

ASTORIA PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

Astoria City Hall
October 28, 2014

CALL TO ORDER:

President Nemlowill called the meeting to order at 7:06 pm.

ROLL CALL:

Commissioners Present: President Zetty Nemlowill, Vice President McLaren Innes, David Pearson, Kent Easom, Peter Gimre, and Sean Fitzpatrick

Commissioners Excused: Thor Norgaard

Staff and Others Present: City Manager Brett Estes, Planner Rosemary Johnson, City Attorney Blair Henningsgaard and consultant Matt Hastie, Angelo Planning Group. The meeting is recorded and will be transcribed by ABC Transcription Services, Inc.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

President Nemlowill called for approval of the minutes of the September 23, 2014 meeting.

Vice President Innes and Commissioner Easom noted the following changes:

- Page 2, 5th paragraph: "Vice-President Innes declared that she has been a member of the Astoria Co-Op for a long time. She shops there regularly, but believed she could make an unbiased decision about this application."
- Page 3, 3rd paragraph under Reports of Officers: "... Seeing that there were members of the audience who wished to speak on the record, she reconvened the meeting at 6:49 pm."
- Page 4, 4th paragraph: "... Planner Johnson said she would have to check with the building official."
- Page 4, 5th paragraph, 4th line: "Black plastic has been sitting on the buffer zone for two weeks..."

Commissioner Pearson moved that the Astoria Planning Commission approve the minutes with the corrections noted; seconded by Vice President Innes. Motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

President Nemlowill explained the procedures governing the conduct of public hearings to the audience and advised that handouts of the substantive review criteria were available from Staff.

ITEM 4(a):

A14-04 Amendment A 14-04 by the Community Development Department to amend Development Code Section 15.065.A.5 concerning wireless communication facility structures to allow lattice towers and support structures for public emergency communication facilities within the LR, Land Reserve, zone, City Wide. Staff recommends that the Planning Commission recommend adoption by the City Council. The City Council will hold a public hearing tentatively scheduled for December 1, 2014 at 7:00 pm in the City Hall Council Chambers.

President Nemlowill asked if anyone objected to the jurisdiction of the Planning Commission to hear this matter at this time. There were no objections. She asked if any member of the Planning Commission had any conflicts of interest or ex parte contacts to declare. Hearing none, she asked Staff to present the Staff report.

Planner Johnson reviewed the written Staff report. No correspondence had been received and Staff recommended that the Planning Commission approve the request and recommend adoption by the City Council.

President Nemlowill asked if Commissioners had questions for Staff.

Commissioner Gimre asked how tall the existing tower was at the Column. Planner Johnson said she was not sure about the height of the tower on Coxcomb, but the proposed lattice tower would be taller. She confirmed that the tower might be seen, but the height of that tower would be considered by the Planning Commission when the wireless communication permit is reviewed. She clarified the Commission is not approving a specific tower or height, but reviewing a code amendment which would allow a lattice tower that could be presented later. The lattice tower may be seen from various points in town, but it would be located above the reservoir off Pipeline Road. City Manager Estes said the tower would be similar to the KAST transmission tower.

Commissioner Gimre asked Staff to define the necessary upgrades. He was concerned about erecting new towers around town if existing towers could not be upgraded. City Manager Estes explained that the existing tower at the Column has come to the end of its life and cannot structurally accommodate any additional antennas. The Friends of the Column have stated to City Council they would like the tower removed from the top of Coxcomb Hill. City Council has established a goal to implement the City's Emergency Communication Plan. The other alternative presented to City Council was to build a new tower at the Column. Planner Johnson added that the existing location at the Column has blind spots with poor reception for emergency services and private providers. The new location will rectify this issue.

President Nemlowill opened the public hearing, noting the Applicant's presentation was made by Staff during presentation of the Staff report. She called for any testimony in favor of the application.

