



PLANNING COMMISSION

Minutes of April 7, 2010

Members present: Chair Robert Martin, Vice Chair Michael Jones and Commissioners Laura Horsey, Christine Steel and Dean Wood

Members absent: None

Staff present: John Sonnen, Planning Director; Tom Soppe, Associate Planner; and William Monahan, City Attorney

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Martin called the Planning Commission meeting to order in the Council Chambers of City Hall at 7:30 p.m.

MINUTES

The Commissioners corrected the drafts. Then Horsey **moved** to accept the Minutes of February 3, 2010. Steel **seconded** the motion and it **passed** 4:0. Wood abstained. Horsey **moved** to accept the Minutes of February 17, 2010. Steel **seconded** the motion and it **passed** 3:0. Wood and Martin abstained. Horsey **moved** to accept the Minutes of March 3, 2010. Jones **seconded** the motion and it **passed** 4:0. Wood abstained.

PUBLIC COMMENTS (None)

PUBLIC HEARINGS

(Note: The staff reports and all related documents for the hearings are available through the Planning Department.)

DR-09-11/VAR-10-01, Design Review, Douglas Park, 2280 Rogue Way

Chair Martin opened the public hearing. Each of the Commissioners declared he/she had visited the site.

Staff Report

Tom Soppe presented the staff report (see Planning and Development Staff Report dated March 24, 2010). The site had been an open space tract within the Douglas Park PUD when the City purchased it for a new City park. Soppe discussed the proposed site plan, features and access for the new City park. The staff recommended requiring the entrance to be widened to 20 feet at the stem and requiring the rest of the driveway to be widened as much as possible,

up to 24 feet. During the questioning period, Soppe clarified there was no required setback between the paved area and the property line.

Applicant

Ken Worchester, Director, Parks and Recreation Department, testified that the applicant had worked with the neighbors and gained their support. The applicant could accept recommended Condition 4, but they believed it would make more sense to keep the driveway width a consistent 20 feet instead of varying it where possible to up to 24 feet. They believed the proposed width was adequate because they did not anticipate much drive-in traffic and the narrower width could help keep traffic speed down. They would consider the preferences of adjacent property owners when they landscaped the perimeter. During the questioning period, Worcester clarified that North Willamette Park had more parking spaces, but he observed that was more parking than that park actually needed. He clarified that the restrooms would be automatically locked and unlocked. The schedule would be based on anticipated hours of use. He suggested instead of requiring the driveways to be widened just to accommodate cars, it might be better to use the additional width for safe pedestrian access. He anticipated the applicant would install signs to prohibit on street parking if there were any street spaces close enough to affect the line of sight of drivers leaving the park.

Public Testimony

Matt Loun, 23710 Crystal Terr., asked the Planning Commission to authorize the park. During the questioning period he specified that his family would walk to the park.

Holly Miller, 2313 Haskins Rd., asked the Planning Commission to approve the requested variance because a narrower driveway and parking area would keep the park small and quiet and a good place for kids to play.

Diane Wustrack, 2900 Haskins Rd., asked the Commissioners to approve the variance because it was consistent with the applicable criteria and supported by the neighbors.

Jim Sechrist, 2405 Haskins Rd., supported granting the variance so kids could play in the park soon.

Kevin Sullivan, 2455 Haskins Rd., supported the application and related that his kids currently had to play in the street.

Bryan Epperson, 2332 Haskins, reasoned that approving the proposed driveway was common sense because most park users arrived there on foot and there would not be heavy vehicle traffic. He had created a website to offer information about the park and the neighbors had helped select the play structures.

Martin was concerned that in the future the applicant would be subjected to public pressure to use the new park as a practice field, and the traffic and noise would impact the neighborhood. He suggested adding a condition to address that. Worcester suggested wording the condition to specify that the City could not schedule practice time in the subject park. That way the City would not have to police young neighborhood kids and a neighborhood resident coach who walked across the street to practice. It was a small field that might only be large enough for little kids' soccer. The City would never put in permanent goal posts or a backstop. When Martin asked them the staff advised that another part of the code required a design review permit to add playing fields to a park. However, they suggested the following new Condition 5 and Worcester indicated the applicant would agree to it. "The City shall not schedule the open space as an available field for organized team athletic practice or games."

Alice Richmond, 3939 Parker Rd., testified that the park belonged to and benefited everyone in the City, not just the immediate neighbors. People would practice there. She supported approval.

Applicant rebuttal (None)

Deliberations / Motions

Chair Martin closed the public hearing. Planning staff related they had discussed allowing the driveway to be 20 feet wide along its entire length with the Engineering Department staff and they all agreed it could be. The Commissioners and the staff then revised Condition 4 as follows: "The driveway shall be designed to be 20 feet wide with no curbs within the stem connecting the site to Rogue Way, and containing curbs, except within the stem."

Re-open Public Hearing

Chair Martin reopened the public hearing and Worcester confirmed the applicant would agree with revised Condition 4.

Deliberations / Motions

Chair Martin closed the public hearing and polled the Commissioners. They were all in favor of having the new park. But Wood wanted assurance that people who parked on the street would not park too close to the access and block exiting drivers' line of sight. Steel indicated she could agree with the modification of driveway width because it was not a busy street. However, she was less inclined to support new Condition 5 to restrict scheduling of play on the site. Jones agreed that new Condition 5 might not be necessary. He commended the young citizens in the audience and their parents for choosing to come to the hearing. Horsey supported the variance because that plan discouraged people from making the open space area a drive-through. She was pleased that the applicant had involved the neighbors in the process. She could support either approach to driveway width in Condition 4. She leaned toward adding Condition 5 because that would help the City resist using the site as a practice field for organized sports.

Martin observed there was no opposition to the application and he commended the Parks Director for using a process that ended in consensus. He explained that he supported new Condition 5 because it was assurance that the use of the site would not change in the future to a practice field that would further impact the neighborhood. Even if the applicant forgot about it, others would remind them about it. Wood indicated that he was in favor of Condition 5 because using the site as an organized sports playing field would cause problems. Martin asked the staff to propose wording for new Condition 5 and they suggested the following: "The City shall not schedule the open space as an available field for organized athletic team practices or games. "

Jones **moved** to approve DR-09-11/VAR-10-01 subject to Conditions 1-3 listed in the staff report and the following:

- Modified Condition 4: The driveway shall be designed to be 20 feet wide with no curbs within the stem connecting the site to Rogue Way and containing curbs, except within the stem.
- New Condition 5: The City shall not schedule the open space as an available field for organized athletic team practices or games.

Wood **seconded** the motion and it **passed** 5:0.

ITEMS OF INTEREST FROM STAFF (None)

ITEMS OF INTEREST FROM THE PLANNING COMMISSION

The Commissioners directed the staff arrange for the next meeting agenda to show the CCI discussion would be general discussion and not limited to a few specific issues. The Commissioners recalled issues they had encountered during that night's hearing. Horsey suggested when they worked on the PUD code they review the history of the park in the Douglas Park PUD. Steel explained that she had expected the Commissioners to conduct a separate vote on the new condition because she would have voted against it. Monahan advised the important thing was that each Commissioner had an opportunity to express his/her positions on the proposed conditions before they voted on the whole package.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no other business, Chair Martin adjourned the Planning Commission meeting at 9:10 p.m.

APPROVED:



Robert Martin, Chair

5/5/2010

Date