AGENDA
ASTORIA PLANNING COMMISSION

Astoria City Hall Council Chambers, 1095 Duane Street, Astoria

Tuesday, February 26, 2013

Immediately Following the Traffic Safety Committee Meeting at 7:00 p.m.

1. CALL TO ORDER
2. ROLL CALL
3. MINUTES
   a. January 22, 2013 APC/ Council Work Session
   b. January 22, 2013 APC
4. PUBLIC HEARINGS
   a. Variance V13-02 by Stephen and Karen Allen for the Wet Dog Café and Brewery from the maximum 15 square feet for a projecting sign to install an approximate 49 square foot projecting sign and a variance from the maximum 65 square foot signage for the entire site to install approximately 150 square feet of signage on the north and west elevations of an existing commercial building at 144 11th Street in the S-2A, Tourist Oriented Shorelands zone. Staff recommends approval of the request.
5. REPORT OF OFFICERS
6. NEW BUSINESS
   a. Member List – The Member List for 2013 Planning Commission is attached for Commissioner use and information.
7. ADJOURNMENT

ASTORIA CITY COUNCIL AND PLANNING COMMISSION JOINT WORK SESSION
Astoria City Hall
January 22, 2013

CALL TO ORDER:

Mayor Van Dusen called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

ROLL CALL:

Councilors Present:	Councilor Warr, Councilor Mellin, Councilor Herzig, Councilor LaMear, and Mayor Van Dusen
Commissioners Present:	President Zetty Nemlowill, Commissioner Cary, Commissioner Innes, Commissioner Tollefson, Commissioner Pearson and Commissioner Norgaard
Staff Present:	City Manager Benoit, Community Development Director Estes, Police Chief Curzon, Deputy Chief Johnston, Police Sergeant Aydt, Officer Hord, Public Works Director Ken Cook, City Engineer Harrington, and Planner Johnson. The meeting is recorded and will be transcribed by ABC Transcription Services, Inc.

REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS:

Item 3(a): Pedestrian Safety Discussion

City Manager Benoit explained that over the past few months, the Planning Commission, acting in its role as the Traffic Safety Committee (TSC), has been discussing the issue of pedestrian safety. Representatives from the Public Works, Police, and Community Development Departments have been addressing questions and issues raised by the TSC. Chris Maciejewski from DKS & Associates, the firm working on Astoria's Transportation System Plan (TSP) update, will present information and discuss issues regarding pedestrian safety within the City of Astoria.

Chris Maciejewski, Traffic Engineer, DKS & Associates, presented an overview of the pedestrian safety issues within the city via PowerPoint, reviewing statistics and information about pedestrian related accidents over the last ten years and noting key factors that lead to such incidents. He also reviewed a toolbox of pedestrian safety improvements used by communities around the country to generate ideas about what tools would fit well for Astoria and help improve pedestrian safety. He explained that his goal is to get a good dialogue started about pedestrian safety and what changes people are interested in seeing. His key comments and responses to questions from Council and the Commission included:

- Pedestrian crash statistics are generated by a report being filed with the police or the DMV, which are copied to ODOT. There could be more close calls or unreported incidents.
- Lighting seems to be a leading factor in pedestrian related accidents, as more accidents occur during the winter months, when there is less light each day, and around dusk during most of the year.
- Most accidents occur in Astoria's downtown core, where most pedestrian traffic occurs. Accidents have also been occurring on the highway west of downtown, which is currently being discussed at the TSP meetings as crossing that four-lane section of highway is difficult.
- The majority of crashes occur at unsignalized crossing locations in the downtown area with the key contributing factors being lack of driver visibility and motorists failing to yield to pedestrians.
    - Pedestrian accidents on the highway west of town occurred at both unsignalized and signalized intersections and as a result of jaywalking, again, lack of visibility and failure to yield to pedestrians were the key causes. A couple accidents resulted from excessive speed.
- In the downtown core area, improvements at signalized intersections could include countdown timers, leading pedestrian intervals and a pedestrian scramble.
    - Countdown timers that tell pedestrians how long they have to get across the intersection. Due to the number of reduced crashes, Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices standards now require that all traffic signals have a countdown timer installed. ODOT may decide to programmatically upgrade signals region wide with the timers over the next few years.

- Leading pedestrian intervals give pedestrians an additional three to five seconds before drivers are given a green light, which improves visibility of pedestrians. This is an effective, low-cost option and could be discussed with ODOT for the highway.
- A pedestrian scramble stops all vehicles while allowing pedestrian traffic in all directions to cross an intersection. This reduces the efficiency of vehicle traffic flow and is most effective in areas where moving large numbers of pedestrians is the priority. This option would be used at specific times, like when the cruise ships are in Astoria. It might not be practical year round.

- Improvements at unsignalized intersections include:
  - Curb extensions, which help improve the visibility of both drivers and pedestrians and the chance that drivers will yield to pedestrians. Curb extensions are relatively expensive and can affect storm water drainage, reduce parking space, and impact the turning movements of large vehicles at intersections.
  - Installing waist-high, metal tubes or markers in areas where on-street parking reduces visibility. These markers are installed diagonally across the parking space closest to the pedestrian crosswalk, providing better visibility at a lower cost than curb extensions without impacting storm water drainage
    - Astoria may have parking spaces closer than the required 25 feet distance from intersections. Curb extension and metal tube markers could help improve compliance and safety.
    - Each intersection could lose up to eight parking spots, depending on the street configuration, so the City will need to consider the parking supply downtown and whether to mitigate the loss of parking.
- Improvements that may improve driver yielding behavior include:
  - In-pavement flashers, which are lights installed in the pavement that light up when a pedestrian pushes the crosswalk button. The lights are visible during the day and night. Jurisdictions using the flashers have replaced them with other treatment options as installation can be tricky and maintenance can be expensive. Snow plows and water can damage the lights.
  - A sign placed in the center of the road instructing drivers to watch for pedestrians, which can improve yielding behavior from 13 percent to 46 percent. While a low-cost option, the signs can be easily hit by vehicles, increasing maintenance costs.
  - Median refuge islands, which allow pedestrians to cross a road in two stages. The intersection must be large enough to accommodate an island, where signs and landscaping can be installed. Refuge islands work well at T intersections where no left turn pocket exists.
- Enhancing intersections with signs, stripped crosswalks, and street lighting are effective overall treatments.
- The described improvement methods should only be used at certain intersections, otherwise the improvements tend to be ignored. The City needs to be selective when deciding which method to use at which intersection. Federal guidelines can help the City determine which method is best at each intersection. Improvements inappropriate for a given intersection can decrease pedestrian safety.
- Improvements that address the problem of speeding include:
  - Driver speed feedback signs, which are placed near speed limit signs and tell drivers how fast they are going. Studies show these to be as effective as speed bumps in neighborhoods; however, once the feedback sign is removed, speeding increases. A permanently installed feedback sign may cost less than the mobile option.
  - A road diet involves narrowing the road by reducing the number of lanes in a specific location. This allows space to install bike lanes, median islands, and center turn lanes. In areas with heavy through traffic, a road diet can increase congestion.
- General, citywide improvements include:
  - Improved street lighting, including the location and type of street lighting used. LED lighting allows for more control of lighting levels and patterns to help eliminate shadows and reduce visibility.
  - Rectangular rapid flashing beacons at pedestrian crosswalks are a low cost option and research shows them to be effective at improving driver yielding behavior.
  - High-intensity activated crosswalk beacons flash lights when a pedestrian is present and stops traffic in both directions. These are typically used at major pedestrian crossings like at a school and more expensive option than the rapid flashing beacon. High-intensity activated crosswalk beacons are only used on city streets and are not approved for highways.
  - Flags or paddles can be carried across the intersection by pedestrians to increase visibility. Limited research shows the flags improve driver compliance by an average of 65 percent. While inexpensive, theft is a big issue. Seattle discontinued using the flags because pedestrians were not using them.
  - Coordinating with the Police Department about changes to the system is recommended so that spot enforcement can magnify that a different behavior is required. Costs for enforcement can be high depending on the strategy or programs implemented.

- Education campaigns can be low cost. ODOT has materials available for the City to utilize and the City can work with the school district and other agencies to implement an education program.

