CITY OF THE DALLES PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES

Thursday, September 3, 2015
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, Dennis Whitehouse, Chris Zukin, John Nelson, Sherry DuFault, Jeff Stiles

BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT
Mark Poppoff

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT
Planning Director Richard Gassman, Senior Planner Dawn Marie Hert, Administrative Secretary Carole Trautman

APPROVAL OF AGENDA
It was moved by Whitehouse and seconded by Stiles to approve the agenda as submitted. The motion carried unanimously; Poppoff absent.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES
It was moved by DuFault and seconded by Whitehouse to approve the August 6, 2015 minutes as submitted. Lavier, Whitehouse, Zukin, Nelson and DuFault approved, Stiles abstained, Poppoff absent. The motion carried.

PUBLIC COMMENT
None

QUASI-JUDCIAL HEARINGS:

A. **CUP 177-15; Design LLC; Request:** Approval of a conditional use permit for a new data storage facility higher than generally allowed. Property is located at 4350 River Trail Way, The Dalles, Oregon, and is further described as 2N 13E 21 t.l. 700 and 2N 13E 21 t.l. 800. Property is zoned "I" – Industrial District.

Chair Lavier read the rules for a public hearing and asked the Commissioners if they had any ex-parte contact, bias or conflict of interest that would hinder them from making an impartial decision on the application. None were noted.

Lavier opened the public hearing at 6:05 PM.
Director Gassman presented the highlights of the staff report. He reported that one comment was received by Wasco County Commissioner Hege (Exhibit 1). Gassman read aloud the design standards for the Commercial General zone, Section 5.060.050, and suggested the Commission could require a condition of approval that would include similar language to Section 5.060.050.

Gassman reminded the Commission that the CUP was to consider height only; the applicant had not turned in a full scale site plan review. Gassman said the site plan review could go through the Planning Commission upon request, and at that time Hege's comments could be addressed.

Director Gassman pointed out that the CUP criteria indicated location, size and design should be compatible with the surrounding neighborhood. He said it would be difficult to determine if the building would have an adverse affect on neighboring properties, because currently there was nothing around the proposed site. Therefore, staff recommended approval with conditions, because of the lack of adverse impact, and this proposed project was what The Dalles needed. Gassman said the request was for 108 feet, and some equipment would go to 126 feet. The structure would be over 55 feet from the Riverfront Trail, as required, and landscaping would also be placed in the 55 ft. area to help buffer the bulk of the building from Riverfront Trail.

*Note: City Attorney Parker joined the meeting at 6:05 PM.

Nelson asked what the plans were for access to the area. Gassman said he knew of no other development to the south or west. Any subsequent development would take the size of the building into consideration. There would need to be an access from the west, possibly from the Taylor Lakes area, but the applicant would need to take that up with the property owner, Port of The Dalles.

** Note: Commissioner Poppoff joined the meeting at 6:07 PM.

Testimony
Proponents:
Dave Karlson, PO Box 1718 White Salmon, Washington stated he was the Google site manager for The Dalles. Karlsson indicated they were in the preliminary stages of project design, and they were hoping for feedback on their initial renderings. The purpose for the building was to increase Google operations in The Dalles. He reported that the new building would be four stories to maximize land space.

Nelson asked if the footprint of the new structure would be larger than building 2. Mr. Karlson said the footprint would be larger, and the structure would be taller, possibly double the size of building 2. He said the intent was to blend the design of the building with the surroundings. Zukin asked if the requirement of locating the structure at least 50 feet from Riverfront Trail would be agreeable with them. Karlson said the design was already set at more than the 50 foot buffer requirement, with landscaping.

Sarah Viemeister, 713 West 18th Street, The Dalles, Oregon stated that she supported the project. She had evidenced Google's continued support to the community through her affiliation with Home at Last and the Financial Aid Department at Columbia Gorge Community College.

Scott Hege, 6580 Martin Road, The Dalles, Oregon, stated that he supported Director Gassman's comments that The Dalles needed to optimize its remaining industrial-zoned land by using more height. In reference to his written comment, Hege said he realized Google would do all that they could to fit in, he thought it was a great project. He asked the Commission to support the application.

Opponents:
None

There was discussion amongst staff and Commission on whether or not the Planning Commission could request that the site plan review come back to them, but only to discuss design. City Attorney Parker said the Commission could ask the applicant what their design intentions were and if they would be willing to use similar design language as found in Section 5. 060.050. Mr. Karlson said Design LLC would want to use similar design language and make it a collaborative effort.

Chair Lavier closed the public hearing at 6:46 PM.

Deliberation:
Stiles said he drove around surrounding areas from the perspective of the proposed height of the new structure. After he made his observations, he felt the height of the building would not be an issue from any surrounding area.

