

CITY OF THE DALLES PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

Thursday, November 6, 2014

City Hall Council Chambers

313 Court Street

The Dalles, OR 97058

Conducted in a handicap accessible room

6:00 PM

CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Lavier called the meeting to order at 6:00 PM.

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Bruce Lavier, Mark Poppoff, John Nelson, Jeff Stiles

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:

Dennis Whitehouse; Chris Zukin; Sherry DuFault*

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Planning Director Richard Gassman, City Engineer Dale McCabe, Administrative Secretary Carole Trautman

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

It was moved by Stiles and seconded by Nelson to approve the agenda as submitted. The motion carried unanimously; Whitehouse, Zukin and DuFault absent.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

It was moved by Nelson and seconded by Lavier to approve the October 14, 2014 minutes as submitted. The motion carried unanimously; Whitehouse, Zukin and DuFault absent.

It was moved by Nelson and seconded by Stiles to approve the October 16, 2014 minutes as submitted; Whitehouse, Zukin and DuFault absent.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

R.G. Hager, 2800 East 10th Street, The Dalles, Oregon, stated that staff has altered the intent of improvements and related development policies, such as substituting the term “waiver of remonstrance” for other types of agreements. He said that until the language was restructured to identify that the City would be responsible for improvements, policy changes would not be resolved.

Chair Lavier stated that such concerns could not be addressed at the Planning Commission level, and he suggested that Mr. Hager’s concerns could be directed to City Council.

*NOTE: DuFault joined the meeting at 6:03 PM.

LEGISLATIVE HEARING – Residential Infill Policies:

Director Gassman distributed a written comment from Loyal Quackenbush (Attachment 1).

Director Gassman explained that he separated his staff report into sections to reflect various topics of discussion the Planning Commission addressed throughout the work sessions. During this hearing, he addressed each section (including some clarifying questions for the Commission’s consideration) in an attempt to finalize recommendations to the City Council. The discussion format was as follows:

Network Streets

Director Gassman presented background information on how the Planning Commission chose to identify grid streets. He said the intent was to try to minimize obligations on the property owners. According to state requirements, he said, the City must provide a level of pedestrian, bicycle and vehicular access. By selecting a group of streets that allowed people to travel to almost all parts of town (except for the southeast corner), the grid streets would provide enhanced usability. Gassman said that by focusing on residential infill street improvements on these grid streets, other streets in the City would not have street improvement requirements. He highlighted the list of proposed grid streets and indicated that most of those streets were already fully, or nearly fully, improved. Gassman also highlighted the proposed typical cross sections for the network streets. The cross sections were based upon the existing improvements of each street.

Taner Elliott, 397 Summit Ridge Drive, The Dalles, Oregon, stated that it seemed as if the Planning Commission was going back and forth on what to do with the existing waivers of remonstrance. He said that to consider offering a “trade option” agreement to network street property owners with existing waivers of remonstrance would be a step backwards. Mr. Elliott commented that City Council mandated getting rid of all waivers of remonstrance.

Nelson said he agreed with the concept of a street network to satisfy state requirements, and he was in favor of the proposed street network list. Lavier pointed out that the City would not be locked into this particular proposed list of network streets. As the City evolved, it could be modified, he said.

After further discussion, it was the general consensus of the Planning Commission to recommend to City Council the concept of network streets and to use the term “network” for the proposed concept.

Typical Cross Sections

Director Gassman advised that staff’s proposed typical cross sections were based on what street improvements were currently developed on each street, and the proposed cross sections should only be used as guidelines. Gassman said there may be particular situations where the proposed cross sections would not be logical or rational and may be modified to fit the particular situation.

Stiles asked if there was a priority list for the network streets. Gassman said there was none at this time, although there was a Scenic Drive project in progress. City Engineer McCabe explained that the Scenic Drive Stabilization Project was out to bid. Phase I was the installation of a wall for stabilizing the north side of Scenic Drive and the installation of a storm system. Phase II, in the future, would be the completion of the second phase of the wall, sewer installation, and the rebuild of Scenic Drive from Jefferson to Esther Way that would include a new sidewalk, curbing, and a new road.

