

**COLUMBIA CITY PLANNING COMMISSION
SPECIAL MEETING / PUBLIC DECISION
VIA "ZOOM MEETING"
February 25, 2021 - 6:30 P.M.**

PLANNING

COMMISSIONERS:

Kelly Niles, Chair
Barbara Gordon, Vice-Chair
Coralee Aho
Bill Amos
Doug Calkins*
George Fortier
Dana Marble

*Denotes Commissioner absent

STAFF:

Lauren Scott, City Planner
Helen Johnson, Planning Administrative Assistant

OTHERS:

Wayne Weigandt
Trisha Clark
Valyrie German
Wayde Elliott
Josh Komp

MEETING TO ORDER:

Kelly called the meeting to order at 6:32 p.m.

PUBLIC DECISION:

Kelly stated the special meeting this evening is a public decision not a public hearing and read the procedure expectations. He explained the application from Wayde Elliott is requesting Planning Commission approval for a site development review and ordinance interpretation to develop a RV/Boat and Self-Storage Facility on a 4.3 acre vacant commercial lot located at the east end of Penn Street and north of the Mini Mart and Athletic Club on A Street.

Staff report:

Kelly asked Lauren to present the staff report. Lauren explained the proposed use of an RV/Boat and Self-Storage Facility is a permitted use within the Commercial Zone that was part of a text amendment late last year allowing outdoor storage of boats and RVs.

She stated the project would include one enclosed RV storage building, a self-storage building with a small office space, two covered structures for RV storage and 38 spaces for RV storage along the north and west property lines. Lauren mentioned there would also be about 17 parking spaces for employees, visitors and patrons on the southern side of the site. The site is currently vacant. She stated that main access to the site will be from A Street via an existing 40 foot wide access and utility easement. Lauren explained there would be a second means of access to the site for emergency vehicles at the Penn Street dead end along with a permanent vehicle turn around. She said when the adjacent subdivision was created and platted a temporary turn around was created on the site with the intention of the street continuing on someday. Lauren said the applicant's proposal originally would have removed the temporary turnaround and would result in insufficient emergency access. Lauren explained the preliminary revised design has been submitted by the applicant for the turnaround and has been found to be sufficient by the City Engineer and CRF&R.

Lauren said the development meets or has been conditioned to meet the requirements related to water, sewer, storm drainage, access and parking. She stated in addition to the site development review the applicant is requesting an ordinance interpretation of the development code specifically chapter 7.96 related to landscaping, buffering and fencing. Code normally requires 20' buffer area when a non-residential use abuts a residential use. The site is bordered by residential uses to the north and west. The chapter of the code prohibits buildings, internal vehicle access ways or parking to be located within the buffer area. The applicant is asking the Planning Commission to make an official interpretation of the code and view long term storage of parked vehicles and boats not as parking, but as outdoor storage and allow them to be placed within the 20' buffer zone and 5' from property lines. Outdoor storage is allowed and required to be screened by fencing and landscaping. The applicant is proposing 6' tall chain-link and slat fence with black vinyl around the entire perimeter of the site along with deciduous trees no less than 10' in height at time of planting. The trees would be planted along the north and west perimeter of the site adjacent to the residential uses.

Lauren also stated the proposed use would typically generate less trips, noise, light or other glare than other commercial uses. She explained the applicant will be required to submit a lighting plan to staff to ensure any onsite light will not affect any adjacent residential uses.

In conclusion Lauren recommends the Planning Commission approve the site development review and ordinance interpretation as conditioned in the staff report.

Applicant presentation:

Trisha Clark, with Emerio Design, introduced herself as a representative of the engineering firm for the applicant. She stated the only change from the proposal provided was the fencing material, they are now requesting a mesh see through material and barbed wire at the top of the fence.

Chair Kelly asked if black was the proposed color for the fencing. Wayde Elliott, the applicant, spoke to confirm the color they were thinking of is black, but there are definitely other colors available.

Commissioner Barbara spoke thinking the slats seem to do a better job of privacy as opposed to the mesh. Commissioner Coralee was in agreement with Barbara's comment. Wayde stated they could do the slats, they have just done the mesh at all the other sites because it allows the wind to go through and doesn't put a lot of torque on the fence, but they could certainly do the slats. Josh Komp, a contractor for the applicant, stated the mesh is less expensive, easier to replace than the slats and the slats have a tendency to fade. He also explained the mesh comes in different screening levels. The picture that had been shown he thought was at 80%.

Lauren advised the Commissioners that barbed wire, electric and corrugated metal are not acceptable forms of fencing, so the proposed barbed wire a top the fencing would not be permitted. Josh Komp asked if the fence could be 7' if no barbed wire. Lauren stated the fence could be 7' high with Planning Commission approval.

Wayde stated security is very important to them, so either approval of a 7' fence or 6' with barbed wire would be the hope.

Helen stated the code only allows barbed wire around the city well for security.

Commissioner Kelly asked Wayde if the facility in St. Helens has had any issues. He stated when he owned it there was not, but he believes there has been an attempted break in.

Helen further read from code where it states barbed wire would be allowed if called for by state law, she is unaware of anything specifically that would permit the use, but she is not familiar.

Commissioner Bill stated from Lauren's report it sounded like the hammerhead was inside the fence, but it appears the hammerhead is outside the fence with a gate which would allow for people to turn around without having to go into private driveways. That was confirmed by the applicant.

Trisha did ask the Planning Commission to consider allowing a 7' fence as a condition of approval.

Written materials submitted:

None.

Make Decision:

Kelly asked Lauren to summarize for Commissioners the ordinance interpretation request, she explained the applicant is requesting Commissioners to interpret that the long term storage of boats and RV's not be considered parking under chapter 7.96 landscaping and fencing.

IT WAS MOVED (BILL) AND SECONDED (BARBARA) TO APPROVE THE ORDINANCE INTERPRETATION AS DISCUSSED IN THE STAFF REPORT. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

IT WAS MOVED (BILL) AND SECONDED (CORALEE) TO APPROVE THE SITE DEVELOPMENT REVIEW WITH CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL AS OUTLINED IN THE STAFF REPORT WITH EXCEPTION OF ALLOWING A 7 FOOT TALL PERIMETER FENCE. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

ADJOURNMENT:

Meeting adjourned at 6:57 p.m.

Kelly Niles
Planning Commission Chair

Attest by:

Helen K Johnson
Planning Administrative Assistant