Poppoff said he felt the request was not unreasonable for the Industrial zone.

It was moved by Zukin and seconded by DuFault to approve CUP 177-15, Design LLC, based on the findings of fact of the staff report, to include the six conditions of approval as listed in the staff report, and an additional condition of approval #7 as follows: "The facility will use design elements, color, materials, landscaping, setbacks, and other features that would be similar to design standards found in Section 5.060.050 of the Land Use and Development Ordinance to lessen the visual impact of the facility and ensure that the facility is compatible with the surrounding landscape." The motion carried unanimously.

B. **CUP 178-15; Robert A. Richards/The Dalles Seventh Day Adventist Church; Request:** To site and construct a new 216 seat Seventh Day Adventist Church with a small radio station. Property is located in the 500 block of Veterans Drive, The Dalles, Oregon, and is further described as 1N 13E 01 t.l. 101. Property is zoned "RL" – Low Density Residential District.

Chair Lavier read the rules for a public hearing and asked the Commissioners if they had any bias, ex-parte contact or conflict of interest on the application. None were noted.

Lavier opened the public hearing at 6:53 PM.

Senior Planner Dawn Marie Hert highlighted the staff report. She commented that the pedestrian walkway from the structure's main entrance to the sidewalk was not included in the original site plan. That hard surface pedestrian walkway would be required. Hert stated that staff recommended approval with 14 conditions of approval.

Whitehouse asked if the plans were for storm water usage or swale. Hert indicated that because of the size of the parking lot, an oil/water separator would be installed that would go into the City's system.

Hert reported that the City Transportation System Plan called for connections or extensions of streets in the vicinity of the applicant's parcel, and it could be connected in the future, if any additional partitioning occurred.

Testimony

Proponents:

Robert A. Richards, 2108 Griffin Avenue, Enumclaw, Washington, stated that he was in support of the project. He explained that the congregation had no church facility; they had been meeting in a school. He felt this project was good for them and for the community.

Chair Lavier asked if the church intended on having a school at any time. Mr. Richards said the church had no such plans at this time.

Nelson asked if the church had plans for the western portion of the property. Mr. Richards said no plans at this time. Nelson asked if Mr. Richards, as their architect, was comfortable with the 14 conditions of approval. Richards affirmed that he and the church were agreeable to the conditions.

Whitehouse asked where the antenna for the radio station would be placed. Richards said it would be located on the property, and it would be approximately 62 feet high.

Opponents:

None

Questions:

Shawn Skiles, 504 Veteran's Drive, The Dalles, Oregon asked if the church would be built on the east side of the property. Mr. Richards indicated it would be built in the northeast corner of the property. Mr. Skiles said he respected the rights of the church to build on their property, and he had two requests. He asked that the church consider minimizing the impact of blocking the view of the neighboring residents, and to ensure that the contractor would keep control of dust, weeds and trash. Chair Lavier indicated that the dust, weed and trash control issues were mentioned in the conditions of approval.

Whitehouse asked what the requirements were for the storm swale. City Engineer McCabe reported that the storm water pond must hold a 25 year storm. There is a storm in Columbia View Drive and Veterans Drive. McCabe said the church could build a storm retention pond then build an overflow.

Taner Elliott, 397 Summit Ridge Drive, The Dalles, Oregon asked if a church could be built in a residential zone. Senior Planner Hert advised that a church facility was allowed in the residential zone as a conditional use permit. Churches are considered a community facility.

Chair Lavier closed the public hearing at 7:08 PM.

Deliberation:

Stiles stated that he saw the project as a good use of the land. Poppoff said it was a good design.

It was moved by DuFault and seconded by Poppoff to approve CUP 178-15; Robert Richards based on the findings of fact in the staff report, and to include the recommended conditions of approval. The motion carried unanimously.

RESOLUTION

A. It was moved by Whitehouse and seconded by Zukin to approve P.C. Resolution #545-15, CUP #177-15 for Design LLC as amended during the public hearing portion of the meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

B. It was moved by Whitehouse and seconded by Nelson to approve P.C. Resolution #546-15, CUP #175-15 for The Dalles Seventh Day Adventist Church as proposed by staff and to include staff's recommended conditions of approval. The motion carried unanimously.

STAFF COMMENTS

City Engineer Dale McCabe asked for a Planning Commissioner to volunteer to serve on the Public Advisory Committee for the Transportation System Plan update. The volunteer would be appointed by the Mayor. Three Commissioners volunteered – Poppoff, Lavier and DuFault; the Mayor will choose one to be the Planning Commission representative.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

None

NEXT MEETING

October 1, 2015

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Lavier adjourned the meeting at 7:26 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Administrative Secretary Carole Trautman

Bruce E Lavier

Bruce Lavier, Chairman