Stiles asked if the State would come back on the City for street requirements. Director Gassman said he could not speak for the state, but he believed if the City had a plan and could show progress, the state probably would not determine that the City was not making enough progress.

Lavier indicated he agreed with the proposed typical cross sections. Gassman commented that on the bus tour there was discussion on giving property owners to decide options on whether or not to install on-street parking. That would be a variation to the proposed cross sections. Lavier said choices were good, and the on-street parking option seemed appropriate on the tour. Nelson said the City was not going through residential infill review because it was state mandated; it was a good thing to provide safe travel routes to the public, and the City was responsible to provide for its citizens 50 years from now.

After further discussion, it was the general consensus of the Planning Commission to recommend the concept of providing options to property owners on whether or not to install on-street parking. It was also the general consensus of the committee to recommend the proposed typical cross sections as standards (not code) and to exclude both Thompson and Fremont Streets from typical cross section proposals.

Timing of Improvements

Director Gassman advised that almost all network streets had installed storm water. For areas that had storm water, there would be a possibility of having improvements put in at the time of development. The Commission discussed options available such as installing improvements at the time of development (creating islands); if islands were undesirable, defer to a delayed agreement; or pay into the fund based on a “cap” amount; or the City could install street improvements. Chair Lavier said the options would be decided at the City Council level. Stiles said he was not ready to push forward with the DDA recommendation, because it was seen as a waiver of remonstrance and was the least favored option. The issue was placed on hold for future discussion under the section on DDAs.

Mimi McDonell, 5574 Cherry Heights Road, The Dalles, Oregon, Public Health Officer, stated she was testifying to offer information on possible funding resources available for transportation efforts and to advocate for the health of all citizens. Dr. McDonell reported that there were state and private grants available for the execution of a transportation policy that would promote the health of all citizens, more specifically children and older citizens. Discussion followed that it was observed on the bus tour that there were sections of town where children could not walk safely to and from school. Dr. McDonell encouraged the Commission to be mindful that there were economic benefits to sidewalks and bike lanes. They could bring jobs to the City. She said there would be an aesthetic value also.

Director Gassman suggested the following recommended preferred order for the timing of improvements: 1) The City would be responsible for installing residential street improvements; 2) the property owner would install improvements at the time of development if no “island” was created; 3) the property owner would pay into the fund (with a “cap” amount to be established); and 4) the delayed development agreement (the least preferred) with a dollar cap and time limit, if the City decided to implement the DDA option.

It was the general consensus of the Planning Commission to recommend to the City Council various options for the timing of the installation of street improvements, in order of preference, as listed by Director Gassman.

Delayed Development Agreement

It was the general consensus of the Planning Commission, from previous discussions in this meeting, that the delayed development agreement would be presented to City Council as the least preferred option for the timing of the installation of street improvements.

It was the general consensus of the Planning Commission that information provided by both City Engineer McCabe and Taner Elliott regarding an estimated dollar cap amount for DDAs could be given to City Council for consideration. Chair Lavier commented that, if the option of the DDA came to the forefront at the Council level, Council could task the Planning Commission to formulate DDA terms regarding a dollar cap and sunset clause, and identify what would trigger the use of a DDA.

Mr. Elliott's estimate was approximately \$40 per linear foot. City Engineer McCabe researched two recent City projects (with no prevailing wage). One project estimated \$61.05 per linear foot; the other estimated \$60 per linear foot.

Pay Into the Fund

It was the general consensus of the Planning Commission to recommend to provide the property owner the option of pay into the fund (with a dollar cap) either up front, in lieu of a DDA, or at any time after a property owner had signed a DDA. It would be the option of the property owner to initiate this option; the City could not invoke this option at any time.

City Responsibility

It was acknowledged by the Planning Commission that the City offered to be responsible for the engineering of street improvements and storm water system installation on network streets.

Waivers of Remonstrance

It was the general consensus of the Planning Commission to recommend that existing waivers of remonstrance should be eliminated on streets not listed on the list of network streets.

