

**COLUMBIA CITY PLANNING COMMISSION
PUBLIC HEARINGS & REGULAR SESSION**
CITY HALL – 1840 SECOND STREET
APRIL 8, 2014, 7:00 P.M.

PLANNING

COMMISSIONERS:

Laurie Falk, Chair*
Barbara Gordon, Vice-Chair
Nell Harrison
Kelly Niles*
Mark Worrall

*Denotes Commissioner absent

STAFF:

Lisa Smith, Planner
Helen Johnson, Planning Administrative Assistant

OTHERS:

Earline Lunsford, Columbia City resident
Kevin Diegel, Columbia City resident
Scott Jensen, Port of St. Helens
Steve Little, Columbia City Resident
Robert & Shelly Sandford, Columbia City Residents
Terry Maloney, Caples House Museum
(above list represents those who signed in)

MEETING TO ORDER:

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Barbara led the pledge of allegiance.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

IT WAS MOVED (NELL) AND SECONDED (MARK) TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MARCH 11, 2014 MEETING, AS PRESENTED. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

CITIZEN INPUT AND REQUESTS:

None.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

REGULAR SESSION CLOSED AND PUBLIC HEARING OPENED.

Barbara opened the public hearing and turned the meeting over to Lisa. Lisa explained the hearings this evening is to consider amendments to the Comprehensive Plan and the Development Code based on the City's recent adoption of a new vision statement.

Lisa stated there are going to be two separate hearings. The first hearing is to discuss changes to the Comprehensive Plan with the main changes relating to economic policy. She also explained the process that was expected for the hearing.

Lisa reviewed the staff report for the Comprehensive Plan changes. She also read the amended policies under Economic Development from the proposed Ordinance.

Shelly Sandford, Columbia City resident and property owner, asked what a rain garden is. Lisa explained and staff presented a booklet that shows examples and how to build one. Shelly also asked who would be responsible for the street standard goals discussed in the Comprehensive Plan change. Lisa stated that Public Works would be as it does related to Street development. Lisa said the committee modeled the goals after a project in Seattle called SEA Street and more information can be found on the Internet. Shelly asked where these areas are intended to be developed. Lisa explained that designs have not been prepared, but the project has been presented to the State of Oregon for grant funding for design work.

Robert Sanford, husband to Shelly Sandford, expressed concern about back in parking and asked if additional property would be needed to accommodate this style of parking. Lisa explained that most of the right-of-way in Columbia City is 80', which provides adequate land to accomplish this parking design. Additional discussion was had regarding the pros and cons of this style of parking between Lisa and the Sandford's.

Lisa read an email request from Mia Nelson with 1000 Friends of Oregon for the record. The request stated, "Planning department, hello, I would like to review the proposed changes to the comp plan economic policies. Would you be able to send the proposal electronically? Thank you." Lisa explained that staff, Helen Johnson, did respond by sending the staff report, all of the proposed ordinances including the Comprehensive Plan and Development Code and maps. The response was sent Tuesday, April 1, 2014. We have not received formal comments for the record.

Barbara closed the public hearing at 7:25 p.m.

IT WAS MOVED (NELL) AND SECONDED (MARK) TO ADOPT THE FINDINGS IN THE STAFF REPORT AND RECOMMEND TO THE CITY COUNCIL APPROVE THE ATTACHED ORDINANCE AMENDING ORDINANCE NO. 03-585-O, THE COLUMBIA CITY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

REGULAR SESSION CLOSED AND PUBLIC HEARING OPENED.

Barbara closed the regular session at 7:28 p.m. and opened the public hearing to discuss the proposed amendments to the Columbia City Development Code.

Barbara asked if there were any conflicts of interest or bias, none were declared.

Barbara asked Lisa to go over the staff report. Lisa explained the public hearing process and the noticing process. When notice is required, it is sent to property owners listed on the Columbia County assessor's records. Unfortunately that is not always the property owner or the best contact. Regarding the DAR (Daughters of the American Revolution) properties, notice was sent to two different contacts at two difference addresses and both were returned to the City. Fortunately we were able to make contact with a DAR representative via email and received response from Sue Owen to say that contact updates will be made and thanked us for the notice. There is also a representative from the DAR here this evening.

Lisa reviewed the staff report. She then reviewed the proposed ordinance amending Ordinance No. 03-586-O, The Columbia City Development Code.

Staff, commissioners and audience discussed permitted and conditional uses in the Public Land Zone would also include the permitted and conditional uses from the Commercial and Commercial Recreational Zones.

Lisa discussed the proposed Village Center Overlay. Clarifying that the original zoning does not change. The overlay will add additional uses and opportunities in the outlined area. Lisa was explaining that Type II Home Occupations in the Village Center Overlay would be done as an administrative review and not be required to go to public hearing. Shelly Sandford was questioning the notice requirement and Lisa explained that the decision would be made and the neighbors would have 14 days to comment on it. Shelly was concerned that 14 days is too short.

Kevin Diegel questioned that if the school property was sold, would the same process happen as was just discussed. Lisa explained that if a commercial use went into the school property it would be required under that zone designation to have a site development review and follow the limited land use decision process.

Lisa explained for Shelly that Type II Home Occupations do not have the right to exist, it is an approval process and the Planning Commission and the City Council always have the ability to pull that approval. There is a process established for that and that process will not change. Neighbors always have the right to express concerns or file a complaint.

