

City of Hood River
Planning Commission
Public Meeting
April 18, 2016

City Council Chambers
211 Second Street
Hood River, OR 97031

PRESENT: Commissioners Nikki Rohan (chair), Bill Irving, Casey Weeks, Victor Pavlenko, Jodie Gates

ABSENT: Commissioners Nathan DeVol, Will Smith

STAFF: Planning Director Cindy Walbridge, Senior Planner Kevin Liburdy, Associate Planner Jennifer Kaden

MINUTES

I. CALL TO ORDER – Chair Rohan called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

II: PUBLIC HEARINGS:

- A. REQUEST (FILE NO. 15-29): Application by property owner Charlotte Wertgen for an amendment of the Eliot Woods Business Park Subdivision (File No. 97-54) to remove a deed restriction requiring undevelopable open space from 0.50 acre of land. The subject property is located between the northern terminus of 8th Street and Indian Creek, on the south side of Indian Creek. Legal Description: 3N 10E 36CB Tax Lot 3400. The subject property, zoned Urban High Density Residential (R-3), is to be accessed via 8th Street and is proposed to be developed with up to three residential dwelling units.

Chair Rohan read the procedural script and opened the public hearing.

No ex parte contact, conflict of interest or bias was declared by any member of the Planning Commission, and there were no challenges to the commissioners by the audience or by other commissioners.

STAFF REPORT: Planning Director Cindy Walbridge presented the staff report including a history of the Eliot Woods Business Park subdivision and an explanation of a “no build” deed restriction that was implemented to reduce development potential based on proximity to Indian Creek and vehicular access limitations. The current request is to remove the “no build” designation from a portion of the subject property.

The property owner traded approximately 1.5 acres of land along Indian Creek to the city in exchange for access to 8th Street. A minor partition then established a 0.50 acre parcel located in the “no build” designated area. The current amendment of the subdivision is requested to allow development of the 0.50 parcel. If approved, up to three units are

anticipated as a townhouse project or triplex with vehicular access off of 8th Street. Findings and draft conditions of approval were provided in the staff report which relied on the Minor Amendment criteria of Hood River Municipal Code Section 16.08.010(C.1). Staff recommended approval.

Commissioner Irving requested clarification of how the deed restriction is in place.

Walbridge confirmed the deed restriction is on the plat for the subdivision.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY: Property owner Charlotte Wertgen was in the audience but chose not to testify. No other party testified.

REBUTTAL: None.

STAFF RECAP: None.

Chair Rohan closed the hearing and the commission deliberated.

Commissioner Pavlenko made a motion to approve the amendment of the subdivision subject to the findings and conditions of approval in the staff report. Commissioner Gates seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

- B. **REQUEST (FILE NO. 15-38):** Application by Klein & Associates, Inc. on behalf of property owners Allan and Signe Tencer for a Conditional Use Permit for a two-unit Townhouse Project including a two-parcel Minor Partition and associated site improvements. The owners are in the process of constructing a duplex and now seek approval to convert the duplex to townhouses. The subject property is located at 106 Eugene Street. Legal description: 3N 10E 36AB Tax Lot 1600 (Lot 7, Block 2, Winan's Addition) and is zoned Urban High Density Residential (R-3) with a Geologic Hazard Overlay.

Chair Rohan opened the public hearing.

No ex parte contact, conflict of interest or bias was declared by any member of the Planning Commission, and there were no challenges to the commissioners by the audience or by other commissioners.

STAFF REPORT: Planning Director Cindy Walbridge presented the staff report. Staff previously approved a minor partition and property line adjustment affecting the subject property. A duplex currently is under construction on the site and it is nearly ready for occupancy. The application was reviewed for conformance with applicable criteria for needed housing. Staff recommends approval subject to conditions drafted in the staff report.

Commissioner Weeks asked why the commission is going through this process when the Housing Needs Analysis and Strategy recommend that townhouses should be processed in a different manner.

Walbridge explained that the request is subject to current code requirements.

Weeks asked why the townhouse code has not yet been updated.

