



# PLANNING COMMISSION

Tuesday, July 13, 2021, at 7:00 PM

## APPROVED MINUTES

### Members Present:

Chair Cary  
Vice Chair Hubbard  
Commissioner Webster  
Commissioner Semling  
Commissioner Lawrence  
Commissioner Pugsley

### Members Absent:

Commissioner Cavanaugh

### Staff Present:

City Planner Graichen  
Associate Planner Dimsho  
Community Development Admin Assistant Sullivan  
Councilor Birkle

### Others:

None

### 1. 7:00 P.M. CALL TO ORDER & FLAG SALUTE

### 2. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Planning Commission Minutes Dated May 11, 2021

**Motion:** Upon Commissioner Webster's motion and Commissioner Pugsley's second, the Planning Commission unanimously approved the Draft Minutes dated May 11, 2021. [AYES: Vice Chair Hubbard, Commissioner Pugsley, Commissioner Lawrence, Commissioner Webster, Commissioner Semling  
NAYS: None]

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

**Leskowich, Arthur.** Leskowich was called to speak. He had questions about the strategic goals and future of the city and what plans came through the Planning Commission for their review. He asked why they were not more involved in the review of the Riverfront Development. He shared concern about the funds and where they were going for environmental studies. He shared concern about the leasing of the lagoon area, as he did not think it had been cleaned up yet. He said there was no environmental oversight or commission to oversee the cleanup of the lagoon and suggested there should be one.

Chair Cary said nothing about the cleanup had come before the Planning Commission and he was not sure it would. He did mention the State was requiring the city to clean up the space.

### 4. PUBLIC HEARING AGENDA (times are earliest start time)

#### B. 7:05 p.m. Site Design Review at 2375 Gable Road – Angelo Planning Group for St. Helens School District

City Planner Graichen presented the staff report dated June 30, 2021. Graichen said they were discussing the updates and improvements to the St. Helens High School property and building. He

mentioned the property was annexed in 1971. He said there had been small improvements since the last big expansion in 1980 when they expanded the school from 600 to 1,200 students. He said the school is not looking to increase the capacity from 1,200 students; they plan to maintain it. He said the zoning of the property was Public Lands. He said that means the standards are very open ended and based on proximity to residential zones and impacts. He said they proposed a ten-foot setback for buildings and athletic areas. Ten feet is also the minimum rear yard of the Apartment Residential zone that abuts the west side.

He showed some of the changes to the access ways the applicant proposed. He also shared some information about the pedestrian connections from the sidewalks to the site. He mentioned three different ways the Commission could consider. He also brought up the issues with Firlok Park Boulevard. He shared some of the options for improvements to that road and increasing the access to the school along that road. He talked about the road being a Collector classified street.

He shared the support from the Fire Marshall and some of the concerns and support from Columbia County. Recommendation of approval did not include any deleted conditions.

Graichen also shared some of the added language to the memo between him and the applicant and mentioned they had agreed to the additions. He said the memo did not include any deletions.

There was a discussion about possible street improvements to Firlok Park Boulevard.

**Stockwell, Scot. Applicant.** Stockwell was called to speak. He mentioned the strong relationships between the school district and the city. He said they have worked hard to separate plans into projects for academics and the activities. He said he hoped to keep the project schedule on time and moving forward to keep with the normalcy they are trying to maintain for the students. Chair Cary asked when construction would begin and when it would finish. Stockwell said they hope to begin demolition in November 2021 and be completed by Fall of 2024.

**Gills, Marlene. Applicant.** Gills works for Soderstrom Architects and represents the applicant. She was called to speak. She shared the plans they had for updating the building and the timeline for the project. She shared some of the neighborhood impacts and where they are trying to rectify any issues. She discussed the fire life safety plan and the overall fire and first responders access plan. She explained the timeline they had for renovations. She said the classroom count and capacity would remain the same but is being shuffled to have a better layout. She also provided some description of the interior classrooms.

**Baker, Meagan. Applicant.** Baker also works for Soderstrom Architects. She was called to speak. She discussed the safety and security of the school. They were designing the building to be connected and united with one main entrance. She said they hope to make the building feel like a new and cohesive building that all are proud of. She showed the new connector areas on the site and the updated parking areas.

**Reburg, Shana. Applicant.** Reburg works for Angelo Planning Group, the planning firm for the project. She mentioned they support and approve all staff recommendations on conditions for approval.

### **In Favor**

No one spoke in favor.

### **Neutral**

No one spoke as neutral testimony.

### **In Opposition**

No one spoke in opposition.

**End of Oral Testimony**

There were no requests to continue the hearing or leave the record open.

**Close of Public Hearing & Record**

The applicant waived the opportunity to submit final written argument after the close of the record.

**Deliberations**

There was a discussion about the conditions of approval that were amended by the memo.

There was a small discussion about access to the school and from Firlok Park Boulevard.

