

CITY OF PULLMAN  
**PLANNING COMMISSION**

Regular Meeting Minutes  
September 27, 2006

The City of Pullman Planning Commission held a regular meeting at 7:30 p.m. on Wednesday, September 27, 2006, in Council Chambers, City Hall, 325 SE Paradise, Pullman, Washington with Chair John Anderson presiding.

ROLL CALL:           Present:       Anderson, Streva, Garl, Martin, Ronniger  
                          Excused:     Gruen, Irby  
                          Staff:       Dickinson, Johnson

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ANDERSON            Called the meeting to order. Called roll.

MOTION              Martin moved to accept the minutes of the August 23, 2006, Regular Meeting as written. Seconded by Garl and passed unanimously.

**REGULAR BUSINESS**   Anderson read the public hearing rules of procedure, administered the Kathy Wilson proposal to amend the oath or affirmation for those wishing to provide testimony during the Comprehensive Plan hearing and qualified all Commission members. Asked for the staff Map and zoning report.

classification from R2 to R4 on a three-lot parcel of land totaling 18,000 square feet located at 400 and 420 NE Oak Street on College Hill.

Dickinson stated that the proposal involves the re-zoning of 18,000 square feet of land located at 400 and 420 NE Oak Street on College Hill, from R2 to R4 and the proposal also involves a revision of the Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map from Low-Density Residential to High-Density Residential. Stated that this proposal is identical to the re-zone proposal that was presented earlier this year. Staff is in favor of granting the request because high-density in the vicinity of WSU is beneficial as it is located near the community's destination point and facilitates pedestrian and bicycle travel to campus rather than the use of vehicles. The university is generally expanding and is expected to continue to grow. Stated that many of the lower-density areas on College Hill that are currently zoned R2 should be preserved to protect the mixed-use character of College Hill, but this area is unlike those other R2 areas; it is a narrow peninsula of R2 land surrounded on three sides by R4, a character that could continue to invite land-use conflicts. The proposed zone change would be compatible with surrounding land-use. Staff believes the traffic generation would be minimal given the size of the property to be re-zoned. Parking may actually be improved due to stricter standards in parking requirements than when the original structures were built.

Dickinson answered questions about the original application which was

presented to the commission and eventually denied by the City Council earlier this year; about the limit to how many times an action might be brought before the commission.

ANDERSON Opened the public testimony portion of the hearing. Called for proponents.

KATHY WILSON  
DRA Real Estate Stated that she had resubmitted this application for the property owners because, as planning personnel explained in their staff report, circumstances had changed since the time she filed the original application in 2005. She asserted that the zone change was appropriate because housing in the Maple Street area is nearly all renter-occupied, and there are a number of existing multi-family developments in the neighborhood, including the Elmhurst apartment house located directly across the street from the subject property. She said the owners have kept up the subject property in a habitable manner, but the limit of four unrelated persons per residence in the R2 zone makes it difficult to obtain sufficient revenue to maintain the property because costs for many items (insurance, for example) are rising quickly.

ANDERSON Called for opponents.

DENNIS EDGECOMBE  
705 SE Pheasant Run Ct.  
Pullman, WA 99163 Stated that he was speaking on behalf of the Sacred Heart Church at 440 NE Ash Street. He stated the church is opposed to attempts to increase the number of residents on College Hill because existing problems with parking and vandalism would be exacerbated.

RICHARD DOMEY  
945 SE Glen Echo Road  
Pullman, WA 99163 Explained that he owns rental property on College Hill and he himself lived in the area years ago. He noted that the problems started on College Hill when "slumlords" purchased properties, rented their housing units to an excessive number of students, and allowed these tenants to hold large parties, park on the front lawn, and degrade the appearance of the dwellings. He claimed that the residents at 400 NE Oak Street once held a party for 300 people that resulted in a collapsed floor at the house.

KNONA LIDDELL  
520 NE Howard Street  
Pullman, WA 99163 Stated that parking and traffic impacts associated with this proposal have not been sufficiently addressed; WSU's enrollment figures are now on a downward trend, so adding more apartments in Pullman might lead to an oversupply of housing; this rezone proposal would facilitate the continuing deterioration of rental property in the area; and the historical significance of the house at 400 NE Oak Street should not be discounted.

