

City of Selah
Planning Commission Minutes
of
August 4, 2009

Selah Council Chambers
115 W. Naches Ave.
Selah, Washington 98942

A. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order to by Chairman Munson at 6:00 p.m.

B. Roll Call:

Members Present: Commissioners Quinnell, Roberts, Eagles, Smith and Munson.

Members Absent:

Staff Present: Dennis Davison, Community Planner, Diana Turner, Secretary.

Guests: Mike Shinn; Jordan Matson; Rod Matson; Charlie Eglin; Armando Esquivel; Tonya Esquivel; Jason Matson; Eusebio & Carolina Herrera; Gerald Kobes; Brian Longmire, Tina Longmire, Preston Shepherd; Bill Harris, Ruth Harris, Jess Hale, Lynn Gilroy; Chris Thorn, Brad Helms & Bill Hordan.

- C. Agenda Changes There were no agenda changes, but Mr. Davison stated that Commissioner Smith needed to explain on the record that he has reviewed all the materials presented to the Commission for the proposed Comprehensive Plan change.

Chairman Munson asked Commissioner Smith to explain that he has reviewed all materials.

Commissioner Smith stated this seems to be a repeat of the request the Commission has heard before. It is basically the material that was presented before and I am familiar with it.

Bob Noe suggested the Chairman ask if there were any objections from the audience to have Commission Smith participate in the meeting.

Mr. Shinn stated that as long as Commissioner Smith has reviewed the material they had no problem with him participating.

D. Communications

1. Oral - None
2. Written - None

E. Approval of Minutes

Chairman Munson called for a motion on the minutes of the Study Session. Commissioner Eagles moved to approve the minutes of the Study Session, seconded by Commissioner Roberts. Voice vote 4/0 Commissioner Smith abstained.

Chairman Munson called for a motion on the minutes of the Planning Commission meeting.

Commissioner Roberts stated there were a couple of items that were not presented as he stated them. On page 13 at the top of the page the question on why they could not haul fruit back and forth I asked him why it would decrease the amount of traffic. On page 14 his question was if there would be CA storage and cold storage (his concern was if there would be chemicals which he did not say).

Chairman Munson called for a vote on the minutes of July 7, 2009 with the changes Commissioner Roberts requested. Chairman Munson moved to approve the minutes, Commissioner Eagles seconded. Minutes were approved with voice vote 4/0 Commissioner Smith abstained.

F. Public Hearing

- 1 Old Business -
 - a. 2007-2 Matson Fruit Company Selah Urban Growth Area Comprehensive Plan Amendment

Chairman Munson opened the public hearing.

Mr. Davison stated at the last hearing Commissioners had asked for employment figures for the fruit industry. Staff has gathered the information and presented them to the Commission as exhibit #49. There are two documents that comprise the exhibit. The first is the documentation from the Conference of Governments which was not very explanatory. The second one that came to you is dated July 30th, which is between the department and New Vision. On Monday there was a conversation with New Vision and Mr. Sweet (City Supervisor) with revised numbers. The exhibit is the original memo and the updated memo with the revised numbers.

Chairman Munson stated the audience portion has been closed and called for discussion from the Commissioners.

Commissioner Smith asked if there were any critical changes between the information received for this meeting versus the meeting in 2007?

Mr. Davison stated yes, the original staff report recommended approval and this staff report recommends denial because the recent development constitutes a change in circumstances. Staff based on that change has recommended denial.

Commissioner Smith asked on this 8.3 acres has there been any requests by any commercial agencies on that land?

Mr. Davison stated according to Mr. Almon (who is an expert realtor) there has been no inquiries or offers to purchase.

Chairman Munson asked the original purchase of the City's property how many acres was that?

Mr. Davison stated it was about 22 acres,

Chairman Munson asked if that did not include the Harlan property?

Mr. Davison stated that is correct.

Chairman Munson asked what has been purchased and developed commercially or is in the planning process of commercial development?

Mr. Davison stated it is either purchased or is subject to purchase.

Chairman Munson asked if they had any exact figures of the lots for development?

Mr. Davison stated that he does not have that exact figure but out of all that acreage there were streets and infrastructure

Commissioner Smith asked if this request on the investor side of this property were for employees and office space not a packing house?

