

August 30, 2013



# Planning Department Newsletter

## COUNCIL REQUESTS CODE AMENDMENT TO ALLOW MINIATURE PIGS

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At its meeting of August 27, the City Council directed planning staff to initiate city code revisions to allow the keeping of miniature pigs in the city under certain qualifications. Action on this matter began in March of this year when city staff discovered that a resident at a local manufactured home park was maintaining a pot bellied pig as a household pet.

Animals in residential areas are regulated in the zoning ordinance. The code allows a limited number of dogs, cats, rabbits, and similar animals as household pets. It allows chickens, and large groups of dogs and cats, under the "Small Domestic Animal and Fowl" category that, among other things, demands a lot size of at least 10,000 square feet. It also permits horses, cows, sheep, and goats as "Large Domestic Animals" so long as the owner has a minimum of 20,000 square feet of lot area.



Many communities that allow miniature pigs place a 150-pound weight limit on the size of the animals.

With regard to pigs, the zoning code prohibits "swine of any kind" in the city. This ban against pigs has been in force here continuously since 1914.

When planning staff informed the city resident in this case that pigs were prohibited in Pullman, he inquired about available options he could pursue to keep his animal. Staff responded that he could potentially seek a zoning code variance through the Board of Adjustment or he could ask the city to consider a zoning code amendment to allow miniature pigs within the city. In May, he appeared before the City Council to request that it initiate such a code amendment. The Council decided at that time to refer the matter to the Planning Commission.

In anticipation of the Commission meeting on this subject, planning staff prepared a report that presented the results of its research. In the report, planning staff also provided its recommendation that the prohibition against all pigs should be retained because the negative aspects of keeping these animals (such as potential destructive or aggressive behavior) outweigh the positive ones (if sterilized, miniature pigs are generally quiet, clean, and well-mannered).

The Planning Commission addressed the issue at a public meeting in June. Six members of the public spoke at the session, and all of

this input was supportive of raising miniature pigs as pets. When the Commission members discussed the matter among themselves, they expressed a variety of opinions. Some members advocated for the keeping of a limited number of miniature pigs as household pets, subject to licensing requirements involving a maximum size for the animal, sterilization, and maintaining current vaccinations. Other members suggested there should also be a minimum lot size to qualify for raising miniature pigs. And other members said the current ban on pigs should be retained. In the end, the Commission could not reach a consensus, and it asked staff to inform the Council of its “impasse.”

When the Council met regarding this matter on August 27, staff explained what had transpired at the Commission session. The Council accepted

additional public input from the subject pig owner and two others who supported the keeping of miniature pigs, plus three Planning Commission members who explained their respective positions on the issue. After hearing this input, Council members discussed the topic and unanimously asked planning staff to move forward with a zoning code amendment that would allow for miniature pigs with the understanding that staff would do appropriate research to determine how best to regulate the keeping of these animals.

The zoning code revision process involves a public hearing before the Planning Commission and formal action by the City Council. Keep watching for updates on this particular code amendment proposal in future editions of this newsletter.

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## WEBSITE TOOL AVAILABLE TO ASSESS THE BENEFITS OF URBAN TREES

Trees in an urban setting offer a variety of benefits. They filter air and water, consume carbon, offer habitat and shade, reduce the urban heat-island effect, boost property values, buffer storms, and even provide a source of energy through waste wood and mulch. In an effort to quantify the benefits of trees in a community, the United States Forest Service has, in partnership with the Davey Tree Company, developed an accessible modeling program called “i-Tree.” This tool, which is now in its fifth iteration since it was conceived back in 2006, can be found at the following website: <http://www.itreetools.org/index.php>.

The i-Tree website provides the following information about the program:

Since the initial release of the i-Tree Tools in August 2006, numerous communities, non-profit organizations, consultants, volunteers and students have used i-Tree to report on individual trees, parcels, neighborhoods, cities, and even entire states. By understanding the local, tangible ecosystem services that trees provide, i-Tree users can link urban forest management activities with environmental quality and community livability. Whether your interest is a single tree or an entire forest, i-Tree provides baseline data that you can use to demonstrate value and set priorities for more effective decision-making.

