

City of Hood River  
Planning Commission  
Public Meeting  
July 12, 2016

City Council Chambers  
211 Second Street  
Hood River, OR 97031

PRESENT: Commissioners Nathan DeVol (chair), Victor Pavlenko, Jodie Gates, Will Smith

ABSENT: Commissioners Nikki Hollatz, Casey Weeks, Bill Irving

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

## MINUTES

I. CALL TO ORDER – Chair DeVol called the meeting to order at 5:35 p.m.

II: PLANNING DIRECTOR'S UPDATE: Planning Director Cindy Walbridge explained that the city council recently interviewed six applicants for the seat vacated by Laurent Picard. The council narrowed the candidates to two and ultimately selected Tim Counihan.

The council will review draft zoning ordinance regulations for Short-Term Rentals on July 25. Separately, a consultant is also drafting revised regulations for development of townhouse projects.

No planning commission meeting will be held in August. Hearings are anticipated on September 6 and 19.

The city manager hired a consultant to consider issues associated with development in the Urban Growth Area including extension of sanitary sewer service and annexation.

The planning department is reviewing several land use applications, some of which will be presented to the commission. Any application that starts at an administrative review but generates a significant volume of testimony may need to go through a quasi-judicial review process.

Senior Planner Kevin Liburdy provided a brief update on the status of the Westside Area Concept Plan which is being funded with a grant from the state's Transportation and Growth Management (TGM) Program. Through a public process the area plan will consider land use, transportation and other public infrastructure issues in an effort to facilitate development of affordable- and workforce housing. Staff hopes to receive a notice to proceed by the end of July.

III. PUBLIC HEARINGS:

- A. REQUEST (FILE NO. 16-17): Application by Erica Stolhand, Hood River County 911 Commander, for a Conditional Use Permit to install one 50-foot lattice mast on the roof top of 601 State Street (Dean Building), with one 2-foot microwave dish attached at the top and three VHF antennas, two near the bottom and one at the top, of the mast; and one 4-foot freestanding microwave dish at the NE corner of the roof top. The antenna installations and associated infrastructure are proposed to improve the 911 radio system.

Chair DeVol read the procedural script and opened the public hearing. DeVol also asked for declarations of ex parte contact, conflicts of interest and other disclosures.

Pavlenko explained that he has a friend in the audience.

No ex parte contact, conflict of interest or bias was declared by any member of the Planning Commission.

DeVol also asked if the audience or any commissioner wished to challenge a commissioner. There were no challenges to the commissioners by the audience or by other commissioners.

STAFF REPORT: Associate Planner Jennifer Kaden presented the staff report and described the proposal and its purpose, as well as applicable criteria. The use is a public facility that will be owned and operated by Hood River County. Kaden described the height, design and color of the tower and appurtenances, and recommended a condition of approval that a conditional use permit must be obtained prior to collocating any additional appurtenances on the tower in the future.

DeVol asked if any commissioner had any questions.

Commissioner Weeks asked if regulations in the Waterfront Overlay Zone address similar circumstances with communications equipment on buildings.

Kaden responded that exceptions to building height are specified in Section 17.04.070 of the zoning ordinance.

Pavlenko asked for clarification if the Waterfront Overlay Zone regulations are applicable and Kaden confirmed they are not applicable to this proposal.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY: Applicant Michael Aippersbach appeared on behalf of the applicant as a proponent. Aippersbach explained complexities of the project in the context of Federal, State and Local regulations, as well as funding.

Joel Harrington appeared on behalf of Adcomm Engineering as a proponent. Harrington provided a Powerpoint presentation and explained this is the first of eight sites

throughout Hood River County where communications equipment will be upgraded to ensure portable radios work inside buildings for emergency service providers.

Commissioner Pavlenko asked about the differences between VHF and microwave dish connections, and whether fiber optic lines were considered. Harrington responded that the project will keep 911 dispatch close to the equipment they need, and microwave communications are less prone to failure than fiber optic connections.

Pavlenko asked how the grant for the project affected design, and whether the design reflects federal or local requirements. Harrington explained that a \$130,000 grant needed to be spent by the end of June as a part of a multi-million-dollar project. The design is primarily based on local considerations, except notifications were provided to the Federal Communications Commission and tribal law enforcement. Harrington noted that there is testimony from emergency service providers in the staff report. The Dean Building was selected based on its reliability. Painting the equipment is not recommended due to maintenance issues.

Pavlenko asked if the proposed 50-foot height is to the top of the lattice tower. Harrington confirmed that it is 50 feet from the rooftop to the top of the lattice, plus a VHF antenna fixed to the lattice tower results in a top height of approximately 68 feet.

Commissioner Smith asked if the original application anticipated a single 70-foot-tall tower. Harrington confirmed that a 70-foot-tall tower was considered but the current proposal is a compromise. Smith asked if the proposed design effects quality of communications. Harrington confirmed the design will affect quality but he expects it will function adequately.

Chair DeVol asked if any of the other eight sites for these facilities are inside the city limits. Harrington responded that no other sites are inside the city.

Commissioner Gates asked if the antennas will be blue. Harrington responded that the VHF antennas fixed to the lattice tower will be a light blue color.

Pavlenko asked if Adcomm Engineering produced the coverage map for this project. Harrington confirmed.

