

June 30, 2010



## Planning Department Newsletter

### COMMISSION RECOMMENDS DENIAL OF COLLEGE HILL REZONE

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For those of you who have been following this story in past editions of this newsletter or have been attending the meetings at City Hall, you know that the Planning Commission has recently conducted a hearing on a proposal to change the zoning of the College Hill Historic District (centered around Monroe and Michigan Streets) and adjacent properties. The proposed rezone involves an amendment from R2 Low Density Multi-Family Residential and R4 High Density Multi-Family Residential to RT Residential Transitional, which would reduce allowable housing density for the affected parcels. The planning department initiated this case in accordance with an implementation strategy in the city's recently adopted College Hill Core Neighborhood Plan to conduct proceedings to consider the proposal.

The Commission accepted public comment regarding this matter at the first two sessions of its public hearing on April 28 and May 26. A substantial amount of input was furnished to the Commission during the course of these two meetings. Citizens provided approximately 3½ hours of oral remarks, and they submitted 77 sets of documents (in the form of letters, email messages, formal statements, and news articles).

At its June 23 meeting, the Commission made its final deliberations, and decided to recommend to the City Council that the proposed zone change be denied. Conclusion Nos. 2 through 4 of

the Commission's formal resolution set forth the basic rationale for its decision. These conclusions read as follows:

2. The proposed rezone would create a significant number of nonconforming uses, and these nonconformities would cause a substantial adverse economic impact on property owners within the subject area.
3. The architectural design standards prescribed in the College Hill Core Neighborhood Plan would provide an effective means to help achieve the expressed objectives of this RT zoning proposal by enhancing historic preservation and neighborhood appearance in the subject area without the detrimental impacts associated with said proposal.
4. The zoning code provisions for the R2 zoning district that encompasses the majority of the subject area allow for a diversity of land uses that is suitable for this portion of the city located near the WSU campus, and the code limitations of said R2 district provide sufficient safeguards for maintaining or improving the quality of the neighborhood under consideration.

The Commission's recommendation will soon be forwarded to the City Council for review. The Council will conduct its own public meetings on this matter. Staff expects these meetings will commence in late August or early September after the WSU fall semester begins.

## COUNCIL APPROVES R1 BUFFER FOR BRAYTON ROAD PROPERTY

On June 15, the City Council approved a proposal to change the prezone designation of a 134-acre parcel located along Brayton Road about 1½ miles northwest of Pullman's wastewater treatment plant from R2 Low Density Multi-Family Residential to R1 Single Family Residential. This decision was the culmination of nine months of Planning Commission and City Council review of prezone designations for the subject property and contiguous land. Prezone districts can be assigned by the city for land outside the city limits, but they do not take effect until the property is annexed.

Planning staff started the process by proposing the establishment of R2, I1 Light Industrial, and C3 General Commercial prezone districts for 515 acres of land (of which the 134-acre parcel identified above is a part) located outside the city

limits between Brayton Road and the Palouse Highway north of Military Hill. This proposal was approved by the Council on March 9, but, in response to public comments about the incompatibility between potential housing developments allowed in an R2 district and existing land uses along Brayton Road, the Council directed the Planning Commission to consider an R1 "buffer area" for a portion of the R2 prezone district adjacent to Brayton Road.

In accordance with this directive, the Commission held a hearing to review the prezone change from R2 to R1 for the 134-acre parcel described above. The Commission recommended approval of the proposal, and the Council agreed. The majority owner of the 515-acre property has indicated that he may submit a request to annex this land within the next few months.



The newly prezoned property (shown on the left side in this photo), is adjacent to Brayton Road and the South Fork of the Palouse River valley.

## HILLTOP RESTAURANT TO BE DEMOLISHED FOR MOTEL ADDITION

Earlier this month, the Kirkbride Group of Lacey, Washington submitted a site plan review application to the public works department for a proposal to expand the Hilltop Inn located at the corner of Davis Way and Old Wawawai Road. The plan involves the addition of 54 rooms to the existing 59-room, three-story motel. To provide the necessary space for this addition, the 10,000-square-foot building that contains the Hilltop Restaurant is proposed to be demolished.

According to the city's building division records, a restaurant has been in place at this site (accompanying a motel) since 1954. Back then, the eating establishment was a small drive-in restaurant and ice cream shop. The Hilltop Restaurant structure that we know today was built by then-owner Al Kircher in 1965. Over the years, the business has been called Kircher's Steakhouse, Hilltop Café, and Hilltop Steakhouse,

until it took on its current name in the late 1970s. Ron and Barbara Wachter, long-standing owners of the motel and restaurant property, are maintaining their ownership interest in the motel facility throughout the redevelopment process.

The city's site plan review committee has met to consider the site plan for this proposal, and it has notified the applicant of certain deficiencies in the plan. If all goes smoothly, the developer intends to start the demolition and construction work at the site late this summer.