The latest rendition of the i-Tree system provides several urban forest assessment applications, including “i-Tree Eco,” “i-Tree Streets” and “i-Tree Design.”

- i-Tree Eco provides a broad picture of the entire urban forest. It is designed to use field data from complete inventories or randomly located plots throughout a community along with local hourly air pollution and meteorological data to quantify urban forest structure, environmental effects, and values to communities.
- i-Tree Streets focuses on the benefits provided by a municipality's street trees. It makes use of a sample or complete inventory to quantify and put a dollar value on the street trees' annual environmental and aesthetic benefits. i-Tree Streets also describes urban forest structure and management needs to help managers plan for the future.
- i-Tree Design is a simple online tool that provides a platform for assessments of individual or multiple trees at the parcel level. This tool links to Google Maps and allows you to see how tree selection, tree size, and placement around your home effects energy use and other benefits.

According to information published online by “Next City,” a non-profit organization dedicated to connecting and improving cities, a group of citizens in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania utilized the i-Tree system for an extensive assessment of its urban forest. The citizen group, called “Tree Pittsburgh,” sampled more than 200 small plots throughout the city, and entered that data into the i-Tree program. The analysis showed a value of between \$10 and \$13 million in annual benefits based on the entire urban forest’s contributions to aesthetics, property values, energy use, and air and water quality. In another application of the i-Tree tool, Tree Pittsburgh found that the city’s street trees — just those planted in sidewalks, planting strips, and medians — provided \$2.4 million worth of environmental and aesthetic value every year. Given



Tree stands, like this one on Dexter Street, provide many benefits to the neighborhood and community.

the city of Pittsburgh’s annual expenditure of \$850,000 on street tree planting and maintenance, Tree Pittsburgh concluded that the city received \$3 in benefits for every dollar it invested in street trees.

This evidence convinced city officials there to expand its urban forest over the next two decades.

Pullman has, for the past 16 years, been designated as a Tree City USA. Communities achieve this status by meeting four core standards: maintaining a tree board or department, having a community tree ordinance, spending at least \$2 per capita on urban trees, and

celebrating Arbor Day. The i-Tree tool offers opportunities for local government officials and citizens to advance the goals of the Tree City USA program and enhance the quality of our urban forest.

## FORUM SCHEDULED ON OPEN MEETINGS LAWS

The Pullman League of Women Voters is joining other local organizations to sponsor a forum on Washington State’s Open Meetings Laws. The event will take place on Wednesday, September 25, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. at the McGregor Company Training Center, 401 Airport Road, five miles north of Colfax. The meeting will address Washington’s Open Public Meetings Act, the Appearance of Fairness Doctrine, and public records laws.

The program is being prepared by the Washington Coalition for Open Government, a statewide collection of individuals and groups, both public and private, that work to preserve the public’s right to access governmental activities and records. Other sponsors of the event are the Moscow–Pullman Daily News, the Whitman County Gazette, and the Whitman County Library District. For more information, please contact the League of Women Voters by email at [lwpull@yahoo.com](mailto:lwpull@yahoo.com).

CITY OFFICES WILL BE CLOSED ON:  
 MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 2, 2013 FOR LABOR DAY



## Pending Land Use Proposals

Displayed below are land use applications submitted to the planning or public works department or city-generated proposals for planning provisions that require a public meeting, public notice, or site plan review in accordance with the city code.