He clarified he has not seen any studies about diagonal versus parallel parking and pedestrian safety. That discussion usually comes up with bicycle safety rather than pedestrian safety.

Comments and questions from the Councilors and Commissioners were as follows with responses by Staff and ODOT representatives as noted:

- It is unfortunate that the blinking lights that extend across the intersection are so difficult to maintain because they increase visibility, especially at night and in fog. The flags are an inexpensive way to increase visibility.
- At one time, Uniontown seemed to have a high number of pedestrian accidents where an older version of the rectangular rapid flash beacon (RRFB) is installed. It is expected that upgrades will be done on that existing beacon to match the unit used at 36th Street when sufficient funds are available. That existing beacon was requested by Uniontown Association after a pedestrian was struck. Adding LED lights will be more effective in this area because they are brighter and focused better. High intensity signals are typically used at fire stations where a red light is used to stop traffic. The beacon in Uniontown uses a flashing yellow light to warn drivers.
- Center lane signs seem to be a good idea. The flags may not be practical, but are cost effective.
- This presentation gives the City many site specific tools to consider. Some tools may work in one area and another tool may work best in another area.
- Director Estes explained the TSP process began more than a year ago and has involved gathering data. This next year will include more analysis in order to plan for pedestrian and bike needs and vehicular traffic flow. This will include more public meetings to get feedback about the ideas presented. A draft of the TSP should be presented for review by the Planning Commission and City Council by fall of 2013.
- Trends in pedestrian-related accidents have been difficult to determine. Some immediate action should be taken to increase pedestrian safety because measures in the TSP will take time to implement. Gathering data will not solve the problem.
- Visibility is a real problem when pedestrians step out from behind parked cars. Reducing parking spaces is a small price to pay compared to losing a pedestrian.
- As indicated on Slides 3 and 4, November and January have the largest number of accidents, which is when the sun blinds drivers at sunset.

Mayor Van Dusen called for public comment.

Pamela Mass McDonald, 687 14th Street, Astoria stated that many of the public trails maintained by the Parks Department are dangerous for pedestrians. While well-constructed, many public trails are not well maintained and are hazardous. She identified several public trails that need attention and is concerned someone would be hurt.

Jeff Daily, 2380 Ocean Vista Drive, suggested using a reflective paddle that is carried across the intersection by pedestrians, as flags are more expensive and lights can be ignored. Studies have shown that non-typical visual aids increase driver compliance. He urged the City to experiment with using the paddles on any intersection in Astoria to see if the concept would work. Sponsors could advertise to decrease cost on the paddles. He did not believe theft would be an issue, especially with businesses advertising placed on the inexpensive paddles. He demonstrated how a pedestrian might carry the paddle across an intersection. He chose using paddles versus flags for several reasons, including the wind, price per flag and overall expenses involved. He agreed using flags or paddles, combined with an education program, could result in changes in both driver and pedestrian behaviors.

Dane Jacoenetti, 1594 4th Street, Astoria said he wears a bright green vest or neon green jacket when he walks around town. He also carries a 6-foot pole that he uses when walking in slippery conditions. Motorists avoid the pole, even when cutting him off as he crosses an intersection. The pole keeps the vehicle about two feet from him. He recently began using a crutch and wearing a black jacket, which has actually resulted in more motorists stopping to allow him to cross an intersection. Just being visible does not promote yielding behavior. Most accidents occur at dusk because people are in a hurry to get home after work and school, so yielding behavior needs to be addressed.

- To address pedestrian safety now, he believed KMUN would air public service announcements on pedestrian safety immediately.
- Tinted windows make eye contact between pedestrians and motorist difficult, especially for children and seniors. One cannot see which way the driver is looking. The behavior of the motorist must be addressed.
- Perhaps ODOT could do a campaign like "Click-it or Ticket" that promotes, "Stop Merging with Pedestrians."
- When merging with traffic, drivers aim for the empty spot and keep moving to avoid being hit. Drivers do the same thing in crosswalks, aiming for the empty spot where the pedestrian will not be by the time they get there.

Accidents occur when the driver is distracted, their timing is off or the pedestrian moves in an unexpected manner. KMUN could make Stop Merging announcements on the radio to help these behaviors.

Suzanna Gladwin did not believe trucks should be allowed in the downtown area. She suggested developing a truck route with a 30 mph speed limit on Wicks Road from John Day to the fairgrounds, which should be included in the County's TSP. She confirmed that the City of Astoria favors such a truck route and noted ODOT has found that a truck route would not decrease visitors to Astoria. She explained that the Clatsop County Planning Commission has been discussing the possibility of a truck route.

Mayor Van Dusen noted that having a truck route has been a City Council goal for 30 years. ODOT Area Manager Larry McKinley noted a draft environmental statement was completed for the project and at that time, the State told ODOT that further funding was not available.

Councilor Herzig believed the leading pedestrian interval would be easy and quick to implement at a couple signaled intersections on Commercial with cooperation from ODOT. He suggested moving two on-street parking spaces on a temporary basis using pylons at certain unsignalized intersections on Commercial Street. The flags could be made by high school students at Tongue Point as part of their senior project, which could be part of a community education event as well.

Jerry Wilson, 1445 Duane, Astoria, stated it is important that motorists look at the pedestrian's background because pedestrians wearing dark clothing against a dark background are hard to see.

City Manager Benoit suggested the City immediately begin implementing some low cost options, which could probably happen quickly, such as adjusting the signals, which will have to be discussed with ODOT, and using flags or paddles. Removing parking is a big issue for downtown, but it could be done experimentally.

Following a brief discussion, City Council and Planning Commission directed Staff to research the various options for increasing pedestrian safety at intersections and consented to implement the use flags or paddles with reflective material at certain intersections.

Councilor Mellin noted jaywalking is also a problem. Chief Johnson explained the City's Ordinance prohibiting jaywalking in specific areas, and noted that sting operations do occur, but determining when a pedestrian is jaywalking can be difficult. Most pedestrian accidents occur at intersections, which is the problem with delaying traffic signals because crashes occur when a driver is attempting to make a right turn. The driver is looking for oncoming traffic rather than pedestrians. The delayed signals can give a false sense of security. He suggested allowing pedestrians to cross on certain sides of the intersection to avoid conflicts with drivers making a right turn.

Larry McKinley, 350 W. Marine Drive, ODOT Area Manager, agreed to follow up and review several of the suggestions made, including the flexible markers on the centerline, delayed traffic signals, and lighting. He noted candlesticks placed along the center line leading to work zones are effective for ODOT. Some traffic signals may not have been engineered to hold additional lighting. Illumination could be installed separately from the traffic signal to increase visibility. He used the intersection on 33rd at Safeway as an example and suggested that lighting be installed in the parking lot.

Officer Hord agreed visibility is poor on Commercial Street near downtown and shared his experiences and ideas regarding pedestrian safety in Astoria.

Mr. McKinley noted the speed to get through the signals using the east and west through lanes on Commercial and Marine is set at about 21 miles per hour. The white time displayed at the crosswalk tells pedestrians how many more seconds they have to safely to step out off of the curb. Pedestrians still have sufficient time to get to the other side of the intersection if they are in the crosswalk when the signal turns orange or red.

Mayor Van Dusen announced that Director Brett Estes and his wife, Tiffany Estes, were just awarded the George Award for Outstanding Volunteerism by the Astoria Chamber of Commerce.

Item 3(b): **Solar Power Presentation**

City Manager Benoit noted the Planning Commission has been working for more than a year to develop a land use ordinance to govern the installation of solar facilities on buildings. During the Commission's work, questions were

raised about the direction of solar technology and the need for more information on the future of solar technology to aid in developing the Code. Robert Delmar, a State expert on solar technology, has been invited to update the Council and Commission on solar technology trends.

