

City Postpones Hearing on Zone Change

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site be re-designated Planned Development PD which would require Planning Commission approval of any specific site development plan. That motion was approved by the Planning Commission by a 4-1 vote. The City Council will make the final decision on the zone change request.

City Planner Connell's staff report to the Council on the zone change request reports that in 2007 the Planning Commission approved a Conditional Use Permit application by the Dows for the site which included uses for a hotel, Bed and Breakfast, youth hostel, small restaurant, brew pub, bicycle shop and retail uses. Connell's report further explains that since no permits were pulled or work done on the building and no extensions were requested on the original Conditional Use Permit, the permit expired according to City Ordinance 711.

Connell's report does note several inconsistencies and procedural flaws in the way City Planner Aldie Howard handled the original Conditional Use Permit application in 2007. Among those inconsistencies is the fact that the affected parties were not notified of the Planning Commissions decision, nor did Howard's staff report include the Conditional Use approval criteria, adequate findings addressing these criteria or any reference to expiration regulations.

Further, according to Connell's report, staff's interpretation that the uses allowed in a Residential zoned area under the Conditional Use Permit qualified as a "Community Building" are not adequately justified with findings. Connell notes that the applied for uses don't meet the definition of a Community Building and that the zone doesn't allow retail commercial uses. According to Connell's report, the final decision added a condition that required all future uses to obtain a Conditional Use Permit.

In addition, Connell's report states that the list of approval conditions, (including all interior and exterior alterations, detailed facility plans, landscaping, signage, lighting and neighborhood impact plans) only need be approved by the Planning Director, which was a procedural flaw. Instead those conditions should be required to be presented to, and approved by, the Planning Commission.

After reviewing the 2007 Conditional Use application process, Connell's report states that she believed the preferred method for moving forward with development on the property would be for the Dows to request the property be re-zoned from Residential R to either General Commercial GC, Downtown DT or Planned Development PD, which would assure due process and public and agency involvement as well as certainty to the building owners of the uses permitted over time.

The current application by the Dows for the zone change was submitted in July of 2014 and proposes similar uses as were requested in the original Conditional Use Permit application.

At the Public Hearing before the Planning Commission on September 4, 2014 (which was continued on September 18) Planning Commissioner Kathy Larsen stated that she is a neighbor of the property and had no bias. Planning Commissioner Susan Wagner declared she works with two of the neighbors but would make a fair and impartial decision. No audience member raised any objection to either Commissioner being able to be impartial.

Several neighbors and local residents testified in favor of a zone change, including Columbia County Commissioner Tony Hyde, who said development of the property would encourage growth and local jobs. Several other neighbors, including Jim Tierney,

testified against the zone change, raising concerns about increased traffic, noise and other impacts to the adjacent neighbors.

One of the concerns that was raised and discussed was the idea that if the property zone was changed to General Commercial GC and the new business failed, that any type of business, such as an auto body shop, would be allowable on the site which is situated in a neighborhood.

The Dows were represented at the Planning Commission hearing by their attorney Day, who told the Planning Commission that the most important reason to re-zone the property was to protect the Lincoln School building. Day noted that under the current Residential R zone, it was within the Dow's rights as the property owners to demolish the building and construct single family residences. Day expressed that General Commercial GC zoning is tailor made for this specific property and that a Planned Development PD designation would likely cause problems for the applicants.

A transportation analysis provided to the Planning Commission concluded that a worst-case scenario of development on the property could cause a "significant effect" on Highway 47, but suggested that the proposed development is expected to generate significantly less traffic than the worst case scenario. The traffic study also concluded that the site is capable of maintaining acceptable street capacity and level of service under the proposed zone change, as well as accommodating safe vehicle access and loading, parking, signage, and roadway safety. However, the traffic engineer concluded that there should be a cap of 1,000 trips per day applied to a zone change approval. ODOT agreed with the trip cap limitation.

Bridge Street Bits

PEOPLE DANCING TO MUSIC and the fish were really jumping at the Vernonia Salmon Festival this year. Hope you all had a great time joining in with the festivities and if you missed the snicker doodle cupcakes at the Christmas in Vernonia booth, well, I took the last two!

