

CITY OF PULLMAN
PLANNING COMMISSION
Regular Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, April 28, 2010

The City of Pullman Planning Commission held a regular meeting at 7:30 p.m. on Wednesday, April 28, 2010, in Council Chambers, City Hall, 325 SE Paradise, Pullman, Washington with Chair Stephen Garl presiding.

ROLL CALL: Present: Anderson, Bergstedt, Crow, Garl, Gibney, Overstreet,
Paulson, Shannon, Wendle
Staff: Dickinson, Emerson

GARL Called the meeting to order at 7:30 pm and called roll.

MOTION Bergstedt moved to accept the minutes of the March 24, 2010 Regular Meeting as submitted by Staff. Seconded by Shannon and passed unanimously.

REGULAR BUSINESS
Conduct simultaneous public hearings to review and recommend action on a proposal initiated by the Planning Department to amend the zoning classification from R2 and R4 to RT for a parcel of land approximately 29 acres in size generally bordered by Stadium Way, B Street, Howard Street (extended), and Maple Street Extension/Indiana Street on College Hill, and change the Comprehensive Plan Land Use Plan Map to Low Density Residential for those portions of the property currently designated as High Density Residential.

Dickinson stated that the Planning Department initiated the proposal. This zone change proposal was prompted by a provision in the College Hill Core Neighborhood Plan, Implementation Strategy 2C, which was adopted by the city in November of last year. Dickinson explained the difference between an R2 zone and an RT zone. On a 9,000-square-foot lot, one could develop a triplex in an R2 district, and a duplex in an RT District.

Dickinson stated that after considerable deliberation regarding the proposal, planning staff has decided to recommend against the zone change to RT. Retaining the combination of uses permitted under R2 zoning for the subject property promotes the land use diversity envisioned for College Hill and provides the best means to fulfill Goal 2 of the College Hill Core Neighborhood Plan. In planning staff's view, instantly transforming about 25 percent of the residential developments within the subject property from conforming to nonconforming status by approving the proposed zone change is too substantial an impact to impose on property owners who oppose this zoning action. Planning staff believes that maintaining the existing R2 zoning at this site while implementing architectural design regulations would be the most appropriate means of accomplishing Comprehensive Plan Policy LU4.2.

Dickinson stated that the city will be following this up with architectural design standards no matter the outcome.

Entered into the record Staff Report No. 10-6, with Attachments A through JJ, as Exhibit No. 1.

Entered into the record three letters dated April 18, 2010 from Major Andrew Tong, as Exhibit No. 2A, 2B and 2C.

Entered into the record a letter dated April 18, 2010 from Jim Clark, as Exhibit No. 3.

Entered into the record a letter dated April 20, 2010 from Eleanor Larsen, as Exhibit No. 4.

Entered into the record a letter dated April 21, 2010 from Jamie & Jim Peters, as Exhibit No. 5.

Entered into the record a letter dated April 22, 2010 from Major Andrew Tong, as Exhibit No. 6.

Entered into the record an email dated April 23, 2010 from Anita Hornback, as Exhibit No. 7.

Entered into the record an email dated April 23, 2010 from Sue Armitage with the Pullman League of Women Voters, as Exhibit No. 8.

Entered into the record a letter dated April 23, 2010 from Wei-Chi Jao, as Exhibit No. 9.

Entered into the record a letter dated April 23, 2010 from William R. Davis, as Exhibit No. 10.

Entered into the record a letter dated April 25, 2010 from Robert Manoske, as Exhibit No. 11.

Entered into the record a letter dated April 25, 2010 from Tim 'Sully' Sullivan, as Exhibit No. 12.

Entered into the record a letter dated April 26, 2010 from Tammy Lewis and Mike Waite with the Pullman Chamber of Commerce, as Exhibit No. 13.

Entered into the record an email dated April 27, 2010 from Chase M. Gunnell, Director of Greek Affairs, as Exhibit No. 14.

Entered into the record an email dated April 27, 2010 from Tom Weaver, as Exhibit No. 15.

Entered into the record an email dated April 27, 2010 from George Kennedy, as Exhibit No. 16.

Entered into the record a letter dated April 27, 2010 from Susan R. Wilson, as Exhibit No. 17.

Entered into the record a letter dated April 27, 2010 from Edwin P. Garreston, Jr. with the Whitman County Historical Society, as Exhibit No. 18.

