

May 29, 2007



Planning Department Newsletter



PLANNING COMMISSION TO HOLD MEETING ABOUT COMMUNITY GROWTH

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Do you have an opinion about how Pullman should grow in the future? If so, you will probably want to come to the Planning Commission meeting on June 27 to express your views, or at least listen to the discussion.

As reported in previous editions of this newsletter, the city is currently engaged in the process of reviewing its urban growth area, or UGA. The UGA is defined as the property into which the city expects to grow over a certain time frame (usually 20 years in the future). The planning department has noted in past articles that it has devised preliminary population forecasts for 20 and 50 years out. This was done to provide background information for the city's water system plan update that is currently being prepared with the assistance of engineering consultant HDR, Inc.

The city's current population is estimated at 27,030. The department's preliminary population forecast for Pullman in 2027 is 34,650, and the projection for 2057 is 46,000. Both of these future population predictions basically assume that the growth rate the community has experienced over the past ten years will continue unabated into the future. If these forecasts prove to be accurate, and if the amount of land consumed by each new resident remains constant, the department has determined that the UGA must be expanded by the year 2027 to accommodate the anticipated growth.

Of course, this information raises many questions. Should the community

continue to grow in accordance with its historic land use pattern? Would it be advantageous to develop in a more compact manner, or would it be better to adopt a more dispersed arrangement? Are the variety of development options provided by our current zoning districts appropriate, or are there other alternatives that should be pursued? As the community grows, are there more suitable places than others to accommodate this development? Should growth occur more or less evenly around the periphery of the city, or should we consider specific growth opportunity areas, such as the Pullman-Moscow corridor? Does the city have sufficient infrastructure capacity to handle the expected growth? How does city growth relate to development currently being allowed in the county?

These and other issues are likely to be addressed during the upcoming Planning Commission meeting. The session is scheduled to take place at 7:30 p.m. on June 27 in the City Hall Council Chambers. The Commission will incorporate any input received into its work of reevaluating the city's UGA.



VALHALLA TAVERN GRANTED PERMIT TO EXPAND

At a public hearing on May 21, 2007, the Pullman Board of Adjustment approved a conditional use permit to allow certain modifications at the existing Valhalla Tavern at 1000 NE Colorado Street. These modifications involve changing the tavern's liquor license from its current 21 and over Class H license to a Restaurant license that would allow patrons under 21 years of age to occupy the premises, and expanding the floor area of the tavern by approximately 2,500 square feet on the ground floor of the building. (The tavern currently occupies about 3,075 square feet of floor area in the basement of the building.) The floor area expansion would involve remodeling vacant floor space already in existence; the proposal entails no new exterior construction.

A key consideration in this case was parking. Although the applicant, Inland Oasis, Inc., was requesting enlargement of the tavern, it did not propose a commensurate increase in its off-street parking spaces. Instead, it requested a variance through the conditional use permit process to allow the tavern expansion with no additional off-street parking spaces, claiming that the vast majority of its customers walk to the establishment. The original conditional use permit for the Valhalla Tavern, issued retroactively by the Board in 2000, required that the business maintain a minimum of six off-street

parking stalls at the site for use by its patrons during evening hours. The documentation for this earlier permit acknowledged that even this parking arrangement represented a variance from the zoning code parking standards. Inland Oasis, Inc. submitted its most recent application hoping to keep this original condition intact.

In its staff report prepared for the May 21 hearing, the planning department argued against allowing the variance for parking. In the report, staff stated the following:

Planning staff acknowledges the applicant's claims that most of his patrons walk to his establishment, but the code requires this extra parking for all land uses in the C1 zoning district. The exception for parking was granted in the original 2000 permit partly because the business had been operating in satisfactory fashion for 25 years with its deficient parking arrangement. Planning staff advises against allowing this tavern business to expand without accommodating some of its patrons who will inevitably drive to the establishment.

The only parties to speak at the hearing were those in favor of the application, including the business owner, his attorney, and members of the College Hill Association. These proponents stated that, since almost all of the tavern patrons travel to the site on foot and there are many parking options available in the evening hours for the few customers who choose to drive, the proposed floor area expansion should be permitted without the requirement for additional off-street parking spaces.