Yvonne Hughes, 1390 Jerome, Astoria, believed there was a 150-foot building height limit that applied to the wooded area off Irving because storms and mudslides could cause the tall trees to fall on the towers. She asked if this would increase the cost of building a foundation that would secure the tower. Planner Johnson said the design was still in a preliminary stage and the engineers were looking at the depth of the foundation. A monopole tower requires a deeper foundation than a lattice tower. Engineers would also consider the geology of the area. However, this request is only to allow a lattice tower, not for a tower in a specific location. The design features, location, and geologic issues would be addressed when the permit is reviewed in the future. City Manager Estes added that all towers must meet State building codes, regardless of where they are located. State building codes address wind loads.

Ms. Hughes confirmed that the city-owned tower was currently being shared with Verizon, and asked if AT&T could provide options that would increase cellular reception. Planner Johnson said the City is also working with Sprint and AT&T. She believed Sprint had completed its upgrade and Staff is currently working on AT&T's permit. City Manager Estes added that any new tower constructed must accommodate co-location of facilities. The reach of the cellular reception would not be known until all of the logistics are in place.

Ms. Hughes said she supported the amendment, especially with all of the emergency preparedness going on in the county.

President Nemlowill called for testimony impartial to the application.

George (Mick) Hague, 1 3rd Street, Astoria, said he wanted the service providers and the City to use more stealth implementations, especially if the towers would have flashing lights. There are cities in the United States that push for stealth implementations and he believed it would be appropriate for Astoria to do the same. He was sure the tower would be built in an attempt to attract additional customers. He suggested the Planning Commission find out why other cities prefer the stealth methods and consider those stealth methods for Astoria.

President Nemlowill called for testimony opposed to the application. Hearing none, she called for closing comments of Staff.

Planner Johnson reminded that this request is just for the ability to install a lattice tower for emergency services, not for any specific tower.

President Nemlowill closed the public hearing and called Commission discussion and deliberation.

Commissioner Pearson said he supported the Code amendment because the Staff report addressed all his concerns. Moving some of the electronics away from the Column is a benefit.

Commissioner Fitzpatrick agreed. The discussion about AT&T reminded him that he needed to declare prior to voting that he owns shares of AT&T and possibly Verizon. However, he believed he could be impartial when making a decision. He apologized for failing to make the declaration when asked.

City Attorney Henningsgaard confirmed his declaration was acceptable as long as it was made prior to voting.

Commissioner Easom said he had no comments.

Vice President Innes said she was in favor of this opportunity to examine moving towers away from the Column.

Commissioner Gimre said he supported anything that would improve emergency communications.

Vice President Innes moved that the Astoria Planning Commission adopt the Findings and Conclusions contained in the Staff report, approve Amendment A14-04 by the Community Development Department, and recommend adoption by the City Council; seconded by Commissioner Easom. Motion passed unanimously.

President Nemlowill read the rules of appeal into the record.

ITEM 4(b):

V14-14 Variance V14-14 by Buoy Beer Company from the maximum 150 square feet of signage and 100 square foot maximum of a single sign to install two signs for a total of approximately 266 square feet on an existing commercial building at 1 8th Street in the A-2, Aquatic Two Development zone.

President Nemlowill asked if anyone objected to the jurisdiction of the Planning Commission to hear this matter at this time. There were no objections. She asked if any member of the Planning Commission had any conflicts of interest or ex parte contacts to declare.

Commissioner Gimre declared a conflict of interest as an investor in Buoy Beer. He stepped down from the dais.

Commissioner Fitzpatrick declared that the president of Buoy Beer rents a home from him, but he believed he could be impartial.

President Nemlowill declared that she had an interest in Fort George Brewery and did not want to give the perception of bias. She turned the hearing over to Vice President Innes and stepped down from the dais.

Commissioner Easom declared that he serves on the Clatsop County Historical Society board with Andrew Bornstein, but believed he could vote impartially.

Vice President Innes called for the Staff report.

Planner Johnson reviewed the written Staff report. No correspondence had been received and Staff recommended approval of the request.

Vice President Innes confirmed that the Commissioners did not have any questions for Staff and opened the public hearing. She called for a presentation by the Applicant. No presentation was provided.