Robert Delmar, Senior Solar Project Manager, Energy Trust of Oregon described various solar technologies and displayed pictures via PowerPoint to show recent developments, trends, and the direction solar technology is taking. His key comments and responses to questions were as follows:

- Germany has installed solar more than any other country and their solar resource is about the same as Astoria. The cost of installing solar systems in Germany is half the cost in the United States due to the permitting, taxes, overhead and labor costs in the U.S. Permitting and ordinances can help the industry have straightforward guidelines about how to install solar on buildings and help reduce these soft costs.
  - Rather than increasing efficiencies, new technologies are focused specifically on reducing the overall installation cost and time for solar.
- Welding flexible panels to flat roof membranes reduces efficiency when puddles form that collect dust and pollen. Panels should be installed at a 15 degree angle to allow the rain to clean the panels and alleviate problems with shading, which can be caused even by pollen accumulating on the panels.
  - Understanding the hazards of perfectly flat installations is the purchaser's responsibility. Property owners taking advantage of performance based financial incentives can be assured that panels are mounted at a slope.
- Ballasted systems are installed without any roof penetrations, which preserves the integrity of the roof. However, these systems are designed for lower wind loads and would be challenging to install on the coast. Ballasted systems are typically installed inland on commercial buildings.
  - Standing seam metal roofs last about 50 years on the coast when installed correctly. Peal and stick solar collectors are installed in between the ribs, however, this is half as effective as installing panels with clips that grab the seam to provide a mounting base for panels.
- Panels should face within 30 degrees of south for maximum efficiency, and shadows throughout the day need to be considered when deciding where to place a solar system on a roof. Proper placement of solar panels on buildings that face north and south depends on whether the property is east or west of the Cascades. Properties east of the Cascades get more sun in the morning and thunderstorms in the afternoon so solar systems are placed on the east facing roof. Properties on the coast generally place solar systems on the west facing roof.
- Installing solar systems on the south facing roof is best, as 20 percent is lost when placed on the west facing roof. Prohibiting people from placing solar on a south facing roof, due to visibility from the street for example, is essentially prohibiting them from having solar at all.
- Shading is another big impact. A tree shading just one or two collectors could eliminate 90 percent of production.
- In the next session, a bill before the State legislature will allow solar gardens where people without good solar roofs can buy shares in a central solar installation. States that allow solar gardens refer to this as virtual net metering where residents receive the benefits of a solar system not installed on their properties.
  - Solar gardens may be a good solution for communities on the coast where mature trees or poor building orientation would prevent roof mounting. The concept is also worth considering in areas with many historic properties.
- Solar water heating on breweries is popular because breweries use a lot of gas and electricity, even Wet Dog, a coastal brewery, has experienced tremendous savings.
- Solar shingles, while aesthetically pleasing, are difficult to install and have not taken off.
- He described the various equipment options used for residential solar systems, adding that commercial installations can also require a myriad of equipment. Code regulates how this equipment is used. As the equipment gets less expensive, labor costs will also decrease.
- Most all residential installations use conventional, photovoltaic (PV) modules mounted on an aluminum frame flush against the roof. This type of installation reduces wind loads and looks nice. Oregon's Solar Installation Specialty Code gives a prescriptive structural solution for mounting these collectors flush on the roof, which reduces soft costs.
- Solar water heating systems have a small visual impact and look like a skylight when installed. The industry has come a long way to make these installations meet professional roofing standards.
  - Solar Rating and Certification Corporation (SRCC) gives credibility to the industry and provides a third party test for performance. Third party certifications make approving the systems easier for jurisdictions.
  - Traditionally, about 250 Oregon residences install a solar water heating system each year and about 1,200 residential PV systems are installed.

- Good tools, guides, and resources are available for planners. Technical specs have been created for putting solar on National Park properties and a guide is available for installing solar on historic buildings. Each study on the effect of solar energy systems on property values has found that solar energy improves property values.
- Financial incentives offered by the State will remain in effect through 2018 and have been extended every year since about 1978. At this time, Federal tax credits are available until 2016, but could be eliminated before that, which will have a big impact on the industry. The Energy Trust of Oregon is offering incentives for at least another five years; hopefully the technology will become cheap enough that incentives are not needed.
    - Commercial properties have struggled with State and Federal incentives. The Federal tax credit has been extended for one more year. The State tax credit, once defunct, is now back, but difficult to use so commercial properties are struggling to install solar. Residential properties are the real market for solar.
- A residential PV system installation would take approximately 30 years to pay back with no financial incentives. With incentives, residential systems can take less than 10 years to pay back. Solar water heating systems are cheaper to install, but they do not have as generous of incentive package. Compared to PV systems with about a six year payback with incentives, solar water heating is about eight or ten years with incentives. Without incentives, both systems would take more than 20 years to pay back.
- PV systems come with a 25-year warranty and will still produce 80 percent of their original power production after 25 years. The systems will fail if hit with a rock, tree branch or baseball, but the laminated glass prevents shattering. PV systems will withstand hail storms in Oregon.
    - Solar water heating systems are made of glass and copper and typically come with a 20-year warranty.
- With regard to concerns about rooflines and visibility, he confirmed that angled panels do not significantly improve the energy produced as originally believed. A flat mounted panel will produce 85 to 90 percent of what a south facing panel angled at an ideal 30 degree slope can achieve.
- The State Installation Code has addressed issues concerning firefighter safety by requiring access paths for firefighters to ensure the roof can be vented on either the north or south side. The Code mandates having walkways at the side of the panel and along the ridge of the roof.
    - The State Fire Marshall and the firefighting community helped develop the State Installation Code.
    - Installing systems according to this State Code would be required if the local jurisdiction has adopted that code as its local requirement.
- The electricity production per panel is measured in watts per square meter. Efficiencies are improving; a conventional-sized panel, approximately 30-inches wide by 5-feet tall, produces about 250 watts. Five years ago, that same panel would have been a 220-watt panel.
- Improved efficiency enables a property owner to install a certain amount of solar in a smaller footprint. Most of the time, standard efficiency systems are installed because the price is lower, and more panels are added to get receive more efficiency, resulting in a bigger footprint. High efficiency technologies are only being used in areas where space is limited.

Commissioner Innes thanked Mr. Delmar for the information. She believed the presentation has provided a lot of ideas to consider as the Commission focuses on residential solar power installation code.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, the work session was adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

ATTEST:

Secretary

APPROVED:

City Manager

ASTORIA PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING
Astoria City Hall
January 22, 2013

CALL TO ORDER:

President Nemlowill called the meeting to order at 7:38 p.m.

INTRODUCTION OF NEW MEMBER:

Commissioner David Pearson stated he has served on the Historic Landmarks Commission (HLC) for 15 years and currently works at the Maritime Museum as the Deputy Director. He explained how he came to live in Astoria and work at the museum.

ROLL CALL:

Commissioners Present:	President Zetty Nemlowill, Vice-President Mark Cary, McLaren Innes, Al Tollefson, David Pearson, and Thor Norgaard.
Commissioners Excused:	Annie Oliver
Staff Present:	Planner Rosemary Johnson. The meeting is recorded and will be transcribed by ABC Transcription Services, Inc.

The Planning Commission proceeded to Agenda Item 5(a) Approval of Minutes and moved Item 4(a), Election of Officers to after the public hearings.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – ITEM 5(a):

President Nemlowill asked for approval of the minutes of the November 27, 2012 meeting. Vice-President Cary moved to approve the minutes, seconded by Commissioner Innes. Motion passed unanimously.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS – ITEM 4(a): *[Planning Commission elected officers after Public Hearing Items 6(a)]*

In accordance with Sections 1.110 and 1.115 of the Astoria Development Code, the APC needs to elect officers for 2013. The 2012 officers were President Zetty Nemlowill, Vice-President Mark Cary, and Secretary Sherri Williams

President Nemlowill moved to elect Sherri Williams to continue serving as Planning Commission Secretary for 2013; seconded by Commissioner Norgaard. Motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Norgaard nominated Zetty Nemlowill to continue as 2012 Planning Commission President; seconded by McLaren Innes.

President Nemlowill nominated McLaren Innes to serve as 2013 Planning Commission President; seconded by Commissioner Cary. Commissioner Norgaard withdrew his nomination. McLaren Innes was unanimously elected 2013 Planning Commission President.

Commissioner Nemlowill passed the gavel to newly elected President McLaren Innes.

President Innes nominated Mark Cary to continue to serve as Planning Commission Vice-President, seconded by Commissioner Norgaard. Mark Cary was unanimously elected 2013 Planning Commission Vice-President.

