

CITY OF PULLMAN
PLANNING COMMISSION
Regular Meeting Minutes
February 25, 2009

The City of Pullman Planning Commission held a regular meeting at 7:30 p.m. on Wednesday, February 25, 2009, in Council Chambers, City Hall, 325 SE Paradise, Pullman, Washington with Chair Stephen Garl presiding.

ROLL CALL: Present: Anderson, Bergstedt, Crow, Garl, Gruen, Paulson, Shannon
Staff: Dickinson, Johnson

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

MOTION Shannon moved to accept the minutes of January 28 2009 Regular Meeting as prepared. Seconded by Crow and passed unanimously.

REGULAR BUSINESS Garl read the rules of procedure and qualified Commission members.

City of Pullman Planning Department proposal to amend the Comprehensive Plan map and zoning classification from R1 to R3 on a 35.8-acre parcel of land located along SE Johnson Avenue approximately 2,000 feet south of its intersection with SE Old Moscow Road on Pioneer Hill.

Dickinson stated that the applicant is the City of Pullman Planning Department. The subject property was annexed to the City in July 2008 with no prezone designation. Per the City of Pullman's zoning code, if no prezone designation exists for annexed property, that property is construed to have an R1 classification; however, the Planning Commission must review the zoning of the property within a year of annexation. At its December 17, 2008 meeting, the Planning Commission recommended considering an R3 zoning designation for the subject property on a preliminary basis.

Dickinson stated that the Planning Commission has several options, including recommending an R3 designation, an R2 designation, an RT designation, or retaining the R1 designation for the subject property.

Entered into the record Staff Report No. 09-2, with Attachments A through N, as Exhibit No. 1.

Dickinson answered questions regarding the South Bypass possible route; what currently occupies the proposed route; that access to the subject property would most likely be by Johnson Avenue; potential impact from adjacent commercial uses even though the land is not accessed through the commercial zone; possible impact on the river and wetlands caused by development of the subject property; indicated that environmental impact requirements are generally the

same for all residential zoning districts with any variations being negligible; clarified that no residential uses are allowed in the floodway and the floodplain; possibility of recommending multiple zoning designations by dividing the property into chunks; maximum density for development of the entire property; the proposed pedestrian pathway along Johnson Avenue.

GARL

Reiterated the options offered by Dickinson. Called for proponents; no response. Called for opponents.

Bill Kabasenche
476 Old Moscow Road
Pullman, WA 99163

Recommended that the Planning Commission visit the site before making any decisions regarding the zoning of the property. Stated that his greatest concerns were environmental specifically regarding development on the river. Stated that Pullman has no “urban wilderness” and encouraged the use of this site as such and, if the Commission did not consider this site, then to consider another site within the City. Opined that the cinema is not a huge issue for residents. Stated his opposition to the proposed South Bypass route. Also opined that the subject property is not within walking distance of Washington State University (WSU).

Christopher Schlott
252 Johnson Road
Pullman, WA 99163

Stated that he owns one of the three private homes on the subject property. Stated that he is concerned about the quality of life. Urged the Planning Commission to make a site visit. Stated that he was not thrilled with the theater construction, but opined there is a geographic break between the cinema structure and subject property. Concerned that the development allowed in an R3 zone would negatively affect property values. Stated that his is an established neighborhood with a very rural feel. Opined it would be ill-advised to impact what is becoming exceedingly unique within Pullman.

George Crowe
533 Johnson Road
Pullman, WA 99163

Stated that he has lived on and his family has owned their property for 35 years and that his father was the head of the Economics Department. Opined that the proposed rezone is totally out of character with the existing neighborhood; that it is a very riparian area. Stated that he is concerned about the environmental impact of possible future development and additional noise and litter in the area. Opined that retaining the R1 would be more in character with the existing neighborhood. Stated that the proposed South Bypass would go through the existing Askins house and barn.

Nancy Gregory
1800 SE Johnson Avenue
Pullman, WA 99163

Stated that her property was annexed into the city 15 years ago; that she owns a triplex and is already in an R3 zone. Stated that she is also concerned about the environmental impact and feels that it is a conflict of interest for the City to decide environmental impacts for their proposal. Also indicated that the Glen Haven care facility

located on the subject property is an adult care home and can have no more than 6 residents.

