CITY OF PULLMAN **PLANNING COMMISSION**

Regular Meeting Minutes November 28, 2007

The City of Pullman Planning Commission held a regular meeting at 7:30 p.m. on Wednesday, November 28, 2007, in Council Chambers, City Hall, 325 SE Paradise, Pullman, Washington with Chair Stephen Garl presiding.

ROLL CALL: Present: Anderson, Bergstedt, Crow, Garl, Gruen, Paulson,

Ronniger

Excused: Streva Absent: Utzman

Staff: Dickinson, Johnson

GARL Called the meeting to order at 7:35 p.m. and called roll.

MOTION Crow moved to continue the meeting until after the conclusion of the

Landmarks Commission special meeting. Seconded by Anderson and

passed unanimously.

GARL Called the meeting back to order at 8:14 p.m.

MOTION Anderson moved to accept the minutes of the October 24, 2006 Regular

Meeting as written. Seconded by Gruen and passed unanimously.

REGULAR BUSINESS

Conduct discussion regarding parking in the downtown area.

Dickinson explained that the Planning Commission has been studying this topic since February 2007. The most recent session was held by the City Council on October 30th; they have asked for a Planning Commission recommendation regarding this matter. City Staff has updated the research previously conducted on comparable cities and their off-street parking requirements.

City Staff also conducted a survey of several stakeholders including downtown merchants, real estate developers, residents of adjacent neighborhoods, and one WSU official. Depending on the groups that staff spoke to, the responses were pretty similar. For example, the primary theme of the residents in the surrounding neighborhoods close to downtown was that the city needs some sort of off-street parking requirement, ranging from one space per dwelling unit to one space per bedroom. The opposite extreme was the real estate developers who believed that there wasn't an extreme problem, certainly not right now, and the city needed to look at the possibility of future parking structures in the downtown. The primary theme from the merchants was better code enforcement for parking downtown.

Dickinson answered questions regarding parking structures; requirements for off-street parking versus on-street parking.

DISCUSSION

Commission members discussed different aspects of parking facilities including cost and aesthetics. Paulson stated that he was invited to attend a Business Development Committee of the Chamber of Commerce meeting and that their primary concern was enforcement with their secondary concern being clear labeling of parking. Paulson opined that enforcement would be the most efficient way to deal with parking downtown. Commissioners expressed concern about off-street parking requirements resulting in street frontage becoming driveways and parking lots.

DICKINSON

Explained that the city currently requires the commercial ground-floor space to be at least 50 percent of the residential space above.

TODD BUTLER 610 SE High Street Pullman, WA 99163 Stated that he is President of the Pullman Pioneer Hill Association (PPHA). Indicated that unless the developer needs a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for their development, they don't have to provide any off-street parking for development in the downtown C2 district. Stated that a Board of Adjustment member, during a hearing regarding a CUP, asked for a specific definition for the term "adequate parking" in the CUP review criteria. Requested that the Commission provide a definition for "adequate." Stated that the PPHA would be satisfied with one off-street parking space per dwelling unit. Opined that such a requirement would put constraints on development, but will not kill development; instead it would encourage development that is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. Expressed opposition to private use of public parking lots.

ALICE SCHROEDER 145 SW Arbor Street Pullman, WA 99163 Stated that she is President of the League of Women Voters (League) and referred to a letter previously submitted by the League regarding this issue. The League does support Todd Butler and the PPHA's analysis that a large residential development on the edge of downtown without parking is very likely to disturb both the commercial area and to the residential area on Pioneer Hill. It is difficult to believe that people will be in Pullman without cars. Opined that some developers would take advantage of one parking space per dwelling unit such that, rather than the construction of two two-bedroom apartments, they would build one four-bedroom apartment, so further definition of the parking requirement would be necessary.

DICKINSON

Explained that staff had revisited the information provided earlier in the year regarding the number of downtown dwelling units and the number of off-street parking spaces assigned to those dwelling units; if the Pioneer Square Apartments for senior citizens were excluded from the

calculation, the number of dwelling units downtown is 72 and the number of off-street parking spaces is 94, for a ratio of approximately 1.3 parking spaces per dwelling unit. This could be construed one of two ways: 1) the development community is already addressing this issue, or 2) requiring one parking space per dwelling would not be a hardship for developers. He also answered questions regarding the possibility of hiring a consultant.