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 6(a):

CU12-05 Conditional Use CU12-05 by Brian Reichert to operate a drive-through food service as a temporary use in an existing commercial building at 230 - 37th Street in the S-1, Marine Industrial Shorelands 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. President Nemlowill asked if any member of the Planning Commission had a conflict of interest or any ex parte contacts to declare. None declared.

Planner Johnson reviewed the written Staff report. No correspondence has been received and Staff recommends approval of the request with conditions.

Commissioner Innes expressed concern about access to the food stand would be from 37th Street as noted on Page 4 of the Staff report. She believed most people would turn into the lot from Lief Erikson Drive. Planner Johnson explained that drivers would turn onto 37th from Lief Erikson Drive to get to the building; access would not be directly from Lief Erikson Drive. ODOT regulates driveways that directly access a State highway. There are fewer requirements for driveways that directly access from side streets.

Commissioner Norgaard stated he could not recall approving the condition to remove the outdoor grill with the last permit extension. Planner Johnson clarified that removal of the grill was not a condition of approval, but the Planning Commission directed Staff to have the grill removed because the City was receiving complaints about the smoke. She confirmed that the locomotive had been a food grill.

President Nemlowill opened the public hearing and called for testimony from the Applicant.

Brian Reichert, 4743 Cedar St., stated he is requesting permission from the HLC to install an exhaust fan on the roof to remove heat and steam from the building. No smoke will be emitted from the building. A self-contained frying unit with an integrated air filtration system and fire suppression system will be used. The smell of french fries cooking will be the only smell emitted from this unit. The hood inside the building is designed to remove excess heat. A double-sided flat grilling Panini machine is the only other cooking device that will be used in the building. This grill will only emit steam and heat. The Applicant will be serving 100% plant-based products. No meat or dairy products will be sold. The menu will change on a daily basis.

Commissioner Innes believed the Applicant would get foot traffic from the River Walk and asked how these customers would eat without any tables or chairs available. Mr. Reichert explained he would be providing a carryout service, similar to an espresso or coffee shop. Without restroom facilities, he is unable to put tables and chairs outside. Customers could use benches along the River Walk or take the food to another location. Parking spaces have been leased from the Port, so his customers do not have to pay for parking on Port property.

President Nemlowill noted that no one else was in the audience and closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Norgaard stated he was glad the building was going to be used, adding the location would benefit trolley riders wanting something to eat.

Vice-President Cary noted he owns a self-contained frying unit and confirmed the only time smells are emitted is when the grease needs to be changed. He supported the application.

Commissioner Pearson noted it is a temporary use for an underutilized site and the application meets all of the criteria, so he also supported the application.

President Nemlowill agreed the application would have minimal impact as it is not a change from the conditional uses previously approved for the site.

Commissioner Pearson moved that the Astoria Planning Commission adopt the Findings of Fact and Conclusions contained in the Staff report and approve CU12-05 by Brian Reichert; seconded by Commissioner Cary. Motion passed unanimously.

President Nemlowill read the rules of appeal into the record.

REPORTS OF OFFICERS/COMMISSIONERS:

This agenda item was addressed following Item 4(a) Election of Officers.

Planner Johnson stated she had sent the Commission's draft of the Solar Code to Robert Delmar of Energy Trust of Oregon for their review and feedback. The draft already addresses many of the items discussed during Mr. Delmar's solar energy presentation at the City Council/Planning Commission Joint Work Session earlier that evening. The Planning Commission must ensure the Solar Code complies with new State regulations.

- Rather than trying to allow for every potential type of solar facility, the ordinance should discourage or prohibit systems and installation techniques that are not aesthetically pleasing or have poor efficiency.
- The State solar installation code regulates the technical aspects of installing a solar system, but does not address aesthetic issues. In compliance with the State code, the Commission's proposed draft states that solar systems which meet the State code are not required to have a City permit. Not all solar installations are exempt from permits and the non-exempt systems would be regulated by the City standards and permitting. The City's draft ordinance also exempts some other systems from City permits.

Commissioner Nemlowill expressed concern about excessive regulations, paperwork, and other requirements contributing to higher costs with regard to solar systems. Planner Johnson explained she is working towards making the approval process administrative, so an applicant would not be required to go through a public permitting process with the Planning Commission or Historic Landmarks Commission.

President Innes asked about State installation guidelines overriding the City's goals. Planner Johnson explained that State laws involve building codes, or the mechanics of installation, that will always apply to every city in Oregon. The City of Astoria has adopted the International Building Code with the Oregon amendments, which is part of the Code the City building inspector enforces. The proposed Solar Code regulates those applications that do require permits by State codes and addresses the aesthetics of solar facilities. President Innes liked the idea of a solar cooperative farm on a separate lot as mentioned by Mr. Delmar to preserve the look of historic buildings.

Commissioner Nemlowill questioned the relevance of solar power in Astoria. She would have liked to have asked Mr. Delmar more about his comparisons of Astoria and Germany, where solar power is prevalent.

Vice-President Cary said he would like to know how much money Clatsop County Community College saves on electricity by using solar power. He noted the comment that it takes 30 years to pay back on a residential installation, but the life of the panels is 25 years. He does not have a problem with panels installed along the slope of a roof as they are unnoticeable. Planner Johnson noted that initially, the Planning Commission's direction was to not consider cost efficiency nor the energy efficiency of solar compared to alternative methods. Some cities offer energy efficiency audits to residents, but the Commission agreed some people may want to install alternative energy facilities simply for the good of the environment; whether or not they break even or make a return on that investment is not the City's issue.

Commissioner Nemlowill reiterated she is concerned with the relevance of solar power and implementing too many restrictions, especially when the environment is already so prohibitive. It would be good to see another, more effective method of tapping into the sun's energy. Planner Johnson said the City could consider doing a brochure showing the various options available. She noted most proposed Code restrictions focused on historic properties.

President Innes believed it would be difficult for the Commission to advise about actual choices and mechanics. Planner Johnson noted that Staff would refer residents to a professional.

Commissioner Pearson stated the HLC typically deals with skylights and must consider any visible impact to the neighborhood. While it is nice to say no one will see a solar facility, their location can create a visual impact. Planner Johnson noted that most of the City's proposed Solar Code came from National Park Service standards for historic properties. Commissioner Pearson added many historic buildings are using solar gardens where the facilities are placed in a contemporary structure behind vegetation, along with HVAC and other utilities.

President Innes noted it is surprising to learn how many buildings already have solar systems. Planner Johnson noted the solar system on the Wet Dog was approved administratively as rooftop mechanical equipment that was not visible from the streetscape. President Innes noted that the State does not allow solar panels to be installed on public pools.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:12 p.m.

ATTEST:

Secretary

APPROVED:

Planner

STAFF REPORT AND FINDINGS OF FACT

February 6, 2013

TO: ASTORIA PLANNING COMMISSION

FROM: ROSEMARY JOHNSON, PLANNER

SUBJECT: VARIANCE REQUEST (V13-02) BY WET DOG CAFE AND BREWERY TO INSTALL PROJECTING SIGN AND WALL SIGNS AT 144 11TH STREET