PROJECT	DESCRIPTION	LOCATION	STATUS
College Hill Design Standards	formulate design standards for new construction	College Hill Core	stakeholders meeting held 10/27/11 on design concepts; staff revising standards
Mary's Park Annexation	annex approximately 2.2 acres to city	southeast of Old Moscow Road/Johnson Avenue intersection	engineering staff preparing legal description for proposed annexation area
Barclay Estate Subdivision No. 3 Preliminary Plat	divide 6.5 acres into 19 lots and public streets in R2 zone	south of intersection of SW Golden Hills Drive and SW Casey Court	PC recommended approval 8/28/13; CC meeting to be scheduled for September
Askins Zone Change (Z-13-1)	revise R1 zoning on 27.9-acre site to R2 (9.0 acres), R3 (10.5 acres), and C3 (8.4 acres)	1903 SE Johnson Avenue	PC recommended approval 8/28/13; CC meeting to be scheduled for September
Possible Zoning Code Amendment	ask PC to consider zoning code amendment to allow pigs in city	Citywide	CC directed staff on 8/27/13 to draft amendment to allow pigs with qualifications
Parks Shop Parking Lot Conditional Use Permit (C-13-1)	create 9 spaces in landscaped parking lot	north of South Street and west of South Fork of Palouse River	BOA hearing initiated 7/15/13; hearing continued to 8/19/13 for additional input; hearing continued to 9/16/13
PBC/KIP Communication Tower Conditional Use Permit (C-13-3)	construct 160-foot-tall cell tower and related facilities	east of City Cemetery and south of Pullman Regional Hospital	staff reviewing application; probable BOA hearing on 10/21/13
College Hill Historic Property Inventory	use federal funds for an historic survey of about 50 properties	vicinity of NE Maple Street	DAHP approved application 6/18/12; consultant selected 2/13; consultant filed draft survey report 8/19/13
Downtown Historic Property Inventory Grant Application	use federal funds for an historic survey of about 40 properties	vicinity of Grand Avenue and Main Street	application submitted to DAHP 4/18/13; DAHP approved application 6/10/13
Palouse/Maple Streets Local Historic Register Nomination	list parts of Palouse and Maple Streets to the historic register	Palouse and Maple Streets from Kamiaken Street to Whitman Street	staff reviewing nomination request
SEL Airport Parking Lot Addition site plan (12-13)	construct 29-stall parking lot at SEL airport hangar	7100 Airport Complex North	applicant requested delay in city review to resolve airport safety issues
1015 B Street Boarding House site plan (13-1)	convert single family home to boarding house	1015 NE B Street	staff requested applicant to revise site plan
Pimlico Apartment Complex Phase II site plan (13-4)	develop 188 apartments on 7.9-acre parcel	south of NE Terre View Drive and west of NE Brandi Way	staff requested applicant to revise site plan
940 Maple Street Addition site plan (13-5)	add four bedrooms to existing duplex	940 NE Maple Street Extension	staff requested applicant to revise site plan
Franklin Elementary School Addition site plan (13-6)	construct 6,500-square-foot addition to existing school to accommodate 6 new classrooms	850 SE Klemgard Avenue	staff reviewing revised site plan
Pullman Armory Renovation site plan (13-7)	renovation of existing building into retail space and 9 dwellings	540 E. Main Street	staff requested applicant to revise site plan
Valley Road Apartments site plan (13-8)	develop 6-plex on 11,675-square-foot lot	1245 NE Valley Road	staff reviewing site plan
Golden Hills Multi-Family West site plan (13-9)	develop 24 apartments on two-acre site	south of SW Old Wawawai Road and west of SW Golden Hills Drive	staff reviewing site plan

See KEY at bottom of following page



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**WE'RE ON THE WEB!**  
**[WWW.PULLMAN-WA.GOV](http://WWW.PULLMAN-WA.GOV)**

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KEY TO ZONING DISTRICTS: R1 Single Family Residential; RT Residential Transitional; R2 Low Density Multi-Family Residential; R3 Medium Density Multi-Family Residential; R4 High Density Multi-Family Residential; C1 Neighborhood Commercial; C2 Central Business District; C3 General Commercial; I1 Light Industrial; I2 Heavy Industrial; IRP Industrial Research Park; WSU Washington State University

KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS: CC: City Council; PC: Planning Commission; BOA: Board of Adjustment; HPC: Historic Preservation Commission; DOE: State Department of Ecology; DAHP: State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation

NOTES: 1) If an applicant fails to act on a pending application for a period of six months, said application will be dropped from the above list. 2) Numbers in parentheses are planning staff's internal file numbers. 3) Site plan review by city staff is generally conducted for proposed construction of developments other than single family homes, duplexes, or manufactured homes; it does not apply to most construction on the WSU campus.

