

CITY OF PULLMAN  
**PLANNING COMMISSION**  
Regular Meeting Minutes  
January 24, 2007

The City of Pullman Planning Commission held a regular meeting at 7:30 p.m. on Wednesday, January 24, 2007, in Council Chambers, City Hall, 325 SE Paradise, Pullman, Washington with Chair John Anderson presiding.

ROLL CALL: Present: Anderson, Garl, Gruen, Paulson, Ronniger, Streva, Utzman  
Staff: Dickinson, Johnson

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ANDERSON Called the meeting to order at 7:33 p.m. and called roll.

MOTION Streva moved to accept the minutes of the December 13, 2006 Special Meeting as written. Seconded by Garl and passed unanimously.

**REGULAR BUSINESS** Anderson asked for the Staff Report.

Richard and Pamela DeBowes petition for vacation of a 10-foot-wide portion of South Street located north of South Street and west of Spring Street on Pioneer Hill

Dickinson stated that on December 21, 2006, Richard and Pamela DeBowes submitted a petition to vacate real property. The subject parcel is a 10-foot-wide by 100-foot-long portion of public right of way located along the northernmost portion of South Street and west of Spring Street on Pioneer Hill. Planning staff suggests that the Commission recommend to the City Council that the proposed vacation is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

Answered questions regarding street width, parking on that portion of the street, ownership of adjacent land, how the cost is determined for the land to be purchased by adjacent landowner, and zoning in the area of the subject property.

MOTION Garl moved to find the proposed vacation consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. Seconded by Streva and passed unanimously.

**REGULAR BUSINESS** Anderson asked for the Staff Report.

Richard and Pamela DeBowes petition for vacation of a 40-foot-wide portion of Jackson Street located west of Spring Street on Pioneer Hill

Dickinson stated that on December 21, 2006, Richard and Pamela DeBowes submitted a petition to vacate real property. The subject parcel is a 40-foot-wide by 100-foot-long portion of public right of way located west of Spring Street on Pioneer Hill. Dickinson stated that Public Works reviewed the application and commented on the likelihood of City water, sanitary sewer and/or franchise utilities within the proposed vacation area so utility easements would need to be retained and no building would be allowed within the vacation area with a professional survey identifying and locating said utilities at the

petitioner's expense. Public Services also revised the subject petition and commented that the vacation proposal might eliminate the existing volunteer-maintained pedestrian path from Spring Street to Pine Street.

Planning staff suggests that the Commission recommend to the City Council that the proposed vacation is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan provided appropriate easements are retained for pedestrian access and utilities.

**MOTION**

Garl moved to find the proposed vacation consistent with the Comprehensive Plan provided appropriate easements are retained for pedestrian access and utilities. Seconded by Streva and passed unanimously.

**REGULAR BUSINESS**  
Reevaluation of  
Pullman's Urban Growth  
Area

Dickinson read the introductory memorandum and explained the memorandum prepared for the City Council meeting on January 9, 2007. Answered questions regarding lack of industrial and commercial land on the maps; projected growth of WSU; ratio of high-density, multi-family residential versus low-density single-family; land not conducive to development within the city limits; park lands mentioned in Table 2 but not in the additional tables; lack of a requirement for park land per development; county development in close proximity to city limits; potential meeting between Planning Commission and County Planning; water use and limitations for landowners with wells; historical development of Pullman; minimum lot size within City limits.

**DISCUSSION**

The Commission discussed whether the proposed Urban Growth Area could be considered urban sprawl; members expressed concerns about city services being offered efficiently to future developments.

**DICKINSON**

Stated that he could invite the Public Works director to come speak with the Commission specifically about water rights.

**REGULAR BUSINESS**  
Discussion of Storm  
Water Management  
Issues

Dickinson stated that this was a topic requested by commission member Ronniger.  
  
Ronniger stated that he believes this to be a "quality-of-life" issue; he really believes in conserving, re-using and augmenting water resources; he would like to raise awareness of the issue before it becomes a problem.