Entered into the record a letter dated April 28, 2010 from Timothy Esser, as Exhibit No. 19.

Entered into the record an email dated April 28, 2010 from Anita Hornback, as Exhibit No. 20.

Entered into the record a letter from Dora & Walter Mih, as Exhibit No. 21.

GARL

Asked for comments from the Commission.

DISCUSSION

The Commission clarified that this will be going to City Council.

GARL

Opened the public comment portion.

Lisa Nelson
PO Box 935
Pullman, WA 99163

Stated that she is a realtor and serves as secretary of the Landlord/Tenant Association. She also stated that she is opposed to the proposal. Down zoning would not protect the Historic District but make it incompatible.

John Chapman
405 NW North Street
Pullman, WA 99163

Stated that he looked at the application for Historic District designation. Development stopped around 1960 and only 8 homes have been built since. 34 new homes would need to be built to threaten the Historic District designation. Also only 2 historic homes have been demolished; one was condemned by the city and the other was torn down by Washington State University for a parking lot.

Anita Hornback
405 NW North Street
Pullman, WA 99163

Stated that she owns properties in the Historic District and is opposed to the proposed re-zone. She was surprised at the restrictions for non-conforming homes - no decks, carports, bay windows, play houses, ramps. Asked how that would affect a disabled person.

ANDERSON

Asked for clarification on nonconforming use.

DICKINSON

Stated that a bay window and a ramp for a disabled person would

likely be allowed. No accessory buildings or expansions of existing structures are allowed. Also, if a structure is destroyed by 75% or more of its value, it can only be rebuilt under the zoning in effect at the time of reconstruction. Variances are available, but the owner would need to prove a definite hardship.

Wayne Popeski
515 NW Robert Street
Pullman, WA 99163

Stated that he owns property on College Hill and is opposed to the proposed re-zone. He read a letter discussing the dilapidated house at 1070 NE Monroe Street and why it was torn down and the current project being built there.

DICKINSON

Entered into the record a letter from Wayne Popeski and Jian Chen, as Exhibit No. 22.

Mike Miller
710 NE Michigan
Pullman, WA 99163

Stated that he is a resident of College Hill and lives on Michigan Street across from Jian Chen's project. Explained that an elderly woman with mental health issues lived in the dilapidated house on Monroe street and was removed for her own safety. Now when he looks out his window he sees a monster, a large box, probably the largest one possible. Agrees the old house needed to be torn down, but not replaced with a building that will house 12 students. Named other developments that are just as ugly on College Hill. Asked where the development is going and if more monsters will be built. Opined that the College Hill Historic District will be a student ghetto.

Julie Hungate
715 NE Stadium Way
Pullman, WA 99163

Stated that she has lived on College Hill for more than 17 years. The buildings that have been built recently on College Hill are not homes. Agrees that the Monroe Street house needed to be torn down. Concerned about parking and that the College Hill sewers will not be able to handle more people. Asked how College Hill can support a 12 bedroom project when it can not support more homes. Stated that the students cause families to move off of College Hill because they are not respectful of the properties.

WENDLE

Asked for clarification on parking spaces.

DICKINSON

Explained that one off-street parking space is required per bedroom.

Austin Wilmerding
430 NE Howard Street
Pullman, WA 99163

Stated that he owns two houses on Howard Street. One is his principle house and the other is a rental. He has remodeled them to be historically accurate. Stated that he opposes the proposed re-zone because it might preclude remodeling of homes such as he has done. He feels that a more effective way to control the look of College Hill is through design standards.

Rebecca Henderson
1010 NE Monroe Street
Pullman, WA 99163

Stated that she owns two homes on Monroe Street and opposes the proposed re-zone. Would like to see the characteristics preserved on College Hill, but feels the re-zone is not the correct route.

Mark Henderson
1010 NE Monroe Street
Pullman, WA 99163

Stated that he owns two houses on Monroe Street and opined that the proposed re-zone is not likely to help the characteristics of College Hill architecturally.

Mary Reed
313 NW Webb Street
Pullman, WA 99163

Opined that College Hill fits into a larger picture of Pullman; College Hill is a historic core of Pullman. Stated that she is in favor of the proposed re-zone. Moved to Pullman in 1977 and works with historical preservation.

