

TOWN OF LA CONNER
PLANNING COMMISSION ZOOM MEETING
April 20, 2021

The Planning Commission meeting was called to order at 6:03 p.m.

Commissioners present: Bruce Bradburn, Rick Dole, Marna Hanneman, Liz Theaker.

Commissioners absent: Carol Hedlin.

Staff: Michael Davolio, Alex Capron (Watershed Company).

Members of the public: 4, including Lauren Bromley, WA Dept. of Ecology and Jeremy McNett of Underwood & Associates.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

None.

MINUTES:

Commissioner Dole moved to approve the March 16, 2021 minutes. Seconded by Commissioner Hanneman. Motion carried 4-0.

OLD BUSINESS:

None.

NEW BUSINESS:

- *Public Hearing Shoreline Master Program periodic review*

The Town of La Conner is updating the Shoreline Master Program to make it consistent with state and federal regulations. Alex Capron, an environmental planner with the Watershed Company who is the town's consultant for the update, gave a presentation. The update is currently in a joint public comment period and this is a joint public hearing with the Department of Ecology a representative of whom was also present.

This is a periodic update, not a comprehensive update (that was done in 2013) and the amendments are focused on capturing changes to state law that have occurred since. Critical area changes are occurring only in the shoreline jurisdiction and are going to be a separate appendix to the SMP. Ecology requires SMPs to be brought into compliance with local and state regulations every eight years as well as incorporate new or improved data. The SMP applies to shorelines of water bodies over a certain size and any wetlands

within the Town of La Conner. A gap analysis report was prepared to address the needed changes. Among other changes, aquaculture was added as a shoreline conditional use and the 2017 Sea Level Rise Design Charrette was added as an appendix.

Planner Michael Davolio noted that the timeline on the SMP update has been skewed by the pandemic but it is on track to be adopted by summer.

Public hearing for the Shoreline Master Program Periodic Review opened at 6:05 PM.

There was no public comment.

Commissioner Hanneman asked for a breakdown of the minor changes to the SMP. Capron said that this was provided in the Gap Analysis which is available on the Town's website and these changes were reviewed by the planning commission at previous meetings. Commissioner Theaker said that in the 2017 Charrette document there's reference to a study the Swinomish Tribe did and asked if the links included were still active so people could access it. Capron said he would double-check that.

A motion was made by Commissioner Hanneman to accept the staff report on the Shoreline Master Program periodic review. Seconded by Commissioner Theaker. Motion carried 4-0.

Public Hearing closed at 6:26 PM.

- *Public Hearing LU21-09HDR Firehall Historic Design Review 402 Morris Street*

Public Hearing for the Firehall Historic Design Review opened at 6:27 PM.

Planner Michael Davolio said that most of the improvements are interior and even the exterior improvement of the hallway to connect the two buildings is not on Morris Street, so there is little impact in terms of historic preservation.

Jeremy McNett of Underwood & Associates is the architect on the project and said that the owners want to leave the building on Morris as intact as possible with siding and colors, etc. He did point out that the owners want to put a couple of freezers on the west side of the building. There is vegetation there between the neighboring property that may shield it somewhat and it is set back from the street. They also want to put a dump enclosure there. There is an existing drive lane to the rear of the building located on the west side, but they do not intend to maintain it for a number of reasons. The walk-in freezers would be accessed from inside the building.

The building on Morris Street has a garage door which currently has parking in front of it and they would like to turn that into outdoor seating. The main construction is a breezeway between the front and rear building where restrooms and storage will be located. On the east and west side of this breezeway would be concrete pads for outdoor

seating and the eastern patio will be partially covered with an access door from the rear of the main building and a yard in the back for summer games.

The interior reconfiguration is a kitchen, serving area and table seating. The exterior siding will be similar to the surrounding properties and the colors will likely mirror the colors on the back and on the new structure. There is no intention of doing anything to the front façade of the building and the garage door would remain the same. There was an idea of possibly putting in a wall so the garage would only come down partway and having barstools on either side but this was not in the application.

Parking is an issue but the owner of the building also owns the building across the street which has parking. The idea is to likely take advantage of the in-lieu of fee and enter into a shared parking agreement, but they will maintain and upgrade the parking area in front of the building as an ADA accessible parking stall.

There was no public comment.

Public Hearing Closed at 6:36 PM.

Commissioner Hanneman asked if there were changes to the garage door if that would make any difference to what the commission was approving. Planner Davolio said that there are no changes proposed at this time but if there were to be significant changes in the future, the owner would need to back come before the commission.

A motion was made by Commissioner Dole to accept the staff report on LU21-09HDR Firehall Historic Design Review. Seconded by Commissioner Bradburn. Motion carried 4-0.

CLOSING COMMENTS:

Commissioner Hanneman asked if the commission could start meeting in person. Planner Davolio said that he is waiting for Council guidance in that regard.

Davolio said that he is starting to get a lot of requests from business owners not located on First Street for signage on First Street so he is going to be working with the Town Administrator to come up with some solutions that might provide better access to signage in a way that is attractive to the town as well.

With no further business Commissioner Hanneman moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:44 p.m. Seconded by Commissioner Dole. Motion carried unanimously.

Chair

Date