I. BACKGROUND SUMMARY

A. Applicant: Stephen & Karen Allen
Wet Dog Cafe and Brewery
144 11th Street
Astoria OR 97103

B. Owner: Stephen C Allen
144 11th Street
Astoria OR 97103

C. Location: 144 - 11th Street; Map T8N R9W Section 8CA, Tax Lot 200; Lots 1 & 1, Block 56.5, McClure

D. Zone: S-2A, Tourist Oriented Shoreland

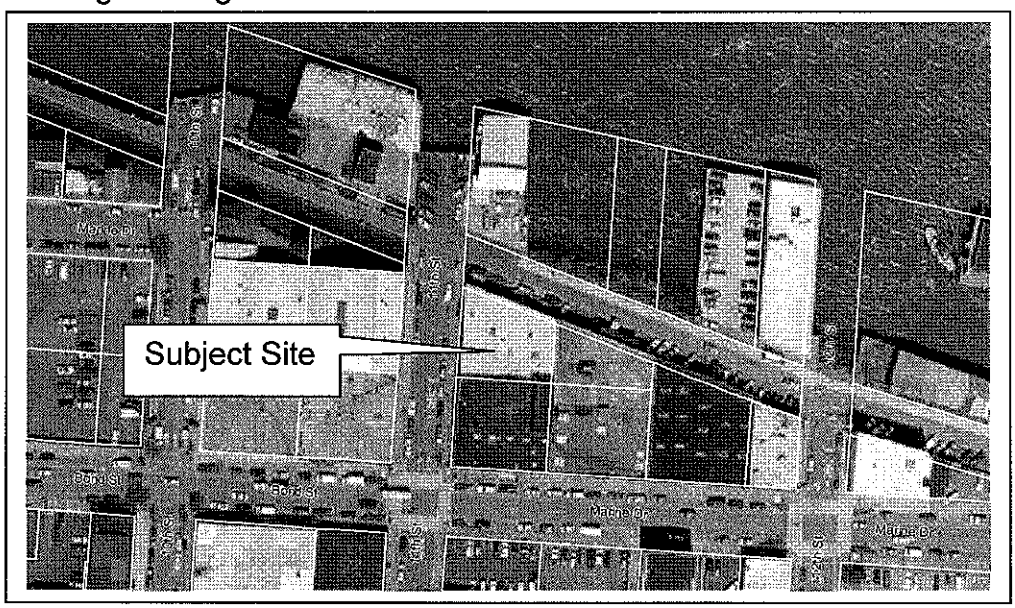
E. Proposal: To remove existing signage and install wall signs and a projecting sign. Variance requested from the following:
1) Maximum 15 square feet for projecting sign to install a 49 square foot projecting sign
2) Maximum 64 square feet of total signage for the site to install a total of approximately 150 square feet of signs

II. BACKGROUND

The building is located on the east side of 11th Street with the north elevation adjacent to the City Trolley Line. It is currently occupied by Wet Dog Cafe. This portion of the building was originally occupied by Pacific Fruit & Produce Company and subsequent fruit wholesalers while the main portion of the building housed the Riviera Theater (now Columbia Theater) facing on Marine Drive.

B. Adjacent Neighborhood

The site is surrounded by commercial development. To the south is the Columbian Theater on Marine Drive; to the west across the right-of-way is JP Plumbing and a hair salon; to the east is Sears' rear loading dock area; to the north across the trolley line property is Pier 11 and the vacant former seafood receiving building.



C. Proposal

The applicant is proposing to install the following signs for a total of approximately 150 square feet:

1) Projecting neon sign on northwest corner – 11.3' x 4.33' (49 sqft)
2) Wall sign on west elevation, painted on top band – 1' x 43' (43 sqft)
3) Wall sign on north elevation, painted on top band – 1' 50' (50 sqft)
4) Window sign on west elevation, painted on window – 1.5' x 3' (4.5 sqft)
5) Window neon sign on west elevation window – 1' x 1.5' (1.5 sqft)

III. PUBLIC REVIEW AND COMMENT

A public notice was mailed to all property owners within 100 feet pursuant to Section 9.020 on February 1, 2013. A notice of public hearing was published in the Daily Astorian on February 19, 2013. Comments received will be made available at the Astoria Planning Commission meeting.

IV. APPLICABLE REVIEW CRITERIA AND FINDINGS OF FACT

A. Section 8.180.F.2 concerning projecting signs in the S-2A Zone states that *"A projecting sign shall not exceed an area of one (1) square foot for one (1) foot of lineal frontage. The maximum area of any projecting sign shall be 15 square feet."*

Section 8.070.A.6 concerning Sign Face Area states that *"For sign structures containing multiple sign modules oriented in the same direction, the sign area is determined by calculating the area of an imaginary rectangle drawn around the sign elements."*

Finding: The building is approximately 94' long on the west side and 99' long on the north side. The proposed projecting sign is 49 square feet (11.3' x 4.33'). The sign exceeds the 15 square foot maximum for a projecting sign. A variance is required.

B. Section 8.180.A concerning Total Square Footage Permitted in the S-2A Zone states that *"The total square footage of all signage associated with a business site, use, activity, or site shall not exceed 64 square feet."*

Finding: The applicant is proposing to install five signs for a total of approximately 150 square feet which exceeds the 64 square foot maximum allowed signage. A variance is required.

C. Section 8.110.A requires that *"one of the following factors exists:*

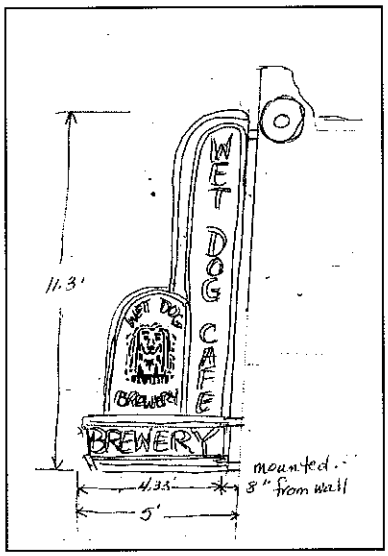
a. The variance would permit the placement of a sign with an exceptional design or style.

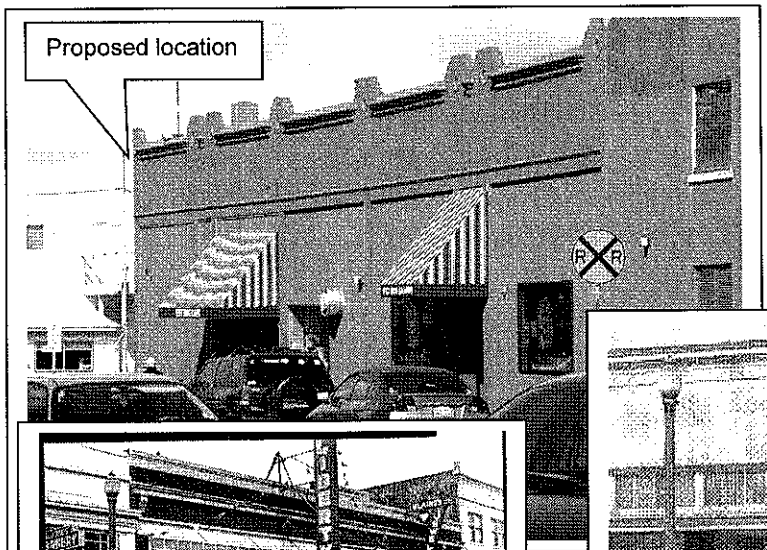
b. The variance would permit the placement of a sign which is more consistent with the architecture, and development of the site.

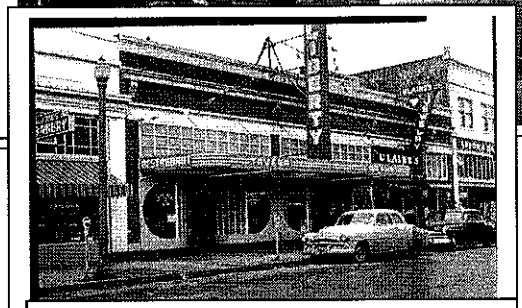
c. The existence of an unusual site characteristic, such as topography, existing development, or adjacent development, which precludes an allowable sign from being effectively visible from the public roadway adjacent to the site.

d. The requirement to remove a sign under Section 8.110(A) would constitute a severe or extreme economic hardship to the business or activity involved."

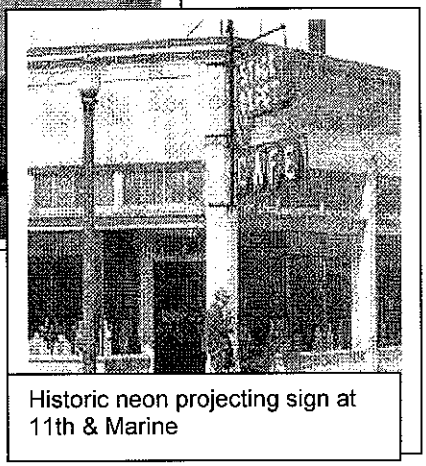
Finding: The proposed projecting sign on the northwest corner would be a neon sign which is a historic design consistent with the design of the historic structure. The Downtown is a National Register Historic District with the primary historic period in the 1920's. Neon projecting signs were very popular from the 1920's to the 1940's and would be a style of sign encouraged in this historic area. The sign would be 49 square feet which exceeds the maximum of 15 square feet allowed in the zone. The sign would be similar to ones on other historic buildings such as those at the Labor Temple Cafe (926 Duane) and Banker's Suite (1215 Duane). The Liberty Theater (1203 Commercial) also has a neon projecting sign. Historic neon signs were generally larger than the current allowable 15 square feet.