TODD BUTLER 610 SE High Street Pullman, WA 99163 Opined that the City Council appears to be asking for a general sense of this matter from the Planning Commission, and not necessarily a specific recommendation. Also opined that he saw several specific areas of concern, including: private use of public parking areas; currently vague terminology for conditional uses to have "adequate parking"; longer-term development to consider aesthetics and design standards.

DISCUSSION

Anderson stated his interest in an off-street parking requirement of one space per dwelling, with extra spaces being required for additional bedrooms over a certain threshold. Gruen said he favored better enforcement, a permit parking system, and better identification of existing parking, but he was not supportive of an off-street parking requirement by itself because the city would not be able to control the location of the parking; he expressed concern that additional parking facilities at the street level would disrupt the existing urban fabric of commercial storefronts downtown. Ronniger asked in the short term for additional information (such as a map of downtown dwellings and their parking spaces); he also expressed interest in taking advantage of the current energy of the stakeholders to create a long-term vision for the downtown area. Garl advocated instead for conducting that process during the next Comprehensive Plan update. Crow said she favored an off-street parking requirement (at least one space per dwelling) and better identification of existing parking lots. Anderson and Bergstedt both expressed interest in design standards for parking improvements to lessen the visual impact of these facilities.

Garl facilitated a discussion regarding matters upon which the Commission could agree. As a result of this discussion, the Commission came to a consensus on four recommendations that they would like to forward to the City Council:

- 1. Provide better code enforcement of existing downtown parking regulations.
- 2. More clearly identify parking opportunities downtown.
- 3. Explore permit parking for downtown residents in central business district parking lots.
- 4. If parking is required for downtown residential uses, then design standards for that parking should be developed.

REGULAR BUSINESS

Review for consistency with the Comprehensive Plan the proposed dedication of NE Brandi Way. Garl asked for the Staff Report.

Dickinson stated that Town Centre, LLC submitted a proposal to dedicate right-of-way for NE Brandi Way; it provides a connection between NE Valley Road and NE Terre View Drive; it is approximately 60 feet wide and 1,700 feet long; being submitted to provide access to the existing Churchill Downs apartment complex developed by Duane Brelsford and his group as well as future apartments to be accessed off this street; both Public Works and Planning Departments believe this road will assist with traffic efficiency and safety in this area and thus is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. Answered questions regarding 60-foot width of NE Brandi Way, requirements for traffic signs, current construction of the street.

MOTION

Crow moved to find the proposed roadway dedication consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. Seconded by Gruen and passed unanimously.

REGULAR BUSINESS

Take action on a request by planning department staff to withdraw and reinitiate a prezone change from R2 Low Density Multi-Family Residential to C1 Neighborhood Commercial for a 9,000square-foot parcel located north of Old Wawawai Road and west of Sunnyside Park and a zoning code amendment to revise the use classification for radio and television studios in the C1 zoning district.

Garl asked for the Staff Report.

Dickinson stated that in 2004 the Hinrichs family submitted an annexation proposal and the City Council instructed the Hinrichs family to include additional property in order to create orderly city limit boundaries. This additional property includes land that is owned by the Radio Palouse, Inc. and is occupied by their radio studio. Back in 2005, the Planning Commission initiated a re-zone from R2 Low Density Multi-Family Residential to C1 Neighborhood Commercial and the zoning code text amendment to allow radio studios in the C1 zone to make it so that the radio studio would not be a non-conforming use in that R2 district. For some time, it looked like the Hinrichs would resolve the matter by requesting a rezone of a fairly large chunk of land to a C3 General Commercial Zone and include the radio station land in that, but that proposal has been abandoned. Approval of the legal description for the entire property that the Hinrichs need to annex is approaching and the zoning code time limits have expired on the initial cases. Dickinson requested that the old cases be officially withdrawn by Answered questions motion and initiated again, also by motion. regarding contacting the Hinrichs about this issue.

MOTION

Crow moved to withdraw the original proposals and to initiate new proposals to change the prezone designation for the Radio Palouse, Inc. land from R2 to C1 Neighborhood Commercial, and revise the use classification for radio and television studios in the C1 zoning district from "prohibited" to "permitted." Anderson seconded and passed unanimously.

November 28, 2007

Planning Commission

Secretary