

February 28, 2007



Planning Department Newsletter

2006 PERMIT ACTIVITY REMAINS STRONG

The final numbers for Pullman building permit activity in 2006 have been accumulated, and, although the figures show less growth than the record setting year of 2005, it was still a very strong year for construction. Last year, the city issued permits for 79 single family houses, 244 multi-family dwellings, and three manufactured homes. The city also issued 216 permits for new construction or remodels related to commercial or institutional uses, which include retail businesses, restaurants, offices, manufacturing activities, churches, schools, and other public facilities. The total building permit valuation for all permits was slightly more than \$61 million. The quantity of city building inspections for the year totaled 4,328 (considerably higher than the 3,501 inspections conducted during 2005).

This level of building permit activity was above the norm for Pullman. Over the past ten years, the average annual number of single family homes permitted here was 69, the mean annual figure for apartments was 152, and the average annual building permit valuation was \$33.6 million.

Land subdivision activity in 2006 showed a marked decline from 2005. In 2005, real estate developers obtained approval from the City

Council for 345 residential lots. Last year, owners received approval for only 67 residential lots. During the last ten years, there have been about 80 lots established on an annual basis.

Annexations of land are another indicator of growth in the community. In 2006, a 95-acre parcel located west of the Palouse Highway (State Route 27) and north of NW Clay Court was incorporated into the city. The landowner has submitted a zone change application (from commercial to residential) for a portion of this property, and planning staff expects development proposals to follow soon thereafter. The city recently received another annexation request for a 35-acre tract on Johnson Road south of the Village Centre Cinemas. Annexation proposals such as this have inspired the City Council to engage in discussions about reevaluating Pullman's urban growth area (as described elsewhere in this newsletter).

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Construction activity continued at a strong pace in 2006.

COLLEGE HILL STUDY NEARS COMPLETION

Several months ago, the City Council retained planning consultant Studio Cascade of Spokane to conduct a comprehensive review of College Hill issues. This review, jointly funded by the city and WSU, involves a study of land use and transportation matters in the College Hill core area bounded by Stadium Way, Grand Avenue, and Main Street (excepting the WSU campus).

Studio Cascade principal Bill Grimes visited Pullman in December and January to speak with stakeholders and tour the study area. He and the rest of his staff also spent considerable time dur-

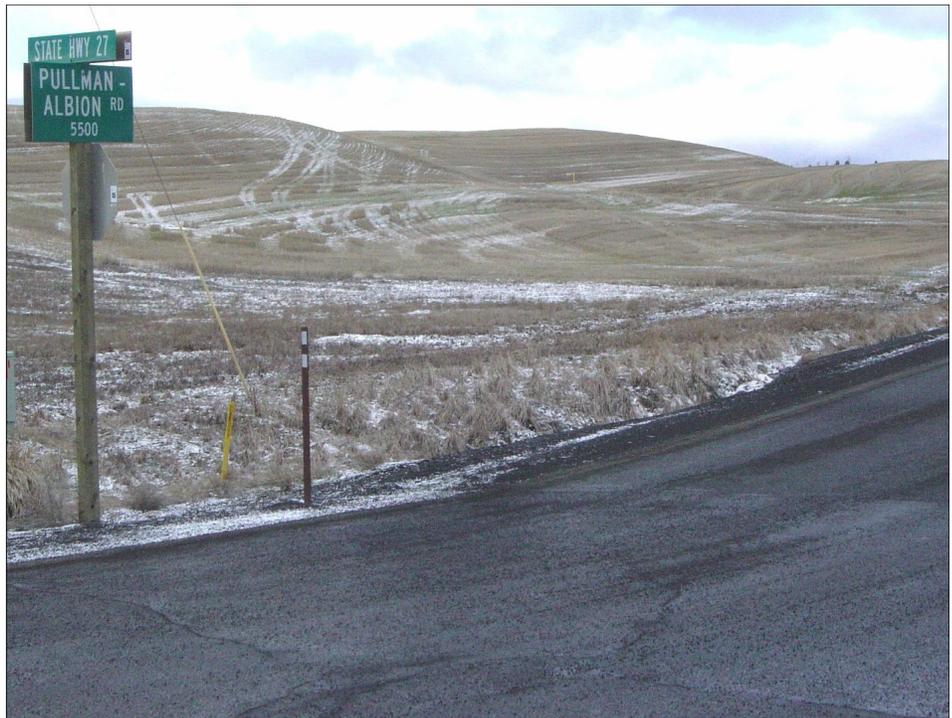
ing those months reviewing a large quantity of background material transmitted to them by the city.

The consultant is currently preparing a final report that will set forth the findings and recommendations of its College Hill study. This report is scheduled to be completed by Friday, March 9. Studio Cascade is then tentatively scheduled to formally present the report at the City Council meeting of April 3. Staff anticipates that public input concerning the report would also be accepted at that meeting.

COUNCIL REVIEWS URBAN GROWTH AREA

At City Council meetings in January and February, the City Council held discussions about potentially revising the city's urban growth area (UGA) to ensure orderly expansion of the community in the future.

In January, planning staff presented a report to the Council related to construction activity, population forecasts, and vacant land within the UGA. This report showed that there has been a significant rise recently in the number of housing units established in the city. Of the total 11,025 dwellings in Pullman, almost 15 percent of our housing stock was added in the past six years alone.



The area southwest of State Route 27 and Albion Road may soon be added to the city's urban growth area.