Chair Cary asked what will happen with the parking and student safety from the construction when the modulars are in place. He was concerned about where the construction vehicles would be and how they would keep students safe and clear from those areas. Graichen mentioned that there would be safe passage through fenced off areas.

**Motion:** Upon Commissioner Webster's motion and Commissioner Pugsley's second, the Planning Commission unanimously approved the Site Design Review as recommended by staff and as amended by the memo from Angelo Planning Group including annotations by staff. [Ayes: Vice Chair Hubbard, Commissioner Semling, Commissioner Webster, Commissioner Pugsley, Commissioner Lawrence; Nays: None]

**Motion:** Upon Commissioner Webster's motion and Commissioner Lawrence's second, the Planning Commission unanimously approved the Chair to sign the Findings when prepared. [Ayes: Vice Chair Hubbard, Commissioner Semling, Commissioner Webster, Commissioner Lawrence, Commissioner Pugsley; Nays: None]

**C. 7:40 p.m. Conditional Use Permit at 2625 Gable Road – City of St. Helens**

Graichen presented the staff report dated June 30, 2021. Graichen showed the Commission where the property was located. He explained that the site was undeveloped before 1999. There was a Conditional Use Permit pulled to build a church, and it has been a Baptist Church ever since. The City purchased the property and building to be the home of the new Recreation Center. He said there were a few things that seemed appropriate to update, including the disabled parking, and bike parking. There were some wheel stops and safety features of a parking lot to be installed. He said there would need to be a trash enclosure added. He also said the City would be working with the school district for a pedestrian connection between properties.

He brought up the hammerhead off Alexandra Lane that extends onto the subject property. He said when there is a dead-end street more than 150-feet in length, there is a turnaround required. He said currently people were using the hammerhead to park, so they would require some no parking signs. He also said they would recommend to the City Council to dedicate the hammerhead as public right-of-way since an easement was never recorded for the turnaround.

Graichen said there are standards specific to Community Recreation uses. He said there was a minimum 30-foot setback. He said this setback is met on three sides of the building, but on one side it was about 10-feet. He said since it is a pre-existing circumstance, so the Commission could consider this okay.

Chair Cary asked if they would also be using the field for parking in the future. Graichen said the Recreation Center had not mentioned there would be any parking there.

**Duggan, Shanna. Applicant.** Duggan was called to speak. Duggan is the Parks & Recreation Manager. She said the field in the back would be used for their programs they offer. She also mentioned currently the programs offered were more geared towards youth, but they hope to expand to programs for all ages. She said the closeness to the High School would provide opportunities to host events on the School District site. She said the current Recreation Center building would remain. She said this location would be for education and activities for youth. She also mentioned this would be like a community center to help offer services to the area. She also discussed the access to this site was safer and much easier to get to than the existing Recreation Center.

#### **In Favor**

**Stockwell, Scot.** Stockwell was called to speak. He said the School District was excited to have such close proximity to the new Recreation Center building. He said they planned to have a walkway to this new building to provide easier access.

#### **Neutral**

No one spoke as neutral testimony.

#### **In Opposition**

No one spoke in opposition.

#### **End of Oral Testimony**

There were no requests to continue the hearing or leave the record open.

#### **Close of Public Hearing & Record**

The applicant waived the opportunity to submit final written argument after the close of the record.

#### **Deliberations**

There was a discussion about the hammerhead on Alexandra Lane.

Commissioner Pugsley brought up the screening for trash and that it was not listed in the conditions of approval. Graichen said that it would be included in the landscaping rules for vegetation.

**Motion:** Upon Commissioner Webster's motion and Commissioner Lawrence's second, the Planning Commission unanimously approved the Conditional Use Permit as recommended by staff. [Ayes: Vice Chair Hubbard, Commissioner Semling, Commissioner Webster, Commissioner Pugsley, Commissioner Lawrence; Nays: None]

**Motion:** Upon Commissioner Semling's motion and Commissioner Pugsley's second, the Planning Commission unanimously approved the Chair to sign the Findings when prepared. [Ayes: Vice Chair Hubbard, Commissioner Semling, Commissioner Webster, Commissioner Lawrence, Commissioner Pugsley; Nays: None]

#### **D. 8:00 p.m. Conditional Use Permit and Variance at 174 Sunset Blvd – Lower Columbia Engineering**

Associate Planner Dimsho presented the staff report dated June 30, 2021. Dimsho said Columbia Health Services has a modular building located on their current location off Gable Road. They would like to move it to the Sunset Park Community Church space on the corner of Sunset Boulevard and Bradley Street. The property they would like to move it to is zoned Apartment Residential.

