

**CITY OF BLAINE
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
Thursday, January 26, 2017
7:00 PM
Calvin Armerding - Chair**

A. CALL TO ORDER: 7:00 PM

B. ROLL CALL:

PRESENT: Calvin Armerding, Richard May, Kevin Owens, John LeBrun,
Steve Hrutfiord, and Larry Wonnacott

ABSENT: Sue Sturgill

STAFF: Community Development Director, Michael Jones
Community Planner II, Alex Wenger

Mr. Wenger noted, Commissioner Sturgill asked via email to be excused from the January 26, 2017 Planning Commission meeting.

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER LEBRUN, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER LEBRUN TO EXCUSE COMMISSIONER OWENS, APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY (6-0).

C. AUDIENCE COMMENTS: None

Note: The Commission took no action on the “Election” agenda item.

Note: The Commission reordered the agenda based on a request from staff to accommodate the members of the audience and applicants present.

D. NEW BUSINESS:

1. Marin Shoreline Substantial Development Permit Extension

Alex Wenger presented on the extension request. He noted the item is not a public hearing item, and the decision is subject to the Commission’s discretion on the applicant’s showing of good cause. He presented a letter from the Semiahmoo Resort Association.

Chris Franiek, 300-5970 East Boulevard, Vancouver, BC – Mr. Franiek discussed a challenge related to a change in the team designing and underwriting the project.

Paul Chiu, 420 – 745 Thurlow St, Vancouver, BC – Mr. Chui explained they have recently found a new development partner and they have been meeting with contractors and engineers. He noted that the Building Official has already granted a 6-month

extension of the building permit. He discussed a recent meeting with a real estate agent to evaluate the market for the new product. He stated the extension is crucial to the success of the project.

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER LEBRUN, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER OWENS TO APPROVE THE EXTENSION BASED ON FINDINGS OF FACT, APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY (6-0).

E. PUBLIC HEARING:

1. Zoning Text Amendment – Code Scrub ZTA-1-17

Mr. Jones presented the Zoning Text Amendment Code Scrub, and noted that numerous public comments that have been received to date. Mr. Jones summarized the process and notices requirements and outlined the multiple actions proposed.

The actions include adjusting the PUD code for PR density, residential design standards, manufacturing performance standards, junk vehicles, food service in the CB-TP zoning district, hardship extension, vesting of applications and accessible parking spaces ADA/IBC.

Mr. Jones then discussed the history of the recent effort to rezone downtown, including the creation of the Central Business Town Portal District, and some of the reasoning of disallowing food services in the Town Portal District.

Mr. Jones then recapped all the public comments. Written comments received prior to the close of business were provided to the Commission.

Commissioner May asked if the City solicited the public comments received. Mr. Jones replied no, but the Chamber of Commerce and perhaps Mr. Finston requested comments on the project.

Commissioner May asked if library patrons specifically were requested for comments. Mr. Jones stated, no, the library patrons were not specifically singled out, but the application was properly noticed and the public had an opportunity to comment.

Mr. Jones then summarized the Conditional Use threshold in several zoning districts, including the RH district, the RM district, and the R/O district.

Mr. Jones concluded his presentation.

Ms. Shannon Manning, 8741 Semiahmoo Drive, Blaine WA, Ms. Manning expressed her support for the zoning text amendment. Ms. Manning would like to open the Wine Vault and Event Center. Ms. Manning covered a variety of menu options. She discussed the support for downtown and creating a busy business district. Blaine needs to offer more than parcels and package pickup. Ms. Manning read several excerpts from the 25 support

letters she has received. Ms. Manning concluded her presentation and thanked the commission

Alan Finston, 8288 Fawn Crescent, Blaine WA, Mr. Finston discussed his experience purchasing the building and his desire to do something different than a parcel store and expand his business in the future.

Mr. Finston explained how he checked with City and that commercial uses were allowed in the Central Business District, but later found out after he purchased the property that commercial uses in the newly formed Town Portal District does not allow food services and other commercial. Mr. Finston read his letter and outlined how this project would support economic development in downtown.

Ms. Hilldall, 1520 Willmult St. Mt. Vernon, Ms. Hilldall stated she works for the Washington Restaurant Association and is supportive of the amendment.

Commissioner Owens asked if food would be prepared at the Vault.

Ms. Manning answered that food would be prepared by guest chiefs. She noted that they are required to serve food to serve wine and alcohol under Washington's regulations.

Mr. Finston stated that under the existing zoning, they would be allowed to serve food and alcohol if they were a brewery or distillery making the product on site.