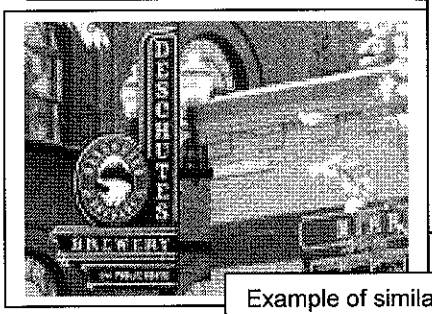




Historic neon projecting signs at 1100 Block Commercial Street

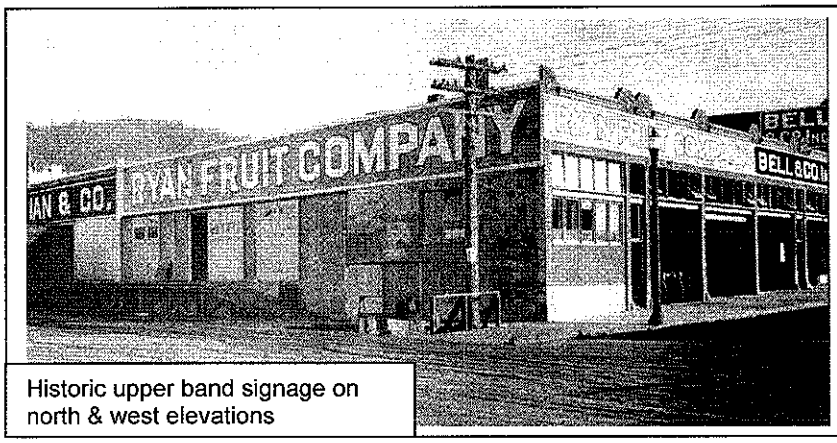


Historic neon projecting sign at 11th & Marine

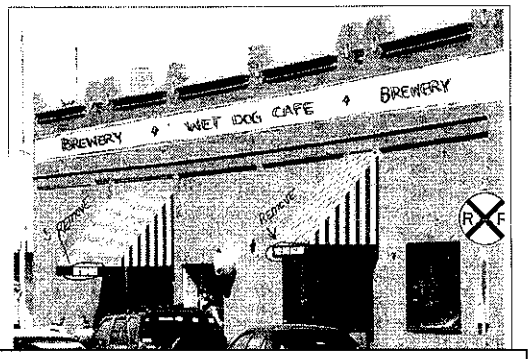


Example of similar projecting sign at Deschutes Brewery in Portland

The building has two large frontages on the west and north. The applicant proposes to paint an architectural band along the top edge of the facades and paint signage at 1' tall with individual words spread out to a width of 43' on the west and 50' on the north. These signs meet the allowable square footage for their respective elevation but combined square footage of all signs exceeds the maximum 64 square feet allowed in this zone. The original building was a fruit market and had signage on the entire north wall.



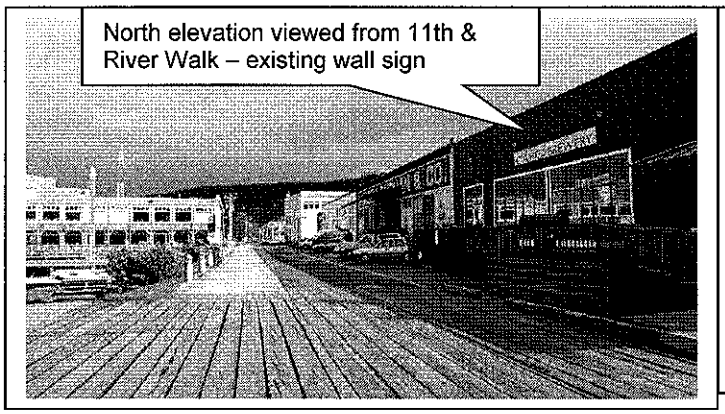
Historic upper band signage on north & west elevations

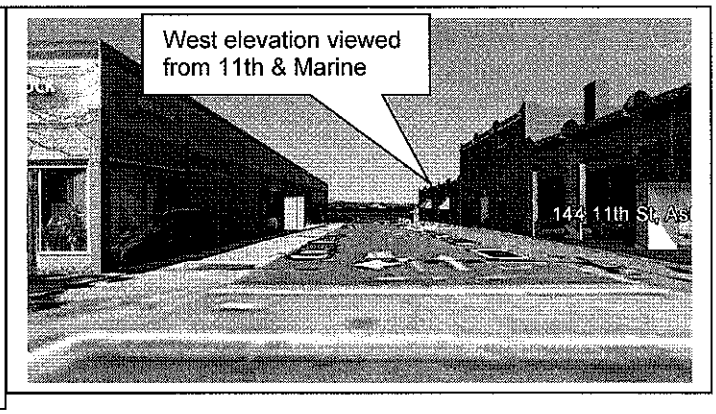


Proposed upper band signage on west elevation. North elevation would be similar.

The building has large frontage areas. The applicant is proposing 1' tall lettering which is readable at 120' distance and visible at approximately 500' distance

according to the book *"A Guideline Code for On-Premise Signs"*. The site is at the foot of 11th Street with the main traffic at Marine Drive which is approximately 200' from the proposed sign location. Therefore, the west elevation wall sign would be barely visible from Marine Drive. From the trolley line to the north, visibility would be from both the pedestrian River Walk and from the trolley. While building signage is not intended to be visible from large distances, the size of the building and location at the foot of a dead end street justifies the larger lettering.



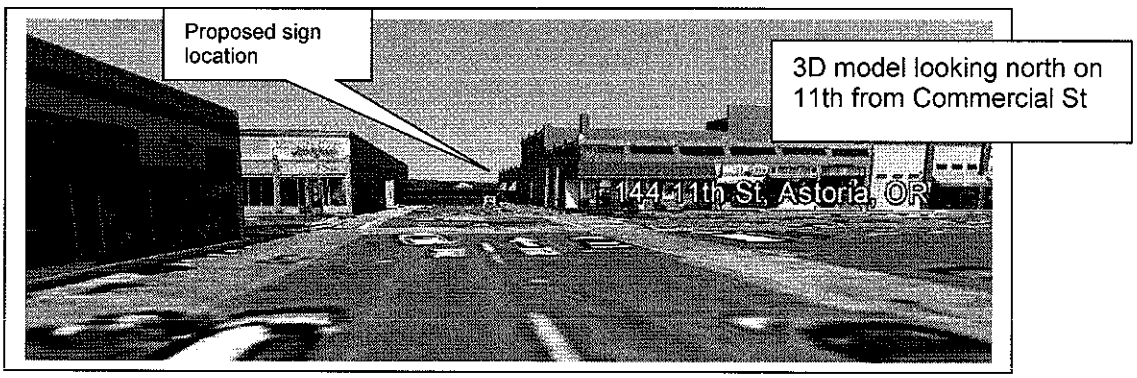


In comparison, the existing "Cafe-Brewery" wall sign on the north elevation is 2' tall x 22' long (44 sqft). The existing sign is proposed to be replaced by a sign that would be 1' tall x 50' long (50 sqft).

