

**ASTORIA PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING**

Astoria City Hall  
May 24, 2016

CALL TO ORDER:

President Pearson called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm.

ROLL CALL:

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

Commissioners Absent: Jan Mitchell

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

**Item 3(a): April 26, 2016 Meeting**

Vice President Easom noted the following corrections:

- Page 1, motion to approve the minutes of the March 22, 2016 meeting: "...seconded by ~~Vice President Easom~~ **Commissioner Innes**."
- Page 2, Paragraph 6: "~~Vice President Easom~~ **Commissioner Spence** noted the Staff report required the bicycle space to be located in the sidewalk furnishing zone."

Vice President Easom moved that the Astoria Planning Commission approve the minutes of April 26, 2016 as corrected; seconded by Commissioner Innes. Motion passed unanimously.

**Item 3(b): April 26, 2016 Work Session**

Vice President Easom noted the following correction:

- Page 1, Paragraph 4: "~~Vice President Easom~~ **Commissioner Spence** noted the City owns 1,300 parcels of land..."

Vice President Easom moved that the Astoria Planning Commission approve the April 26, 2016 work session minutes as corrected; seconded by Commissioner Moore. 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):

A16-03                      Amendment A16-03 by the Astoria Parks and Recreation Department to amend the Astoria Comprehensive Plan to include the Astoria Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Master Plan, City Wide.

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.

Director Cronin and Ian Sisson reviewed the written Staff report and noted the most recent updates to the draft Astoria Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Master Plan.

Commissioner Moore said he had no objections to the updates. He wanted to know why Columbia Field was listed as a City of Astoria park. The park is not City property and he did not believe the City had a formal arrangement with the school district. However, he understood the City uses and maintains the park. Mr. Sisson said the inventory could include an additional column to show ownership of each park property. The intent of the inventory is to show the parks that are managed by the Parks and Recreation Department. Staff needed to account for all of the facilities that are available to the public for recreation services and use. He confirmed that the Master Plan could be updated if the management agreement with the school district changed. Director Cronin added that this change could be done administratively because the Plan is a working document.

Commissioner Spence said lack of staff was discussed in several meetings. He hoped it would not be too late to recommend increased staffing while the City is putting the final touches on the budget. He asked if staffing had been addressed in the Parks Department budget and if the need for more staff had been accepted positively. Director Cosby said Staff has begun discussing staffing needs with City Council as part of the Master Plan, but it was not considered for the next fiscal year because the Master Plan has not yet been adopted. Once the Plan is adopted, work sessions will be scheduled to discuss how to balance resources with staffing requirements. She confirmed that the Parks Department just started to contract out some of its maintenance work, like restroom cleaning and mowing. The City has three full-time Parks maintenance employees and the contracted employees are seasonal employees that make lower hourly rates and do not receive the City's benefit package. City staff costs 60 percent more than seasonal employees. However, since the employment pool is empty, contracting is the City's only option right now.

President Pearson opened the public hearing and called for 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.

Commissioner Innes said a lot of work had gone into the Master Plan in a very short amount of time. She hoped following through with the Plan would go well.

Commissioner Fitzpatrick said he was impressed with the amount of work that went into the Plan.

President Pearson agreed and said the document was a great working document.

Director Cronin said Staff wanted to continue this hearing because the Parks Board would be reviewing the Master Plan on May 25<sup>th</sup> and they may have something new for the Planning Commission to consider.

Commissioner Moore moved that the Astoria Planning Commission continue the hearing for A16-03 by the Astoria Parks and Recreation Department to the June 28, 2016 6:30 p.m. meeting; seconded by Commissioner Spence. Motion passed unanimously.

#### ITEM 4(b):

V16-05                      Variance V16-05 by Josh Kolberg, Architect for Columbia Memorial Hospital to locate a cancer treatment facility with floor area to lot ration of .22 from the required 1:1 ration at 1905 Exchange in the AH-HC, Attached Housing – Health Care 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 a potential conflict of interest, as he manages the property adjacent to the site of the proposed facility. However, he did not believe this would impact his decision.

Commissioner Fitzpatrick declared that he and his wife have been long-term supporters of the facility. They were invited to a sneak peak of the cancer center the previous week, which they did not attend. He also received a letter with information about the facility, but he did not believe any of this would preclude him from being impartial. He also believed everything in the letter would be presented to the Commission during this hearing.

President Pearson asked Staff to present the Staff report.

Planner Ferber reviewed the written Staff report, noting Staff recommended approval of the request.

Commissioner Spence asked if the hospital owned all of the land shown in the photograph on Page 4 of the Staff report and why not all of the parcels would be used to calculate the floor to area ratio (FAR). It appears as if one site is being divided, which triggers the variance. Other Commissioners indicated the FAR would be worse if the entire property were considered. Commissioner Spence asked if the legal description of the individual lots controlled what could be developed. Planner Ferber confirmed the hospital owns one large lot, but just wants to develop a piece of it now and potentially develop the rest of it in the future.

Commissioner Spence asked if access would be from Exchange Street. Director Cronin said the Design Review Committee had already addressed the access criteria and it was not part of the criteria for approving the variance.

President Pearson opened the public hearing and called for a presentation by the Applicant. The Applicant confirmed he had no presentation.

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.

Commissioner Fitzpatrick believed the Applicant had made a case for needing this variance and he supported the application. President Pearson, Vice President Easom, Commissioners Innes and Spence agreed.

Commissioner Moore said the intention of the Gateway Overlay Zone was 1 to 1 construction. A cancer treatment center is absolutely necessary, but he believed the Commission should consider that variances could conflict with the intentions of the area. In the future, the hospital may construct more on the lot, which will increase the FAR, but there is no real plan at this point. Staff suggested the Applicant develop a master plan for the area, so he hoped there would be more development in the area to achieve the goals of the Gateway Area.

Vice President Easom moved that the Astoria Planning Commission adopt the Findings and Conclusions contained in the Staff report and Variance V16-05 by Josh Kolberg; seconded by Commissioner Innes. Motion passed unanimously.

President Pearson read the rules of appeal into the record.

#### REPORTS OF OFFICERS/COMMISSIONERS:

Director Cronin reported that the library's open house was scheduled for May 25<sup>th</sup> from 4:30 pm to 6:30 pm, and then the Library Board and City Council work session would be held at City Hall in Council Chambers at 7:00 pm. Columbia Memorial Hospital will host an open house on May 25<sup>th</sup> at the Seafood Lab to discuss the new parking lot at the site of the old gas station. On May 31<sup>st</sup>, an emergency management town hall meeting will be held at the Liberty Theatre.

#### PUBLIC COMMENTS:

#### ADJOURNMENT:

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

#### **APPROVED:**



Community Development Director