When it came time to decide, the Board of Adjustment, in a unanimous vote, agreed with the proponents. It granted the conditional use permit with certain stipulations related to operation of the business, enhanced outdoor lighting at the property, and continuation of the existing nonconforming six-stall parking arrangement. The Board's decision is final unless appealed to the Whitman County Superior Court by June 11.



During evening hours, the Valhalla Tavern maintains six off-street parking spaces on the west side of the building.

CITY SEEKS MORE PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBERS

Other parts of this newsletter have pointed out the important work being performed by the Planning Commission in helping to shape the future of this community. The Commission is a nine-member advisory body that recommends action to the City Council on a wide variety of planning matters. Currently, the committee only has seven members, so Mayor Glenn Johnson is soliciting applications to fill the remaining two vacancies. If you have an interest in providing community service through participation on this committee, please complete the application form and deliver it to the Mayor at Pullman City Hall. Application forms are available here: <http://www.pullman-wa.gov/content/WYSIWYG/Boards/CommissionApplication.pdf>



Pending Land Use Applications

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.

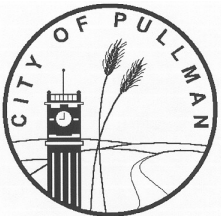
PROJECT	DESCRIPTION	LOCATION	STATUS
Critical Areas Ordinance Revisions	proposed amendments to city's ordinance regarding environmentally sensitive areas	citywide	PC meeting scheduled for 5/30
Hinrichs Annexation	annex 37 acres to the city	west of Sunnyside Park and north of Old Wawawai Road	staff reviewing legal description of property
Askins Annexation	annex 35 acres to the city	Johnson Road south of the Village Centre Cinemas	CC accepted annexation on 4/3; city awaiting petition from applicant
Whispering Hills III Planned Residential Development	develop 72 single family homes on 19.9 acres in a planned development	south of SW Old Wawawai Road and west of SW Marcia Drive	staff reviewing application materials
Whispering Hills III Preliminary Plat	divide 44.3 acres into 117 lots and public streets in an R2 district	south of SW Old Wawawai Road and west of SW Lochsa Drive	staff reviewing application materials
Barclay Subdivision No. 2 Preliminary Plat	divide 5.4 acres into 14 lots in an R2 district	South of the SW Casey Court/Barclay Court intersection	staff reviewing application materials
Bryant House Special Valuation	request for special property tax valuation for single family house rehabilitation	1005 NE Maple Street	staff reviewing revised application materials
Pioneer Center Modifications Conditional Use Permit (C-07-6)	modify use of the site to allow youth athletic programs and events past 9:30 p.m.	240 SE Dexter Street	staff reviewing revised application materials
Emmanuel Baptist Church Preschool Conditional Use Permit (C-07-7)	conduct preschool for 20 children aged 3-5	1300 SE Sunnymead Way	staff reviewing revised application materials
Wal-Mart Supercenter SEPA determination and site plan	develop 223,000-sq-ft store on a 28-acre site	south of SE Harvest Dr/Bishop Boulevard intersection	Superior Court judge denied PARD appeal on 10/18/06; PARD filed appeal with Court of Appeals on 11/27/06
University Park Apartments site plan (06-18)	develop 21 apartments on 23,656-sq-ft lot	680 NE Gray Lane	staff requested applicant to revise site plan
Crimson Village site plan (07-2)	develop mixed-use retail/residential buildings totaling 66,000 sq ft on 10.5-acre lot	1000 block of SE Bishop Boulevard	staff requested applicant to revise site plan
Anita's Townhouses site plan (07-4)	build two housing units on 6,016 sq ft lot	1055 NE B Street	staff reviewing site plan
Whispering Hills Townhouses site plan (07-5)	construct 10 townhouse units on 88,800-sq-ft site	southwest of SW Old Wawawai Road/Marcia Drive intersection	staff reviewing 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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WE'RE ON THE WEB!

WWW.PULLMAN-WA.GOV
