



City of Oregon City

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Meeting Minutes - Final Planning Commission

Monday, July 22, 2013

7:00 PM

Commission Chambers

Work Session

1. Call to Order

Chair Kidwell called the work session to order at 7:00 p.m.

Present: 6 - Paul Espe, Zachary Henkin, Denyse McGriff, Robert Mahoney, Charles Kidwell and Tom Geil

Absent: 1 - Damon Mabee

Staffers: 2 - Tony Konkol and Laura Terway

2. Discussion Items:

2a. [PC 13-064](#)

Willamette Falls Legacy Project Vision and Master Plan

Tony Konkol, Community Development Director, updated the Commissioners on the new Website up and running for the Willamette Falls Legacy Project at www.rediscoverthefalls.com. The site includes the core values, how to get involved, photos, history of the site, contact information, and is interactive inviting public comment. He explained the outreach booths and public engagement events designed to obtain public feedback on what they would like to see on the site. He showed a video designed to promote the Willamette Falls development site produced by Portland General Electric that will be distributed more widely in the future.

Mr. Konkol gave a history of the due diligence done to bring the project to this point. The project site is 23 acres; 17 acres are north of the PGE seawall, and 6 acres south of the seawall down to where it intersects with Union Pacific. The Partners have been working with the 4 core values: 1) Public access; 2) Economic Development; 3) Healthy Habitats; 4) Cultural and Historic Interpretation, to reinvent the site.

Commissioner Mahoney asked who owns the falls, and Mr. Konkol replied that PGE owns the falls and the Coast Guard has jurisdiction.

Mr. Konkol gave a presentation to the Planning Commissioners showing photos and drawings of the site. He explained the 23-acre site was the focus of the project, but there were other stakeholders to engage in the discussions, such as the West Linn side, the Locks, and the Willamette Falls Heritage area and others. He explained that the City Commission approved an agreement with Blue Heron's bankruptcy trustee for the master planning process, and the City agreed to have a framework plan from the Planning Commission by April 24, 2014. The process includes very aggressive community engagement and communication. The current visioning process is the initial stage to look at big picture goals, addressing larger infrastructure. He reported that the State Legislature approved reserving \$5 million dollars in its budget for the

Willamette Falls Legacy Project. A financial plan needs to be complete by March 2015 in order to get the bonds sold and the funds available. The money is for investing in the site and getting development ready, such as demolition and clean-up. An offer of \$4.1 million dollars has been received from Eclipse Development to buy the property and the bankruptcy trustee accepted the offer and brought it to the Court for consideration. August 21, 2013 is the "overbid date" for another party to overbid the offer. If there is an overbid, it will go to auction one week later on August 28, 2013.

Mr. Konkol invited the Planning Commission members to think 20 years out and envision what they would like to see at the Willamette Falls site. The Commissioners provided the following suggestions:

- A world class museum celebrating the heritage of the property and the area*
- Mixed use*
- Public access to the area*
- World class hotel overlooking the falls with a good restaurant and convention facilities*
- Public plaza for events, picnicking and gathering places*
- Area for flags paying tribute to fallen heros and other veterans*
- Area for water sports activities*
- Commercial use*
- Community oriented restaurants and shops, but not a major shopping area*
- An area with its own personality, but inviting community connection to its visitors*
- Balconies over the falls from facilities*
- A place where Oregon City residents would want to keep returning to*
- Pedestrian connectivity to Main Street and the Promenade*
- Rail access*
- Consider the 24-hour city concept*
- Turn-around at the end of Main Street*
- Evening lighting and/or lighting projection on the falls*
- Pedestal directional monuments*
- Apartments/condominiums in mid-range*
- Light industrial craftsman shops*
- Art gallery*
- A current Blue Heron building renovated for a smaller hotel*
- No national franchise retail chains*
- Design standards that fit in with the current tone of the City*
- A design review board should be in place*
- Potential portage for boats to come from Portland*
- Connection to the River - Willamette Greenway*
- Seek a way to put Hwy. 99 below grade to develop connectivity*
- Parking structure against the cliff to mitigate noise*
- Habitat restoration*
- Flood mitigation*
- Pedestrian friendly*
- Use of river water to power development*

Commissioner Kidwell commented that many of the current Blue Heron buildings do not meet present-day building codes for fire/life safety, energy, seismic, and accessibility, and unless there is built-in financial incentive or an easy way to convert the building to another use without significant renovation, the cost to renovate an old building is often more costly than demolishing it and building anew. He added that the developer has to see the vision, and the master planning and design process can help the developer see the vision. He suggested narrowing the site down to determine which buildings would qualify for renovation to maximize the use and

incorporate the historical into the design element.

Commissioner Mahoney noted that fire safety would need to be considered and commented that a sub station may be needed.

Mr. Konkol said the Planning Commission would have more opportunity to provide further input. He explained the future events scheduled to obtain additional public input.

2b. [PC 13-065](#)

Oregon City Sign Code Update

Laura Terway, Planner, updated the Planning Commission on the proposed sign code development and current status. Staff is working with the public over the next year to determine their desires and needs for signs primarily on private property, rather than public street signs. She indicated a Website for the sign code revision is up and running at www.ocsigncode.org and is interactive and ready to receive comments. A sign code citizen committee is being developed consisting of representatives of schools, churches, neighborhoods, sign code manufacturers, the Planning Commission, HRB, the Chamber of Commerce, and others. Applications are being accepted until August 16, 2013, and members will be appointed by the end of August 2013 to participate in 4 meetings in the next few months. The Committee will make recommendations to staff, who will then put together the proposed code changes and bring it through the legislative process early next year.

Chair Kidwell volunteered to be the Planning Commission member of the citizen committee. Mr. Konkol will send an e-mail to the Commissioners to respond with their interest in participating on the citizen committee.

Commissioner McGriff questioned the need for a sign code manufacturer to be a member of the citizen committee due to the potential conflict of interest.

3. Communications

4. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 9:22 p.m.