

MINUTES
COLUMBIA CITY PLAN COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
SEPTEMBER 11, 2023
7:00 P.M.

WHITLEY COUNTY GOVERNMENT CENTER
MEETING ROOM A/B, LOWER LEVEL

MEMBERS PRESENT

Walt Crowder
Chip Hill
Jon Kissinger
Dennis Warnick
Dan Weigold
Larry Weiss, President
Patrick Zickgraf, Vice President (E)

MEMBERS ABSENT

Donald Langeloh
Nicki Venable

STAFF

Nathan Bilger
Amanda Thompson

ATTORNEY

Dawn Boyd
(E)lectronic participant

AUDIENCE MEMBERS

The Guest List, attached, was signed by fifteen of the visitors who attended the meeting. There were no attendees on the webcast.

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

Mr. Weiss called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M. Ms. Thompson read the roll call with members present and absent listed above.

CONSIDERATION OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES

Ms. Thompson confirmed that previous minutes were still outstanding.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE OATH TO WITNESSES

Ms. Boyd administered the Oath to those present who intended to speak during the meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business.

NEW BUSINESS

1. 23-C-REZ-2

Timbers Edge Development, LLC, requested an amendment to the Columbia City Zoning Ordinance to reclassify 15.26± acres of property on the north ends of Cottonwood Court and Sommerset Trail from the R-2, Two-Family Residential District, to the R-3, Multi-Family Residential District.

Mr. Bilger provided a summary of the staff report. He stated that the property was located north of the Ravenwood Section II subdivision and east of the current Timbers Edge subdivision and was currently unimproved except for two temporary culs-de-sac. He stated

that the request to R-3 was to permit some mix of two-family dwellings and a mix of lot sizes. There was a commitment not to permit multi-family or apartment buildings. He then displayed aerial views and a sketch lot layout plan for reference. He made comparisons with the existing Timbers Edge subdivision, which was also rezoned to R-3, mainly for the purpose of lot sizes. He reviewed the zone map amendment criteria. He presented one item recommended to be a recorded commitment:

1. Multi-family residential shall not be permitted.

He noted that the Commission may also desire to specify a mix of lot or unit types as further conditions or commitments.

Having no questions for staff, Mr. Weiss asked the petitioner to speak.

Brooks Langeloh, representative of the landowner, spoke on the request. He stated that the proposed development would be similar to the existing Timbers Edge subdivision, and the requested rezoning was to permit a similar mix of lot sizes and standards as well as possibly some two-family villas. He described the site constraints of laying out the lots and the benefits of the smaller setbacks to the layout. He relayed some calculations regarding densities of existing subdivisions for comparisons, stating the existing Ravenwood I and II sections would be more than 3 units per acre. Also noted was that the existing R-2 zoning would permit two-family dwellings; the rezoning would allow the mix of lot sizes. He said that there no smallest lots planned. Mr. Weiss asked about the smallest lots; Mr. Bilger said that the sketch plan showed 55' lots on the west edge, which matched the lots in Timbers Edge. Mr. Langeloh repeated that the sketch plan would be changing. He presented more calculations about the maximum number of lots possible in the existing R-2 zoning and said that their intent was to match the existing Timbers Edge, not to max out the site.

Mr. Warnick asked if anything would be built to the north. Mr. Langeloh said it was not feasible to develop, but it might be sold for a single home.

Mr. Weigold expressed concerns about the driveway length to make sure that there was enough room to park two cars. Mr. Langeloh said that he planned to have a 20' wide driveway to permit cars to park side-by-side and not staggered.

Mr. Weigold asked for more details on the composition of lot sizes. Mr. Langeloh said that 55' wide was the smallest they would go. Mr. Crowder asked if the development would be done in one or two sections; it would be one. He asked if there would be a construction drive designated; Mr. Langeloh said it would be Sommerset or Cottonwood, more likely Sommerset since it was the direct access to 100 South.

Mr. Weigold asked about whether the development would be for rent or owner-occupied. Mr. Langeloh said these would be intended for owner-occupied, but they could not stop owners from renting their property. There was discussion about development costs and affordable house prices. Mr. Langeloh emphasized the importance of a larger backyard in the market and how the development standards would help that.

Having no further questions for the petitioner, Mr. Weiss asked for public comment.

Lori Coremin and Jason Polk spoke together. Mr. Polk said that they were new to the area, having moved into their home three months ago. He said that when they bought their house, they were told that their street was completed and that the subject property was not going to

be developed. That was a big part of their decision to buy the home on Cottonwood. He said that they understood it was already zoned R-2, and that development would happen there. He said their concern was about reducing the density of the development. He said that he was happy about it not being apartments.