Allison Munch-Rotolo
635 NE Illinois
Pullman, WA 99163

Stated that she is representing the College Hill Association. Aesthetics and density are both important subjects, but historic preservation is the main issue. Feels that R2 zoning might cause eventual revocation of the historic district designation. The most common building activity in the College Hill area is alterations to the buildings. These alterations compromise the historic character of the area incrementally. Mentioned that the re-zoning of Military Hill to an RT had no ill-effects. Suggested 8 different findings of facts.

DICKINSON

Entered into the record a memorandum from Allison Munch-Rotolo, as Exhibit No. 23.

Tim Sullivan
PO Box 418
Albion, WA 99102

Stated that he supports the proposed re-zone and has been a local contractor for 14 years. Feels the proposed re-zone would make the College Hill area more family oriented.

Sue Armitage
Pullman, WA 99163

Stated that a letter from Anita Hornback, Attachment CC to the staff report, has a misstated fact. The letter states that the boards of the League of Women Voters and the College Hill Association overlap to a great extent. She clarified that she is the only person that serves on both boards, and she has recused herself from College Hill Association board discussions regarding this zoning matter.

Alice Schroeder
145 SW Arbor
Pullman, WA 99163

Stated that she is representing the League of Women Voters and read a letter in support of the proposed re-zone.

DICKINSON

Entered into the record a letter from Alice Schroeder, as Exhibit No. 24.

KNona Liddell

Stated that she has lived on College Hill for 15 years and is

520 NE Howard
Pullman, WA 99163

concerned that the infrastructure does not support today's density standards. Urged passage of the proposed re-zone.

Jim Peters
1120 NE Indiana
Pullman, WA 99163

Thanked the Commission members. Stated that he is a new member to College Hill. Feels there are compelling reasons for both sides of the proposed re-zone, but he is for the re-zone. Also stated that the re-zone would make his home non-conforming, but he is still supportive of the proposal.

Eileen Macoll
Pullman, WA 99163

Stated that she is an officer in the Landlord/Tenant Association. Indicated that the League of Women Voters has made inaccurate statements. For example, Alice Schroeder misspoke about the proposed re-zone being an up-zone. Mentioned potential funding sources for historic properties and said zoning has no influence on these funding mechanisms.

Jeannette Gordon
125 SE High Street
Pullman, WA 99163

Noted that she is the treasurer of the Landlord/Tenant Association. Stated that she is opposed to the proposed re-zone.

Frances Bose
1030 SW Meyer Drive
Pullman, WA 99163

Stated that she is supportive of the proposed re-zone and that there has been a lot of double talk in reference to this matter.

Kathy Wilson
330 N Grand Avenue
Pullman, WA 99163

Stated that she owns DRA Rentals and manages many of the properties within the proposed zone change area. She has lived in Pullman since 1971 and strongly opposes the proposal. Opined that a re-zone from R2 to RT will not decrease the number of people and College Hill has become more and more student oriented. She asked that the city keep the R2 zoning to maintain property values in the area.

Michael Schwartz
1005 NE Indiana
Pullman, WA 99163

Stated that he is a former tenant of DRA Rentals. Feels that students and families will always live on College Hill and he is a student himself. He said if the city allows more apartments on College Hill, the area will lose its essence. Submitted a letter.

DICKINSON

Entered into the record a letter by Michael Schwartz, as Exhibit No. 25.

Robert Greene
Pullman, WA 99163

Stated that he has worked in urban planning for a variety of places including Boulder, Colorado and Pullman, Washington. Supports the proposed re-zone and submitted an article from the Daily Evergreen. Feels that there is not enough adequate parking and there is a need to preserve the neighborhood.

DICKINSON

Entered into the record the article "Samaritans collect College

Hill cans” from the Daily Evergreen dated April 28, 2010 as Exhibit No. 26.

Donald Schneider
PO Box 821
Pullman, WA 99163

Stated that he is a property owner on College Hill and down zoning is not needed to control density on College Hill.

Julie Schneider
PO Box 821
Pullman, WA 99163

Stated that she is a property owner on College Hill and opined the down zoning will not satisfy the folks who express concern about the appearance of construction currently being done on College Hill. She is against the proposed re-zone.

