

COLUMBIA CITY PLANNING COMMISSION
PUBLIC HEARING & SPECIAL SESSION
CITY HALL – 1840 SECOND STREET
NOVEMBER 29, 2011, 7:00 P.M.

PLANNING

COMMISSIONERS:

Deborah Jacob, Chair
Glen Pritchard, Vice-Chair*
Kelly Niles
John Sachs
Lisa Bush
Nell Harrison
Kenneth Wieland*

*Denotes Commissioner absent

STAFF:

Lisa Smith, Planner
Helen Johnson, Planning Administrative Assistant

OTHERS:

None

MEETING TO ORDER:

Deborah called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Deborah led the pledge of allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

No minutes were ready for this meeting.

CITIZEN INPUT AND REQUESTS:

None.

PUBLIC HEARING:

REGULAR SESSION CLOSED AND PUBLIC HEARING OPENED.

Lisa S. asked if there were any conflicts of interest, bias or ex parte contacts that need to be declared, none were heard. Because there was no one in the audience Lisa requested that the chair approve entering the pre hearing statement and staff report my reference. Deborah agreed.

Lisa S. explained this hearing is simply an extension of time that changed one date to the approval that was granted last year for Wayne Weigandt's application. Lisa S. and other

Commissioners helped to explain for our newer Commission members the application was for an urban growth boundary amendment, annexation, zone changes, property line adjustments, partition and variances. Lisa S. explained that so far the application has been approved by Columbia City, Columbia County and some plans have been sent to the City Engineer for review. Wayne has requested an additional year before being required to filing the final plat.

IT WAS MOVED (KELLY) AND SECONDED (JOHN.) TO APPROVE THE FINDINGS IN THE STAFF REPORT FOR THE EXTENSION OF AN APPROVAL PERIOD TO WAYNE WEIGANDT'S APPLICATION. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

None.

NEW BUSINESS:

Lisa S. discussed in the spring the City is scheduled to start a visioning process that would eventually result in some comprehensive plan and ordinance amendments. She explained the City is also in the process of updating the water and sewer master plans. She stated that this time next year the Planning Commission could be doing comprehensive plan amendments and facilities planning. Lisa B. stated she is a part of the steering committee for this project. Lisa S. said that having her on the committee would be a good way to keep the Planning Commission informed.

Lisa S. said the City Council asked her to talk with the Planning Commission about annexing the two areas of property that are refer to as islands here in Columbia City. The areas were pointed out on the large zoning map. Lisa S. explained that these properties receive City water services. Commissioners and staff discussed that one of the properties had a fire during this last summer and it was the City was the one to provide traffic control and other services associated with the fire, even though the property is not in the City and they don't pay City taxes. Another concern is that one of the areas has a lot of residences abutting it. These areas have weed abatement, noise, dogs at large ordinance issues that the City regulates and they don't apply to those properties because they are in the County.

Lisa explained the City is giving consideration and has the ability to annex islands of property with or without the consent of property owners. If the City did what is called a forced annexation it could take anywhere from three to ten years depending on what was decided. It wouldn't be able to just go out and take someone's property and put them in that situation. Lisa S. stated that they would be annexed and entitled to City benefits and the City would consider individualized agreements for sewer to those properties if necessary because the City requires sewer and they currently do not have it.

Deborah asked if the City has mentioned anything to the property owners yet. Lisa S. stated the City is under the impression that the property owners biggest concern is sewer and those connection costs. Lisa S. commented that there should be a way to come up with agreements to deal with that.

The Commissioners and staff recalled from the recent annexation of the Melchert property that the Chimes Crest property owners were pretty set against annexing. It was discussed that they are currently receiving City water and other services and not paying the taxes for those services. The only service they are not currently getting is sewer. They receive police services by default because we have no choice, we just can't ignore their situations. It was brought up they are not subject to the City's burning regulations, but are serviced by the same fire department that the City is.

Deborah expressed making the annexation worth it to the property owners and being sensitive to their concerns. Commissioners raised questions about taxes and Lisa explained how Columbia City's tax rate is pretty low. She also explained that the City charges higher water rates to outside users, so water rates would be down and taxes would go up, but not by much and they would then be entitled to the services currently being received. If the City initiated the annexation, there would not be a fee charged for the annexation, which is also a big price savings.

Lisa B. suggested the City should proceed with these annexations and that seemed to be the general consensus from all the Planning Commissioners, but to be sensitive to the concerns of those owners.

REPORTS AND COMMUNICATIONS:

None.

ADJOURNMENT:

Meeting adjourned at approximately 7:25 p.m.

Deborah Jacob
Planning Commission Chair

Attest by:

Helen K Johnson
Planning, Building Administrative Assistant