Mr. Davison stated the original site plan shows the office complex, the off street parking, truck parking primarily on Burlington Northern right-of-way and the two structures, which one is definitely for packing and I am assuming for cold storage.

Mr. Shinn asked Mr. Davison which one he was referring to?

Mr. Davison stated on the far left of the site plan. The original map showed all the parcels as it is shown on this map.

Commissioner Smith asked if there was any change from the original request?

Mr. Davison stated no. There is no change as far as this site plan is concerned.

Chairman Munson stated his understanding that the records from the previous meeting are longer available for review?

Mr. Davison asked Mr. Noe to address that question?

Mr. Noe stated the when they went up to Superior Court they were not available, but after the Commissions last meeting the Court Recorder remembered that her office had the tapes. The City now has the tapes in their possession.

Chairman Munson asked if that has any impact on tonight's meeting at all?

Mr. Noe stated he believes that it does not have any impact as the Commission has held a separate hearing and taken testimony.

Chairman Munson stated for the record that he was the Commissioner who made the motion on the original hearing. He stated that the motion was based on two facts. The first one was Mr. Shinn and the Matson Company had put a very thorough proposition and he thought that they took into consideration a number of the City's hopes and desired. They allocated three parcels up front to be designated commercial creating a buffer between the industrial area and the retail lots

on the west side. They left open the northern portion of the lot for future commercial development. This created another buffer. He had concerns that a railroad that could create noise pollution in a retail area. The second reason was that the family has been a major contributor to the growth and prosperity of our community. They have been an outstanding representative of our community and provided excellent employment. There are a lot of positive things there. There is also a third. At the time there was not any development in the area. There were development plans in the works but nothing was constructed as yet. With all those items he made the motion to approve the request. This has been the hardest decision to make because the Matson proposal is a valid one, but he also recognizes the wishes of the City for more retail center. The City petitioned and obtained along with Mr. Harlan a rezone of the property to commercial. Not a lot happened for a while. Now the plan is working. There are commercial buildings being developed and that is a positive thing. This makes him take a second look at the proposal. The hearing that was held on July 7, 2009 with all the positive testimony given is what swayed his thinking on the proposal. The Commission needs to take a look at all the testimony that was given at the last meeting. The public testimony received was from prominent ag leaders from the valley. Although it was late when the Commission called for comments from the audience in opposition to the proposal, but none was given. He asked about the facility at Pomona whether it could include a packing house and the answer was no due to the fact there was a problem with water supply and it would be better for a municipality to furnish the water. He feels Matson does need to expand in order to compete in the industry. If this proposal were to be denied Matson might have to relocate to another city and the City would lose that employment base. The Commission needs to decide if that is a valid part in making the decision. He called for comments or questions.

Commissioner Smith asked if there was some concern about the traffic flow with the Matson project and the State going ahead with their improvements?

Mr. Davison stated the State is going to extend Wenas Road south to Valleyview and the light connection. They are still committed to improving Railroad Ave. from First Ave. going north to Matson. They will still have to work with Matson to connect Railroad to South Park Dr. Those improvements will include stop lights at Naches Ave. and Fremont Ave.

Commissioner Smith asked if there was a study on the impact of traffic flow on First and North Wenas?

Mr. Davison stated the State has done the study.

Commissioner Smith asked what they have come up with?

Mr. Davison stated they found the only way to maintain downtown Selah was to get the truck traffic and approximately 8,000 cars a day off First.

Commissioner Smith asked if Matson's proposal was going to have that big of an impact? Where do they enter and exit from now?

Mr. Davison stated traffic coming from the south uses South First Street to First Ave., then to Wenas Ave. to Naches Ave (for Larson) and Home Ave (for Matson).

Commissioner Smith asked if this will increase traffic there or decrease it?

Mr. Davison stated that Wenas will increase but it will be a wider and will have two traffic

control devices at Naches and Fremont.

