

MINUTES
COLUMBIA CITY PLAN COMMISSION
REGULAR MEETING
APRIL 1, 2024
7:00 P.M.

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

MEMBERS PRESENT

Jon Kissinger
Donald Langeloh
Jennifer Romano
Nicki Venable
Dennis Warnick
Larry Weiss, Vice President
Patrick Zickgraf, President

MEMBERS ABSENT

Chip Hill
Dan Weigold

STAFF

Nathan Bilger
Amanda Thompson

ATTORNEY

Dawn Boyd

(E)lectronic participant

AUDIENCE MEMBERS

Two visitors signed the Guest List at the meeting. There were no attendees on the webcast. A Guest List is included with the minutes of this meeting.

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

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

CONSIDERATION OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES

Mr. Langeloh made a motion to approve the March meeting minutes, as distributed. Ms. Venable gave the second. The motion passed 6-0-1; Mr. Kissinger abstained as he was not present at the March meeting.

ADMINISTRATION OF THE OATH TO WITNESSES

Mr. Bilger administered the Oath to the two visitors. (Ms. Boyd arrived at the meeting shortly thereafter.)

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business.

NEW BUSINESS

1. 24-C-SUBD-1

Nathan McDonald requested primary plat approval for a 2-lot subdivision proposed to be known as Nathan And Rachel McDonald Subdivision and located at 990 S. Line Street. Mr. Bilger summarized the Staff Report and stated that the 0.716± acre property was not part of the surrounding Oakdale Ridge Subdivision. He described that the proposal was to create two lots, Lot 1 being a new building site, and Lot 2 containing the existing two-family dwelling

and detached garage. He noted that the proposed subdivision name was too lengthy for the Recorder's Office's database and the "McDonald" name too common, so the subdivision name would need to be altered. Mr. Bilger stated that the subdivision plan exceeded all the minimum Code standards and that although the proposed lots were slightly narrower and deeper than those in Oakdale Ridge, the acreages of the lots were comparable. Mr. Bilger suggested four conditions of approval, listed in the Staff Report.

Mr. Weiss noted that no covenants were submitted, and he asked if Oakdale Ridge's covenants could be applied to the proposed subdivision. Mr. Bilger stated it would be possible to record them with the plat, although this subdivision would not be part of Oakdale Ridge and enforcement of covenants would be only between the owners of the two lots. Mr. Bilger clarified for Mr. Weiss that the intention of the suggested condition regarding sidewalks was for sidewalks to be installed along the street frontages of both lots.

Nathan McDonald was present and stated he had a list of names to suggest for the subdivision. Mr. Bilger said the name could be considered as part of the secondary plat, if the members had no concerns; the members concurred. Mr. McDonald referred to the suggested condition requiring sidewalks and stated that installing the sidewalks, especially along Weston Drive, would cause him serious hardship. He described that the County had planted several street trees in that area, and a larger tree on the northwest corner would cost approximately \$1500.00 to remove. He stated that the ground would need leveled out, which would disturb two tiles in the northeast corner and interrupt drainage near Line Street. Mr. McDonald said he supported the idea of having sidewalks but expressed that the cost of preparing the area and installing the sidewalks would cause there to be no benefit to subdividing. Ms. Romano and Mr. Warnick mentioned that the property may qualify for the City's cost sharing sidewalk program. Mr. Bilger displayed images of the existing sidewalks on the neighboring properties. The members discussed the area's sidewalk locations, utility locations, the topography of the areas where sidewalks should be (and should have been) located, drainage concerns, and Mr. McDonald's trees. Mr. McDonald expressed that the sidewalk may damage the root systems of the street trees, causing them to die. He asked if he would "get in trouble" if he cut them, and Ms. Romano replied that he would. Mr. McDonald asked how to manage maintaining the sidewalk if the trees survive and their roots cause damage. He also asked how to handle drainage for the lots, because the property is sloped to direct water to the tiles, and the sidewalk would cause the slope to be altered and the tiles to be removed; he asked if he would need to tile the whole property or how to resolve that matter. Mr. Weiss said the Community Development Director could advise him. Mr. Bilger confirmed for Mr. Kissinger that the school's trail should be installed along Mr. McDonald's property. Mr. Bilger stated that the Community Development Director would be the person to consider the conflict with the trees. Mr. Weiss agreed that elevating the sidewalk to connect along Weston Drive would cause water retention that would kill the trees there. Ms. Romano suggested Mr. McDonald discuss with the Tree Board.

Mr. Zickgraf asked if anyone else wished to speak with regard to the petition. The gentleman in the audience stated that he had no questions, so Mr. Zickgraf closed the public hearing. Mr. McDonald asked how to connect the sidewalk to the west, because his neighbor had no sidewalk on the east side of his drive, meaning a connection would go through his neighbor's landscaping. Mr. Warnick and Mr. Kissinger replied that Mr. McDonald's sidewalk would end at his property line, and he would not be responsible for the gap on his neighbor's

property. There were no further questions for Mr. McDonald, and the members discussed the case. They considered that if the cost of development were too great, Mr. McDonald may choose not to subdivide. Mr. McDonald confirmed he would not proceed if it afforded him no benefit. The members considered that there may be a time frame set for the installation for the trail, and they did not want to assign a condition that would conflict with the plan for the trail. Mr. Bilger suggested amending the sidewalk condition to require the sidewalks if deemed practical by the City; then, the City Departments could review and determine if the sidewalk should be required or if it would be better not to disturb drainage and etc. The members discussed further. Mr. Langeloh made a motion to approve 24-C-SUBD-1 with the conditions suggested in the Staff Report, amending #1 as Mr. Bilger had proposed. Mr. Weiss requested a condition to apply Covenants similar to those for Oakdale Ridge. Mr. Langeloh amended his motion to include the Covenants as suggested. Mr. Warnick gave the second. Ms. Thompson repeated the motion, at Mr. Zickgraf's request: Motion to approve 24-C-SUBD-1 with the following conditions:

1. A 5' sidewalk and intersection ramps will be installed on the street frontages of both lots, as per the directive of the Community Development Director, as deemed practical.
2. Revise the side/rear setbacks to be 8' side setback on the west and 10' rear setback on the south.
3. The subdivision name be amended to meet the requirements of the Recorder.
4. Secondary plat approval be delegated to staff.
5. Record covenants and restrictions complimentary to the Oakdale Ridge covenants.

Motion passed 7-0.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Bilger reminded the Commission members of a Training Session meeting scheduled for April 29th. He listed possible meeting topics.

Mr. Weiss asked if an equipment storage use had been permitted for a particular property. Mr. Bilger said the activity described might be compliant, and he would investigate.

Ms. Venable asked if screening had been required for a particular property developed for a utility. Mr. Bilger replied that it had not been required. He clarified that as a municipal utility project, it had been deemed exempt from the Development Plan process.

Mr. Zickgraf thanked Mr. Bilger for following up on the members' concerns regarding the speed limit on W. Lincolnway. Mr. Bilger reported that a discrepancy in the corporate limit line had caused a delay, but after the map was updated, the City was able to start the process of considering the speed limit.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Ms. Romano made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Weiss; the meeting was adjourned, by unanimous vote, at 8:01 P.M.

GUEST LIST

1. Shane Caudill 308 W. Orchid Court, Columbia City
2. Nathan McDonald 990 S. Line Street, Columbia City

GUEST LIST (WEBCAST)

3. None.