

**COLUMBIA CITY PLANNING COMMISSION
REGULAR SESSION & PUBLIC DECISION**
CITY HALL – 1840 SECOND STREET
JUNE 9, 2015 - 7:00 P.M.

PLANNING COMMISSIONERS: Kelly Niles, Chair *Denotes Commissioner absent
Barbara Gordon, Vice-Chair
Dennis Capik
Laurie Oliver
Shelly Sandford
Mark Worrall*
Coralee Aho

STAFF: Lisa Smith, Planner
Helen Johnson, Planning Administrative Assistant

OTHERS: Paulette Lichatowich, Kathy Baush, Scott Jensen, Lynn Vellenga

MEETING TO ORDER:

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

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE:

Kelly led the pledge of allegiance.

WELCOME NEW COMMISSIONER:

Coralee Aho, the newest Planning Commissioner, introduced herself and provided a brief outline of her background.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

IT WAS MOVED (BARBARA) AND SECONDED (LAURIE) TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MARCH 10, 2015 MEETING, AS AMENDED BY SHELLY REGARDING THE LACK OF OVERSIGHT WITH VACATION OR SHORT TERM RENTALS. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

IT WAS MOVED (SHELLY) AND SECONDED (BARBARA) TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MAY 12, 2015 MEETING, AS PRESENTED. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

CITIZEN INPUT AND REQUESTS:

None.

PUBLIC DECISION:

Staff Report

Kelly asked Lisa to review the staff report for the Port of St. Helens site development review of improvements related to the existing Trestle Beach recreation area. Lisa clarified that the Trestle Beach recreation area is not in the city limits, but the improvements will be. The Port of St. Helens is proposing to permit parking and vehicle access to their site, create a new trail that connects to the existing one down to Trestle Beach and add a restroom similar to what is in Harvard Park.

Lisa stated that in addition to the agency referrals mentioned in the staff report she had also received comment from the Columbia River PUD stating they had no objection to the approval as submitted.

Lisa commented that in addition to the comments in the staff report from Paulette Lichatowich and Kathleen Bauska, the City had received a petition like document from Kevin Diegel in support of the proposed ideas along with some additional recommendations including video surveillance system with signs to reduce criminal presence, permanent toilet facilities with foot wash and drinking fountain and trash cans.

Lisa continued to review the staff report. She said that the recommendation of garbage cans would be a good idea and the Planning Commission may want to require one on the site. Lisa does recommend the approval of this application subject to conditions of approval.

Applicant Presentation

Scott Jensen, with the Port of St. Helens, expressed they have been fortunate to work with the City and a citizen committee on getting input for improvements to the Trestle Beach access. Scott said it was important to protect their current clients and also provide a solution that would not negatively affect future tenants of the Port property. He did say there are limits to the amount of funds that can be dedicated to this project and their liability protection depends on not charging for access.

Scott said the hope is to get these changes up and running before the end of summer and keep them in place for the next summer. Then evaluate what might be other improvements that could be made in the future.

Barbara asked Scott to clarify how the insurance liability works. He explained that State law requires if you charge for admittance then liability insurance is required otherwise it is a use at your own risk. Barbara also asked if this site would then be considered temporary and if a better user came along that the access would be removed. Scott answered to say they specifically designed the parking in a that should be able to accommodate both.

Commissioners and Scott discussed plans and looked at maps at length. It was also discussed that the Port will be working with ODOT and the railroad on the future of the current Trestle Beach parking area off Hwy 30 and signage to encourage parking at the new location. The intension is to make the area off Hwy 30 less appealing as it is not a safe spot.

Lisa stated the conditions of approval are written in a way to address the remaining questions on how to mark the parking and how to sign the property at a future time.

Kelly commented that he is in support of the proposed changes and would like to see improvements to access for emergency crews to the beach be something considered for the future. Scott explained there is better access to the beach which is through the Clearwater Paper site which is down by the water.

Barbara was asking about site hours and if the police would be policing the area. Scott explained the area is within the City limits and they would be asking the City to respond to issues or concerns. It was also stated the park would be open dawn to dusk.

Scott did clarify that they do intend to put a trash can at the parking site similar to what they have at the existing entrance.

Shelly asked Kathleen with the ADHOC committee how everything got started. She stated Port Commissioner Chris Iverson wanted to reach a solution between the Port and the public. Scott further explained there had been a no trespassing sign at the entrance for a very long time, but when the railroad came in to replace the trestle, they removed the sign. When the culvert was put in, the sign was replaced. This was seen by the press and the public as a new sign and the Port was now saying no more access to Trestle Beach. At that time the lawyers for the Port of St. Helens were able to determine by review state law that if it was made more of a recreation facility with no revenue generated, it could be available and have the liability protection.

Scott continued to say that a committee was created. Multiple agencies and people were invited to participate at look into solutions. Multiple meetings were held over an approximate six month window.

It was discussed by Lisa and Barbara that this would not be a city park, it is designated as a recreation area on Port property.

Kathleen added that the main goal was to address the safety of citizens and still provide for the public demand. She stated the committee will continue to work toward making it a wonderful facility. She said there is a "Friend of Trestle Beach" group that already picks up garbage and will continue to take care of the facility.

Barbara asked if dogs would be permitted and Kathleen was unclear at this time whether or not they would be. She knows there are some that use it now.

Kelly asked about additional signs especially on the docks. Scott said there is existing signage on the docks and that will be something that is monitored closely. He is also hoping that some of the users will do some self-policing to discourage people for the unsafe activities, as it might get the access closed.

Scott answered the question of dogs, by stating leash laws apply and that the City has a nice off leash Dog Park.

IT WAS MOVED (BARBARA) AND SECONDED (LAURIE) TO APPROVE THE APPLICATION SUBJECT TO THE CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL AND THE FINDINGS IN THE STAFF REPORT. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

Lisa shared that the City is submitting an application for a TGM (transportation and growth management) grant for \$100,000 with a 12% match. If the grant is awarded the City Council would probably ask that the Port of St. Helens share in the match as the project has been identified as a refinement of our Industrial Transportation Plan. This plan was discussed quite a bit at the meeting for the proposed

meeting room on the Port property. There were questions about "E" Street and a lot of other transportation needs to be looked into at a 93 acres Industrial site. The plan would be to develop transportation performance measures that would outline specific requirements for different developments. It would also create a tool for marketing the site as it would outline what improvements would be needed for different types of developments.

NEW BUSINESS:

Lisa explained there is a big hearing scheduled on July 14, 2015 for a proposed zone change to property adjacent to Riverclub Estates. It is important for Commissioners to be there. Shelly stated that she will be recusing herself from the hearing as she is the President of the Riverclub Estates Homeowners Association. Lisa clarified for the Commissioners that at this hearing they would be making a recommendation to the City Council.

ADJOURNMENT:

Meeting adjourned at 8:01 p.m.

Kelly Niles
Planning Commission Chair

Attest by:

Helen K Johnson
Planning, Building Administrative Assistant