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER MAY, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER OWENS TO CLOSE THE PUBLIC HEARING, APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY (6-0).

Chairperson Armerding had a question about nuisances in the manufacturing zone, and if the Commission had authority to assign Council members to a committee.

Mr. Jones stated that the Council would review this code amendment, and if they approve it, that would grant the Commission the authority indicated.

Chairperson Armerding had a question about junk vehicles, and whether they are listed in Title 8.14. He could not find a reference as described in the staff report.

Chairperson Armerding had a question about the food service change, and that the amendment did not apply to a specific business and that it would apply to the whole district. Mr. Jones indicated that is correct.

Commissioner May had a clarification question that in the Town Portal wine sales wouldn't be allowed today. Mr. Jones indicated that retail is permitted, but not for on-site consumption.

Commissioner May confirmed that everyone in the district could theoretically sell wine if this were passed. Mr. Jones confirmed that as true, but noted it was unlikely to fit all business models.

Commissioner Wonnacott had a question about what the purpose of creating the Town Portal district. Mr. Jones replied and answered his question.

Commissioner May discussed the merits of why the Commission made their early decisions. Discussion ensued.

Mr. Jones pointed out that some of the reasoning was to focus the energy and activity on the Peace Portal corridor.

Mr. Jones corrected the junk vehicles reference to Title 8.10, not 8.14 as included in the staff report.

Chairperson Armerding had a question about parking spaces and grandfathering the space sizes.

Mr. Jones answered and noted that redeveloping the building on the property or substantially changing the use would require updating the size of your parking stalls.

Chairperson Armerding had a comment on density.

Commissioner May had a follow up question on the amount of parking per unit, as it relates to density and size of residential unit. Mr. Jones described the application of the regulations.

Commissioner Owens had a question about the manufacturing performance standards, and who is responsible for outcome of a nuisance complaint. Mr. Jones responded.

Chairperson Armerding had a question about taxes for mobile food services. Mr. Jones and Mr. Wenger responded.

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER MAY, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER HRUTFIORD TO APPROVE ZTA-1-17, INCLUDING RECLASSIFICATION OF THE THREE CONDITIONAL USES TO PERMITTED USES, BASED ON FINDINGS OF FACT IN THE STAFF REPORT, APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY (6-0).

2. AHAB – Shoreline Conditional Use Permit, Shoreline Substantial Development Permit and Zoning Conditional Use Permit

Mr. Wenger summarized information presented at the prior hearing and presented a geographic illustration of coverage areas for different placement locations. Mr. Wenger restated the staff recommendation.

Commissioner Owens asked about density of residents and absolute number of residents that would be able to hear, and be served by the siren. He also commented on information he found related to earthquake hazard and tsunami hazard.

Chief Haslip, Blaine Public Safety Director, presented information primarily related to that which was in his written submittal. He answered questions by the Commission. He further described some of the impacts of a Cascadia Subduction Zone earthquake and related tsunami.

Chief Haslip also discussed the Boulder Creek Fault in eastern Whatcom County. He also explained the potential for underwater landslide with a failure of the Fraser River delta. He also described two newly discovered faults in the Birch Bay and Sandy Point areas.

Commissioner Owens asked about warning time from quakes on the closer faults. Mr. Haslip answered.

Chief Haslip described other uses of the AHAB for instances of a missing child, train accidents, or similar more local and immediate concerns.

Commissioner Owens reiterated the value of reaching more people, and wondered why the program is so focused on shoreline areas given the broader value. Mr. Haslip addressed the shoreline focus of the grant program.

Chairperson Armerding clarified that the decision at hand is to accept the grant-funded location in Marine Park or pursue a City of Blaine-funded AHAB in another location further inland.

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER LEBRUN, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER WONNACOTT TO APPROVE SHORELINE CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT, SHORELINE SUBSTANTIAL DEVELOPMENT PERMIT AND ZONING CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT IN MARINE PARK BASED ON FINDINGS IN THE STAFF REPORT, APPROVED (5-1-1, OWENS OPPOSED, ARMERDING ABSTAINED).

F. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS: None

G. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER OWENS, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER HRUTFIORD TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF JANUARY 12, 2017, APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY (4-0-2, WONNACOTT AND HRUTFIORD ABSTAINED).

H. ADJOURNMENT 9:00 PM.



Calvin Armerding, Chair



Michael Jones, Staff

Planning Commission minutes of January 26, 2017, to be approved at the February 9, 2017
Planning Commission meeting.