DICKINSON

Answered questions regarding willingness of the City to accept suggestions for the South Bypass route and indicated that the current proposed route is the most direct and cost-friendly connection between Highway 195 and the east end of Airport Road.

Nancy Gregory

Stated that the Bellevue Duplexes used to be student housing and opined that it was a disaster regarding noise and litter.

DICKINSON

Answered questions regarding possible future development and that any required environmental checklist would need to be prepared and submitted by the developer; the City being able to require that a developer reserve land for the proposed South Bypass.

H. Marie Miller
502 Johnson Road
Pullman, WA 99163

Provided a quick history of the property and the reasoning behind the annexation. Reiterated that the land was annexed and it is the Planning Commission's responsibility to decide what to do with land never previously part of the Comprehensive Plan. Recommended checking with the hospital regarding their future development plans, as they are owners of a major portion of the commercially designated property west of the subject property. Also questioned the need for making the zone change now, as opposed to making the change at some later date.

Don Miller
502 Johnson Road
Pullman, WA 99163

Stated that the Bellevue Duplexes R3 zone is very small. Congratulated the City on their utilization of the river as a geographic boundary. Opined that it would be a huge mistake to change the zone of the subject property to R3. Stated that the subject property is more than one mile from the south entrance of Stadium Way and opined that would mean the property is not within walking distance for students. Stated that the subject property exhibits far more wildlife than was listed in the Environmental Checklist for the proposed rezone.

DICKINSON

Entered into the record Chapter 173-26 WAC, Shoreline Master Program Guidelines, handout provided by Don Miller as Exhibit No. 2.

GARL

Called for neutral parties.

Rex Burns
452 Old Moscow Road
Pullman, WA 99163

Stated that a couple of years back the South Bypass route was a county issue. Opined that this proposed rezone seems to be more about the South Bypass than about the zone change.

DICKINSON Clarified that he didn't want to present the zone change to the Commission while excluding the information about the South Bypass Route, especially since the route listed has been designated by the City Council as their preferred route. Answered questions regarding the current proposed South Bypass route and indicated that it does include land under both City and County jurisdiction.

GARL Stated that since there were no proponents, there was no need for rebuttal to the comments previously made; closed the public input portion of the hearing.

DISCUSSION Dickinson answered questions regarding the City Code requiring a zoning designation to be determined within one year of annexation for any land without a pre-zone designation; clarified why City Staff recommended an R3 zone.

Bergstedt suggested a site visit; Crow supported the suggestion. Anderson said he was opposed to a site visit because of the difficulties experienced previously by the Planning Commission in coordinating a site visit. Shannon agreed with Anderson about the site visit and stated that he feels adequately prepared to make a decision. Gruen opined there was no compelling reason to make the zone change at this time although he understands the compelling reason why the issue has been brought forth.

Garl reiterated the options available to the Planning Commission: to recommend the change to the proposed R3 zone; split the zoning of the subject property; retain the current R1 default zoning.

Anderson stated he was inclined to talk about split zoning, but also willing to retain the R1. Shannon prefers to retain the current R1 zoning designation. Paulson pointed out that the hospital does own part of the C3 that abuts the subject property to the west but that they don't own it all.

Garl answered questions regarding knowledge of the property and some knowledge of the topography of the subject property. Stated that he could see a benefit to splitting the zone, but can also see the lack of demand for R3 in this area.

GARL Performed a quick straw poll on the Commission members and, based on the results that showed unanimous support for an R1 designation, requested that Staff re-word the resolutions to support retaining the current R1 zoning for the subject property.

DICKINSON Suggested that the Commission take up the subject again at their

regularly scheduled meeting of March 25, 2009.

MOTION

Shannon moved to continue the hearing for Zone Change Application No. Z-08-2 until March 25, 2009 at 7:30 pm. Seconded by Crow and passed unanimously.

BREAK

9:26 to 9:32 p.m.

REGULAR BUSINESS

Conduct discussion about the College Hill Tomorrow stakeholder workshops held in February.