Mike Gordon
125 SE High Street
Pullman, WA 99163

Stated that he is the owner of Summit Realty, a Pullman resident and has property on College Hill. Opined that the proposed re-zone will make non-conforming properties more difficult to sell, the aesthetics can be improved without the re-zone and that College Hill has improved since the 1980’s. He is opposed to the re-zone.

Terry Carlson
220 NW Robert Street
Pullman, WA 99163

Stated that he is an owner on College Hill and a resident of Pullman and opposed to the proposed re-zone. Said that folks who moved away from College Hill did so because the elementary school on the hill was closed. Submitted an article regarding the school district.

DICKINSON

Entered into the record an article titled “History of our School District” as submitted by Terry Carlson, as Exhibit No. 27.

Chris Clark
840 SE Bishop Boulevard
Pullman, WA 99163

Stated that he is with the Whitman County Association of Realtors and down zoning would make it harder to finance non-conforming residences.

Colleen MacDonald
1912 SW Canyon View Dr.
Pullman, WA 99163

Stated that she is opposed and a realtor in Pullman. She also stated that non-conforming residences are hard to finance.

Richard Domey
945 SE Glen Echo
Pullman, WA 99163

Stated that he is a former realtor and supports the proposed re-zone. He owns property on College Hill and supports anything that creates a family oriented College Hill Neighborhood.

Bill Skavdahl
310 NW North Street
Pullman, WA 99163

Said he has had 20 years of experience in the mortgage business. Stated the houses that would become non-conforming due to the proposed re-zone will be severely affected by financing.

Larry Woodbary
PO Box 9046
Moscow, ID 83843

Stated that he owns three properties on College Hill and does not support the proposed re-zone. He feels the city has enough tools to prevent undesirable development and that design standards

seem to be the real solution. Also said that it makes sense to house students close to campus.

Alex Hammond
1110 NE Indiana
Pullman, WA 99163

Stated that he has lived on College Hill since 1994 and is on the College Hill Association Board. An RT zone is not meant to drive students out; an R2 zone allows for development that detracts from the historic character of the area. Said the neighborhood has been lucky to have not experienced more building construction as of late, and the forces to develop the area under R2 housing densities are still quite strong. Submitted a planning department newsletter article.

DICKINSON

Entered into the record a planning department newsletter article dated October 28, 2005, submitted by Alex Hammond, as Exhibit No. 28.

GARL

Asked the Planning Commission about its preferences for continuation of this hearing.

MOTION

Anderson moved to reconvene May 26, 2010 at 7:30 p.m. to continue the public hearing. Seconded by Shannon and passed unanimously.

REGULAR BUSINESS

Conduct a public hearing to review and recommend action on a proposed zoning code text amendment involving required material for zoning code applications.

Dickinson stated that Pullman's insurance carrier, the Washington Cities Insurance Authority (WCIA) performed an audit of the city's land use procedures. The audit resulted in very few mandates, and the city was complimented on its solid risk management record. One of the deficiencies cited by WCIA was a clause in the subsection of the zoning code related to application requirements. This subsection sets forth a list of materials that are required to be submitted for each zoning code application. In addition to demanding specific items, the aforementioned subsection also states that the applicant may be required to provide "further information" for an application at the discretion of city staff, the Board of Adjustment, the Planning Commission, or the City Council. WCIA objected to the open-ended nature of this provision, indicating that it could potentially be used to extend an application process indefinitely. The provision in question was included in the zoning code in 1987 to provide city officials with flexibility regarding application requirements since different projects can vary substantially in scope and intensity. Planning staff fully appreciates the concerns of WCIA and recommends that the subject regulation be deleted.

ANDERSON

Asked for clarification on No. 3d and No. 3e in the Draft Zoning Code Text Amendments Pullman City Code Section 17.175.030.

GARL Asked for public comments. No members of the audience offered remarks.

Closed the public comments portion of the hearing.

MOTION Crow moved to accept Resolution No. PC-2010-2 as submitted by staff. Seconded by Shannon and passed unanimously by roll call vote.

OTHER BUSINESS The Commission decided to discuss architectural design standards for College Hill at their regular scheduled meeting July 28, 2010.

UPCOMING MEETINGS Crow will not be available May 26, 2010.
Bergstedt will not be available June 23, 2010.

MOTION Shannon moved to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Crow and passed unanimously.

ADJOURNMENT The meeting was adjourned at 10:33 pm.

ATTEST:

Chair

Planning Director

Secretary