

ASTORIA PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

Astoria City Hall
July 28, 2015

CALL TO ORDER:

Acting President Innes called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

INTRODUCTIONS

Interim Planner Morgan introduced Community Development Director Kevin Cronin. Director Cronin shared with the Commission his work background, stating he was happy to be working with the City of Astoria.

ROLL CALL:

Commissioners Present: Vice President McLaren Innes, Kent Easom, Sean Fitzpatrick, Daryl Moore, Jan Mitchell and Frank Spence. President Pearson was excused.

Staff Present: Community Development Director Kevin Cronin, Interim Planner Mike Morgan, City Attorney Blair Henningsgaard.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

a. April 7, 2015

Acting President Innes asked for approval of the minutes of the April 7th meeting. Commissioner Mitchell noted the following corrections:

Second paragraph, Page 2 should read: "He also wanted to **show** how the final revisions...."

Fourth paragraph, Page 2 should read: "**Del** Corbett, 701 NW Warrenton Drive..."

Commissioner Easom moved that the Astoria Planning Commission approve the minutes as corrected; seconded by Commissioner Mitchell. Motion passed 6 to 0.

b. April 28, 2015

Motion made and seconded to approve the April 28, 2015 minutes as presented. Motion approved.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

Interim President Innes 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):

Amendment A15-02 by Clatsop Community College to amend the land use and zoning map from R-3, High Density Residential to C-3, General Commercial zone at 550 - 16th Street, 164 Franklin, and 1642 Franklin in the R-3, High Density Residential zone.

Interim President Innes 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 Fitzpatrick stated that he had a conflict of interest and recused himself. Interim President Innes asked Staff to present the Staff report.

Interim Planner Morgan reviewed the written staff report. Correspondence in opposition had been received from Karen Sheridan, an adjacent property owner, address 1674 Franklin Avenue. Interim Planner Morgan informed the commission that a lot line adjustment was being prepared by Planner Johnson, who is working with the

college, which would separate the Josie Peper property from the rest of the property, and still allow access for the parking lot area on the east side. Director Cronin reiterated that the building in question has operated as an office and day care for years and the properties in the adjacent area are zoned the same as the proposed zone. Based on the findings of fact contained in the report, Staff recommended approval of the request.

Vice President Innes opened the public hearing. She called for any testimony in favor of, impartial to, or opposed to the application.

Greg Dorcheus, Clatsop Community College, 1653 Jerome, Astoria explained that the College had declared the property, referred to as the Josie Peper building, surplus and had an offer from a private party. The property has been on the market for some time. The new buyer has requested commercial zoning to support a vacation rental business.

Drew Herzig, 628 Klaskanine, Astoria asked to speak impartially. He suggested that perhaps a variance or conditional use would be a better approach to a zone change. Attorney Henningsgaard said this was not possible.

Donna Quinn, 1684 Franklin, Astoria presented testimony in opposition to the request. She submitted a petition signed by several neighborhood property owners in opposition of the amendment request and an article from the *New York Times* regarding the downside of tourism for the commission's review.

Len Myers, 544 17th Street, testified in opposition to the request, stating he agreed with Donna Quinn's testimony and wanted to make his opposition known.

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

Director Cronin responded to concerns raised during the public testimony: 1) limiting certain allowable uses in the proposed zone through conditions of approval or through legal means such as a deed restriction. City Attorney agreed with staff that limiting the uses through a land use action is problematic, and 2) "neighborhood character" is a subjective term not included in the applicable criteria whereas staff must render a recommendation based on clear and objective standards.

Commissioner Spence stated that he had reservations about the proposal because of the parking situation. Planner Morgan explained that the private property would be a 50' x 100' lot with five parking spaces on the north side of the brick building.

Commissioner Easom said that it was unlikely that the property would sell as a home, since it sits in the middle of an asphalt parking lot next to the PAC. He stated that he supports the zone change.

Commissioner Moore declared he felt the change was justified given the character of the area.

Commissioner Mitchell said she was conflicted about the change but she felt that on balance it made sense to include it in a commercial zone. Interim President Innes also said she was torn, but felt that it was a reasonable request.

Vice President Innes reopened the hearing to allow rebuttal testimony from the applicant. Ann Gyde, representing the applicant, acknowledged that a law office that was leasing the space was operating illegally in a residential zone. The College initiated the zone change to address this issue as well as respond to the request of a prospective buyer, who was not available to attend the hearing.

Commissioner Easom moved that the Astoria Planning Commission finds the proposed amendment to be necessary and recommend to the Astoria City Council that the proposed amendment be approved; seconded by Commissioner Moore. Motion passed with a vote of 4-1, Commissioner Spence against; Commissioner Fitzpatrick abstained.

REPORTS OF OFFICERS/COMMISSIONERS:

Community Development Director Cronin provided a summary of the projects the department is involved in, including: Parklets, the Affordable Housing Study, Riverfront Vision Plan Phase 3, administrative reorganization, development services review, as well as economic development issues.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:55 pm.

ATTEST:


Secretary

APPROVED:

Interim Planner