

City of St. Helens
Planning Commission Meeting
September 13, 2016
Minutes

Members Present: Dan Cary, Chair
Al Petersen, Vice Chair
Greg Cohen, Commissioner
Sheila Semling, Commissioner
Audrey Webster, Commissioner
Kathryn Lawrence, Commissioner
Russell Hubbard, Commissioner

Staff Present: Jacob Graichen, City Planner
Jennifer Dimsho, Assistant Planner & Planning Secretary

Councilors Present: Ginny Carlson, City Council Liaison

Others Present: Robert & Muriel Wenner
Annie & Richard Buell
John Warneke

The Planning Commission meeting was called to order by Chair Dan Cary at 7:00 p.m. Chair Cary led the flag salute.

Consent Agenda

Approval of Minutes

Vice Chair Petersen noted that the word “announced” on page two should be “unannounced.” Commissioner Cohen said in the first paragraph of deliberations on page three, Chair Cary should be changed to Vice Chair Petersen. Commissioner Webster moved to approve the minutes of the July 12, 2016 Planning Commission meeting with the two corrections as noted. Commissioner Semling seconded the motion. Motion carried with all in favor. Chair Cary did not vote as per operating rules.



Topics From The Floor

There were no topics from the floor.



CLG Historic Preservation Grant Project Summary Report

Assistant Planner Jenny Dimsho discussed the four projects that were completed, as presented in the memo. Commissioner Cohen asked if this program will continue. Dimsho said as long as the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) continues to offer the grant program, we will apply. Commissioner Webster and Commissioner Cohen thanked staff for preparing this summary report.



Public Hearing

Wayne Weigandt

Comprehensive Plan/Zoning Map Amendment / CPZA.1.16

35090 Pittsburg Rd.

It is now 7:08 p.m. and Chair Cary opened the public hearing. There were no conflicts of interest or personal bias in this matter.

Graichen entered the following items into the record:

- Staff report packet dated September 6, 2016 with attachments

Graichen provided a letter in opposition to the proposal to the Commission. It was entered into the record last week. Graichen explained the background of the proposal, as presented in the staff report. The applicant is requesting a Comprehensive Plan Amendment from Suburban Residential (SR) to General Residential (GR) and a Zoning Amendment from Moderate Residential (R7) to General Residential (R5). He said the Commission's recommendation to City Council could focus on compatibility with adjacent land uses.

Vice Chair Petersen asked when the property was originally annexed. Graichen said the western tax lot was annexed after the other tax lot, but he did not know exactly when. Commissioner Cohen asked if the City had conducted a housing needs analysis that identified the types of housing we need. Graichen said no, there is only anecdotal evidence of the need for additional housing.

Commissioner Lawrence asked if there are still vacant homes from the recession. Graichen said the building department would have better knowledge about that. Commissioner Cohen noted that houses are on the market for very few days before they are bought, some receiving many offers before selling.

IN FAVOR

Weigandt, Wayne. Applicant. Weigandt explained that he has owned the property since 2006. He had a preliminary plat for the property, but then the market collapsed. He would like to resurrect the old proposal. Weigandt explained the approved preliminary plat does not have adequate street widths according to the new Transportation Systems Plan standards. Following staff's suggestion, he is pursuing an R5 zone change in order to accommodate the new wider road width standards. Weigandt also pointed out that there is a BPA easement encumbering some of the southern lots. He doesn't feel this proposal is a spot zone.

Commissioner Hubbard asked if Weigandt plans on developing any multi-family units on the property. Weigandt said R5 does allow some multi-family conditionally, but he does not foresee any in his proposal. He re-iterated that the zone change request isn't for the different uses, but to provide flexibility to accommodate the wider streets.

Commissioner Semling asked how they plan to access the property. Weigandt said they would work with City Engineering to develop an adequate street plan, but they will likely access the property through N. Vernonia Rd. He said Pittsburg Rd. is more dangerous, so it is preferred to access via Vernonia Rd.

IN OPPOSITION

Wenner, Robert. 510 Hillcrest Rd. Wenner said that if two and three story homes are built on the subject property, all the residents on Hillcrest Rd. will lose their view.

END OF ORAL TESTIMONY

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

CLOSE PUBLIC HEARING & RECORD

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

DELIBERATIONS

Commissioner Russell asked how many more houses they could potentially develop with R5 versus R7. The Commission estimated it would be about 30-35 more units (purely on a conceptual level). Graichen said it is fairer to use the percentage increase in units, rather than gross numbers.

Vice Chair Petersen asked which property the letter in opposition came from. Graichen pointed to 35186 Pittsburg Rd. on the map.

Commissioner Cohen asked if other departments had been consulted regarding this proposal. Graichen said any development will have to address storm water with a management plan, but there are no obvious deficiencies with storm, sewer, or water at this point. Graichen also said any proposal will have to conduct a traffic impact analysis to determine how the housing density will impact the transportation network.

Commissioner Cohen said the Commission needs to consider how well this proposal fits with the Comprehensive Plan and the surrounding area. Chair Cary feels the proposal is in line with the surrounding area. Commissioner Webster feels there is plenty of vacant R5 property available elsewhere. Commissioner Cohen said he would feel more comfortable if there was a housing needs survey that broke down the housing need by type.