DeVol asked if there were any other proponents.

Michael Aippersbach, on behalf of the applicant, spoke about color options for the proposed equipment. The regulations for Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act require addressing visual impact so the designers of this project worked on mitigation. Not much can be done to conceal the microwave dishes.

Pavlenko asked where the two-foot-diameter microwave dishes are proposed. Aippersbach responded that one will be located near the top of the lattice tower and a

second, freestanding four-foot diameter, will be located approximately 10 feet above the rooftop.

DeVol asked if there were any other proponents.

Neal Holste, Hood River Police Chief, explained that emergency service providers had better radio coverage 20 years ago than today. There are problems with radio coverage throughout downtown. The department tried to address the issue by purchasing new radios but that hasn't been sufficient.

DeVol questioned whether the proposed project will allow the needed capacity. Holste responded that the proposed improvements should help for the next 20 years, including in Mosier.

DeVol asked if there were any other proponents.

Erica Stolhand, 911 Commander, explained that radio coverage is poor in many areas, leaving 911 dispatch to feel helpless when officers need assistance.

Jamie Hepner, Sheriff's Office Parole and Probation Commander, explained that this project will address officer safety issues. For example, using the current radio system, she can't communicate with dispatch from the County Courthouse.

Don Cheli, Hood River Police Sergeant, agreed with other speakers. Radios are hit or miss, and bad inside buildings.

DeVol asked if there was any neutral testimony. There was none.

DeVol asked if there was any opponent testimony. There was none.

REBUTTAL: None.

STAFF RECAP: None.

Chair DeVol closed the hearing and the commission deliberated.

Pavlenko explained that he has some background in this type of service, and he questioned whether it was in the commission's purview to adopt conditions of approval addressing the effectiveness of the communications equipment.

Kaden explained that, based on the criteria, she focused on issues such as colors. There are practical considerations with painting equipment. If the equipment was manufactured in more appropriate colors rather than painted, she may have different recommendations.

Smith noted that the height of the tower was reduced from 70 feet to 50 feet, and asked if there were drawbacks to a taller tower.

Walbridge explained that the commission can ask the applicant for a point of clarification. If the commission were to recommend a taller tower, staff would need to send notices to property owners again explaining the change.

Gates questioned the purpose of using a lattice tower. Kaden responded that the lattice tower doesn't require guy-wires.

DeVol asked for a point of clarification from the applicant: how much better would the facility operate if the tower was 70-feet tall? Joel Harrington, Adcomm Engineering, responded that one thing they are trying to accomplish is to minimize noise by separating antennas from each other. A taller pole may be necessary in the future to provide more isolation.

DeVol questioned the process that would be used in the future if the tower needed to be taller. Kaden confirmed that a new conditional use permit application would need to be submitted.

Pavlenko questioned why the facility was not sited on the hilltop across the river. Harrington responded that the Underwood site will not work due to federal requirements.

MOTION: Commissioner Pavlenko made a motion to approve the application subject to the findings and conditions of approval in the staff report. Commissioner Gates seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously, 4-0.

Pavlenko recommends that staff also should find out if there is a practical solution to the color issue.

The commission took a five minute recess.

- B. REQUEST (FILE NO. 16-13): Application by the City of Hood River on behalf of Horse Feathers/Big Horse Brew Pub for vacation of a 50'x12' portion of public dedicated State Street right-of-way, located north of 3N 10E 25DC tax lots 501 and 5600 (between the face of the existing building and the first retaining wall). The hearing bodies will evaluate the request according to ORS 271.110 and the City of Hood River's Comprehensive Plan and Transportation System Plan.

Chair DeVol opened the public hearing and provided an explanation of the proposal and applicable criteria.

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 explained this is an unusual request. The owners of Horse Feathers purchased the subject property from the City of Hood River in 1988. Although the City sold the property, a formal right-of-way vacation was never completed. Recently the owners submitted a Site Plan Review application for an addition to their brewery and kitchen that is being processed administratively. This is a housekeeping issue. The proposal meets the criteria in ORS 271 and Hood River Municipal Code Title 16. Staff recommends that the commission recommends approval to the city council.

Commissioner Pavlenko asked if Horse Feathers is proposing to build north up to an existing retaining wall. Walbridge confirmed.

After confirming the discussion is about a 600-square-foot area north of the building, Pavlenko questioned a 750-square-foot area that is noted on the map on the side of the building. Senior Planner Kevin Liburdy responded that in 1987 or 1988 the city traded land on the north and west sides of the building to the owners in exchange for an easement located on the south side of the building where the city anticipated constructing a public parking lot. More recently, in association with the State Street Urban Renewal Project, the city gave up the easement on the south side of the building in order to work with the property owners on a retaining wall located on the north side of the building.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY: None.

REBUTTAL: None.

STAFF RECAP: Walbridge explained that, in order to do the addition to the building, the city is cleaning things up.

Chair DeVol closes the hearing and the commission deliberates.

Commissioner Smith made a motion to recommend approval of the proposal, subject to the findings and conditions of approval in the staff report, to the city council.

Commissioner Pavlenko seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously, 4-0.

IV. ADJOURN: 6:48 p.m.

ATTEST:

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Nathan DeVol, Chair

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Date

Cindy Walbridge, Planning Director

Date (Approved)

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