Starting with the city's current population (27,030), the report provided preliminary population forecasts for 20 and 50 years into the future. The Pullman forecast for 2027 was 34,650, and the projection for 2057 was 46,000. Using these figures, the report identified the amount of land that would be needed for residential, commercial, and industrial uses for the target years, if the community developed in accor-

dance with its historic land use pattern. Next, the report compared the amount of land needed in 2027 and 2057 with the number of vacant acres available within the city's current UGA (last revised by the City Council in 2003). This comparison showed that the city would be deficient with respect to residential land in 2027 and 2057, and the city would experience a deficit regarding industrial land in 2057.

Planning staff's report also included the following paragraphs:

Certainly, there are many factors for a community to consider when it is reevaluating its urban growth area. Does the city wish to grow in a pattern similar to its historical development? Should it seek to become more compact, or more dispersed? While a community might have sufficient vacant land assigned to a land use category, are there more appropriate locations for that land use? Are there political or economic reasons for including or excluding certain properties within an urban growth area? These and many other questions are commonly asked in any reassessment of a community's growth area. Obviously, public input on these issues should be solicited frequently during the review process.

The guiding principles in this reevaluation process are contained in the city's Comprehensive Plan. The current plan envisions an urban growth area that accommodates foreseeable growth while recognizing the city's limitations for efficient public service delivery and its respect for the value of prime agricultural land. Developing an urban growth area is an exercise in balancing competitive forces. If the urban land supply is too small, growth may be stifled, and land costs may be unnecessarily inflated. If the urban land supply is too large, the arrangement may promote sprawl and the development of property far removed from urban services upon which city residents rely.

In February, planning staff informed the Council of two anticipated annexation requests for land outside the city's UGA. One of these proposals involves a 275-acre tract west of the Palouse Highway and south of Albion Road, and the other relates to a 35-acre property on Johnson Road south of the Village Centre Cinemas. (The application for this latter proposal was subsequently submitted to the city.) Upon learning of these potential annexations, the Council approved a motion to include both of these properties within the city's proposed UGA boundaries as part of the upcoming formal UGA reevaluation process.

Also in February, the Council made two decisions regarding expansion of city utility systems. First, it authorized city participation in the extension of water and sewer facilities to the Albion Road area in conjunction with potential real estate development in that vicinity. And second, it endorsed initiation of the design process for extending the existing water system at the Pullman-Moscow Airport to a 600,000-gallon reservoir located between the airport and the Pullman-Moscow Highway; this would assist in providing adequate fire flow to the airport and would provide support for limited development in the Pullman-Moscow corridor area once the water source is converted from WSU to the city.

The Planning Commission and City Council will continue this UGA reevaluation process over the coming months. Future editions of this newsletter will update the city's progress in this regard.

PLANNING COMMISSION LOOKING FOR MORE MEMBERS

As many of you newsletter subscribers know, the Planning Commission is a nine-member advisory committee that addresses long-range planning and reviews major land use development proposals in the community. Currently, the Commission has only seven members, so Mayor Glenn Johnson is seeking applications to fill the remaining two vacancies. If you have an interest in providing community service through participation in this committee, please complete the application form (available at <http://www.pullman-wa.gov/content/WYSIWYG/Boards/CommissionApplication.pdf>) and deliver it to the Mayor at Pullman City Hall.



Pending Land Use Applications

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
Brannan/Brelsford Annexation	annex 9.8 acres to the city	west of S. Grand Avenue/ Fairmount Drive intersection	staff reviewing annexation petition
Askins Annexation	Annex 35 acres to the city	Johnson Road south of the Village Centre Cinemas	PC meeting scheduled for 2/28
Fairbanks Zone Change (Z-07-1)	rezone 18.8 acres from C3 to R2	west of Palouse Highway and north of NW Clay Court	PC hearing scheduled for March
Bryant House Special Valuation	request for special property tax valuation for single family house rehabilitation	1005 NE Maple Street	staff reviewing revised application materials
Concordia Church Preschool Conditional Use Permit (C-07-3)	establish weekday preschool for 15 children	1015 NE Orchard Drive	BOA hearing scheduled for 3/19
City of Pullman Water Tank #10 (C-07-4)	construct a 100-foot-tall water tank	south of 1700 block of SW Casey Court	BOA hearing scheduled for 3/19
Wiley Administrative Variance (AV-06-2)	establish 17-foot front yard for townhouse structure	southwest corner of NE Williams Drive and NE Myrtle Street	staff reviewing application
Wiley Administrative Variance (AV-06-3)	establish 12.75-foot flanking street side yard for townhouse structure	southwest corner of NE Williams Drive and NE Myrtle Street	staff reviewing application
Turner Bed & Breakfast Conditional Use Permit Time Extension (C-06-1)	extend conditional use permit approval period for bed & breakfast establishment	210 NW Olsen Street	staff reviewing application
Wal-Mart Supercenter SEPA determination and site plan	develop 223,000-sq-ft store on a 28- acre site	south of SE Harvest Dr/Bishop Boulevard intersection	Superior Court judge denied PARD appeal on 10/18/06; PARD filed appeal with Court of Appeals on 11/27/06
Cleveland Court site plan revision (04-9)	develop 4-plex on 18,750-sq-ft site	315 NW Cleveland Street	staff requested applicant to revise site plan
Stonegate Townhouses site plan (04-31)	construct 10 townhouses on 18,150- sq-ft lot	715 NE Oak Street	staff requested applicant to revise site plan
University Park Apartments site plan (06-18)	develop 21 apartments on 23,656- sq-ft lot	680 NE Gray Lane	staff requested applicant to revise site plan
Crimson Village site plan (07-2)	develop mixed-use retail/residential buildings totaling 66,000 sq ft on 10.5-acre lot	1000 block of SE Bishop Boulevard	staff requested applicant to revise site plan
South Centre site plan (07-3)	construct 12,000-sq-ft commercial building on 1.3-acre parcel	1225 S. Grand Avenue	staff requested applicant to revise site plan

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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