Chair Cary noted that the zoning map seems to contain the densest property at the center and the least dense on the outskirts. He said if this zone change is approved, it would push the denser properties closer to the edge. Commissioner Hubbard pointed out there would still a ring of less dense property in the Urban Growth Boundary. Chair Cary understands the need to rezone in order to accommodate the wider road width. Commissioner Hubbard agrees that the site is difficult to develop as R7.

Commissioner Semling suggested R5 zoning for the eastern lot between Catarin Street and Camden Street to fit the road in, with the rest of the property R7. Graichen cautioned the Commission not to base their decision based on one use (single-family subdivision). He said ownership could change before development and a completely different proposal with other allowed uses could be submitted. He said there is a high probability it will be developed as a single-family subdivision based on conversations with the applicant, but probable is not 100 percent.

Chair Cary asked if *any* development on this property would require that the main access be from Vernonia Rd. Graichen said it is very possible that there will not be access from Vernonia Rd. because of spacing requirements between other roads. He said Pittsburg Rd. and Vernonia Rd. are both higher classified streets and staff would prefer to direct traffic to the lower classified streets of Camden Street, Catarin Street, and Helens Way. However, he noted that a traffic impact analysis would show more detail.

MOTION_A

Commissioner Semling moved to recommend approval of the Zone Change/Comprehensive Map Amendment to R5 for the eastern tax lot in order to facilitate the wider road width, and to leave the rest of

the property R7. Commissioner Lawrence seconded. Commissioner Lawrence and Commissioner Semling voted in favor; Vice Chair Petersen, Commissioner Webster, Commissioner Hubbard, and Commissioner Cohen opposed; motion fails.

MOTION_B

Commissioner Semling moved to recommend denial of the Zone Change/Comprehensive Map Amendment. Commissioner Cohen seconded. Commissioner Semling, Commissioner Webster, Commissioner Cohen, and Commissioner Lawrence voted in favor; Vice Chair Petersen and Commissioner Hubbard opposed; motion carries.



Term Expirations

Graichen said Commissioner Cohen and Chair Cary's terms expire in December. If Commissioner Cohen wishes to continue, the City has to advertise for the opening because he has served at least two consecutive terms. Commissioner Cohen and Chair Cary said they would like to continue. Graichen said the advertisement could note that the incumbent wishes to stay.

Councilor Carlson asked if two commissioners and an alternate would like to be on the interview committee with her. Commissioner Semling, Vice Chair Petersen, and Commissioner Lawrence volunteered. Graichen said if there are no applicants, then the incumbents will continue in their roles, assuming the City Council liaison does not want to continue advertising the opening.



Ordinance 3209 Review

Graichen said this ordinance was discussed with City Council in August and they suggested a slight change, as noted in the memo. The Council wants all Commissioners who participate to vote (ex. no abstentions if they have participated in the process).

Commissioner Cohen is concerned about a situation where a commissioner is present at the start of the hearing, but is absent during the decision. He said with the proposed language, it would require a vote, even if they are absent for the decision. Graichen suggested adding "who are present" in the second sentence in the proposed language to fix this. Commissioner Webster suggested adding "in attendance" in the first sentence instead. The Commission likes this change.



Planning Director Decisions

- a. Accessory Structure at 2154 Oregon Street #18 – New storage shed
- b. Home Occupation (Type I) at 244 S. 12th St. – Craft creation and online sales
- c. Home Occupation (Type II) at 464 Grey Cliffs Ct. – House cleaning/janitorial business
- d. Home Occupation (Type I) at 34566 Noble Rd. - Custom design glassware and apparel
- e. Accessory Structure at 2154 Oregon Street #26 - New storage shed
- f. Accessory Structure at 2154 Oregon Street #15 - New storage shed

There were no comments.



Planning Department Activity Reports

Vice Chair Petersen suggested allowing the uses Commercial Recreational Facility, Cultural Exhibits & Library Services, and Community Recreation Including Structures in both R5 and R7 zoning districts. Graichen said he will include this topic in the next batch of code changes.



For Your Information Items

Dimsho said the final Waterfront Redevelopment Open House is on Wednesday, October 12. Time and location are still being finalized, but she said it will hopefully be in a tent on the Veneer property around 5 p.m. She encouraged the Commission to watch for information in the October E-Newsletter or on the City's Facebook page. The event will be a celebration of the process and final framework plan product.

Vice Chair Petersen discussed the Seminar Group session fliers. He said they host classes that are very informative and recommends attending or getting the City Council to pay for Commission members to attend.



There being no further business before the Planning Commission, the meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Dimsho
Planning Secretary

2016 Planning Commission Attendance Record

P=Present A=Absent Can=Cancelled

Date	Petersen	Hubbard	Lawrence	Cohen	Cary	Semling	Webster
01/12/16	P	P	P	A	A	P	P
02/09/16	A	P	P	P	P	P	P
03/08/16	P	P	P	A	P	P	P
04/12/16	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
05/10/16	P	P	A	P	P	P	P
06/14/16	P	P	P	P	P	A	P
07/12/16	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
08/09/16	CAN	CAN	CAN	CAN	CAN	CAN	CAN
09/13/16	P	P	P	P	P	P	P
10/11/16							
11/08/16							
12/13/16							