

DRAFT Minutes
Stevenson Planning Commission Meeting
Monday, October 9, 2023
6:00 PM

Planning Commission Chair Breckel called the meeting to order at 6:07 p.m. A quorum was present.

MEMBERS PRESENT

PC Chair Jeff Breckel; Commissioner Anne Keesee, Commissioner Davy Ray.

STAFF PRESENT

Community Development Director Ben Shumaker, Planning & Public Works Assistant Tiffany Anderson

GUESTS PRESENT

Asa Leckie, County Commissioner; Dean Maldonado; Brad Kilby, Bruce Hahnreiter

PUBLIC PRESENT

Lonnie Gates, Kristi ? (noted online audio problems), Mary Repar

A. Preliminary Matters

a. Public Comment Expectations

Shumaker explained use of tools for remote participants: *6 to mute/unmute & *9 to raise hand. Commenters must raise their hand and be acknowledged by the Chair. Individual comments may be limited to 3 minutes. Disruptive individuals may be required to leave the meeting. Persistent disruptions may result in the meeting being recessed and continued at a later date.

b. Public Comment Period

(For items not located elsewhere on the agenda)

Lonnie Gates spoke in favor of the development near Rock Creek Assisted Living.

c. September 11th, 2023 Minutes

The Planning Commission meeting minutes from September 11th, 2023 were approved unanimously following a motion by Commissioner Keesee, seconded by Commissioner Ray.

B. New Business

Substantial development request

Shoreline Permit Request:

(SHOR2023-01 Rock Cove Hospitality)

The Planning Commission was asked to review a proposal by FDM Development for a water-enjoyment commercial use on the shorelands of Rock Cove.

a. Appearance of Fairness Disclosures

Shumaker explained and administered the Appearance of Fairness Doctrine. The Appearance of Fairness Doctrine is a rule of law requiring government decision-makers to conduct non-court hearings and proceedings in a way that is fair, impartial and unbiased in both appearance and fact. Any conflicts of interest must be disclosed to ensure fairness and impartiality. Disclosures include any financial interest in the final outcome, any outside (ex-parte) communications made with any party of interest or anything else that could be construed as a conflict or affects any decision making. Decision makers can be challenged by applicants regarding any perceived conflicts of interest.

None of the Planning Commissioners disclosed any ex-parte communications concerning the application, and none reported any financial conflicts or other matters that would impede a fair and impartial decision. Planning Commission Chair Breckel disclosed he had participated in a previous proposal regarding the development. There were no challenges by the applicant or the public.

b. Presentation by Staff

Shumaker explained this was the first shoreline substantial development under the new Shoreline Management Plan. There are more upfront requirements on applicants to get narratives and justifications in place. He described the layout of the development, and noted several items under discussion, including addressing the discovery of any cultural resources and public access.

Comments from the Department of Ecology and Department of Fish & Wildlife regarding project analyses and justifications on mitigation responses were received. Staff expects applicant testimony to address these comments and is ready to draft findings and conditions if necessary to assist the Planning Commission with their discussion. **Shumaker** noted the project fits in with the Shoreline Management Program in place under the water enjoyment commercial use definition.

c. Presentation by Applicant

Information was provided regarding a number of changes to the 2021 proposal. Historical use of the property as a veneer mill was noted. Past usage of rip-rap along the shore, flood plain siting and a habitat conservation area were discussed. It was stated mitigation efforts would be performed off site using direction or input from the Planning Commission.

Design goals now include increasing public access to Rock Cove, protecting the existing fish and wildlife conservation areas located around the shoreline, and providing an event space to be utilized by local and regional tourists. Public access points were highlighted and discussed at length.

One potential connection to a pathway crossed a ravine claimed to be excessively steep and inaccessible, so one revision is to connect to an existing path alongside the road. The easement would remain. In response to Department of Fish & Wildlife concerns about the habitat conservation site the cabin units might be shifted, with one unit possibly removed from the plan.

Regarding inadvertent discovery of any cultural resources or remains it was pointed out the prior use of the site by the mill left construction debris 6-8' deep in places, and gravel fill was located throughout the site. If anything is discovered construction would immediately stop.

d. Public Hearing: opened at 7:02 p.m.

1. Comments in Favor

It was noted one comment in favor had been received earlier in the meeting.

2. Comments in Opposition

Mary Repar commented the amount of information received was hard to process in a short time. She spoke about mitigation projects, location of a plaque, parking during events, cultural resource monitoring and preventing construction run-off into Rock Creek.

3. Comments Neither in Favor nor Opposition

Commissioner Keese shared there were a number of questions still to be answered.

4. Close Public Hearing-It was agreed to continue the hearing to the November 13th, 2023 Planning Commission meeting.

e. Commission Deliberation

PC Chair Breckel commented he would like more time to read through the proposal. He spoke on the revised public access designs and encouraged protection of the habitat conservation areas. Offsite mitigation would need to be discussed further. Commissioners agreed full time cultural resources monitoring was unnecessary as the site was so degraded. **Shumaker** noted the draft condition requires the applicant to develop and submit a cultural monitoring plan. Questions regarding plat changes will be addressed by the City Council. **Shumaker** advised Commissioners that since the public hearing was being continued the Appearance of Fairness was still in effect and to direct any questions or comments about the project to staff.

f. Decision

It was agreed to continue the hearing to the November 13th, 2023 Planning Commission meeting.

Old Business

1. Subcommittee Reports

Downtown Parking

The numbers are being processed. **Shumaker** shared several graphs. He provided information on comparisons between the usage studies. He advised 85% of spaces being utilized is a good indication that parking needs are in balance with supply. The current usage according to the study is less than 60%. Options to help reduce summertime peak parking issues and possible regulatory changes were discussed.

Annexation Policy

The Committee is working towards developing a policy that provides information on what to expect for property owners interested in annexing. **PC Chair Breckel** observed the recent sewer workshop highlighted a need to create a process that does not conflict with the City's extensions of services. He noted identifying areas of urban density to make it more cost effective to extend services is being explored. He stated it is important as well to communicate with Skamania County regarding coordination on annexation.

Discussion

6. Staff & Commission Reports

Shumaker presented brief updates on the following items:

The Shoreline Public Access Plan was recently approved by the City Council. He will be updating sections of the Shoreline Management Plan to present to the Planning Commission.

Septic and sewers were discussed at a City Council Workshop in September. The City has formed a subcommittee to discuss the issue in relation to rates.

Parks planning is underway. The City is leading a coalition on behalf of the county, port, school district and pool. Having a Parks Plan will make projects eligible for state grants within the Stevenson urban area.

Transition to having applicants submit information online for building permits is taking place. Concurrent reviews between departments will reduce decision times.

7. Thought of the Month

Community Submission - Walla Walla Design Standards

<https://www.codepublishing.com/WA/WallaWalla/html>

8. Adjournment

PC Chair Breckel declared the meeting adjourned at 7:57 p.m.

Minutes recorded by **Johanna Roe**.