

March 31, 2011



# Planning Department Newsletter

## COMMISSION CONDUCTS URBAN GROWTH AREA HEARING

On March 23, the Planning Commission held a public hearing related to the planning department's proposal to expand the city's urban growth area. As mentioned in last month's newsletter, the urban growth area (UGA) is defined as the property, both inside and outside the city limits, into which the community expects to grow over a certain time frame. The City Council initiated this process by requesting a reevaluation of the city's UGA to help provide sufficient land for future community growth.

The proposal, as presented to the Commission at the hearing, was to expand the existing 7,850-acre UGA by about 6,750 acres around the periphery of the city to accommodate urban growth to the year 2060. The proposal involves amendments to the Land Use Plan Map and text of the Pullman Comprehensive Plan, and revisions to the city's "prezone map" (which identifies zoning designations for land outside the city that become effective upon annexation).

Aside from one change, Planning Commission members were satisfied with the suggested UGA arrangement.

At the outset of the meeting, planning staff reminded those in attendance that enlarging the UGA does not mean the city limits are being expanded, but rather that the city is

establishing a larger opportunity area for future city growth. The Commission then opened the hearing for citizen input. Although about 20 people attended the meeting, only five individuals spoke. Their comments included the following:

- the large amount of land proposed for inclusion in the UGA is a concern
- people purchased land outside the city because they desired less regulatory interference, so the prospect of this property eventually becoming part of the city is disconcerting
- the city should extend water and sewer lines into the Pullman-Moscow corridor to serve property that is already in the city limits or proposed to be in the future
- the relatively strict fire suppression standards of the city discourage development within the city limits for land that is distant from water lines
- the city should attempt to limit the UGA to the basin that drains naturally to the waste water treatment plant so as to avoid excessive pumping of sewage
- environmentally sensitive areas (such as the South Fork of the Palouse River valley) are worthy of protection from dense urban development, so it is appropriate that these areas remain under the jurisdiction of the county

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- development of the proposed UGA will demand significant improvements in the city's infrastructure, and it will become increasingly difficult and costly for the city to effect these improvements
- it is more appropriate to designate the property along Johnson Road as residential rather than commercial given the existing housing there and the presence of the South Fork of the Palouse River
- county residents are curious about the annexation process and the difference in property taxes between the city and county

After receiving this input, the Commission members discussed the matter among themselves. They agreed that the proposed land use designation for the property along Johnson Road should be changed from commercial to residential. Otherwise, they stated they were satisfied with the suggested UGA arrangement. The Commission concluded its meeting by recommending approval of the proposal with the change noted for the Johnson Road area.

The urban growth area plan will next be presented to the City Council for its consideration. By state law, the Council must hold two public hearings on the proposal. The first of these hearings is tentatively scheduled for May 3.



The Planning Commission recommended that the proposed designation for the Johnson Road corridor be changed from commercial to residential.

## PLANNING SHORT COURSE COMING APRIL 13

Since you're reading this newsletter, you obviously have an interest in local planning matters. If you would like to build on that interest by learning more about pertinent terminology and procedures, you will be pleased to find out that the city has arranged with groups from around the state to schedule a "Short Course on Local Planning" here in Pullman. This session will take place from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. on Wednesday, April 13, in the City Hall Council Chambers.

The Planning Short Course is a free three-hour workshop that covers the legal basis of planning in Washington State, describes the basics of comprehensive planning and plan implementation, and explains the role of the Planning Commission. The presenters at the workshop are attorneys and planners who practice outside the local jurisdiction.

They utilize this experience from their various jurisdictions to illuminate the topics discussed during the course of the evening.

This Planning Short Course is co-sponsored by the Planning Association of Washington, the Washington State Department of Commerce, and the Washington Cities Insurance Authority. The Pullman session is one of only about 20 planning short courses that will be offered across the state this year.

As mentioned above, the course is provided free of charge to all participants (thanks to the support of the sponsoring organizations). However, registration for the workshop is required. To register, click [here](#) and follow the instructions.

All interested citizens are encouraged to attend this valuable workshop. We hope to see you there!

More information is available on the City of Pullman Planning Department page.

## AVISTA PROPOSES SUBSTATION PROJECTS

The Avista Corporation recently submitted site plan applications pertaining to electrical substation improvements along North Grand Avenue near NW Turner Drive. Electrical substations transfer power from the transmission system to the distribution network, reducing voltage to a level suitable for local homes and businesses.