Walbridge explained that the city council directed staff to work on regulations for short-term rentals before updating regulations for townhouse projects.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY: James Klein of Klein and Associates, Inc. testified on behalf of the property owners and provided site information and background on the project. The property owners chose to construct a duplex in order to speed up the process. No other party testified.

REBUTTAL: None.

STAFF RECAP: None.

Chair Rohan closes the hearing and the commission deliberates.

Commissioner Pavlenko made a motion to approve the conditional use permit application for conversion of the duplex to a two-unit townhouse project subject to the findings and conditions of approval in the staff report. Commissioner Gates seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

- C. **REQUEST (FILE NO. 16-09):** Application by property owners Laura and Richard Starrett for annexation of one vacant parcel in order to connect to City of Hood River sanitary sewer and water facilities. The subject property is located on the east side of Avalon Way, south of Avalon Court and north of Rebecca Avenue. Legal Description: 3N 10E 35DB Tax Lot 802. The parcel is currently zoned Urban Low Density Residential and will remain Urban Low Density Residential (R-1) following annexation.

Chair Rohan read the procedural script, opened the public hearing and explained the planning commission will be making a recommendation to the city council.

No ex parte contact, conflict of interest or bias was declared by any member of the Planning Commission, and there were no challenges to the commissioners by the audience or by other commissioners.

STAFF REPORT: Senior Planner Kevin Liburdy presented the staff report including the applicable criteria. The Starretts request annexation in order to obtain city sanitary sewer and water to construct a new single-family dwelling. The annexation includes a portion of the Avalon Way right-of-way located between the site and the city limits boundary.

The annexed property will be withdrawn from the Westside Rural Fire District and Ice Fountain Water District, and the property owners will compensate the Westside Fire District for five years of lost property tax revenue. Staff recommends that the commission sends a recommendation of approval to the city council subject to the findings and draft conditions of approval in the staff report.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY: Property owner Richard Starrett was in the audience but chose not to testify. No other party testified.

REBUTTAL: None.

STAFF RECAP: None.

Chair Rohan closed the hearing and the commission deliberation.

Commissioner Pavlenko made a motion to approve the annexation subject to the findings and conditions of approval in the staff report. Commissioner Gates seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

III. PLANNING DIRECTOR'S UPDATE: Planning Director Cindy Walbridge discussed anticipated rezoning and code amendments associated with Strategy 1 of the city's Housing Needs Analysis and Housing Strategy. Action 1.1 rezoning will be considered in association with the Transportation and Growth Management project for the Westside Area Concept Plan.

Commissioner Irving asked if rezoning in other areas of the city will be considered.

Walbridge confirms that rezoning in other areas can be considered outside of this TGM project.

Walbridge discussed actions from the Housing Strategy including Action 1.2, townhouse code update, and Actions 1.3 and 1.4, amendments to R-1 and R-2 zones for minimum lot size.

Irving explained that the R-2 zone allows duplexes on a 5,000-square-foot lot. Why force duplexes? Could instead be two cottages.

Walbridge described Action 1.5 PUD update, Action 1.6 Cottage Code, Action 1.7 ADU code update, and suggested holding off on Action 1.8 manufactured home park standards, Action 1.9 revisions to height measurement, etc. It may be appropriate for a stakeholder group to provide recommendations.

Irving questioned the process for code amendments.

Walbridge explained that a request for proposals will be written and asked the commission what they would like to see, such as starting with a stakeholder group.

Irving suggested that it is necessary to have a code drafted to comment on.

Commissioner Weeks suggested that a representative from the development community should participate.

Irving concurred and suggested active builders such as Mike Kitts, Brian Watts, Doug Beveridge, etc.

Weeks suggested providing an invitation, even if a builder is not interested in participating.

Walbridge suggested defining a maximum number of committee members, the planning commissioners and a few others.

Irving asked if work sessions will be public and Walbridge confirmed.

Irving suggested finding a stakeholder from a development group.

Commissioner Pavlenko noted that a task force was successful in developing the Waterfront Overlay Zone.