Yvonne Hughes, 1390 Jerome Ave, Astoria, said the building is a large aluminum building. Other than a beautifully painted mural, she believed bigger signage would be most appealing and create a much better sense of space. Due to its location right off the Riverwalk and the limited visibility coming off Marine Drive, a large sign would be adequate for visitors and people trying to locate the restaurant. Walking west on the Riverwalk, pedestrians see the big yellow building with banners. There is a beautiful 12-foot garage door that opens and a large parking area in the front and on the side of the building. She believed increasing the size of the logo and coordinating it with both corners would be effective and aesthetically pleasing. She asked the Planning Commission to approve the variance.

Vice President Innes called for any testimony in favor of, impartial to, or opposed to the application. Hearing none, she called for closing comments of Staff. There were none. She closed the public hearing and called for Commission discussion and deliberation.

Commissioner Easom said he was in favor of the application. He believed the size and locations were appropriate for the business. The building is large and the signs would work.

Commissioner Fitzpatrick agreed that a large building should have larger signage. He noted that the timing of the application was interesting as the Planning Commission would begin reviewing the Bridge Vista Area of the Riverfront Vision Plan. While this restaurant is not in the Bridge Vista Area, the recommendations include preserving sweeping open vistas along the river's edge and focusing on the working riverfront character and industrial scale. The building blocks the view, but there is a great view of the water from inside the building. The Riverfront Vision Plan talks about built elements that respect and complement the working riverfront character, which the Applicant has done. The Plan also discusses continuing to support water-dependent uses, allowing a mix of commercial uses that support but do not compete with the downtown core, as well as new uses consistent with Astoria's working waterfront, and recommends rehabilitating buildings that respect Astoria's character and providing visual and physical access to the water, which the Applicant has done. He believed Buoy Beer had been a good neighbor and the Planning Commission should approve the request.

Commissioner Pearson believed the signage fit the scale of the façade and the Staff report showed that the request met the criteria to qualify for a variance. He supported the application. Vice President Innes agreed.

Commissioner Easom moved that the Astoria Planning Commission adopt the Findings and Conclusions contained in the Staff report and approve Variance V14-14 by Buoy Beer Company; seconded by Commissioner Fitzpatrick. Motion passed unanimously.

Vice President Innes read the rules of appeal into the record. President Nemlowill and Commissioner Gimre returned to the dais.

REPORTS OF OFFICERS/COMMISSIONERS:

Commissioner Fitzpatrick reported that the Mayor's Ball was held on October 1, 2014. He thanked the Commissioners and members of the audience who attended. He also attended the Coast Guard Open House at the Astoria Middle School on October 27th to discuss the development of Klaskanine Avenue. On Friday, October 31st, the Monster Bash will be held at the Armory. The Armory's open skate will be on November 1st. While filling out his ballot, he noticed there were no candidates for any zone of the Clatsop Soil and Water Conservation District. There has been some concern about why the Mayor was appointing people to positions in the City. So many positions go unfilled and he has attended commission and committee meetings in Astoria and other areas than Astoria where there are seats that have not been filled to find there are only four commissioners instead of seven. He believed Mayor Van Dusen deserved accolades for being proactive and making sure the committees in the City are filled.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:40 pm to convene the Work Session.

WORK SESSION – RIVERFRONT VISION PLAN, BRIDGE VISTA AREA

The Work Session convened at 7:43 pm.

Staff gave a brief overview of the Riverfront Vision Plan (Plan) and implementation process, noting that tonight's work session would focus on the Code language necessary to implement the Bridge Vista Area. Staff is currently working on future phases of the Plan and the City expects to receive a grant for Phase 3, the Neighborhood Greenway Area. The last phase to be implemented will be the Urban Core/Downtown Area.

