

ASTORIA PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

Astoria City Hall
March 22, 2016

CALL TO ORDER:

President Pearson called the meeting to order at 6:26 pm.

ROLL CALL:

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

Staff Present: Community Development Director Kevin Cronin, Planner Nancy Ferber, and RARE AmeriCorps Planner Ian Sisson. The meeting is recorded and will be transcribed by ABC Transcription Services, Inc.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

President Pearson asked for approval of the minutes of the February 23, 2016 meeting. Commissioner Innes moved that the Astoria Planning Commission approve the minutes as presented; seconded by Commissioner Easom. Motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

President Pearson 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):

AEP16-02 Amendment to Existing Permit AEP16-02 for Subdivision Permit SP06-02 by Dale Barrett for Fred Van Horn to relocation the fire access and parking easement on the existing plat at 433-435-441 30th Street in the C-3, General Commercial zone.

President Pearson asked if anyone objected to the jurisdiction of the Planning Commission to hear this matter at this time. There were no objections. He asked if any member of the Planning Commission had any conflicts of interest or ex parte contacts to declare.

Vice President Easom declared that he represented many people on the application and stepped down from the dais.

President Pearson asked Staff to present the Staff report.

Planner Ferber reviewed the written Staff report. The only correspondence was an email from Fred Van Horn, which was included in the Staff report. Staff recommended approval of the request with the conditions listed in the Staff report.

Commissioner Spence said he drove by the site twice and looking at the picture, he could not tell where the easement and parking would be shifted. There is parking in front of the dental building and the units on Columbia Crossing, as well as parking along 30th Street. He asked for clarification about the proposal.

Planner Ferber explained the old easement provided parking right next to the building, which she pointed to on a photograph. The Applicant has proposed to switch the access to the parking so that emergency vehicles can get through to nearby homes. Commissioners noted that this would move the parking to a parking area already designated for the dental office.

Commissioner Spence said the apartments should have sufficient parking, but the parking lot was full. He noted that the original permit required a 25-foot wide egress to accommodate emergency vehicles. He asked if there

was a mistake on the original plat or if the building encroached into the 25-foot right-of-way. He could see on the photograph that it was a tight space for emergency vehicles because there was parking on both sides of the right-of-way. Director Cronin understood that something transpired between the original plat approval in 2006 and today. Staff is simply trying to accommodate what was done during that time to ensure adequate emergency access. Planner Ferber confirmed that the Fire Chief has reviewed this application and found it acceptable. This proposal is a much less expensive alternative than requiring a sprinkler system.

Commissioner Spence said he was satisfied since the Fire Chief had approved the request.

President Pearson opened the public hearing and called for a presentation by the Applicant.

Dale Barrett, 4253 A Highway 101 North, Gearhart, presented drawings of the proposed project at the dais. He noted the drawings were not 100 percent accurate, but showed where the parking and new easement would be on the same aerial photograph that was displayed on the screen. The new easement will be up against the building, but the parking spaces have already been in place for quite some time. To correct the situation to fit the existing parking, the lot created when the Columbia Landing subdivision was created will have to be replatted. The structure in the photograph is the remainder of the Columbia Landing residences. The last lot abuts against the parking. The Fire Department said the area had to remain clear, so all of the parking would have to be moved to the other side. He worked with City Staff and found the best thing to do would be to adjust the 25-foot fire lane. The Staff report includes small versions of the proposed replat, which requires this public hearing. The proposal is to move the fire lane from up against the townhome buildings out into the existing driving lane. The original plat specified 25 feet and he would simply like to move it. The packet shows where the proposed easement will be located. It will be no problem for a fire truck to fit and the Fire Chief has indicated the proposal is acceptable. The parking area will be switched to the west side and the 6-foot wide walkway easement will remain unchanged. The only easements being moved will be the parking easement and the ingress/egress. The packet also shows the existing conditions of the plat prior to the proposed changes. Once this request is approved, the Public Works Director and County Surveyor will have to approve the changes because the fire lane was on the previous plat.

President Pearson called for any testimony in favor of, impartial to, or opposed to the application. Hearing none, he called for closing comments of Staff. There were none. He closed the public hearing and called for Commission discussion and deliberation.

President Pearson said Staff did a great job preparing a thoroughly researched report. Director Cronin added that Rosemary Johnson assisted with this application.

Commissioner Moore moved that the Astoria Planning Commission adopt the Findings and Conclusions contained in the Staff report and approve Amendment to Existing Permit AEP16-02 by the Dale Barrett; seconded by Commissioner Fitzpatrick. Motion passed unanimously.