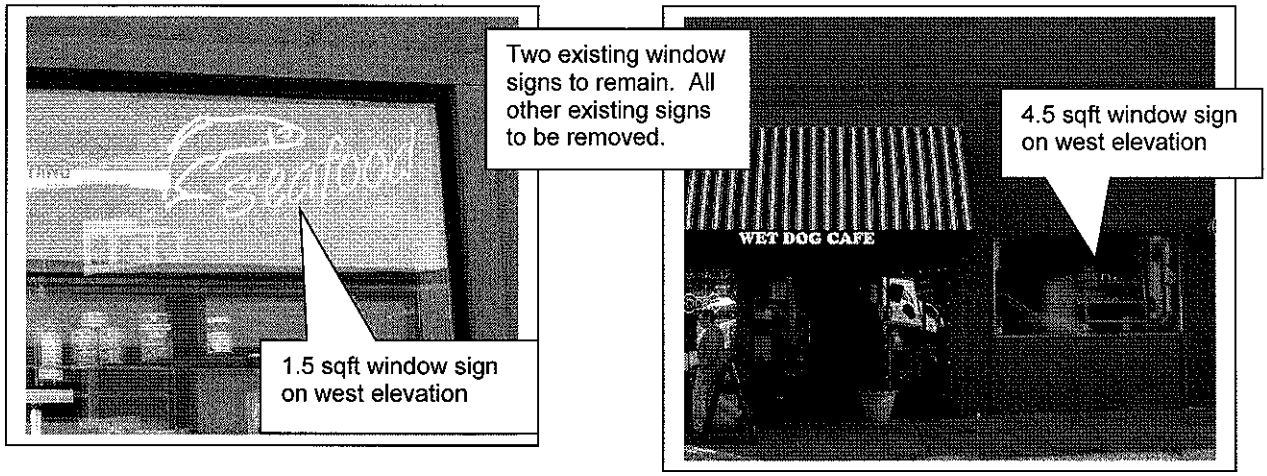
The variance would permit the placement of a sign that is consistent with the architecture of the structure, would allow better visibility with the street configuration, and would be an exceptional design more consistent with the historic character of the building.

D. Section 8.110(B) requires that the granting of the variance would not be detrimental to abutting properties.

Finding: There are only a few businesses, in this block of 11th Street, and a vacant parking lot and Bikes and Beyond across the Marine Drive right-of-way. Signage for the theater is on Marine Drive. Pier 11 is across the trolley rail lines to the northwest and not in the same view corridor as the proposed signs. The sign would not block other signage or visibility of businesses.

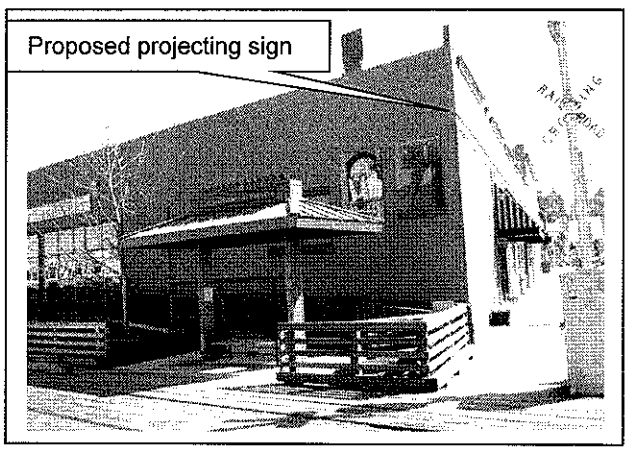


Existing signage for the site is currently approximately 100 square feet through Variance (V92-06). The applicant proposes to remove all but two window signs (4.5 sqft and 1.5 sqft) to allow the new proposed signage. The wall signs would be visible from two different elevations and would not be detrimental adjacent businesses. The projecting sign would be more consistent with the architecture and size of the building and project 5' into the right-of-way from the building facade. It would be installed with a 12' clearance to the sidewalk.



Signage along 11th Street is minimal in this area as only a few businesses encompass large portions of the building facades. The proposed sign would not interfere with the visibility of any other signage or uses in this block. The sign will not be detrimental to abutting properties due to the existing development in the area.

E. Section 8.110(C) requires that the granting of the variance would not create a traffic or safety hazard.



Finding: The sign location will not interfere with the existing traffic visibility as it will be approximately 12' above the sidewalk and is not located on a vehicular corner due to the location of the trolley tracks and trolley stop. Granting the variance will not create a traffic or safety hazard.

F. Section 8.110(D) states that sign variances are exempt from Section 12.030 (General Variance Criteria) through 12.040 (Variance from Standards Relating to Off-street Parking and Loading Facilities).

Finding: The application is for a sign variance and as such is exempt from Section 12.030 through 12.040.

V. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The request, in balance, meets all the applicable review criteria. Staff recommends approval of the request. The applicant should be aware of the following requirements:

Significant changes or modifications to the proposed plans as described in this Staff Report shall be reviewed by the Astoria Planning Commission.

The applicant shall obtain all necessary City and building permits prior to the start of operation.

CITY OF ASTORIA
1095 Duane Street, Astoria OR 97103
503-338-5183

No. V13-02

Fee: ~~Administrative Permit $150.00~~ ~~pd~~ - 1/28/13
Planning Commission $250.00

SIGN VARIANCE APPLICATION

Property Location: Address: 144 - 11th

Lot/Block/Subdivision: Lots 1 & 2, Blk 56.5, McClure

Map/Tax Lot: 8CA 200 Zone: S2A

Applicant Name: Wet Dog Cafe and Brewery

Mailing Address: 144 11th st Astoria

Phone: 503-440-5940 Business Phone: 503-325-6975

Property Owner's Name: Stephen and Karen Allen

Mailing Address: 90850 Kennedy Rd. Warrenton Or 97146

Business Name (if applicable): Wet Dog Cafe & Brewery

Signature of Applicant: _____ Date: 1/28/13

Signature of Property Owner: _____ Date: 1/28/13

Existing/Proposed Use: Cafe & Brewery - update signs

What Development Code Requirement do you need the Variance from? (Describe what is required by the Code and what you are able to provide without a Variance.)

from 15 ft max for projecting sign to do approx 49 ft proj sign and from 64 ft max signage for site to do approx 150 ft of signage on north and west elevations

SITE PLAN: A Site Plan depicting property lines and the location of all existing and proposed structures, parking, landscaping, and/or signs is required. The Plan must include distances to all property lines and dimensions of all structures, parking areas, and/or signs. Scaled free-hand drawings are acceptable.

FILING INFORMATION: Planning Commission meets on the fourth Tuesday of each month. Applications must be received by the 20th of the month to be on the next month's agenda. A Pre-Application meeting with the Planner is required prior to acceptance of the application as complete. Only complete applications will be scheduled on the agenda. Your attendance at the Planning Commission meeting is recommended.

For office use only:

Application Complete:		**Permit Info Into D-Base:**	1/29/13
Labels Prepared:	1/29/13	**Tentative APC Meeting Date:**	2/26/13
120 Days:			

Briefly address the following criteria for **SIGN RELATED VARIANCES**:

8.110. VARIANCES FROM STANDARDS RELATING TO SIGNS.

Variances to the sign regulations of this Section may be approved by the Planning Commission following the procedures of Section 12.060 to 12.120 where the Planning Commission finds that the variance meets the following criteria:

A. One of the following factors exists:

1. The variance would permit the placement of a sign with an exceptional design or style.

Propose historic design, neon projecting sign similar to other historic signs downtown

2. The variance would permit the placement of a sign which is more consistent with the architecture, and development of the site. The band of signage on N & West elevations would follow the architectural band & be in scale w/ the size of the building. Sign would be on corner maximizing visibility from 11th & Rivertrail. Sign would not protude above the parapet.

3. The existence of an unusual site characteristic, such as topography, existing development, or adjacent development, which precludes an allowable sign from being effectively visible from the public roadway adjacent to the site.

N/A

4. The requirement to remove a sign under Section 8.100(A) would constitute a severe or extreme economic hardship to the business or activity involved.

N/A

B. The granting of the variance would not be detrimental to abutting properties.

Sign would not block visibility of other signage. At intersection with large open area.

C. The granting of the variance would not create a traffic or safety hazard.

Neon will not glare into traffic. Sign will be installed protruding @ 3' from bldg face & will maintain pedestrian clearance

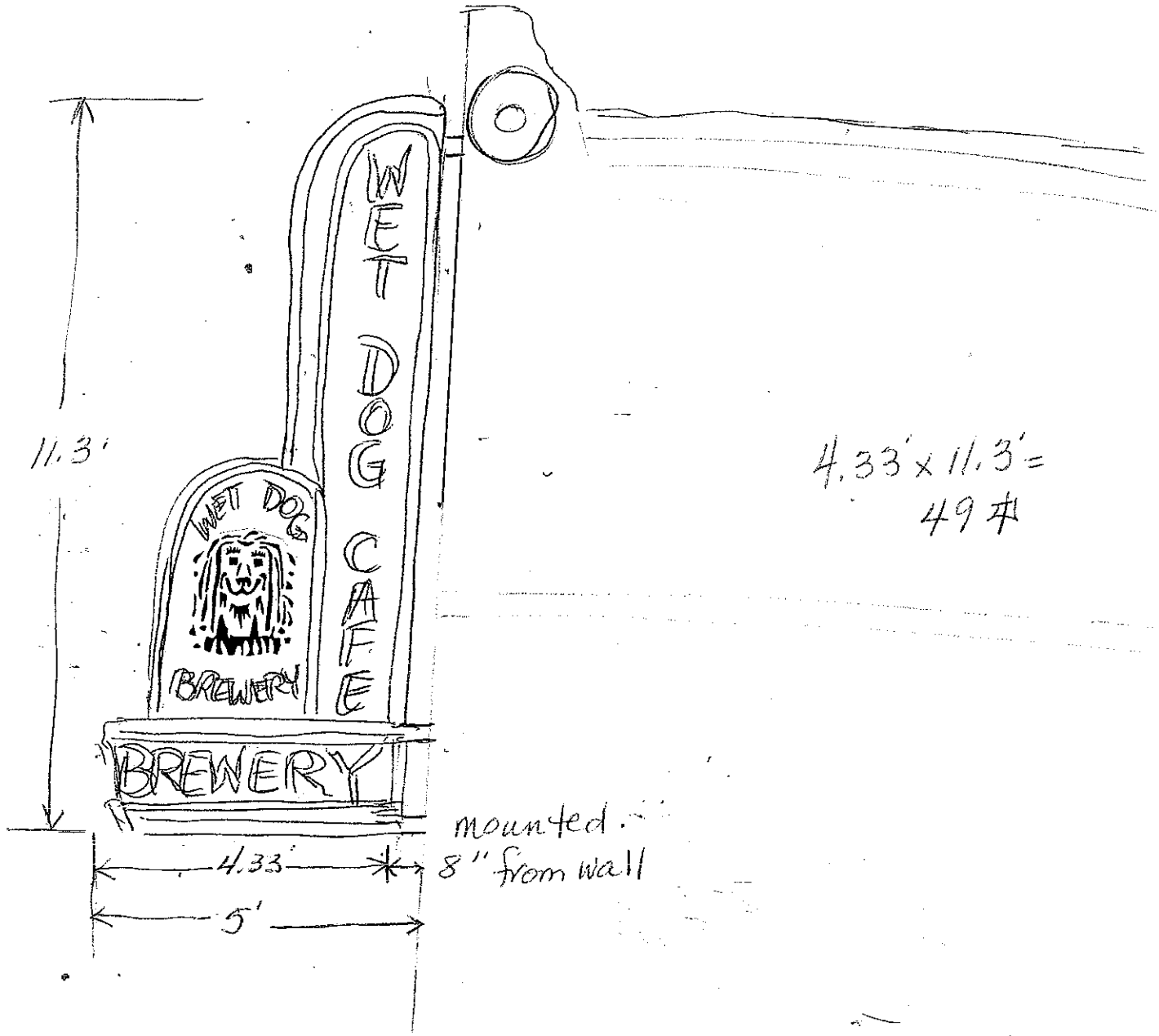
D. Sign variances are exempt from Sections 12.030 through 12.040.

Attention: Kevin

503-230-1861

Khallwyler@securitysigns.com

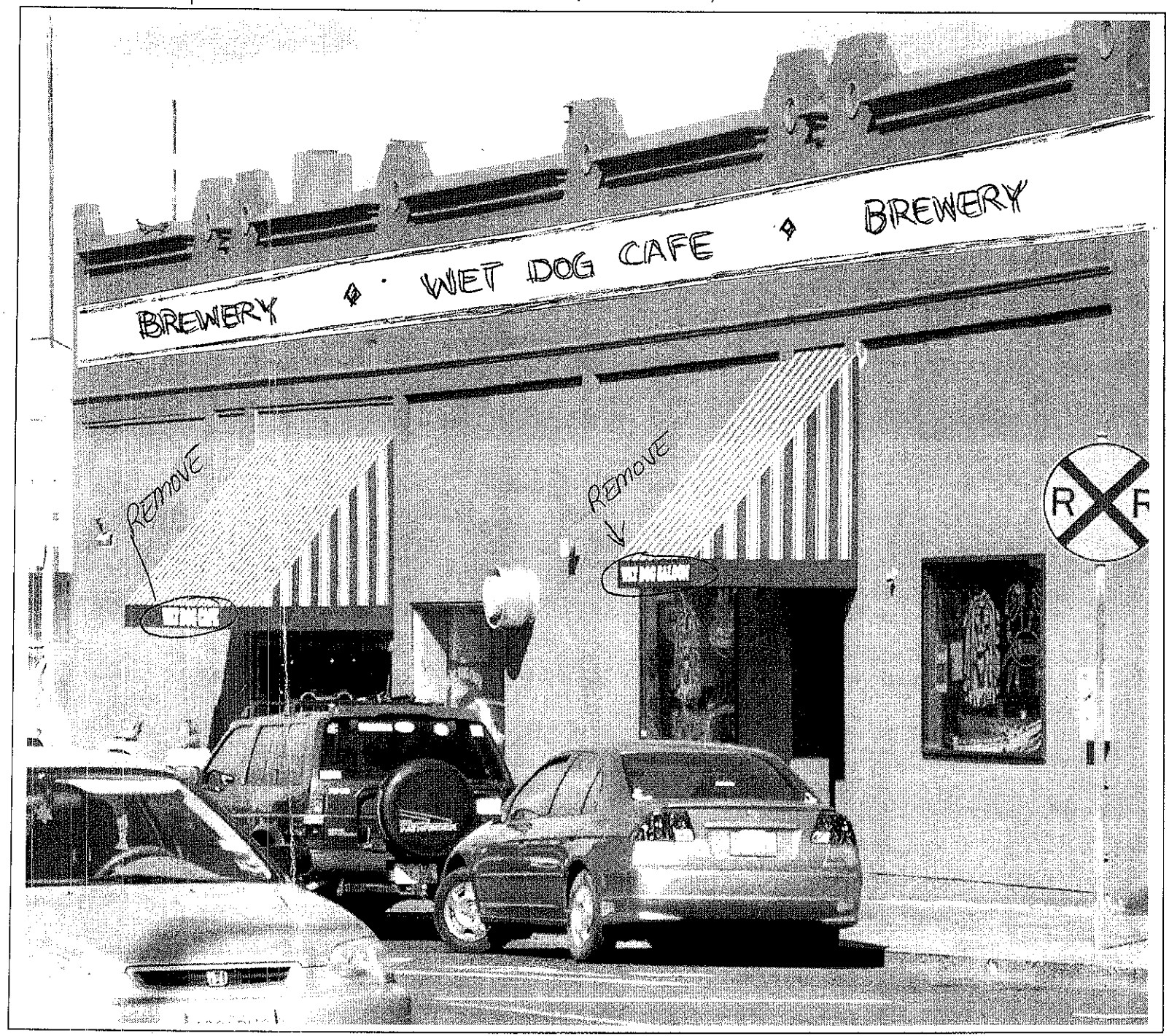
NW Corner



4.33' x 11.3' = 49 ft

Neon Projecting Sign

Sign Calculation: 1'x43' = 43 ft



West Side

Letters
1' wide

BREWERY
1'x 7' (x2)

WET DOG CAFE
1'x 15'

BAND COLORS

RUST ON GREEN

LETTERS WHITE

TOTAL SQ' Letters
= 29 sq ft

WET DOG CAFE ◊ BREWERY ◊ WET DOG CAFE

Sign Calculation: 1' x 50' = 50 #

WET DOG CAFE 1' x 15' (x 2) = 30

BREWERY 1' x 7' = 7

37 sq ft

North Side of Bldg.

Remove EXISTING WOODEN SIGNAGE & AWNING Signage