**DICKINSON**

Suggested that it might be helpful to have a consultant come in to conduct a seminar on this issue. The Department of Ecology has mandated that the City be included in the new stormwater regulations for certain cities and counties in Washington State and those are being promulgated in accordance with the Federal Clean Water Act. There are some people that think the State has gone overboard in terms of those

requirements and that they are being forced upon us before we can finish all the studies that are currently being done on our water quality. The City Council did take a vote to appeal the decision that the City be required to implement those stormwater regulations. Finalization of that vote will be on February 6, 2007, but it looks like the City will join in an appeal with the Association of Washington Cities and several other municipalities that are concerned about this and the seeming overkill nature of the regulations.

**DISCUSSION**

The Commission discussed storm water, fresh water, gray water and water in general; the importance of being educated on the topic; the annual Palouse Basin Water Summit; the Palouse Basin Aquifer Committee; the importance of involving more stakeholders, including but not limited to Whitman County, Moscow, City Boards and Commissions, City Council and city residents.

**REGULAR BUSINESS**  
Election of  
Chairperson and Vice-  
Chairperson

Commission members thanked Anderson for his leadership and guidance as Chairperson.

Streva moved to elect Garl as Chairperson and Ronniger as Vice-chairperson for 2007. Seconded by Gruen and passed unanimously.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

Todd Butler  
610 SE High Street  
Pullman, WA 99163

Mr. Butler came forward specifically to introduce the topic of parking concerns in the Central Business District, mostly brought to a point of concern by the proposed Paradise and High Street development which involves a main floor of commercial space and 50 one- to three-bedroom residential units. He pointed out that the C2 zone has no parking requirements and that he believes this is a thinly veiled attempt to use the Zoning Code to allow for a massive apartment complex to be constructed with no parking requirements for its tenants. Asked the Planning Commission to direct Planning Staff to conduct a study on parking use and needs in the Central Business District.

Mike Monahan  
Portland, OR

Stated that he has numerous years experience with urban development in Portland. He said that Pullman is a real target for growth for retirees who desire to return to their "old small college-town experience." Opined that downtowns are optimal for development as they are perceived as "safe." Proposed that the city approach WSU Planning and Architectural departments to act on a voluntary basis to identify the core downtown area and develop an overlay project for downtown. Suggested that multi-level parking structures may be the answer.

**GRUEN**

Stated that in the most vibrant downtowns, parking is an issue and people put up with it.

Nancy Larson-Powers  
335 SE High Street  
Pullman, WA 99163

Stated that she has lived in Pullman for the last 28 years. Expressed her concerns with the current parking issues downtown and the increased difficulty that will be caused if Paradise Downtown, LLC is allowed to build an apartment building with 50 one- to three-bedroom units. She opined that there isn't any place to park now.

Todd Butler  
610 SE High Street  
Pullman, WA 99163

Asked the Planning Commission to direct Planning Staff to: 1) Clear up the confusion within City agencies; 2) provide for more formal processes to allow for community input; 3) invite additional stakeholders including WSU, small business owners, large business owners, developers and residents to participate in the discussion.

**DISCUSSION**

Commission discussed the parking issues; the desire for a review of the current status; the cost of a parking structure and the cost per a parking slot.

**MOTION**

Garl moved to direct planning staff to: 1) determine the number of existing housing units downtown and the parking spaces assigned to them; 2) identify downtown properties that could be used for housing because they are vacant or underutilized; and 3) provide an estimated cost of a parking garage on a per parking space basis.

**OTHER BUSINESS**  
Update on new  
Commission members

Dickinson stated that the Mayor has been focusing on the Board of Adjustment because it had lost so many members that it was difficult to get a quorum, but that it appears the Commission may get one or two new members within a few months. Garl recommended including a blurb about the need for commission members in the monthly Planning Newsletter.

**UPCOMING MEETINGS**

Anderson stated that he will possibly be unavailable for the Regular Meeting scheduled for February 28, 2007.

**MOTION**

Garl moved to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Strevva and passed unanimously.

**ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 9:50 pm

**ATTEST:**

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Chair

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Planning Director

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Secretary