaker shared research on the attendance policy for the City of Portland. Shoemaker proposed three unexcused absences, non- consecutive, for the Planning Commission attendance policy. Chair Shoemaker asked Commissioner Rosengard to draft a proposal to send to all the Planning Commission to review.

5. PLANNING DIRECTOR DECISIONS (previously e-mailed to the Commission)

- C. Sign Permit at 161 St. Helens Street-Dale Clark/Parjit Singh
6:50pm
- D. Sign Permit at 50 Plaza Sq-Tom & Haley Borton/Herbert-Pugsley Living Trust
- E. Temporary Use Permit at 735 South Columbia River Highway- Bethel Fellowship/Brandon Smith
- F. Temporary Sign Permit at 2100 Block Columbia Blvd-Heather Epperly Agency
- G. Site Development Review at 495 N. Columbia River Highway- John Odom
- H. Sign Permit at 555 S Columbia River Highway Suite A-A to Z Signs
- I. Site Development Review (Minor) at 1271 Columbia Blvd- David & Mindy Sass
- J. Partition at 234 N 16th St- David Hiebert
- K. Site Development Review (Minor) at 550 Milton Way-Haley Baker
- L. Temporary Use Permit at 2295 Gable Rd-TNT Fireworks
- M. Temporary Sign Permit at 2100 Block Columbia Blvd-Columbia County Fair and Rodeo

There were no comments on Planning Director Decisions.

6. PROACTIVE ITEMS

- O. Architectural Standards

City Planner Jacob Graichen mentioned that architectural standard discussion was brought up during the June Joint City Council/Planning Commission meeting.

- P. Vacant and Underutilized Storefronts - St. Helens Mainstreet Alliance

Erin Salisbury & Marci Sanders spoke on behalf of St. Helens Main Street Alliance to spark ideas and conversation in regards to vacant and underutilized storefronts. Commissioner Castner and Commissioner Jacobson both expressed the method of what the city of Astoria uses for how to handle vacant storefronts. Salisbury said that Main Street has a data collection tool for vacant property listings

in the area. Salisbury and Sanders said they are happy to share and work with the Planning commission to share data.

Commissioner Jacobson will still be lead in efforts on gathering data and will work with Salisbury on obtaining access to the data tool for vacant storefronts. Chair Shoemaker raised concerns about businesses with limited operating hours and asked to incentivize longer hours. They discussed the complexity of the issue and the need for a holistic approach. The Planning Commission and Main Street Alliance both agreed on the importance of building relationships and understanding the unique circumstances of each property. They also discussed the need to be mindful of limited City staff resources when considering new initiatives or enforcement measures.

7. CITY COUNCIL LIAISON REPORT

Councilor Hubbard reported positive progress on the police station project. Hubbard also mentioned a recent presentation by a developer to the City Council, noting the developer's positive impression of St Helens' proactive approach to development compared to other cities.

8. FOR YOUR INFORMATION ITEMS

Farewell, safe travels and thank you Associate Planner Jenny Dimsho!

9. ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business before the Planning Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 7:46pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Angelica Artero

Community Development Administrative Assistant