IMPORTANT HEALTH INSURANCE INFO: Michelle Moore, Columbia County agent from Columbia City Benefits Group will be at the Vernonia Senior Center Oct. 22, 29, at 10 a.m. and 1 p.m. and Nov. 12 at 10 a.m. Her office number is 503-987-1809. There are important changes coming with those of you who are signed up with HEALTH NET. Please give Michelle a call if you have additional questions. This is the beginning of open enrollment for Medicare recipients and supplemental plans. Make your appointment

today.

Also Beth Moffett, Washington County agent, will be at the Center Oct. 15 from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. to answer your Medicare questions as well.

LAST HALLOWEEN PARTY at the purple building! Come dressed as you are, what you were, or what you wish to be! Join in on this certain to be fun filled time. Spiders, bats, draculas...all are welcome! Come make this final celebration a real hair raising time! Hold this date: Wednesday, October 29th at the Vernonia Senior Center.

FIVE AREA LUNCH is Monday, October 27th here at our Vernonia Center. Changes are on the horizon with relocating in the near future. So come down and get in on all the last time events here where we have been for so many years.

HEY - A BIG THANK YOU TO PAULA HANSON who has been a vital, important, and fun loving person around the center in her efforts to raise the visibility at the Vernonia Center with her photo taking, and information about Vernonia Center happenings on the Vernonia Senior Center facebook page and also Vernonia Community Board. Sign up for both if you haven't already. Keep informed. Thanks again Paula! (Your efforts are appreciated; it's been a pleasure working with you-KM.)

CALL KAREN OR MARGE, Community Action Team for senior concerns or questions. 503-366-6581

SENIOR SIGN OFF: Life is short, Hopefully your home is the only place where scraps are those brushed off the dining room table.

Vernonia Senior Center • 446 Bridge Street • 503-429-3912

Church Directory (in alphabetical order)

Assembly of God
Sunday School: 9:45 AM
Morning Worship: 11:00 AM
Sunday Evening Prayer: 6:00 PM
Wayne Marr, Pastor
662 Jefferson Avenue
503-429-0373
Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints
Sunday Schedule:
Sacrament Meeting: 10:00 AM
Sunday School & Primary: 11:20 AM
Relief Society, Priesthood and Young Women: 12:10 PM
Roger Cook, Branch President
1350 E. Knott Street
503-429-7151
Covenant Church Vernonia
Sunday School: 9:45 AM

Worship Service: 11:00 AM
Wednesday Prayer Meeting: 7:00 PM
John D. Murray, Pastor
359 "A" Street
503-860-3860
Grace Family Fellowship
Sunday School: 9:00 AM
Worship Service: 10:30 AM
Thursday Prayer: 6:00 PM
Greg "Mac" McCallum, Pastor
957 State Avenue
503-429-6790
Nehalem Valley Bible Church
Sunday School: 9:45 AM
Worship Service: 10:45 AM
Wed. Ladies Bible Study: 10:00 AM
Wednesday Service: 7:00 PM
Sat. Men's Prayer Meeting: 6:30 AM
Gary Taylor, Pastor

Grant & North Streets
503-429-5378
Open Door Gathering Place
Service: Sunday 6:00 PM
Grant Williams, Pastor
375 North Street
St. Mary's Catholic Church
Wednesday Religious Education: 3:15-4:30 PM
Sunday Mass: 12:00 PM
Rev. Luan Tran, Administrator
960 Missouri Avenue
503-429-8841
Vernonia Christian Church
Sunday School: 9:45 AM
Worship Service in Youth & Family Center: 11:00 AM
www.VernoniaChristianChurch.org
Sam Hough, Pastor

410 North Street
503-429-6522
Vernonia Foursquare Church
Sunday Worship Service: 10:30 AM
Children's Sunday School
Carl Pense, Pastor
850 Madison Avenue
503-429-1103
Vernonia Seventh-day Adventist Church
Sabbath (Saturday) Services
Sabbath School: 9:30 AM
Worship Service: 11:00 AM
www.VernoniaSDAC.org
Larry Gibson, Pastor
2nd Ave. and Nehalem St.
503-429-8301