- ALLISON MUNCH-ROTOLO  
635 NE Illinois Street  
Pullman, WA 99163
- Stated that she was representing the College Hill Association. Submitted a document that disputed the draft findings of fact written by planning staff and reviewed this exhibit with the Commission. Discussed a presentation by Meagan Duvall, the Certified Local Government Program Coordinator from Washington State's Department of Archeology and Historic Preservation, to the Better Neighborhoods for Pullman group.
- DICKINSON
- Entered into the record Staff Report No. 06-14 with Attachments A through I as Exhibit No. 1.  
Entered into the record the document from Allison Munch-Rotolo as Exhibit No. 2.  
Answered questions regarding parking standards.
- JANICE MILLER  
1630 SW View Drive  
Pullman, WA 99163
- Mentioned that the application materials contained multiple errors (for example, the Environmental Checklist indicates that new development would cover 90 percent of the site with impervious surfaces). Expressed concern about the maintenance standards of the subject property owners and claimed that the motive for this zone change request was personal profit.
- ALEXANDER  
HAMMOND  
1110 NE Indiana  
Street  
Pullman, WA 99163
- Asserted that the requested zone change would be spot zoning because it would benefit a particular property owner to the detriment of the general public. He claimed that this rezone would increase parking pressure in an already congested area. He also mentioned that the transition from owner- to renter-occupied housing in the neighborhood provides no legal basis for the rezone. Presented a memorandum explaining his opposition to the proposal, and an email message asking about the use of the original Environmental Checklist for this application.
- RICHARD DOMEY  
945 SE Glen Echo Road  
Pullman, WA 99163
- Stated that staff's numbers of Pullman students are greatly suspect considering that many of the current student numbers include students who attend classes in Spokane (specifically Nursing, Architecture and Construction Management courses) or have internships outside of the Pullman area.
- ALEXANDER  
HAMMOND  
1110 NE Indiana  
Street  
Pullman, WA 99163
- Wanted to reiterate that this is spot zoning because it would not be a benefit to the community as a whole. Cited from the Planning Commission June 28, 2006 Regular Meeting Minutes regarding Ms. Wilson's comments at that meeting.
- ANDERSON
- Called for neutral parties; there were no responses.

- DICKINSON Entered into the record the memo from Alexander Hammond dated September 27, 2006, as Exhibit No. 3.  
Entered into the record the e-mail regarding the SEPA matter as Exhibit No. 4.
- ANDERSON Called for reply by proponents.
- KATHY WILSON  
DRA Real Estate She opined that property management was not a relevant issue with respect to this zone change proposal. Ms. Wilson indicated that the owners had not yet decided whether to demolish the house if the rezone is granted.
- ANDERSON Called for response by opponents; there were no responses. Closed the public testimony portion of the hearing.
- DISCUSSION The Commission discussed the notion of spot zoning and reached a consensus that granting the applicant's request in this instance would not meet the qualifications for spot zoning. Some Commission members expressed their interest in retaining historically significant housing and facilitating WSU staff and faculty residences on College Hill. Other Commission members said they expected student enrollment at the university to grow over time and the subject property was an appropriate location to accommodate needed high density development.
- MOTION Garl moved to adopt Findings of Fact Nos. 1-19 for Resolution PC-2006-7 as prepared by staff. Seconded by Martin and passed unanimously.
- MOTION Anderson moved to add Finding of Fact No. 20 stating that "In a letter dated September 19, 2006, Allison Munch-Rotolo wrote on behalf of the College Hill Association to argue against these changes. She included as an attachment a letter dated April 5, 2006 from the State of Washington Department of Archeology and Historic Preservation stating the historical significance of the house on 400 Oak Street based on ownership by a prominent family and on its architecture. Ms. Munch-Rotolo stated her beliefs that the house in question is consistent with the architecture of adjacent homes and that the house could be restored." Seconded by Martin and passed unanimously.
- MOTION Anderson moved to add Finding of Fact No. 21 stating that "In a letter dated September 18, 2006, KNona Liddell argued against the proposed changes based on the historic significance of the house and its former owners, Hubert V. and Maggie Carpenter." Seconded by Martin and passed unanimously.