Lisa clarified for Kevin Diegel that in order to do something commercial at the school property all the zoning requirements under the commercial zone would have to be met in order to develop.

Robert Sandford was asking under a Type II Home Occupation how many people would be allowed to go to and from the home business during a day. Lisa referred Robert to the requirements under 7.104 Home Occupations. She stated that we don't actually call out the number of people allowed to the residence. There are additional things called out such, as hours, number of employees, can't monopolize on street parking or excessive traffic etc. Lisa also explained that during the Home Occupation review process she identifies conflicts and how they will be addressed.

Lisa additionally explained in the Village Center Overlay if a business wanted to exist on residential property, redevelopment would probably be required to address parking, buffering and other requirements. Barbara asked and Lisa clarified that a site development review would be required.

Shelly Sandford stated she objects. She bought a residence and that is what she wants her neighborhood to be. She doesn't like the possibility of her home being located next to a commercial building. Shelly doesn't object to a Type II Home Occupation. She is concerned about how much voice she has if she doesn't agree to have a business located next to her property.

Lisa explained that this area was specifically defined because there is a convergence of functionally commercial property there already. With the school, church, post office, city hall and the property across from city hall, which is already, zoned commercial and the Port property all create a natural flow.

Lisa verified Shelly Sandford's property is located at 2155 Second Street, the corner of Second and "F" Streets.

Scott Jensen, the Port representative, asked if there are restrictions on having primary parking on a residentially zoned property. Lisa said that no one could have a parking lot as a stand-alone use except for the government. The staff, commissioners and audience discussed multiple parking situations.

Lisa asked if the biggest concern from the audience is the Village Center Overlay. Shelly Sandford answered, "yes".

Kevin Diegel expressed concerns and the Sandford's agreed with the Public Lands allowing Commercial uses. Lisa then reviewed what was allowed in the Public Lands zone and what the citizens would want to allow on that property. Lisa explained that if the uses are only limited to what is allowed under the Public Land zone, it wouldn't leave the school district very much leeway in marketing the property if they did not decide to put the school there. Everyone agreed that the school is the preferred use of the land.

Lisa and Shelly discussed the type of commercial uses could be limited. Lisa requested that a list could be emailed to her and language could be developed and incorporated in the ordinance. Lisa suggested that the audience look at the uses allowed in Chapter 7.60 Commercial Zone and see if there are concerns about the uses. Lisa also stated that just because a use is permitted does not mean the use occurs. Economics play a big part. Columbia City doesn't want strip malls off the highway; they are looking for more personal small-scale types of businesses for "our" residents.

Larry Preston stated that if the school property wished to change the zoning for the property they could go through the public process and get the zone change. Lisa commented that a zone changes in the State of Oregon requires a complete analysis of the City's Comprehensive Plan and is a long and involved process. One that most developers or owners don't want to put their time and money into if they don't have to.

Lisa explained that the current Public Lands are tax payer paid for properties and don't general come available for purchase, but when they do it seems it would be beneficial to the public to be able to get the maximum money for them when they are sold. She stated the only way to have this happen is to have the kinds of uses that private industry is looking for or have the property owner go through a zone change.

Shelly Sandford stated it makes sense if the Village Center Overlay allows small scale commercial businesses that the Public Lands property should also allow commercial businesses as they would complement each other.

Lisa asked the audience at this time if the consensus would be to have the Planning Commissioners move the recommendation forward to City Council with further considerations made to the Village Center Overlay and commercial uses in the Public Lands, which allows the remaining items in the document to move forward. The audience agreed with this.

Earline Lunsford expressed the concern that if businesses are brought to the Village Center Overlay, additional consideration needs to be taken for additional yield and stop signs.

Lisa read a letter from George and Jean LeMont, for the record.

Robert Sandford asked if there is a potential applicant waiting for the Village Center Overlay changes to be put in place in order to develop. Lisa answered these changes were proposed at part of a process to remove barriers to economic development. Helen also brought to Lisa's attention that the Church property is for sale and potential buyers have asked what uses are allowed and would be interested in the changes brought about by the Village Center Overlay.

Barbara closed the public hearing at 8:55 p.m.

Staff and Commissioners discussed the concerns of the residents, the amount of time committees put into creating the proposed changes and what direction Columbia City wants to go.

IT WAS MOVED (MARK) AND SECONDED (NELL) TO ADOPT THE FINDINGS IN THE STAFF REPORT AND THE PUBLIC TESTIMONY PRESENTED THIS EVENING AND RECOMMEND THE CITY COUNCIL ADOPT THE ORDINANCE AND ADDRESS CONCERNS RELATED TO THE VILLAGE CENTER OVERLAY AND COMMERCIAL USE ON PUBLIC LAND ZONE IN THE COLUMBIA CITY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

None.

NEW BUSINESS:

Larry Preston's resignation from the Planning Commission was announced. He was appointed to City Council on April 3, 2014.

Helen reminded Commissioners to complete and return the SEI forms to the Oregon Government Economics Commission, due April 15, 2014.

REPORTS AND COMMUNICATIONS:

None.

ADJOURNMENT:

Meeting adjourned at approximately 9:10 p.m.

Barbara Gordon
Planning Commission Co-Chair

Attest by:

Helen K Johnson
Planning, Building Administrative Assistant