Director Gassman asked if existing waivers of remonstrance on properties located on network streets should be cancelled or retained. Gassman said the reasoning for retaining the existing waivers of remonstrance on the network streets was because the City needed every tool available to facilitate the installation of street improvements with the least amount of "island" appearances. Chair Lavier said this question was only valid if City Council decided to use the DDA. Gassman said City Council previously indicated all existing waivers of remonstrance should be eliminated, but that was prior to the Planning Commission's concept of the street network. He said if City Council intended to get full improvement on network streets and decided to include property owners in the responsibility for street improvement installation, then the existing waivers of remonstrance on network streets should not just go away.

Alex Hattenhauer, 122 West 17th Street, The Dalles, Oregon, stated it was his understanding waivers have not worked. He thought all waivers of remonstrance should go away.

Richard Havig, 3015 East 12th Street, The Dalles, Oregon, stated that the existing waivers of remonstrance on the network streets have spotted locations, and he thought they should be eliminated.

Steve Stroud, 3004 East 12th Street, The Dalles, Oregon, stated that if a network street property owner with an existing waiver of remonstrance installed street improvements, the entire City would benefit from the improvements. He said he didn't think it was right for network street property owners to carry the responsibility of residential infill street improvements when the other waivers outside the street network had been eliminated.

Jerry Johnson, 3102 East 13th Street, The Dalles, Oregon, stated he wondered how many of the street network property owners with existing waivers of remonstrance were still current owners or were still living.

It was the general consensus of the Planning Commission to recommend to the City Council to eliminate all existing waivers of remonstrance.

Miscellaneous

Director Gassman asked if the Finance work group's recommendations should be forwarded to City Council. Stiles, the work group's chairman, reported that the work group reached certain conclusions with the intent to reconvene at a later date once the Standards work group had formulated some conclusions.

It was the general consensus of the Planning Commission to advise City Council that it was the preference of the Finance work group to reconvene once street standards were identified by the Standards work group, to formulate specific recommendations related to the Standards' findings.

Director Gassman asked if new streets created by serial minor partitioning should be fully improved. DuFault said if a new street is created, then full street improvements should be installed, otherwise the same problem would occur. Gassman said serial partitions would be more likely in the future, because they were less expensive, and at some point, the developer will need to put a street in. These new streets, he said, would not be required to be paved because they would be considered non-network streets (under the proposed street network). Therefore, there would be no street improvement standards for new streets unless the Planning Commission wished to address this issue.

Various ideas were discussed, such as recommending the same standards as for a subdivision, blacktopping, easements, etc. New streets could remain private or become public. If public, there needed to be a standard. Chair Lavier asked what occurred if and when the City took over a county road. Currently, the City would not take a county road unless the road came up to City standards. City Engineer McCabe said the City standard was curbs and sidewalks on both sides, travel lane (depending on existing bike lanes or parking).

Alex Hattenhauer, 122 West 17th Street, The Dalles, Oregon, stated there could be some engineering flaws for connections. Director Gassman advised that hopefully the developer would meet with City engineering ahead of time to circumvent possible connection flaws.

It was the general consensus of the Planning Commission to recommend that when new streets are developed, and the developer wants the street to be a public street, the new street must meet current City street improvement standards.

Chair Lavier continued the hearing to November 20, 2014.

STAFF COMMENTS:

None

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS:

None

NEXT MEETING:

November 20, 2014

ADJOURNMENT:

Chair Lavier adjourned the meeting at 8:14 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Administrative Secretary Carole Trautman

Bruce Lavier, Chairman

From: Loyal Quackenbush [mailto:loyalg@gmail.com]
Sent: Wednesday, November 05, 2014 2:33 PM
To: Richard Gassman
Subject: Thursday meeting

ATTACHMENT 1

Hi Dick,

I might not make the meeting Thursday night so here is what I think.
Network streets to be paid by the City.
All waivers to be removed and not replaced with a DDA.

DDA should have a cap at 40.00 dollars per foot.
Time limit of 10 years for DDA.

DDA would trigger if it can be tied with long section of new sidewalks
and road.
No islands.

Option to pay into the fund at dollar cap.

Have the people that will be directly impacted by the remonstrance
agreements been notified? Since there are only twenty for the network
streets I feel they should be notified as this is a major impact for those
folks. The little bleep in the paper is not enough! The bringing back the
remonstrance agreements is still tough to swallow and will be dropped
later if not now. Actually this should all be delayed until the new council
is in place. Will save us all time.

Thanks,
Loyal