Ms. Coremin asked Mr. Langeloh for clarification if the proposed sketch plan was for R-2 or R-3 development; it was for R-3. She asked what the time line for development would be, and if the houses would be spec homes. He replied that it would start in the spring; completion would depend on the market. There could be both spec homes or lots for sale. She asked what negative impacts on sustainability, water quality, and general conservation of the area; he replied there should be none. Ms. Coremin asked what if something went wrong; Mr. Langeloh said that they would need to take care of the issues per state and federal requirements. Ms. Coremin said she had a 10-year background in municipal and real estate law and was well aware of the environmental laws. She asked what the planned upgrades to the electric grid would be since the entire neighborhood was on one substation; Mr. Weiss said that providing reliable power was the electric department's responsibility. She asked about increased through traffic on Cottonwood, which would affect existing homeowners not renters, who lived on Sommerset. Mr. Langeloh said that both streets would have to be extended. She repeated concerns about the possibility of multi-family and asked about the infrastructure development. Mr. Weiss said that infrastructure would be reviewed during subdivision review and most would be under the city departments. She asked about trash containment during construction and development; Mr. Langeloh said that it was important to keep the site clean for sales. She asked if there would be management after construction; Mr. Langeloh said it would have a homeowners association.

Miranda Krider and Marcia Krider spoke together. They asked if there would be a homeowners association. Mr. Langeloh said there would be one set up. They expressed concern since existing Timbers Edge owners were told there was no HOA, but then found out there was. There was discussion about the details of the association. Mr. Bilger interjected by stating that the covenants and association details were related to subdivision review, which would come after the current rezoning request. They expressed interest in acquiring the small parcel adjacent to Miranda's lot instead of it being developed with this subdivision. Mr. Weiss said that would be something to be discussed directly with the developer. They asked if the treeline would be preserved. Mr. Langeloh said they would try to do so, but he did not know if utilities would need to go in there.

Ian Haas disagreed with Mr. Langeloh that there would be minimal impact on home values. He had concerns about traffic, ongoing development, and other impacts on his property and if he would be able to sell his property after this development went in. He wondered if Mr. Langeloh was a snake oil salesman. He thanked Ms. Boyd and Ms. Thompson for their time.

Having no further public comment, Mr. Weiss closed the public hearing and asked Mr. Langeloh if he had any rebuttal.

Mr. Langeloh clarified the calculations of maximum lot counts were for comparisons, not threats. He addressed the home price questions, and there was some discussion with audience members on the definition of the prices. He continued by stating that this property was planned to be developed for many years, at one time being a future section of the original

Ravenwood subdivision. He agreed that the real estate agent was mistaken when the property owners were told that the subject property would never be developed.

Mr. Kissinger asked if Sommerset could be connected through to the back instead of Cottonwood. There was discussion about the design of the sketch site plan. There was discussion about the impact of the through traffic on the renters in Ravenwood II, who lived on Sommerset instead of the homeowners who lived on Cottonwood.

Mr. Weigold asked the percentage of lots that would be of smaller size. Mr. Langeloh replied about 25%. He said he was more comfortable with the proposal because of the commitment to doing wider driveways.

Having no further questions for the petitioner, Mr. Weiss asked for a motion. Mr. Warnick made a motion to forward a favorable recommendation with the commitment that there be no multi-family. Mr. Weiss asked about a condition about the maximum number of R-3 lots. Mr. Weigold suggested a maximum of 25% of the lots being to R-3 standards and that the driveway width be 20'. There was discussion about the wording of the commitments.

Mr. Warnick amended his motion to include that there be a maximum of 25% of the lots being the minimum R-3 standards and the minimum driveway width being 20', along with there being no multi-family. Mr. Crowder seconded. Motion passed by roll call vote, 7-0.

OTHER BUSINESS

2. Extraterritorial jurisdiction status

Mr. Bilger reminded the Commission that the ETJ would be considered at the County Plan Commission meeting the next week. He said that the office had not yet been contacted by any of the notified property owners. He said that Thor Hodges had already notified the office that he would not be present.

Mr. Zickgraf stated that he did have a property owner contact him about the ETJ. He addressed their questions and directed them to the County Commissioners or the Mayor for further information.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Mr. Weiss requested a motion to adjourn. Mr. Kissinger made the motion, and Mr. Weigold gave the second. The meeting was declared adjourned at 8:19 P.M.

GUEST LIST

- 1. Lori Coremin 684 S. Cottonwood Court, Columbia City
- 2. Connie Levitz 670 S. Cottonwood Court, Columbia City
- 3. Jason M. Polk 684 S. Cottonwood Court, Columbia City
- 4. Cheryl Honkomp 726 S. Cottonwood Court, Columbia City
- 5. Joe Honkomp 726 S. Cottonwood Court, Columbia City
- 6. Ashley Goon 645 S. Cottonwood Court, Columbia City
- 7. Chad Goon 645 S. Cottonwood Court, Columbia City
- 8. Miranda Krider 642 S. Cottonwood Court, Columbia City
- 9. Marcia Krider 1070 N. 550 West, Columbia City
- 10. Brooks Langeloh 818 N. Newport Run, Columbia City

- 11. Greg Fahl 815 N. State Road 9, Columbia City
- 12. Joyce Hageman 1354 E. Hanna Street, Columbia City
- 13. Sharon Simmons 1910 E. Keiser Road, Columbia City
- 14. Ian Haas 697 S. Cottonwood Court, Columbia City
- 15. Brent Simmons 1308 Louise Drive, Columbia City
- 16. Don Langeloh (Commission member, recused himself from participation)

GUEST LIST (WEBCAST)

- 17. No attendees