Commissioner Eagles stated he would make a comment. He was the one that seconded the motion the first time around. His reasoning was the use of the structures and the planning goals in the RCW and the mandatory elements. He focused on 6 areas. The couple he treated as one - promote urban growth area and reduce sprawl. One of the options for this was the Pomona facility, which was a poor option. Economic development - this is an industrial base job. It is an engine for our economy. If they are going to continue to have a presence they do need to grow. That does provide employment and does have spin off effects to the economy. The support of natural resources industries that is one of the goals of the planning guidelines. They process agricultural materials. So that is another element of the planning goals. Chairman Munson stated citizen participation. A lot of the Commission's decision needs to be community based. At our last meeting there was a lot of testimony given and unlike a lot of our meetings there was good professional based testimony, there was good background, and a lot of history. There was a lot of information to base a decision on. One of the things is historic preservation. This is a long time business in Selah. Communities need to be aware of not just architecture but institutions and businesses that become institutions that is part of the sole that gives the community its character. Matson does that for this community. One of his questions was the comparison of the industrial and commercial space was in use. Staff report stated we needed more commercial. The numbers came out for 2025 that we are about 38% short in available land for commercial. Looking at industrial we are about 62% short. This property has flipped flopped back and forth between industrial and commercial. Our clear shortage is industrial. One of the things that gets lost in this decision is that the front lots will be maintained as commercial. The Matsons are making an effort to keep a part of what the City plan was. I am inclined to go the same route as last time.

Commissioner Quinnell stated there was a delicate balance here as there is a shortage of both. Mr. Preston Shepherd stated it best - you have to have the gold mine before you can have the town. I believe that industrial brings that balance to the City which will support commercial.

Commissioner Smith stated the big question is if industrial and compatible with commercial? He stated he felt it was not but in this case looking at the presentation that it is compatible with commercial. He could not see any commercial people going back by the railroad.

Commissioner Quinnell stated he does not know if the Matson family will stay or leave with the approval or disapproval of the proposal. The strong point that the Chairman made was that the business owners were in favor of proposal 100%.

Chairman Munson called for further questions. He made a motion to approve proposal and called for discussion.

Commissioner Eagles suggested that with staff's help they needed to blend the commercial with that industrial area. They are doing that with those commercial lots but there needs to be some plantings setbacks, something that the Commission recommends to the staff.

Chairman Munson stated that it is important that those three lots be maintained as commercial as well as that piece to the north would be part of that condition.

Commissioner Roberts stated if they adhere to the site plan that should satisfy what is being discussed.

Chairman Munson stated that as part of his motion he wants the site plan to stay as presented and

stated he is not sure how to put that into his motion.

Mr. Davison stated that if Planning Commission recommended approval based on the area site plan showing the area being industrial and zone industrial and three lots and the large one to the north being zoned commercial. Typically with your rezone approval findings you could attach a concomitant agreement. You can get very specific

Commissioner Eagles stated that the Commission is approving a package here, you are taking part of the commercial property here making it industrial and leaving the rest commercial.

Mr. Davison asked if the Commission could approve the proposal with a concordiment agreement?

Mr. Noe stated that they could reference the site plan instead of the agreement.

Mr. Davison stated the Commission could have the agreement or could condition it on the site plan as presented. He suggested the Commission let staff and the attorney prepare the findings and decision and present it to them at the next meeting. The Commission would make their intent known tonight but the decision would not be voted on until next meeting.

Mr. Shinn stated the site plan is not specific and the office will be built first.

Chairman Munson moved for approve with the findings to be presented at the next meeting, seconded by Commissioner Eagles. Voice vote 5/0 unanimously.

2. New Business None

G: General Business

1. Old Business - None
2. New Business - None

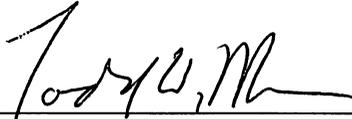
H. Reports/Announcements

1. Chairman - None
2. Commissioners - None
3. Staff - Mr. Davison stated that the next meeting will be as follows:
 - a. The Findings and Decision for Matson
 - b. Torkelson's Short Plat
 - c. Text amendment to Flood Hazard Ordinance

The appeal period for 605 Southern Avenue has ended without an appeal being filed, 305 Southern - the Hearings Examiner has heard that appeal and received briefings from two of the parties and is waiting for the third and will issue a decision here shortly.

I. Adjournment

Commissioner Eagles moved to adjourn the meeting, Chairman Munson seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned the meeting at 6:51 pm.



Chairman