The first of Avista’s two applications involves a reconstruction of the existing facility located at the southwest corner of Grand Avenue and Turner Drive to meet the community's growing energy needs. Under this proposal, all existing apparatus at the site will be removed and replaced, and the operational area will be expanded by 15,000 square feet to accommodate additional equipment. Perimeter fencing will be extended to secure the area.

The city required the submittal of a “critical area report” for the temporary substation to be constructed in the vicinity of Missouri Flat Creek.

In order to accomplish the planned upgrade of the existing substation, Avista must temporarily shut down the facility. That necessity gave rise to the second of Avista’s

applications, which is a request to construct a short-term electrical substation on the east side of Grand Avenue north of the Jack in the Box restaurant. The equipment at this temporary station is proposed to encompass 12,000 square feet, and it would be enclosed by security fencing. Vehicular access to this site would be provided through the Jack in the Box parking lot. No disruption of the adjacent pedestrian path that extends from Stadium Way to Terre View Drive is anticipated. Since the construction of this facility is planned in the vicinity of Missouri Flat Creek, the city required the submittal of a “critical area report” to address potential impacts on the riparian area. Planning staff is currently reviewing this report for compliance with city code.

The site of the temporary substation will be converted back to pre-development conditions after project completion.

If all goes smoothly, Avista plans to begin work at both locations later this spring. Construction at the existing substation is scheduled to be completed in 2012, at which time the temporary substation will be dismantled and the site will be converted back to pre-development conditions.



When the reconstruction is complete, the existing substation will be expanded by 15,000 square feet.



## 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
Certified Local Government Program	establish historic preservation program for community	Citywide	CC approved ordinance 12/7/10; CC confirmed historic preservation commission members 3/29/11; staff assembling CLG application materials
College Hill Architectural Design Standards	formulate design standards for new construction	College Hill Core	PC public forum held 7/28/10; PC meeting to set direction held 9/22/10; staff preparing draft standards
City Urban Growth Area Expansion	expand urban growth area to accommodate future growth	greater Pullman area	PC recommended approval 3/23/11; CC hearing tentatively scheduled for 5/3/11
Guy Street Zone Change (Z-11-1)	rezone 9.2 acres from R1 to I2	northeast of intersection of NW Guy Street and NW Park Street	PC hearing scheduled for 4/27
Emerald Pointe Park Conditional Use Permit (C-11-1)	establish 2.9-acre park	between NW Davis Way and NW Nicole Court, west of NW Golden Hills Drive	BOA hearing tentatively scheduled for 5/16
Hilltop Inn Addition site plan (10-7)	demolish Hilltop Restaurant and construct 54-room addition to existing motel	928 NW Olsen Street	staff requested applicant to revise site plan
Tomason Place Apartments Phase II site plan (10-10)	develop 26-unit apartment building on 3.2-acre parcel	555 NE Terre View Drive	staff requested applicant to revise site plan
Hampton Inn Hotel site plan (10-11)	construct 93-room hotel on 4.3-acre site	785 SE Fairmount Drive	staff requested applicant to revise site plan
Washington State Employees Credit Union Building site plan (11-1)	construct 3,400-square-foot building on 36,750-square-foot site	670 SE Bishop Boulevard	staff requested applicant to revise site plan
SEL Solution Delivery Center site plan (11-2)	develop 89,760-square-foot office building on 3.4-acre parcel	2420 NE Hopkins Court	staff reviewing revised site plan
SEL Parking Lot Expansion site plan (11-3)	add 126 stalls to existing parking lot at manufacturing plant	2440 NE Hopkins Court	staff requested applicant to revise site plan
SEL Parking Lot site plan (11-4)	establish 172-stall parking lot	2370 NE Hopkins Court	staff requested applicant to revise site plan
North Pullman Substation Expansion site plan (11-5)	construct 15,000-square-foot expansion of existing electrical substation	southwest corner of Turner Drive and North Grand Avenue	staff requested applicant to revise site plan
North Pullman Temporary Substation site plan (11-6)	establish temporary 12,000-square-foot electrical substation	southeast of intersection of NW Turner Drive and North Grand Avenue	site plan approved 3/30/11

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; DOE: State Department of Ecology; LC: Landmarks Commission

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.



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