Matt Hastie, Angelo Planning Group, explained the Code issues identified for the Bridge Vista Area would be reviewed over three meetings. This work session would address Comprehensive Plan policies, physical access to the water and building heights, setbacks, and stepbacks on land and over water. He presented the following overview of those Code issues, which were based on recommendations in the Plan:

- The Bridge Vista Area is an area from 2nd Street to just past the West Mooring Basin, and between Marine Drive and the outer edge of the overwater parcels. Objectives for this area include support water dependant uses, promote the working waterfront and provide occasional access to and views of the water.
- Overwater Development – Two locations that are most appropriate for visual access to the river should have limited development at least out to a certain point in the river. The Plan specifically states views of the bridge should be preserved. Most other areas should allow development where it is currently allowed.
 - He suggested some specific building heights, widths, setbacks, and types of access to the river that might be appropriate for the Bridge Vista Area. He described how development would affect views of the bridge and river from various locations on the Riverwalk.
- On Land Development – He suggested provisions similar to the Civic Greenway Area. He also proposed an additional setback for buildings adjacent to the Rivertrail to provide space for landscaping, plazas, and pedestrian activities, particularly on the north side of the trail.
- Next Steps – Receive feedback from the Planning Commission and public, update proposed Code amendments based on the feedback received, and begin on the next set of Code amendments to be discussed in November, which will include permitted uses and modification or rezone of the Tourist Commercial Zone. In December, the Commission will review design guidelines and landscaping. In January, he would present revisions of all the Code amendments.
 - After discussing the City's December schedule, Mr. Hastie and the Planning Commission agreed to consider December 17 or 18, 2014 at 6:30 pm as a possible meeting date.
 - This phase of the project should be complete by the end of June 2015.

President Nemlowill asked if the Commissioners had questions for Mr. Hastie. Hearing none, she invited public testimony on the presentation.

Drew Herzig, 628 Klaskanine Avenue, Astoria, asked where the deep water channel was located in relation to the shore. Planner Johnson explained the deep water channel was located beyond the pier head line and did not appear on the map of the Bridge Vista Area.

George (Mick) Hague, 1 3rd Street, Astoria, said he presented the Planning Commission with a letter. He wanted views of the bridge to be preserved as the Bridge Vista Area is developed. Broad views along the river are valued and should be maximized. The Plan should include a sentence that says people do not have to pay to enjoy the views. People should not have to go into a restaurant, hotel, or business in order to enjoy the vista. The vista can currently be enjoyed as one walks west along 2nd Street and people of all economic backgrounds enjoy the vista, which should be cherished. It would not take much to start putting a few buildings here and there, destroying the vista that brings people to Astoria. He believed a 35-foot or 20-foot building in areas east of the bridge could compromise the vista. With the exception of the warehousing in this area, most of the walk allows people to enjoy a wonderful view of the bridge. Page 37 of the Plan shows pictures of the trolley traveling through a tunnel of buildings. He believed buildings on the south side of the Rivertrail would be appropriate, but not over the water. He appreciated the recommendation to preserve views by limiting development in an area west of 2nd Street and near the bridge. The area west of 2nd Street contains some historical elements that he hoped would be preserved, like the ballast that appears when the river is low, the pilings from the historic canneries that used to exist, and the boiler that was taken from a ship to be used by a cannery. He rides the trolley on a regular basis and hears people talk about these historic elements, not new buildings. The few jobs that vista blocking buildings would provide could allow and would cumulatively impact the tourist industry in our area. He was not against development on the south side of the trolley, but was against forming a tunnel for the trolley. Buildings 35 feet tall would block views of the ships coming up the river and the bridge vista. He would not be able to attend the Planning Commission meetings in November and December, so he asked the Commission to think about his comments. If his building were currently being reviewed by the Commission, he would be protesting. He would try to send comments for meetings he would not be able to attend and hoped the Planning Commission would consider his thoughts.

Cindy Price, 1219 Jerome Ave, Astoria, said it seemed highly likely that the conversation about all areas of the Plan would suggest keeping as much open space as possible. She said she hears often that when reviewing possible Code amendments, the Planning Commission should consider what an area would be like if it were developed to its maximum potential. Slides often show pictures of what an area would look like with one building when the area allows for more. She read in the Plan that murals should be painted on the warehouses to disguise the buildings. She was pleased to see President Nemlowill's reaction to this, as she had the same reaction.

Yvonne Hughes, 1390 Jerome Ave, Astoria, agreed with Ms. Price there would be a lot of discussion about what has been done throughout the Riverfront Project. She often speaks with her son about what is going on in the city and he said the discussion about the riverfront was difficult given the topics involved like renewing housing, painting walls to preserve how they were in the old days, and adding more parks; it was frustrating. She lives on a hill and can see everything, but having lower buildings closer to the water was important because it is difficult to see the river with large buildings in front of you. Her son suggested higher buildings be built further from the river.

- She believed 98 percent of what was planned between 19th Street to 39th Street was excellent and she looked forward to working on the Bridge Vista phase. There is a lot of commercial industry in the Bridge Vista Area, including a gorgeous yacht club, some beautiful hotels, and a lot of vacant open parking spaces that are used heavily during the fishing season. However, time needs to be spent considering what could be built in the area. Building codes should be very specific, allowing for views and potential economic development. Tourism has grown in the area and she believed it would continue to grow. She wanted to preserve the tourism growth, the trolley, and the Riverwalk. The City also has a unique opportunity to bring in other types of industries. There are many vacant buildings in the area and there are places on the south side of the Riverwalk that could be built on. She believed the City should be cautious about building out over the water. Jake Jacobs did a phenomenal job on the Cannery Pier Hotel, which looks beautiful and sets a tone for the bridge. This was the first place she stayed when she discovered Astoria. She still had a photo of herself walking out of her hotel room at sunset with the sun hitting the bridge. This view should be available to everyone. There are buildings with aluminum siding on Marine Drive. The businesses in these buildings are still very active and those types of commercial industries should continue. The areas near the yacht club can be built up. Moving forward, the Commission should put just as much time and attention to detail into the Building Codes. Her son said the City needs to renew the housing and the walls from the old days. She believed it was critical to maintain and uphold the buildings that exist before thinking about building something new. There are a lot of incredible spaces in the area that could move everyone forward with some preservation.

Mr. Haag asked how he could get the PowerPoint presentation emailed to him. City Manager Estes said Staff could email it to him the next day and it would be available on the project website. Mr. Haag asked the Planning Commission to separate the Bridge Vista Area into two parts, one area east of the bridge and one area west of the bridge. This would preserve most of the vistas that the average person enjoys. City Manager Estes clarified that the Riverfront Vision Plan does not include the finger piers of the port. The Bridge Vista Area extends from 2nd Street to the Riverwalk Inn Hotel.

Mike Weston, Port of Astoria, said he spoke earlier in the week with Mr. Hastie and City Manager Estes. He was concerned about limiting development opportunities through building size and setbacks. If wider buildings are allowed, a dock or walkway should be provided to allow for public access. The Bridgewater Bistro could have its view totally blocked if a building were constructed 100 feet off the waterfront in the Exception Area. Therefore, the building should be closer to the shoreline and built in line with the bistro. The west side of the bridge does not work the same as the east side. There is a large pile field to the west of the Astoria-Megler Bridge that could be redeveloped, but chances are slim this pile field would actually be developed. Encouraging development in that direction could be counterproductive to what the community wants to accomplish. This area is high-tuned for tourism. The Port receives a lot of interest for hotels along the marina and the waterfront. He liked the photo of the view platform at the end of the walkway because this is part of the Port's long range plan. The Port has also discussed partnering with the City to install a monument. He believed most of the Port's properties were 45 feet tall, which is optimal for a hotel. The bridge is about 300 feet high and the highway is 20 to 30 feet off the ground, so the current building heights allow plenty of room. A 45-foot high hotel would not affect the view. There is a nice view shed where the Maritime Memorial and park are located, which is partially located on Port property, partially on an ODOT right-of-way, and partially on City property. The Port's interest is the property west of the bridge and the Port would like the Planning Commission to be liberal with zoning codes on this property. He asked the Commission to allow uses that would be productive. The current uses are not clear and do not allow for things like parking lots. Parking space is at a premium in the area because people must park in the streets and fight for parking spots. He asked the Planning Commission to keep the Port in mind as they complete the process of recommending Code amendments.

Suenn Ho, 3742 SE Mill, Portland, said she was speaking on behalf of Professor Jim Petenari, who came to Astoria on Sunday, October 26, 2014 to return five boards. About 25 years earlier, Paul Benoit and Professor Petenari worked on a project where five beautiful hand drawn studies of Astoria's waterfront were developed

from the water looking at the city. Professor Petenari said there are not very many working waterfront cities left along the coasts and rivers. He asked Ms. Ho to tell the City how precious their waterfront is. Looking at the boards that show the land from the water, one will begin to see what Astoria has. If Astoria begins to put things in front of the waterfront, the City needs to look at those structures in the context of its cityscape, landscape, and waterscape. It is very easy to look at what Astoria has from a bird's eye view, but photos and satellite show the city from other views. A building should be seen from the water as well as experienced from between the water and the land. Views from the water are not presented much. The boards will help the Planning Commission. Cities develop their character in response to building codes. She suggested the Commission be very careful about how building codes and design guidelines are developed because many times buildings of a certain era will look the way they do because of the rules. Astoria has a very eclectic type of architecture and a lot of different uses on the waterfront. A working waterfront has buildings that reflect their uses. Therefore, height limits and setbacks can force a factory or cannery to do something that does not work with what is required inside the building. She asked the Commission to consider that many of the existing buildings were built before the building codes and they were built according to how they needed to function. This is where authenticity comes in. The outside of a building will destroy what happens inside if blanket regulations do not consider a building's use. The boards are orphans that have come home; they are precious and tell a lot about Astoria. Astoria has something very precious. She said she was not a preservationist and not pro-development, but as an urban designer, she believed the community needed to think together about how to grow authentically. She suggested the Planning Commission refrain from blanket regulations. She believed Astoria was wonderful and dynamic because it changes all the time. She asked the Commission to be very critical about what guidelines are implemented and to allow for flexibility. A project that breaks all the rules could be exactly what Astoria wants, but the rules would have preceded the opportunity. So, review projects on a case by case basis and allow Astoria to grow. There are many opportunities on land and she hoped they would all be activated. Astoria is a beautiful city.

Commissioner Fitzpatrick asked if the Planning Commission could see the illustrations. Planner Johnson said Staff could bring them to a meeting.

Drew Herzig, 628 Klaskanine Avenue, Astoria, agreed with Ms. Ho's comments about the bird's eye view. When Michelle Reeves was advising the Astoria Downtown Historic District Association (ADHDA), she put a camera on her dashboard. Video taken as she drove into town was part of her presentation, which was incredibly revealing. The bird's eye view does not show what people see on the Riverwalk. He suggested having a pedestrian record images walking through the area so the Planning Commission and City Council can see the area at the pedestrian level. This would be useful for planning, but he agreed it was important to see what people see at that level.

Chris Farrar, 3023 Harrison Avenue, Astoria, said he did not walk in the Bridge Vista Area of the Riverwalk, so the issues being discussed were new to him. He would begin to walk in the area and stay engaged in this Code amendment process by attending all of the meetings. There is a lot of concern about the bird's eye view. The view between two buildings depends on where those buildings are placed. The view of the river cannot be seen half a mile from a 40 foot separation because the buildings appear to be right against each other. The location of the separation between buildings in relation to the Riverwalk should be considered. Huge separations between buildings will be necessary. Otherwise, the buildings will appear to be a solid wall and there will be no views of the river. He did not support tall buildings over the water. People want to see the horizon where the river meets the atmosphere, not a view across the top of a building that just looks into Washington. He wanted to preserve a lot of views in the area and believed a working wharf or port area would be fine. He wanted the Planning Commission to set a specific maximum total coverage.

Robert Jacob, 140 Grand, Astoria, said it is difficult to think about tomorrow with today's brain. He appreciated Ms. Ho's comments about blanket zoning and recognized the Planning Commission faced tough decisions. In many places, the pier line is 600 feet or up against the building. Some of the best architecture is created by the function of the inside of a building. Who would have thought that the cold storage would have become Pier 39 and such an interesting structure? He has had many friends in architecture and many consultants told him his ideas were bad. If it hadn't taken him 13 years, he would have had an ugly structure. The view corridors, types of uses, zoning, variances and all of the issues being discussed have no easy answer. There are quite a few cities with rivers, so many of these issues have been addressed before. He suggested the Planning Commission make sure everyone involved explored the problems and solutions addressed by other cities. Pedestrians should be able to walk past something that is unique to Astoria, like fish being unloaded. He has many investors with unfinished projects. This process will be difficult because every part of the river is unique. It will be tough for the

Planning Commission to collect ideas and find solutions. The Planning Commission needs input from people who are good at planning and river design, developers, and business owners. It's too bad these decisions need to be made so quickly and he did not understand why.

President Nemlowill confirmed there was no further public comment.

Mr. Hastie asked for feedback from the Planning Commission on his presentation. He needed direction in order to refine his recommendations.

Commissioner Fitzpatrick appreciated that Suenn Ho and Robert Jacob were able to articulate some thoughts about the Bridge Vista Area. Their ideas were the same or better than his own. It is difficult to put a limit on something without knowing what could come before the Planning Commission. He believed it was important to remember that Mr. Jacob's building should not fall under what has been presented and should be exempt. He also believed the Commission needed to consider what is in the area, including Mr. Haag's home that is over the water. If the home did not exist yet, people would protest building it. However, the home has become part of the waterfront.

Commissioner Easom said people have talked about the vistas and views, but those views also include the buildings that are constructed along the riverfront. This is part of what makes Astoria unique. No development on the waterfront makes the city very plain and not a working waterfront. The Bridge Vista Area is designated for development, so the Planning Commission needs to make the development possible.

Commissioner Gimre said in the 50 years he has lived in Astoria, the only riverfront development has been the condominiums that Mr. Haag lives in. He asked Staff if anyone has approached the City about developing within the Bridge Vista Area.

Planner Johnson said Mr. Jacob's hotel and the condominiums have been built and the City has received inquiries for one other structure west of the bridge. The City issued a permit, which expired, for a condominium at the foot of Columbia. The City also received one proposal for development at the end of the pier at the foot of 1st Street.

Commissioner Gimre questioned whether development would be cost prohibitive. There has been such limited development over the last 50 years. Any new development should fit in to what the waterfront already provides and this will be a real challenge. He supported more restrictions for overwater development because it would be cost prohibitive for a developer to build a structure up to 45 feet. He admitted he could be wrong, but this has not occurred more than twice in the last 50 years. He wanted to preserve Astoria's vistas and views. He suggested taking a closer look at building on the land side.

Vice President Innes appreciated Ms. Ho's comments and looked forward to seeing the illustrations. However, it seemed as if the working waterfront aspect of the Bridge Vista Area already exists. She needed to think about how to preserve and encourage the working waterfront.

Commissioner Pearson said the Riverfront Vision Plan is a working document and there are still a lot of details to work out. However, he believed the recommendations included some fair compromises. Some views and vistas are being preserved, exception zones have been proposed, and development is being encouraged. He believed the Planning Commission was off to a good start, but still needed to consider some details.

Commissioner Fitzpatrick said the Cannery Pier Hotel, the Red Building, Buoy Beer, Baked Alaska, the Docks on 12th Street, and the Pilot House on 14th Street all have access to the water. He and his wife go out on the dock at 12th Street all the time. He believed it was more interesting to view the water from the dock because it adds to the monotony of going back and forth over the same riverwalk each time. If the fishing dock had not been built next to Dock's on 12th Street, the views would be different.

President Nemlowill asked how design review should be considered in the Bridge Vista Area.

Mr. Hastie said design guidelines and standards would be reviewed for the area. The intent would be to promote the character of this area in the city. These provisions could take more time to discuss, so they are scheduled to be reviewed with the third set of recommendations.

President Nemlowill believed the design standards would be difficult because there is no existing template, like there was in the Civic Greenway Area. She understood there were no strong objections from Commissioners about anything proposed. She is trying to look at this with a fresh set of eyes, and has a lot of new information to consider, including the public testimony and comments from the other Commissioners . She asked if Staff had any additional comments.


City Manager Estes said the Commissioners would be given more information prior to the next Planning Commission meeting.

There being no further business, the work session adjourned at 8:23 pm.

ATTEST:


Secretary

APPROVED:


City Manager