

**MINUTES**  
**COLUMBIA CITY PLAN COMMISSION**  
**REGULAR MEETING**  
**MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 2017**  
**7:00 P.M.**

**WHITLEY COUNTY GOVERNMENT CENTER**  
**COUNTY COMMISSIONERS/COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING ROOM**

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Walt Crowder  
Doug Graft  
Don Langeloh  
Jeff Walker  
Dennis Warnick  
Dan Weigold  
Larry Weiss

**STAFF**

Nathan Bilger  
Amanda Thompson

**ATTORNEY**

Dawn Boyd

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

Jon Kissinger  
Patrick Zickgraf

**VISITORS**

There were five visitors who signed the guest list (and one newspaper reporter who did not) at the September 11, 2017, Columbia City Plan Commission meeting. A guest list is included with the minutes of this meeting.

**CALL TO ORDER**

Mr. Graft called the meeting to order at 7:00 P.M.

**ROLL CALL**

Ms. Thompson read the roll call with those members present and absent listed above.

**CONSIDERATION AND ADOPTION OF THE AUGUST 7, 2017, COLUMBIA CITY PLAN COMMISSION MINUTES**

Mr. Graft asked if there were any additions or corrections to the August 7, 2017, meeting minutes. Mr. Langeloh motioned to approve the minutes as presented. Mr. Weigold seconded the motion. Six members voted in favor of the motion while Mr. Walker abstained.

## **ADMINISTRATION OF THE OATH TO WITNESSES**

Ms. Boyd administered the oath to three of the six visitors.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

There was no old business.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **1. 17-C-DEV-5**

Columbia City RE Developers, LLC, requested an amendment of their previously approved Development Plan for their development, Quail Ridge Villas, located at 120 N. Chestnut Wood Lane, Columbia City. Mr. Bilger summarized the Staff Report and described the petitioner's request to add a building and parking lot and revise the recreational area. A second future building was also showed on the site plan but was not part of this proposal. (It may be discussed with Phase II.) The request to add an 18-unit building causes the need for additional parking, per the Ordinance. The petitioner requested a waiver of the parking code, asking that the garage spaces for the single family attached homes (the 8-unit buildings) be included in the overall parking count. Mr. Bilger stated that Staff does support this waiver and had no suggested conditions other than that any from the previous approval be carried forward.

There were no questions for Mr. Bilger, so Mr. Graft asked the petitioner to step forward. Cory Collins of Columbia City RE Developers, LLC, was in attendance to present the petition. Mr. Collins stated that within the last two years, Phase I of the development had been completed. The developer quickly realized that the need for housing in this area and demand for residences in their development was much greater than they had anticipated. For this reason, the proposed 18-unit building was planned. An additional parking pad is proposed near the new building, and the recreational area will be moved near the clubhouse, which makes more sense to the developer. In order to comply with the Columbia City Parking Code, even with the previous approval to include detached garages in the parking count, the development would need 9 additional spaces. Instead of asking to reduce the number of spaces per unit that the code requires, the developer has requested an additional waiver to include the spaces in the attached garages of the 8-unit buildings. If granted, the waiver would add 24 spaces to the parking count, exceeding the 9 spaces needed by 15 spaces. Mr. Collins also wanted to mention that the developer had reviewed the parking standards for their other developments across the state and found the Columbia City code more restrictive. In order to better understand the parking usage at Quail Ridge, the developer had asked the residence manager to monitor the parking for the last several weeks. Mr. Collins reported the findings of the study and described an excess of unused parking. Because of this, he felt the requested waiver would be a reasonable request for the Commission to consider.

Mr. Walker voiced that he drives through the development often and can confirm that ample parking has been available. Mr. Crowder asked if the northeastern parking lot was already completed. Mr. Collins replied that it was. Mr. Weigold asked how the additional impervious surface area would affect drainage. Mr. Collins replied with reference to the comment letter provided by the Soil & Water District and stated that their engineer is aware of the requirements and will begin working on them after hearing the Commission's decision on this petition. He added that the existing detention was designed to handle the entire development, including Phase II which has not yet been constructed, so the addition of the proposed 18-unit building should not create any problem. There were no further questions from the Commission members. Mr. Graft asked if anyone else was present who wished to speak with regard to this petition. No one stepped forward, so the public portion of the meeting was closed. There was no discussion amongst the Commission members, so Mr. Warnick motioned to approve the petition as presented, with the requested parking waiver, with the condition that the comments from the Soil & Water District be adhered to, and carrying forward any conditions from the previous approval. Mr. Crowder seconded the motion. The Commission members voted unanimously to carry the motion. Mr. Bilger reminded Mr. Collins that the final Development Plan would need to be recorded in order to dedicate the streets if that is still the developer's intention.

## **2. ADVISORY**

Passages, Inc., through its affiliate, Whitley Crossings, LLC, requested an advisory to discuss a potential subdivision to be located on the southwest corner of North Street and Oak Street, just north of their Creative Learning Center at 333 N. Oak Street, Columbia City. Mr. Bilger explained that the site is zoned GB, General Business District, which does allow for single- and two-family residences and a minimum of 5,000 square foot lots at 50 feet wide with 50 feet of frontage. The site in question is approximately 5 acres, and 22 lots are being proposed. Utilities are available. Mr. Bilger stated that he recommended the Advisory so that the owners could receive feedback before progressing further, as they will be applying for tax credits for the project.

Mr. Warnick asked what the required lot depth would be. Mr. Bilger replied that at a 50 foot width, the required depth would be a minimum of 100 feet. There were no other questions for Mr. Bilger, so Mr. Graft asked that whoever was present to describe the proposal would do so. Dave Lehman, Executive Director of Whitley Crossings and Vice President of Passages, introduced himself as did Jason Meyer, President and CEO of Passages and Whitley Crossings.

Mr. Lehman reported that Whitley Crossings would like to create 22 lots and build single-family homes with two-car garages for lease-purchase. This project would be very similar to their program at Heritage Place. The homes would be available to low- and moderate-income people who could purchase the homes after a 15 year period.

Mr. Lehman explained that Passages created Whitley Crossings 20 years ago because there wasn't decent and safe housing available for the people that Passages serves. Whitley Crossings Neighborhood Corporation seeks to integrate people with disabilities into the community. They try to set aside approximately 5-10% of the units in their projects for people served by Passages. Whitley Crossings has several residential projects in the Columbia City area. Mr. Lehman stated that they would like to combine this project and the renovation of the historic Clugston apartment building in order to apply for housing tax credits as well as HOME funds through the state. Whitley Crossings is already working on an application for a Federal Home Loan Bank grant.

The proposed project will be modeled after the concept at Heritage Place. Mr. Lehman stated that Whitley Crossings tentatively plans to construct eight 2-story homes and fourteen ranches. The homes will be quality housing at 1100 – 1600 square feet with two bathrooms and 2-car garages. The plan is to use 4 acres for lots while Passages retains 1 acre for future use. Mr. Lehman expects the two projects combined will be an investment in the community of approximately \$4.5 million. In designing the location of the lots, Whitley Crossings attempted to keep the infrastructure cost down by including only one new street. Lots 1-7 are proposed to access off of North Street. Mr. Lehman noted that the traffic on North Street is significantly less since the relocation of the hospital. He mentioned that it may be possible to combine some of the driveways in order to decrease the number of access points.

Mr. Warnick asked if Lots 7 and 8 would access off of Oak Street. Mr. Lehman said it was possible that Lot 7 might have a better access point off of Oak Street, but he wasn't certain. Meanwhile, Lot 8 would access off of the new street. The configuration of the location of the homes will be looked at in the upcoming week. Mr. Lehman mentioned that sidewalks would be added along the new street and along North and Oak Streets. Mr. Warnick was pleased to hear about the new sidewalks. Mr. Bilger asked if Hill Drive would have sidewalks also. Mr. Lehman said they did not include a sidewalk there because of an easement and also because the screening from the existing tree line is appealing.

Mr. Weiss asked where the access point would be for the portion of property that Passages plans to retain. Mr. Meyer stated that Passages' Creative Learning Center is located on the southern parcel and access would come from the drive between the two parcels. There was some discussion over the need for at least 22 lots and different configurations of access points. Several Commission members expressed concern regarding the number of lots accessing onto North Street. With consideration of the proposed US 30 Project, traffic patterns in the City will change, with North Street possibly taking on a great deal more traffic than it has currently. Mr. Lehman recognized that using combined drives for Lots 1-6 would be helpful but could be inconvenient for the residents. Mr. Walker pointed out that the Habitat for Humanity homes on West Ellsworth Street were created with combined drives, and the concept works well there.

Mr. Langeloh asked if there were storm sewer plans yet. Mr. Lehman said there were not. Mr. Walker highly suggested using the existing tanks at the southeast corner of the property. They were installed with the last expansion of the hospital. The Commission members discussed the water flow pattern in this area.

Mr. Lehman stated that the current goal is to put together a financial package for the state application. Information from this advisory will be used for that purpose. Mr. Warnick and Mr. Crowder expressed that they felt this was a good and feasible project. Mr. Bilger asked what the project's time frame would be. Mr. Lehman said tax credits would be applied for in early November. A HOME fund application will be filed around the same time. The results would be made known in early spring. The Federal Home Loan Bank grant would be filed around this time. The earliest that construction might start would be in the fall of 2018.

### **OTHER BUSINESS**

A meeting schedule for the 2018 calendar year had been distributed to the members for their review. It was the consensus of those present that they would meet on July 9 instead of July 2, due to the proximity to the holiday.

There was no other business.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Mr. Graft called for a motion to adjourn which was given by Mr. Weigold. Mr. Crowder seconded the motion, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:04 P.M.

## **GUEST LIST** **COLUMBIA CITY PLAN COMMISSION** **SEPTEMBER 11, 2017**

1. David Lehman ----- Passages, Inc.
2. Cory Collins ----- Columbia City RE Developers, LLC
3. Jason Meyer ----- Passages, Inc.
4. Verlin Dittmer ----- 325 N. 200 East, Columbia City
5. Connie Dittmer ----- 325 N. 200 East, Columbia City
6. *Newspaper reporter – did not sign in*