The Hilltop Restaurant has been serving patrons since the mid-1960s.



## Pending Land Use Proposals

Displayed below are land use applications submitted to the planning or public works department or city-generated proposals for planning provisions that require a public meeting, public notice, or site plan review in accordance with the city code.

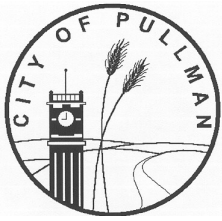
PROJECT	DESCRIPTION	LOCATION	STATUS
Certified Local Government Program	establish historic preservation program for community	Citywide	CC requested ordinance revisions on 1/20/09; ad hoc committee met on 2/9/09 to address ordinance revisions; legal staff reviewing draft ordinance amendments
College Hill Architectural Design Standards	formulate design standards for new construction	College Hill Core	PC approved review process 3/24; PC public forum scheduled for 7/28
Historic District Rezone (Z-10-2)	rezone 29 acres from R2 to RT	vicinity of Monroe and Michigan Streets	PC recommended denial of rezone on 6/23; CC hearing to be scheduled for late Aug./early Sep.
SEL Residential Rezone (Z-10-3)	rezone 40 acres from I2 to R2	between Hickman Court and Eastgate Boulevard near NE Terre View Drive	staff reviewing application materials
Sacred Heart Church Canopy Conditional Use Expansion Request (09-3)	construct 110-sq-ft canopy over rear entryway of church building	400 NE Ash Street	staff awaiting complete application
City Shoreline Permit Application No. 77	relocate and upgrade existing Wawawai Basin Lift Station	1025 NW Guy Street (Wastewater Treatment Plant)	permit issued 6/22; permit materials sent to Dept. of Ecology to initiate state comment period
Johnson Avenue Storage Lot site plan (09-10)	construct 360-sq-ft carport and conduct grading on 4.9-acre site	1222 SE Johnson Avenue	staff requested applicant to revise site plan
Transitional Housing Community Building site plan (10-6)	develop 830-sq-ft training/storage building	520 NW Davis Way	staff requested applicant to revise site plan
Hilltop Inn Addition site plan (10-7)	demolish Hilltop Restaurant and construct 54-room addition to existing motel	928 NW Olsen Street	staff requested applicant to revise site plan

KEY TO ZONING DISTRICTS: R1 Single Family Residential; RT Residential Transitional; R2 Low Density Multi-Family Residential; R3 Medium Density Multi-Family Residential; R4 High Density Multi-Family Residential; C1 Neighborhood Commercial; C2 Central Business District; C3 General Commercial; I1 Light Industrial; I2 Heavy Industrial; IRP Industrial Research Park; WSU Washington State University

KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS: CC: City Council; PC: Planning Commission; BOA: Board of Adjustment; DOE: State Department of Ecology; LC: Landmarks Commission

NOTES: 1) If an applicant fails to act on a pending application for a period of six months, said application will be dropped from the above list.. 2) Numbers in parentheses are planning staff's internal file numbers. 3) Site plan review by city staff is generally conducted for proposed construction of developments other than single family homes, duplexes, or manufactured homes; it does not apply to most construction on the WSU campus.





*Planning Department  
325 SE Paradise St.  
Pullman, WA 99163*

*Phone: 509-338-3213  
Fax: 509-338-3282  
Email: [bethany.johnson@pullman-wa.gov](mailto:bethany.johnson@pullman-wa.gov)*

#### **Pullman Planning Department Staff**

Pete Dickinson, Planning Director  
Jason Radtke, Assistant Planner  
Bethany Johnson, Public Works Administrative Assistant  
Kealan Emerson, Public Works Administrative Specialist  
Evan Pond, Engineering/Planning Aide  
Ruth Younce, Engineering/Planning Aide

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**[WWW.PULLMAN-WA.GOV](http://www.pullman-wa.gov)**

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## **WESTERN PLANNER CONFERENCE OFFERS EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY**

The Western Planner organization is composed of community planners from 14 western states (all western states, including Alaska, but excluding California and Hawaii). Each year, the organization conducts a conference in one of its sponsoring states, and this year's event is scheduled to be held at the Red Lion Hotel in Vancouver, Washington from August 10 through 13.

This conference offers a great opportunity to learn about land use, transportation, environmental, and historic preservation matters from the broad perspective of planning-related professionals that practice in various parts of the Western U.S. Sessions

will be conducted on such topics as non-motorized transportation options, scenic byways, climate change, urban forestry, downtown redevelopment, best practices in historic preservation, wind energy, and agricultural land preservation. A short course on the basics of local planning will also be offered free to all participants.

If you find that your travels will be taking you to the west side of Washington in early August, you may want to consider registering for this event. For more information about the conference, please consult the following website:

<http://www.westernplanner.org/2010conf.html>.