Dickinson stated there were two workshops held in February, on the 4th and the 18th, with a pretty good turn-out, although WSU student representation was limited to the first half of the second meeting. Stated that the next step is a draft neighborhood plan for Planning Commission review and recommendation to the City Council.

Bergstedt stated that she thoroughly enjoyed the workshops and she felt that there were good, constructive comments provided. Opined that there are some short-term goals and some longer-term goals to be addressed. Really appreciated the Police Department input, especially in regards to their outreach education programs for students. Indicated that some short-term goals might include: providing safe, long-term parking and/or restricting parking to one side of the street; an adopt-a-street program similar to the state's adopt-a-highway program. Stated that a longer-term goal would be design standards.

Anderson stated that at each meeting he learns something new, but he feels that it is time to move forward. He stated that most people at the workshops appeared to be in favor of the mixed-use feel of the area. Suggested that the Planning Commission address parking. Stated that the topic of greatest dissent seemed to be density on College Hill.

Shannon really appreciated meeting with the people directly. Suggested that Planning Commission meetings be televised like the City Council meetings are in order to stimulate public knowledge.

Dickinson stated that it was difficult to get student representatives to participate, but that they have agreed to take part in individual interviews so that they can at least weigh-in on the topics discussed during the times they were not attending the workshops.

Gruen appreciated Staff's effort to get the students to take part and appreciated the student input during their attendance. Agreed with Anderson's statement that the discussions have occurred repeatedly and it is time to move ahead. Opined that there are too many items to address all at once but that some items could be pinpointed as

current priority.

Anderson and Garl reminded the Commissioners that while all of the information will be forwarded to the City Council, the Commission should focus mainly on the items that fall under their purview.

Dickinson stated that the City Council has requested a comprehensive neighborhood plan, and opined that the plan can encompass more topics than the Planning Commission is required to address. Indicated it might be worthwhile to have a joint meeting with the Parks and Recreation Commission and the Police Advisory Board. Suggested that a draft plan be produced within the next few months.

Bergstedt agrees on the need for input from other entities, and opined that any neighborhood plan for College Hill could be a prototype for other areas of the city.

Paulson requested input from the Public Works department regarding infrastructure improvements on College Hill.

Anderson said he does not have a problem with televising Planning Commission meetings.

Allison Munch-Rotolo
635 NE Illinois Street
Pullman, WA 99163

Stated that there are four students on the College Hill Association (CHA) Board, that she enjoys working with the students. The CHA is asking for immediate and short-term goals rather than short-term and long-term goals. Suggested the Commission move forward, especially in regards to density, zoning and design guidelines.

DISCUSSION

Paulson suggested holding a meeting on College Hill rather than always at City Hall in order to increase student participation.

Munch-Rotolo

Answered questions regarding immediate goals and asked that the College Hill Historic District zone be changed to an RT zone.

Alex Hammond
1110 NE Indiana Street
Pullman, WA 99163

Stated that he agrees with Munch-Rotolo that things need to move forward. Opined that it would be nice to have a plan that considers the economic forces at work in the College Hill neighborhood to encourage sales and turning properties into commercial ventures; that a solid plan might recognize the profit motive but would encourage more restorative uses of money; that it might be difficult but should be possible to find formulas that would encourage investment in reconstruction/remodeling.

DISCUSSION

Anderson suggested talking about consistent/inconsistent and

compatible/incompatible versus ugly/pretty construction. Opined it would be wise of investors and developers to remodel older homes with a target audience of temporary faculty and staff rentals.

Gruen addressed Hammond's argument towards economic incentives and agrees it would be more successful that addressing aesthetics. Suggested considering other historic districts and "University" districts around the country, including "Professorville" outside Stanford University, for templates of design standards.

OTHER BUSINESS

Garl asked about the status of new Commissioners to fill the two open positions. Dickinson said no progress had been made.

UPCOMING MEETINGS

No Commissioners expressed difficulty with attending the regular meetings of March 25 or April 22, 2009. Anderson and Paulson both indicated they would not be available for the May 27, 2009 regular meeting.

MOTION

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

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 10:27 pm

ATTEST:

Chair

Planning Director

Secretary