Walbridge concurred and noted that similar groups participated in development of the Economic Opportunities Analysis and other projects.

Pavlenko suggested criteria for stakeholders should include recognition that the Housing Strategy is three pronged, and participants should have a breadth of interest and knowledge. They should have some experience with the issues, not just a self-interest, and willingness to look at other communities. Also, we should be able to verify if we're making progress. The result shouldn't be more expensive homes on smaller lots. We should use GIS mapping, reposition the housing mix and monitor development. Will White and Joel Madsen may be appropriate participants.

Irving suggested that there should be a participant interested in livability impacts. Not necessarily the Hood River Valley Residents Committee but possibly another local group.

Pavlenko questioned inviting a NIMBY ("not in my back yard") to participate.

Liburdy asked if the advocacy groups that formed during the code work for short-term rental regulations would be appropriate.

Irving questioned if these advocacy groups are interested in more than the issue of vacation rentals. Property owners on Cascade and Columbia streets have been strong advocates.

Pavlenko asked if the process will be similar to the Waterfront Overlay Zone.

Walbridge suggested that it will be similar to the short-term rental discussion based on direction from the city council.

Pavlenko asked if the scope of the project will be taken to the city council.

Walbridge explained that this can be done but the council already expects the work to be done.

Irving responded to Pavlenko's suggestions about monitoring and effectiveness, and suggested the city can look at numbers for dwelling units per acre to see if it changes.

Walbridge explained that she has been talking with County Assessor Brian Beebe about data that can be monitored, as well as Beth Goodman from ECONorthwest.

Irving recommended putting all of the Strategy 1 actions in the request for proposals rather than approaching the actions in a piecemeal manner. For example, Action 1.8 could be useful for addressing modular housing.

Walbridge explained that some of the actions could move more quickly than others, such as updates to townhouse regulations, but will share the request for proposals with the commission before it is sent out.

Pavlenko explained that he is OK with placeholders, and that some of the recommended actions could wait.

Liburdy provided background on the Transportation Growth Management grant and Westside Area Concept Plan. The primary objective is to facilitate development of affordable- and workforce housing, integrating land use and transportation. In June of 2014 staff held a pre-application conference with a property owner north of May Street, west of 30th Street, who was interested in rezoning and well as realigning and reclassifying Mt. Adams Avenue. The cost of building Mt. Adams Ave. was a concern. In 2015 the city initiated the Buildable Lands Inventory and Housing Needs Analysis. In the spring of 2015, the technical advisory committee for the HNA was discussing initial findings including recommendations to rezone areas to accommodate more density and other housing types in order to meeting housing needs. As the Strategy document was being drafted, the Department of Land Conservation and Development announced TGM grants. Staff thought it may be appropriate to apply for a grant to consider rezoning as recommended by the TAC and, because infrastructure costs affect cost of housing, staff thought project could also revisit the Transportation System Plan. However, staff had concerns about taking on the project due to existing workload. City Manager Steve Wheeler then started working on adding a third staff member to the planning department and Heather Staten of the Hood River Valley Residents Committee drafted the grant application. Currently an evaluation committee is in the process of selecting a consultant.

Irving asked if staff can send the request for proposals for the Westside Area Concept Plan to the commission.

Liburdy explained that some information is sensitive during the consultant selection process but, because the RFP is a public record, it can be shared with the commission.

Rohan asked how the hearings for regulations on short-term rentals are progressing at the city council.

Walbridge explained that Nathan DeVol made a presentation to the council on April 11 and public testimony was taken on Title 17 Zoning regulations. More testimony will be taken on April 25. Councilors Picard and Brun recused themselves. Work on the Title 5 regulations for licensing will occur after Title 17.

IV. ACTION ON MINUTES: February 29, 2016

There was a brief discussion by the commissioners and staff.

Pavlenko moved to approve the minutes of the February 29, 2016 meeting as drafted and Gates seconds the motion. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

V: ADJOURN: 6:40 p.m.

ATTEST:

Nikki Rohan, Vice Chair

Date

Cindy Walbridge, Planning Director

Date (Approved)