President Pearson read the rules of appeal into the record.

Vice President Easom returned to the dais.

ITEM 4(b):

CU16-02 Conditional Use CU16-02 by Nicholas Palazzo for The Farmacy to locate light manufacturing (grow marijuana) in the basement of an existing retail space at 2911 Marine Drive, Suite #D in the C-3, General Commercial zone.

President Pearson asked if anyone objected to the jurisdiction of the Planning Commission to hear this matter at this time. There were no objections. He asked if any member of the Planning Commission had any conflicts of interest or ex parte contacts to declare. Hearing none, he asked Staff to present the Staff report.

Planner Ferber reviewed the written Staff report. No correspondence had been received and Staff recommended approval of the request with the conditions listed in the Staff report.

President Pearson opened the public hearing and called for a presentation by the Applicant.

Nicholas Palazzo, 643 10th Street, Astoria, stated he did not have a presentation, but would answer questions.

Commissioner Fitzpatrick confirmed that the relocation of the daycare center was not related to the Applicant's business.

Commissioner Spence understood marijuana growing required a lot of heat and electricity and said he was concerned about the safety of heat in the basement of the building. He confirmed that the Fire Chief had reviewed and approved the application and therefore, he was satisfied.

President Pearson called for any testimony in favor of, impartial to, or opposed to the application. Hearing none, he called for closing comments of Staff. There were none. He closed the public hearing and called for Commission discussion and deliberation.

Vice President Easom said he believed this was a good use of a basement area. Commissioner Fitzpatrick stated the request appeared to meet the criteria and he agreed it would be a very efficient use of the space.

Vice President Easom moved that the Astoria Planning Commission adopt the Findings and Conclusions contained in the Staff report and approve Conditional Use CU16-02 by Nicholas Palazzo; seconded by Commissioner Fitzpatrick. Motion passed unanimously.

President Pearson read the rules of appeal into the record.

REPORTS OF OFFICERS/COMMISSIONERS:

Commissioner Innes reported that the City of Gearhart uses the legal notice section of the *Daily Astorian* as a mechanism for reminding citizens to remove noxious vegetation. She suggested Astoria post reminders that citizens must take care of the sidewalks.

Commissioner Fitzpatrick asked if Staff could review the derelict building ordinance because several people have asked him how the ordinance is enforced. Director Cronin explained Astoria had a vacant building ordinance and a derelict building ordinance. Both ordinances allow the City to take action on derelict properties. Staff is working on a list of properties that need to be cleaned up and will not look for additional properties until the backlog is caught up. He briefly discussed the property at 559 Alameda, which continuously changes ownership through the foreclosure process. Citizens with concerns should be directed to Director Cronin because Astoria does not have a designated code enforcement officer.

Commissioner Fitzpatrick said 936 Grand recently changed ownership. A debris box was placed on the property and the owners hired someone to remove trash from the interior of the house. However, much of the debris was not removed. The Commission and Staff discussed this house and the adjacent properties on Grand. Director Cronin stated he would look into the issue.

Commissioner Spence and Director Cronin discussed Astoria's need for a code enforcement officer. Staff did not anticipate additional funds for an officer, but the City would be recruiting a new building official soon. The entire Community Development Department would work together on the issues.

Director Cronin said in January, Commissioner Fitzpatrick recommended code enforcement at a property on the corner of 8th and Grand. He reported that the issues with the hedge had been resolved.

NEW BUSINESS: None

OLD BUSINESS:

Item 7(a): Parks Master Plan Update

Ian Sisson, 1263 Commercial Street, Astoria, introduced himself and noted that Astoria has never had a comprehensive master plan for the Parks Department. He updated the Commission on the Parks Master Planning process with a PowerPoint presentation that included a timeline, scope of work, details of community

outreach, and next steps. The Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC), appointed by the Mayor to oversee the project, is currently reviewing the draft master plan. After the CAC and Parks Advisory Board have approved the master plan, the Planning Commission will review, and hopefully approve and recommend City Council adopt the plan.

Director Cronin asked which public involvement strategy has been the most successful. Mr. Sisson said the City received almost 900 responses to the online surveys, which were announced on Facebook, in press releases, at City Council meetings, on the radio, in emails, and on flyers placed at all Parks facilities. The survey was incentivized by providing park passes.

STATUS REPORTS:

Planner Ferber has included status report photographs of the following: 1542 Grand, V14-18. The project is complete and conditions have been met. These status report photographs are for Commission information.

The Commission and Staff briefly discussed the details of the project.

PUBLIC COMMENTS: None.

ADJOURNMENT:

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:07 pm.

APPROVED:



Community Development Director