Dimsho said Columbia Health Services will provide the WIC program (Woman, Infants, and Children) to families from this location. WIC is a publicly funded national nutritional education program for families

with pregnant women or children ages 0-5 years old. This use is considered a public facility (major), which is a Conditional Use in this zone. In the AR zone, only one principal building is allowed per property, which is why the applicant is also applying for a variance. She also said that since office use is not allowed in the AR zone, there would need to be a condition that says if CHS ever left the site, the use could not revert to an office use not related to the church. She said there are existing conditions on the site, since it is already built out, but there are ways to improve compliance with the code near the proposed modular location. She said with the new modular building, they would require street trees. She said for parking lots larger than three spaces they require screening, and the trees help with that. They are also proposing a landscaped area in what is the vision clearance area, instead of two parking spaces.

She said there would be a new driveway approach which will formalize the intersection and improve the overall access and circulation of the parking lot. She also said a new disability space would be required and bike parking.

She talked about the interior walkways and there is plan needed to provide these to give safety to the pedestrians using the facility.

She said the property would fit in with the area even though there are multiple buildings as it was surrounded by other properties that had the same layout.

**Niemi, Andrew. Applicant.** Niemi was called to speak. He is with Lower Columbia Engineering, the engineer for the project and representing Columbia Health Services. He said the area where they would like to place the modular is an area where a lot of the community who uses the Columbia Health Services lives. He said he agreed with the recommendations by staff.

### **In Favor**

**Ford, Sheri.** Ford was called to speak. Ford is with Columbia Health Services. She said they were looking to forward to having a more convenient location for community members who may need these services. She was thankful for the partnership with the church.

**Clegg, Matt.** Clegg was called to speak. Clegg is with Sunset Park Community Church. He said the church was excited to partner with Columbia Health Services and provide a more convenient space for those who need these services. He said they are in favor of the changes and support the application.

### **Neutral**

No one spoke as neutral testimony.

### **In Opposition**

No one spoke in opposition.

### **End of Oral Testimony**

There were no requests to continue the hearing or leave the record open.

### **Close of Public Hearing & Record**

The applicant waived the opportunity to submit final written argument after the close of the record.

### **Deliberations**

There were no deliberations.

**Motion:** Upon Commissioner Pugsley's motion and Commissioner Webster's second, the Planning Commission unanimously approved the Conditional Use Permit as written by staff. [Ayes: Vice Chair

Hubbard, Commissioner Semling, Commissioner Webster, Commissioner Pugsley, Commissioner Lawrence; Nays: None]

**Motion:** Upon Commissioner Webster's motion and Commissioner Semling's second, the Planning Commission unanimously approved the Chair to sign the Findings when prepared. [Ayes: Vice Chair Hubbard, Commissioner Semling, Commissioner Webster, Commissioner Lawrence, Commissioner Pugsley; Nays: None]

## **5. RIVERFRONT REDEVELOPMENT UPDATE**

### **E. Riverfront Redevelopment Update Memo**

Dimsho said there was movement with City Council on the development and the design and engineering of the roadway. She said they were also designing the Riverwalk. She said they did some public outreach on how the Community uses the space today and received significant feedback.

She described the phases of the project and what those phases entail. She described the framework and what they were discussing for alternatives.

She said the City Council reviewed two different street alignments and they decided to go with the one close to the buff. She said they approved the alignment strategy, but not the types of development of the alignment.

Commissioner Pugsley asked if there would be requirements of the development to meet the Historic District guidelines. Dimsho said yes, the zoning of the Riverfront property includes the architectural guidelines for the Riverfront District.

## **6. ACCEPTANCE AGENDA: Planning Administrator Site Design Review**

### **1. Site Design Review at 1804 Columbia Blvd – American Mart**

**Motion:** Upon Commissioner Webster's motion and Commissioner Semling's second, the Planning Commission unanimously approved the Acceptance Agenda. [Ayes: Vice Chair Hubbard, Commissioner Semling, Commissioner Webster, Commissioner Pugsley, Commissioner Lawrence; Nays: None]

## **7. PLANNING DIRECTOR DECISIONS (previously e-mailed to the Commission)**

1. Temporary Use Permit at 2295 Gable Road – TNT Fireworks
2. Temporary Use Permit at 735 S Columbia River Hwy – Bethel Fellowship
3. Sign Permit at 795 S Columbia River Hwy – Hannah Signs

## **8. PLANNING DEPARTMENT ACTIVITY REPORT**

- F. Planning Department Report - May
- G. Planning Department Report - June

## **9. FOR YOUR INFORMATION ITEMS**

There was a discussion on the decision made for the Appeal of the Partition (PT.1.21) that went before the City Council.

Graichen brought up the League of Oregon Cities virtual Planning conference and the fee would be paid for by the City if any members of the Commission were interested in attending.

## **10. ADJOURNMENT**

**NEXT REGULAR MEETING: August 10, 2021**

*There being no further business before the Planning Commission, the meeting was adjourned  
10:15p.m.*

*Respectfully submitted,*

*Christina Sullivan  
Community Development Administrative Assistant*