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Planning Department Newsletter

PLANNING COMMISSION FORWARDS COLLEGE HILL CORE PLAN TO CITY COUNCIL

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After much hard work and perseverance, the Planning Commission has recommended its preferred version of the draft College Hill Core Neighborhood Plan to the City Council. The Commission made this decision at the conclusion of its public hearing on October 28. That session capped an eight-week stretch during which the Commission members met seven times to accept citizen input on the draft plan or discuss it publicly among themselves.

The first draft of the plan was released by planning department staff in August. It contained a vision statement, goals, and implementation strategies that promoted responsibility and respect among College Hill residents and business persons; emphasized a harmonious mix of compact land uses in an attractive, historic setting served by exemplary public facilities and services; supported the provision of sufficient vehicular parking in the area; and prescribed continuous interaction among all stakeholders to enhance neighborhood quality and ensure consistency with the Comprehensive Plan for the entire community. The Planning Commission made no changes to these basic themes. Instead, it updated some of the facts and figures in the document; clarified certain passages; placed greater emphasis on the historic character of the neighborhood in the vision statement; altered the general tenor of the implementation strategies to be more directive and less discretionary; and added, deleted, and modified several

strategies (see accompanying article). The version of the draft plan recommended by the Commission can be viewed at the planning department page of the city's website (<http://www.pullman-wa.gov/DrawOnePage.aspx?PageID=22>).

City Council consideration of the document is scheduled to begin with a public input session on Thursday, November 5. Anyone who is interested in this subject is encouraged to participate in this upcoming meeting or provide written comments to the planning department.

COMMISSION MODIFIES DRAFT PLAN STRATEGIES

During its review of the College Hill Core draft plan, the Planning Commission made additions, deletions, and changes to the original set of implementation strategies suggested by planning staff. The strategies added by the Commission are as follows:

- Coordinate with appropriate parties to provide workshops for landlords and tenants regarding the Landlord/Tenant Act.
- Provide oversight of the proposed architectural design standards as necessary upon implementation.
- Review the transportation network for the potential establishment of additional one-way streets in the neighborhood.

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- Review the Pedestrian/Bicycle Circulation Plan for guidance in establishing bike lanes in the area.
- Work with WSU to provide shuttle service to little-used parking lots.

The Commission deleted the following implementation strategies (either because it decided the proposal should not be pursued, or it decided it was unnecessary to address the matter in the draft plan):

- Encourage WSU to continue its active role in educating students regarding proper behavior.
- Encourage continuation of WSU ADCAPS program.
- Promote increased supervision of Greek live out housing to better address behavioral matters.
- Promote use of eviction by landlords in appropriate cases.
- Consider rezoning the Maple Street area from R2 Low Density Multi-Family Residential to R4 High Density Multi-Family Residential.
- Recruit “adopt-a-block” monitors to report on property maintenance issues.
- Establish a neighborhood blight hotline.
- Consider an ordinance limiting grass height in

residential yards.

- Correct lighting or sidewalk deficiencies where new on-street parking permit districts are established.
- Promote awareness of space availability in WSU parking lots.
- Look for opportunities to acquire land for off-street parking lots.

The Commission revised the following implementation strategies as noted:

- Consider rezoning all of the College Hill Historic District from R2 Low Density Multi-Family Residential to RT Residential Transitional rather than just a portion of said district.
- Consider a zoning code amendment to allow cultural theme houses (such as those operated by WSU) as conditional uses in residential districts rather than considering a zoning map amendment to accommodate them.
- Explore the formulation of a mandatory neighborhood-wide on-street parking permit program immediately rather than waiting to determine if other implementation strategies resolve the parking congestion issue.

TRANSITIONAL HOUSING PROJECT UNDER CONSTRUCTION

In August of this year, the public works department issued a building permit for a “transitional housing” development at 520 NW Davis Way (in the vicinity of the former Daily Grind espresso stand). Transitional housing units are living spaces provided to residents for a period from 90 days to 2 years, during which time these residents participate in counseling and self-sufficiency education in order to improve their ability to sustain a stable life. All potential occupants are screened to determine their suitability for the program. The Whitman County Community Action Center (CAC) is the developer of the housing complex.

The project consists of nine residential units on the 3.8-acre site. The dwellings will be contained within three modular structures that are currently being

installed at the property, plus a remodeled triplex.

This project has been in the making for some time. The CAC first conceptualized the development back in 2002, and proceeded from there to explore possible funding sources.

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Construction crews operating at the CAC transitional housing project.

Eventually, the center secured financial resources from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development through the Washington State Department of Commerce, and from Whitman County funds devoted to affordable housing and reduction of homelessness.

The CAC submitted its site plan for the development in October of 2008. The ten-month delay in obtaining a building permit was due largely to the physical constraints of the property. The site is located on the slope of a hill, so design of the project demanded detailed plans to address grading, retaining walls, and fire department access. Also, midway through

the application process, the developer learned that it would need to extend a sanitary sewer line under a wetland at the bottom of the slope, necessitating a report to propose environmental impact mitigation measures. As CAC housing coordinator Dale Miller stated, "It was a very challenging site to build on, and (the development) cost more than we originally anticipated." But, he added, "it's a good location—close to downtown and other services."

As shown in the accompanying photograph, the project is well under way at this point. Mr. Miller said he hopes to have the dwellings ready for occupancy by February.

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.

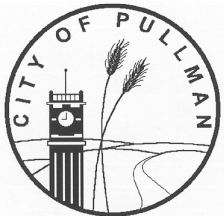
PROJECT	DESCRIPTION	LOCATION	STATUS
Certified Local Government Program	establish historic preservation program for community	citywide	CC requested ordinance revisions on 1/20; ad hoc committee met on 2/9 to address ordinance revisions; legal staff reviewing draft ordinance amendments
Hinrichs Annexation	annex 37 acres to the city	west of Sunnyside Park and north of SW Old Wawawai Road	applicant revising legal description of property
Mader Land Prezone Proposal	prezone 433 acres as R2, 67 acres as I1, and 15 acres as C3	outside city limits; west of SR 27, east of Brayton Road, both sides of Albion Road	PC made recommendation on proposal 10/7; awaiting final legal description of property before submitting matter to CC
College Hill Core Neighborhood Draft Plan	establish neighborhood plan for College Hill Core area	area surrounded by Stadium Way, Grand Avenue, Main Street, except WSU campus	CC meeting to introduce plan held 8/25; PC conducted meetings on 9/9, 9/23, 9/30, 10/7, and 10/14; PC conducted hearing on 10/21 and 10/28, and made recommendation to CC; CC public input session scheduled for 11/5
Whispering Hills No. 5 Planned Residential Development (PRD) Final Plan	establishment of 17 lots on 2.2 acres in a PRD	south of Old Wawawai Road and west of Sunnyside Park	staff reviewing application, and awaiting additional application materials
Sacred Heart Church Canopy Variance (V-09-1)	construct canopy on church building to project into rear yard setback area	400 NE Ash Street	staff reviewing application, and awaiting additional application materials
Itani Valley Road Apartments site plan (09-1)	construct 16-unit apartment building on 27,000-sq-ft lot	1245 NE Valley Road	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.





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WWW.PULLMAN-WA.GOV