- MOTION Anderson moved to add Finding of Fact No. 22 stating that “Comprehensive Plan Goal LU14 and its associated policies pertain to this discussion.” Seconded by Ronniger and passed unanimously.
- MOTION Anderson moved to add Finding of Fact No. 23 stating that “Zoning Code Section 17.180.020 pertains to this discussion.” Seconded by Ronniger and passed 4-1 with Garl opposed.
- MOTION Ronniger moved to add Finding of Fact No. 24 stating that “At the Planning Commission public hearing, there was considerable discussion with proponents, opponents, and Commission members regarding spot zoning.” Seconded by Martin and passed unanimously.
- MOTION Martin moved to accept Conclusions No. 1-11 for Resolution PC-2006-7 as prepared by staff. Seconded by Garl and failed 2-3 with Anderson, Garl and Ronniger opposed.
- MOTION Martin moved to accept Conclusion No. 1 as prepared by staff. Seconded by Garl and passed 3-2 with Ronniger and Anderson opposed.
- MOTION Martin moved to accept Conclusion No. 2 as prepared by staff. Seconded by Strevva and passed 3-2 with Ronniger and Anderson opposed.
- MOTION Martin moved to accept Conclusions Nos. 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 as prepared by staff. Seconded by Garl and passed 3-2 with Ronniger and Anderson opposed.
- MOTION Martin moved to recommend approval of the proposed Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map Amendment from Low Density Residential to High Density Residential. Seconded by Garl and passed 3-2 with Ronniger and Anderson opposed.
- MOTION Garl moved to adopt Findings of Fact Nos. 1-19 for Resolution PC-2006-8 as prepared by staff. Seconded by Strevva and passed unanimously.
- MOTION Anderson moved to accept Findings of Fact Nos. 20-24 for Resolution PC-2006-8 as previously approved for Resolution PC-2006-7. Seconded by Garl and passed unanimously.
- MOTION Garl moved to accept Conclusions No. 1-5 and 7-11 as prepared by staff. Seconded by Martin and passed 3-2 with Ronniger and Anderson opposed.

**MOTION** Garl moved to recommend approval of the proposed zone change from R2 to R4. Seconded by Martin and passed 3-2 with Ronniger and Anderson opposed.

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

David Hagelganz,  
Cheryl Hagelganz and  
Paradise Downtown,  
LLC petition for  
vacation of an 80-foot-  
wide portion of  
McKenzie Street located  
between High Street and  
the centerline of Jordan  
Road.

Dickinson stated that the petition was for an 80-foot-wide portion of McKenzie Street right-of-way between High Street and S. Grand Avenue. Stated that this area has never been developed as a city street and is extremely steep, but that there is evidence of pedestrian use of the area. Also stated that the engineering staff has indicated a need for a utility easement in this area. Staff feels that the vacation is appropriate because of the steepness of the street and sufficient circulation in the area generally. Staff does ask that the area that is proposed to be vacated have a pedestrian easement and a utility easement over that portion of the right-of-way.

**DISCUSSION** The Commission discussed the suggestion of a pedestrian easement and decided this easement was not necessary in this case. Anderson stated that though this is not a quasi-judicial matter, he did want to disclose that he knows the applicant Cheryl Hagelganz quite well as they work together.

**MOTION** Garl moved to find the proposed vacation consistent with the Comprehensive Plan with the addition of the inclusion of a utility easement between High Street and Jordan Street. Seconded by Streva and passed unanimously.

**REGULAR BUSINESS** The Commission discussed the proposed zoning code text amendments related to interim use of land for parking; pedestrian walkways; off-street parking and loading; special use permits for historic structures; public hearing and notice; and application and staff review.

**MEL TAYLOR** Stated that he represents WSU Business Affairs. He explained that WSU bought a house at 420 NE Colorado Street which they have subsequently demolished. WSU does have plans to construct some type of public/private building at that site, but they are not prepared to do so at this time. That location is adjacent to a gravel lot also owned by WSU. WSU proposed that only students residing on College Hill would be able to park in that lot if it is approved as a parking lot. If the parking lot is not approved, the lot will remain vacant until WSU is prepared to move forward with development of the property.

**DISCUSSION** The Commission discussed a clarification to the changes made to the zoning code under section 17.10.090 (3) (b) to state, "by U.S. Postal mail or certified mail return receipt requested or personal service ..."

**MOTION** Martin moved to accept Resolution No. PC-2006-9 with the corrections as noted during the discussion. Seconded by Garl and approved unanimously.

**NEW BUSINESS** The Commission discussed that the Planning Department now has an Assistant Planner, Erin Schau, after being without an Assistant Planner from the beginning of May until August 14; the addition of members to bring the Commission to full capacity of 9 members; that in the case of a tie vote the proposal is forwarded to the City Council with no recommendation; the Commission Chair is a voting member.

**UPCOMING MEETINGS** Garl indicated that he will be out of town on the date of the regularly scheduled meeting on November 22.

**DICKINSON** Provided an invitation to the Planning Commission to attend the Palouse Water Summit on Tuesday, October 3, 2006.

**ADJOURNMENT** Streva moved to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Garl and passed unanimously.

ATTEST:

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Chair

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Planning Director

\_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary