

ASTORIA PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

Astoria City Hall

July 24, 2018

CALL TO ORDER:

President Fitzpatrick called the meeting to order at 6:36 pm.

ROLL CALL:

Commissioners Present: President Sean Fitzpatrick, Vice President Kent Easom, Jennifer Cameron-Latteck, Jan Mitchell, Brookley Henri, and Joan Herman.

Staff Present: Planner Nancy Ferber and City Attorney Blair Henningsgaard. The meeting is recorded and will be transcribed by ABC Transcription Services, Inc.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

President Fitzpatrick asked for approval of the minutes of the June 26, 2018 meeting. Vice-President Easom moved that the Astoria Planning Commission approve the minutes as presented; seconded by Commissioner Henri. Motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

President Fitzpatrick 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. He noted that CU18-03 by Trevor Elaine had originally been continued to this meeting, but the application had since been withdrawn.

ITEM 4(a):

CU17-06 Permit Extension Request for Conditional Use CU17-06 by Astoria Warming Center to extend permit to September 6, 2019 to operate the Astoria Warming Center at 1076 Franklin Avenue. This item was continued from the July 26, 2018 meeting due to an error in mailing the public notice.

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

Planner Ferber reviewed the written Staff report. One piece of correspondence had been received and was included in the Staff report. Staff recommended approval of the request.

President Fitzpatrick opened the public hearing and called for a presentation by the Applicant.

Annie Dolber, 679 Alameda, Astoria, Astoria Warming Center Board Secretary, stated that the Warming Center was usually open for 90 days between November 15th to March 15th and the days of operation are weather dependent. The extension request is based on the City codes. The proposal and City codes had not been changed from the previous year. The Warming Center supplied Staff with copies of the current parking lease and memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the First United Methodist Church, which also remained unchanged.

Dan Parkison, 550 St. Rt. 401, Nacelle, WA, Astoria Warming Center Board President, said last year the Warming Center was asked to do a thorough site analysis before applying for a permit extension this year. The process took several months, as they looked for alternative sites. They met with the community college, hospital, armory, and medical offices. The armory would not work because they offer skating and other activities throughout the day and in the evenings. The community college and hospital did not have any available space. They looked a couple of commercial properties that were for sale, but the down payments were between \$250,000 and \$300,000 and had sold before the Warming Center was even done discussing them with the realtor. Then, they looked at renting, but rents were between \$2,500 and \$4,000 a month and all of the properties

would have required substantial modifications. They began surveying churches in the area because the best use of a church building is a part-time, night time use. Churches typically have a day school during the summer when the Warming Center is not open and meeting facilities are usually used during the day. Additionally, churches have a mission to minister to the poor. They contacted every church listed in the yellow pages and visited every church that had a large enough facility regardless of the zone they were located in. Pastor Bill emailed all of the potential churches and they all responded that they had other uses in their buildings. The church that the Warming Center is currently located in offers an exit from the basement. The Warming Centers needs legal handicap exits from the basement of a church. The survey indicated no other church had space that was available or met the exit requirements. The site analysis was submitted to Staff and was included in the Staff report.

Commissioner Herman noted the report indicated that several individuals had been banned from the facility in the previous year. She asked what they had been banned for.

Chris Williams, 15 New Lock Rd., Nacelle, WA, Astoria Warming Center Board Member, stated about six individuals had been banned for a variety of reasons. One couple had drug paraphernalia, two individuals were banned for fighting inside the facility, and one was banned for being consistently contrary to what the coordinator was asking him to do. Several had been banned just for the evening for rolling cigarettes in the facility. He did not know why the others had been banned. He confirmed that after being banned, no one had caused any trouble trying to return, regardless of whether they had been banned for the evening or for the rest of the season. He believed this was due to the strong support of the guests who did not want bad behavior there either.

Mr. Parkison added that the facility was a low barrier center but had a zero-tolerance policy. This year, the tone would be set by discussing the standards every night at dinner and reacting quickly to non-compliance. Many nights, they turn people away because they reach full capacity. Their location is in an R-3 zone and the front doors face 11th Street. The C-4 zone is 23 feet from the front doors. Their clients come to the Warming Center from the C-4 zone and return to that zone when they leave because they typically head to the bus, mental health and medical appointments, or to DHS. Half of the church property is in the C-4 zone and if the Warming Center was located across the street, they would not be having a discussion about a permit in R-3. The C-4 zone is across from, up the hill from and down the hill from the Warming Center. When they were located across the street at the Senior Center, their impact was identical to the impact they have now.

Annie Martin, 1024 Grand, Astoria, said she believed that the Warming Center met its obligations under the Good Neighbor Commitment. Last year, they set up new rules and guidelines to support guest accountability and personal responsibility. Every night they were open, they educated guests about respect for fellow guests, staff, volunteers, the neighborhood, and Astoria. They have and would continue to log all complaints by the neighborhood. Responses have been and would continue to be made in a timely manner, which is always less than 48 hours. Because of the zero-tolerance policy that prohibits violent or aggressive behavior, they have built a better relationship with the neighborhood and local authorities. Additionally, they now have trash bins and trash pickup that covers a two-block radius. They are looking into doing more recycling with Peace Lutheran Church. No overnight camping and no loitering signs were added to the parking lot. The biggest part of the Good Neighbor Commitment has been their neighborhood meetings. They held meetings before, during, and after the Warming Center was open last year and they are a valuable resource for making policy changes. Notices are sent out three weeks in advance to neighbors, building owners, and residents. Announcements are made on social media and flyers are posted. Anyone who wants to receive notices can email the Warming Center. A meeting will be held two months prior to opening this season on September 15th.

Commissioner Herman said the complaint log listed five complaints. She asked if those were the only complaints received for the entire season.

Ms. Martin stated those were the only complaints they were aware of. The complaints made via social media were addressed but were not official complaints. People know they can contact the Warming Center any time, even when they are not open. She displayed statistics on the screen from the last season. The Warming Center was open 80 nights, served 161 guests, and served 4,000 meals. The Warming Center in Warrenton would not likely open this year and there are no longer any Warming Centers on the peninsula. So, she believed there would be more of a need for a Warming Center in the community. She believed they would be at capacity on the nights they are open. Last winter was mild and they were only open for 80 out of 90 nights. If this winter is more severe, they will turn away more people. She believed their location was the easiest accessible area. If she were

to put a monetary value on their services to the community, with meals and volunteer hours, it would probably be about \$150,000. The bigger value is the care and wellbeing of the community, keeping them sheltered, fed, and out of harm's way.

Ms. Dolber said all of the dinners and coffee were donated by restaurants and a grocery store in the community. The CommuniCare grant recognized their service to the community. The high school Key Club volunteered to help clean on a regular basis all year long. Other donations included coats and clothing from NWRES and Columbia Bank. The need for support was publicized on Facebook. Their page has over 1,600 followers. They also used local radio, word of mouth, and a booth at the Sunday Market, which they will attempt to do again if their permit extension is granted.

Mr. Parkison said he talked to Allen Evans about how the Warming Center fit into his program. His clients and the Warming Center clients overlap and he strongly supported the warming. There is a tremendous need in the community. When people are on the street, winter is different from the summer. In the winter, people begin to get desperate, their mentality and health changes. When the Warming Center takes someone off the street who might freeze to death at night, they are very grateful. The homeless community polices itself inside the building because it is super important to them and they do not want to lose it. They make posters and put them on the walls about respecting the neighborhood. A lot of the people who come in went through medical bankruptcies or could not make rent. They could make a monthly payment, but could not get back on their feet because they do not have first and last month's rent, a deposit, and application fees. Loss of a job, mental illness, and addiction are other reasons. Most of the people they serve are temporarily homeless and many have full time jobs. When they come to the Warming Center, they are given the human touch that they do not get on the street, which is the beginning of them returning to society. Many people will go Helping Hands. Last year, the Warming Center sent many people to Seaside. They hoped to work closely with Mr. Evans this year. The difference between Mr. Evans program and the Warming Center is that people on certain prescription medications can stay at the Warming Center. Mr. Evans will not take people who are being medically treated for drug addiction. So, there is a need for both programs. There is a church in Astoria trying to set up workforce housing for employers who sponsor people. He did not know if that would get off the ground.

President Fitzpatrick called for any testimony in favor of or opposed to the application. Hearing none, he called for testimony impartial to the application.

Kris Haefker, 687 12th Street, Astoria, said the Warming Center had done a much better job this year than in past years. He appreciated that rules were being enforced. He lived very close to the Warming Center and he hears a lot of noise from the downtown area. Some of that noise is probably related to people who visit the Warming Center, but not strictly during the times the Warming Center is open. He would appreciate it if the Warming Center educated its guests about how noise travels in Astoria because he had received complaints from tenants. That would add to the neighborhood agreement. A temporary use permit is a 90-day permit and zoning did not have anything to do with where that is located. Under State law, to get a temporary use permit for an emergency shelter, there is no requirement to be in any specific zone.

City Attorney Henningsgaard confirmed that Astoria's codes did not have any zone requirements.

Mr. Haefker said the Warming Center was not limited to a church facility and other buildings can be considered in the future. In order to grant the temporary use for an emergency shelter, the shelter just needs approval from the fire marshal and building inspector.

Planner Ferber said this was under review because the code did not define emergency shelters. The City has had separate ongoing discussions about amending the code, but no definitions had been adopted yet.

Mr. Haefker said he believed the State's code was different from Astoria's.

City Attorney Henningsgaard explained that the State did not have any regulating ordinances [inaudible 40:33]. He confirmed the Warming Center had not yet been defined as an emergency shelter.

Mr. Haefker was concerned about the group managing the shelter in the future because it was a mostly volunteer group. In Portland, volunteer managed facilities had a burnout rate and he wanted to make sure that the good job being done now would continue in the future.

President Fitzpatrick closed the public hearing and called for closing comments of Staff.

Planner Ferber stated she believed the recommended conditions of approval clearly indicated what had been recommended last year. However, the Commission could still add conditions to address noise complaints.

President Fitzpatrick called for Commission discussion and deliberation.

Commissioner Cameron-Lattek said she believed the conditions for the extension had been met. No changes in use had been proposed and she appreciated the work the Applicants had done to uphold the Good Neighbor Commitment. She confirmed that contact information for the Warming Center was easy to find. She did not want to add any conditions, as she believed the noise complaint should be brought up at one of the neighborhood meetings.

Commissioner Herman agreed the conditions for the extension had been met. She was glad to see the Good Neighbor agreement had been working well. As long as the Warming Center remains committed to the agreement, it would continue to work well.

Commissioner Henri appreciated the statistics. She believed there were no conflicts with the requirements for the permit extension. The Warming Center is a better fit than it was before the Good Neighbor Commitment and she was willing to extend the permit for another year.

Commissioner Mitchell believed the Warming Center had done good job of due diligence when looking for other facilities. She was impressed that the volunteers had worked through all of the Commissioners' questions and concerns. They worked to meet the concerns of the neighborhood and are providing a service to the community. The requirements have been met and she was in favor of the request.

President Fitzpatrick thanked the Warming Center board for the Good Neighbor Commitment. Season three was quite different season four. In season three, he had to go out early in the morning to pick up broken glass and trash. This year, after two weeks, he did not have to go out again. Additionally, the loitering and other issues were been taken care of early on in the season. The first night this year that the Warming Center was open, the temperature was 52 degrees and his neighborhood could smell the marijuana smoke. Just before the facility closed for the season, there were people with territorial issues and were aggressive towards the volunteers. He appreciated the efforts by the volunteers and the changes that the Good Neighbor Commitment brought to the neighborhood. Season three was the first time he did not feel safe in his neighborhood, downtown, or on his property. He had not felt that way since season three ended. He was concerned that the Warming Center would be open every night between December 15th and January 15th, as noted on Page 12 of the Staff report.

Mr. Parkison confirmed that was incorrect, explaining that the Warming Center had asked for that last year. This year, their hours of operation would be completely weather dependent.

Vice President Easom moved that the Astoria Planning Commission adopt the Findings and Conclusions contained in the Staff report and approve the Permit Extension for Conditional Use CU17-06 by Astoria Warming Center, with the following changes to the Staff report:

- Strike the last paragraph of Section V on Page 12.
- Clarify that the operating days would be weather dependent between November 14, 2018 through March 15, 2019.

Seconded by Commissioner Herman. Motion passed unanimously.

President Fitzpatrick read the rules of appeal into the record.

ITEM 4(b):

V18-08 Variance Request V18-08 by Bruce Jones and Julie Flues for the Columbia River Maritime Museum from the maximum 64 square feet of allowable signage and two signs per frontage to install one banner each on the west and south façade and one wall sign on the east façade in addition to the existing 176.7 square feet of signage at the Columbia River Maritime Museum at 1792 Marine Drive.

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

President Fitzpatrick declared he was a member of the Columbia River Maritime Museum, but he believed he could be impartial.

Commissioner Mitchell declared she was a member of the museum as well, but she could be impartial.

President Fitzpatrick asked Staff to present the Staff report.

Planner Ferber reviewed the written Staff report. She noted that the movie banners would only be up during the summer between Memorial Day and Labor Day. No correspondence had been received and Staff recommended approval of the request with the conditions listed in the Staff report.

President Fitzpatrick opened the public hearing and called for a presentation by the Applicant.

Julie Flues, 1 3rd Street, Astoria, said she appreciated the recommendation. The museum is proud to be an attraction in Astoria. Coming into Astoria from the east, it is not possible to tell that the building is a museum until arriving at the third entrance because of the way the life boat protrudes out from the building and conceals the sign. The new signs would let people know that the museum is one of the great attractions in Astoria.

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

Commissioner Henri said it seemed like a good idea to allow signage that alerted visitors from the east. The museum looked tasteful, but she was concerned that rotating posters would be out of character. She liked that the poster would only be hung between Memorial Day and Labor Day and was in favor of the request.

Vice President Easom believed the signage being requested was appropriate to the site. He believed Astoria's signage requirements were too strict. The museum had been using banners for several years and they have always been tasteful, so he was in favor of the application.

Commissioner Herman stated the museum was one of the largest buildings in town. The sign ordinance caps at a maximum of 128 feet regardless of the building's size. She confirmed with City Attorney Henningsgaard that approving this request would not set a precedent.

Commissioner Cameron-Lattek said she felt like the conditions had been met. The museum's signage has always been tasteful.

Commissioner Mitchell believed the architecture of the building was the biggest draw and she did not believe the museum would put up signage that would distract from the quality of the museum.

President Fitzpatrick agreed that the signage requirements were strict. When people come into town and look at the big building shaped like waves, some people have no idea what it is. Better signage is a great idea and he believed it would be less of a distraction and more of an aid to drivers. Drivers will know where they are and can start pulling in sooner.

Planner Ferber noted that the building was within the Gateway Overlay Zone, which had specific signage standards that were applicable to free standing signs. Signage on the existing building does not have to go through a design review.

Vice President Easom moved that the Astoria Planning Commission adopt the Findings and Conclusions contained in the Staff report and approve Variance Request V18-08 by Bruce Jones and Julie Flues; seconded by Commissioner Herman. Motion passed unanimously.

President Fitzpatrick read the rules of appeal into the record.

President Fitzpatrick called for a recess at 7:38 pm. The Planning Commission meeting reconvened at 7:43 pm.

ITEM 4(c):

V18-06 Variance Request V18-06 by Terra Patterson for the Astoria Aquatic Center from the maximum 300 square feet of allowable signage to install an 11' by 150' (1,650 square feet) wave sign which includes a 3' by 38' (114 square feet) text sign painted on the north elevation wall in addition to the existing 52 square feet of signs on the existing Astoria Aquatic Center at 1997 Marine Drive.

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

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

Vice President Easom confirmed that the previous sign was a little bit smaller than the one being proposed, but the design was similar.

President Fitzpatrick opened the public hearing and called for a presentation by the Applicant.

Terra Patterson, 1997 Marine Drive, Astoria, Aquatic Center Supervisor, said the previous sign was a large wooden sign that was installed when the building was built. The wave was smaller and it went along the front of the building facing Marine Drive. When the building was repainted last fall, the wave and the sign were removed and were found to be rotten. Staff researched various options and believed the proposed sign would provide the best representation of the building and the purpose of the facility. The mural would brighten the area and complement the surrounding area, including the wave design of the Maritime Museum building.

Commissioner Mitchell asked what colors would be used in the mural.

Angela Cosby, 1997 Marine Drive, Astoria, Parks and Recreation Director, stated a variety of blues would be used. The mural was designed and would be painted by Roger McKay, who also did the mural inside the Aquatic Center.

President Fitzpatrick called for any testimony in favor of, impartial to, or opposed to the application. Hearing none, he called for closing comments of Staff.

Planner Ferber said the building was in the Gateway Overlay Zone. However, Article 14 was not addressed in the criteria because there were no design issues. The Planning Commission is just reviewing the size and location of the mural.

President Fitzpatrick closed the public hearing and called for Commission discussion and deliberation.

Commissioner Henri said when she first moved to Astoria, she had been unable to find the Aquatic Center and passed by it a few times before finding the building. Replacing the sign would be great. The mural on the inside of the building was awesome and she was in favor of the request.

Vice President Easom believed the sign regulations were inappropriate for the size of this building. He was in favor of the request.

Commissioner Mitchell said the request seemed appropriate. The building currently has no indication of the facility's purpose.

Commissioner Cameron-Latteck stated she supported the application. She liked the old sign and was happy to see a more colorful version.

Commissioner Herman said the new sign was very similar to the original and would make the building look more attractive. She supported the application.

President Fitzpatrick agreed that it was important for people who are looking for the space to figure out what the building is and where it is located. The Aquatic Center is an attraction and an institution. He was in favor of the request.

Vice President Easom moved that the Astoria Planning Commission adopt the Findings and Conclusions contained in the Staff report and approve Variance Request V18-06 by Terra Patterson; seconded by Commissioner Cameron-Lattek. Motion passed unanimously.

President Fitzpatrick read the rules of appeal into the record.

ITEM 4(d):

V18-05 Variance Request V18-05 by Alexander Pappas Construction for Paul and Sally Turchetta from the maximum 6' fence height to construct an 8' fence in the rear and rear side yards of an existing single-family dwelling at 31 Skyline Avenue.

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

Vice President Easom declared that he had used Alexander Pappas as a contractor, but that would not influence his opinion.

President Fitzpatrick asked Staff to present the Staff report.

Planner Ferber reviewed the written Staff report. No correspondence had been received and Staff recommended approval of the request with the conditions listed in the Staff report.

Commissioner Mitchell confirmed that all of the adjacent property owners had been notified and Staff had not received anything from them.

President Fitzpatrick opened the public hearing and called for a presentation by the Applicant.

Alexander Pappas (via telephone) stated the fence would not be visible much from the street because of the shrubs and the depth of the property along the sides. The fence would be mostly visible from the neighboring properties on the sides and behind. The fence would be 12.5-gauge metal, so it would be very see through, except for the posts spaced every eight to ten feet apart.

President Fitzpatrick called for any testimony in favor of, impartial to, or opposed to the application. Hearing none, he called for closing comments of Staff.

Planner Ferber noted that fences higher than six feet required a building permit.

President Fitzpatrick closed the public hearing and called for Commission discussion and deliberation.

Commissioner Henri stated she looked at the house when it was on the market, so she was familiar with the back yard, which slopes way down from the street. There is a drainage easement behind the property and there are probably a lot of deer in that area. A see-through fence would look nice. She was in favor of the request.

Vice President Easom moved that the Astoria Planning Commission adopt the Findings and Conclusions contained in the Staff report and approve Variance Request V18-05 by Alexander Pappas Construction; seconded by Commissioner Henri. Motion passed unanimously.

President Fitzpatrick read the rules of appeal into the record.

ITEM 4(e):

CU18-04 Conditional Use CU18-04 by Shelia Dianne Forte to locate a one-bedroom homestay lodging in an existing single-family dwelling at 1240 Sonora Avenue.

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

Planner Ferber reviewed the written Staff report. No correspondence had been received and Staff recommended approval of the request with the conditions listed in the Staff report.

Commissioner Herman confirmed that a homestay lodging was the same as what most people called an Airbnb.

Commissioner Mitchell understood there was a lot of Staff time involved in follow up. She asked if people generally followed the requirements for homestay lodgings. She also asked how Staff would know if a homeowner was renting out rooms when they were not present.

Planner Ferber said Staff knows pretty quickly because compliance is complaint driven. A couple City Councilors are concerned about homes being used as vacation rentals, which is not allowed. When Staff receives notice that a whole house is being advertised on Airbnb, they will follow up with the homeowner. The few that Staff has found are currently in active code enforcement. Generally, neighbors complain when someone parks in front of their house or when they suspect a house is being used as a vacation rental.

President Fitzpatrick opened the public hearing and called for a presentation by the Applicant.

Shelia Dianne Forte, 1240 Sonora, Astoria, said she was excited to share her home and her beautiful city. All of her kids are grown and have moved away from home, so they have a lot to share.

Commissioner Cameron-Lattek asked why Ms. Forte preferred a homestay rather than an apartment.

Ms. Forte said she could make a lot more money renting by the night instead of by the month. People have asked if they could rent her space, but long-term renters have different requirements than nightly renters.

President Fitzpatrick called for any testimony in favor of the application.

Kris Haefker, 687 12th Street, Astoria, said he was always in favor of homestay lodgings. He believed there was a lot of confusion about homestay lodgings. It is important to understand that homestay lodgings benefit Astoria's housing market on many levels. As an Airbnb host, he has had a lot of people contact him about monthly or weekly stays. He is currently renting to a man who is doing the lineman program at Camp Rilea. He has also donated housing to the director of the Missoula Children's Theatre and for the Astoria Music Festival. When homestay hosts do their routine for a year, they tend to start leaning towards other housing options because of the scheduling and cleaning and because homestays are so seasonal. There is a perception that there is a lot of money to be made, but it's very seasonal. Averaging out the income over the course of a year can sometimes be a wash. One thing hurting a lot of homestay hosts is the transient room tax. Many people are not paying the tax, so the legal homestays have to compete with lower rates. It would be nice to see some sort of collection mechanism that happens at the time of booking so that the City gets more money and there is an even playing field. Astoria does not need new hotels and homes can provide for the seasonal overflow. Many times, his tenants had made more noise and disruption than the Airbnb guests. He joked that family and friends were more difficult to host than the Airbnb guests because they take a lot more energy and leave a lot more mess. Homestay lodgings needed to be considered on a much different level and not be lumped in with vacation housing because it benefits the people of Astoria. He asked the Commission to consider the economic hardship criteria because many people are having a hard time staying in their homes. Homestay lodgings could help those people because they cannot always find a roommate or fix up their house.

President Fitzpatrick called for testimony impartial to or opposed to the application. Hearing none, he called for closing comments of Staff.

Planner Ferber noted that at the state level, there is an ongoing conversation about cities adopting transient lodging rules to get the financing managed at a higher level. Additionally, City Council has discussed changing City Codes to streamline the homestay lodging permitting process and potentially require health and safety inspections.

President Fitzpatrick closed the public hearing and called for Commission discussion and deliberation.

Commissioner Cameron-Latteck said she was in favor of the application because she felt the conditions had been met. She believed the owner had communicated that she understood the impact of a homestay lodging. She also demonstrated an understanding of City ordinances and intention to adhere to them. She asked why the applicant wanted a homestay instead of a long-term rental because homestays are not as oppositional as City Council and others like to say they are. Homestays are a good step towards becoming comfortable with someone living your home. For some, it might also be a good source of revenue. It is important to have on the record homeowners' thoughtful reasons for making this decision.

Commissioner Herman stated she was ambivalent about this application. She appreciated that the Applicant planned to subject herself to paying lodging taxes when there are others in town who are not. She supported the Applicant's right to a point to use her home as a homestay. She was concerned about the shortage of affordable housing for the workers who support the tourism industry. She asked Staff if she could legally oppose the request based on her concern.

Planner Ferber explained that the Commission needed to decide whether the proposal met the criteria. The Applicant has already stated she would not rent out the space to a long-term tenant, so approving the request would not be sacrificing workforce housing.

Commissioner Herman said when there is an option, it is difficult to say that one would or would not do something if it is a self-contained unit.

Planner Ferber confirmed with the Applicant that the space was a basement bedroom, living area, and a full bath. If the space had a full kitchen, the request would be reviewed as an accessory dwelling unit (ADU).

Commissioner Henri commented that she was in favor of the application. Homestay lodgings are unique because the homeowners can choose when they want guests in their house.

Commissioner Mitchell added that there may be ways people move towards a change in housing style, particularly with the large old houses and the older population. People love their old houses, but they have a hard time supporting the house by themselves. That will be part of the discussion about finding workforce housing. She recommended the Commission have a work session to find ways to use Astoria's ordinances and codes to help the process.

Commissioner Mitchell moved that the Astoria Planning Commission adopt the Findings and Conclusions contained in the Staff report and approve Conditional Use CU18-04 by Shelia Dianne Forte; seconded by Vice-President Easom. Motion passed unanimously.

President Fitzpatrick read the rules of appeal into the record.

ITEM 4(f):

CU18-05 Conditional Use CU18-05 by Matt and Bree Philips to locate a one-bedroom homestay lodging in an existing commercial building at 855 Exchange Street.

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

Vice-President Easom declared a potential conflict, as Bree Philips was in the same business as he was. He believed this would be Ms. Philips primary place of business for her real estate office. However, he believed he could vote impartially.

President Fitzpatrick asked Staff to present the Staff report.

Planner Ferber reviewed the written Staff report. No correspondence had been received and Staff recommended approval of the request with the conditions listed in the Staff report.

Commissioner Mitchell asked if the Commission should consider changing the C-4 zoning code to provide for workforce housing.

Planner Ferber said yes, the code had been flagged for amendments the next time City Council makes housing a goal. City Council had also discussed downtown housing and building permit issues related to ingress and egress for second story housing.

President Fitzpatrick opened the public hearing and called for a presentation by the Applicant.

Bree Philips, 855 Exchange Street, Astoria, said she and her husband owned the building and their first idea was to add the unit to workforce housing. However, the code will not allow that. The unit will be a self-contained, one-bedroom, one-bath apartment with a full kitchen. She would love to be a part of the work session to discuss adding housing in the community. She asked the Commission to consider Staff's recommendation and approve her proposal.

Commissioner Herman asked if the Applicant would switch to a permanent resident if the code were changed.

Ms. Philips confirmed she would prefer a permanent resident. She was already a landlord and it is a lot of work to manage the cleaning and turnover. She had already spoken to people who were interested in renting the unit at market rate.

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

Vice-President Easom said he would love to see the unit as long-term housing, but it would still add to Astoria's stock of transient housing. He was in favor of the application.

President Fitzpatrick noted that hospitality and habitation were two different businesses and he hoped the code would be changed to allow this unit to become a long-term rental.

Vice-President Easom moved that the Astoria Planning Commission adopt the Findings and Conclusions contained in the Staff report and approve Conditional Use CU18-05 by Matt and Bree Philips; seconded by Commissioner Mitchell. Motion passed unanimously.

President Fitzpatrick read the rules of appeal into the record.

REPORTS OF OFFICERS/COMMISSIONERS:

Commissioner Cameron-Latteck reported that she read an article in *Street Routes* newspaper, which is sold by homeless people in Portland. The City has been encouraged to discuss what language to use when referring to people who do not have permanent homes. The article used the terms "unsheltered" and "homeless" interchangeably, which demonstrated that homeless people were comfortable using those terms to represent themselves.

Commissioner Mitchell reported that the City was about to start working with a consultant to schedule work sessions and hearings. She planned to take a trip in October, but she did not want to miss any special meetings.

STAFF UPDATES:

Planner Ferber announced that the work session on the Urban Core Area of Riverfront Vision Plan had been scheduled for August 7th. She was not aware of any follow up work sessions in October, but she would send Commissioners a list of meeting dates via email. The next regular Planning Commission meeting was scheduled for August 28th and there were currently three hearings on the agenda.


PUBLIC COMMENTS:

There were none.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:33 pm.

APPROVED:



City Planner

9/5/18

Date