



# Planning Department Newsletter

## 2010 YEAR IN REVIEW

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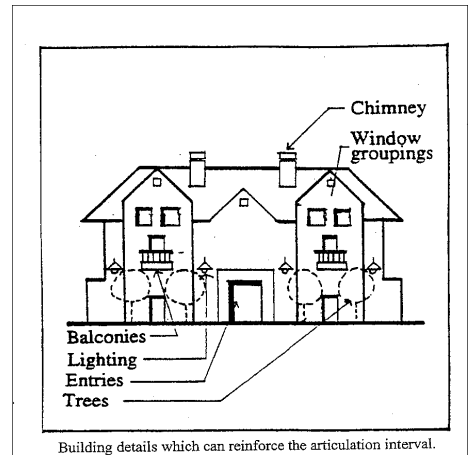
The last twelve months have been eventful for the planning department. Among other things, the agency administered a zone change proposal on College Hill that generated much interest, processed the first stage of a sizable annexation request north of Military Hill, and facilitated the opening of Pullman's largest retail establishment. This article presents a summary of planning department activity in 2010.

### College Hill Core Plan Implementation

Following the City Council's adoption of the College Hill Core Neighborhood Plan in November of 2009, the planning department acted to implement several aspects of the plan. One of the strategies in the document was to consider rezoning the College Hill Historic District, centered around the intersection of Monroe and Michigan Streets, from R2 Low Density Multi-Family Residential and R4 High Density Multi-Family Residential to RT Residential Transitional, which would have had the effect of lowering allowable housing density in the area. Planning staff began preparing background material for this matter in February. The Planning Commission then conducted a public hearing on this proposal over the course of three meetings on April 28, May 26, and June 23. At this hearing, the Commission accepted oral remarks from 33 individuals, and admitted a total of 43 exhibits. Proponents said the proposal would help maintain the quality of the

neighborhood by diminishing the potential for building alterations and demolitions. Opponents expressed concern that the zone change would create numerous nonconforming uses that would then be constrained by zoning code rules. The Commission concluded its proceedings by voting 6-1 to recommend denial of the rezone. In September, the City Council held its own public hearing to obtain additional citizen input. After accepting this input, the Council decided, in a 6-1 vote, to deny the proposed zone change.

A related strategy in the College Hill Core Neighborhood Plan involves the formulation of design standards for new construction in the area to improve compatibility between existing and new structures and to enhance the appearance of the neighborhood. The notion of design standards was mentioned during the Historic District rezone hearings as a means to upgrade College Hill without affecting allowable land uses. The



An example of a design standards graphic.

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Planning Commission held a public forum in July to listen to citizen comments on the subject, and it provided direction to planning staff in September regarding the basic parameters of the standards. Staff is currently conducting research on appropriate design provisions.

Another objective of the plan is to produce and distribute a welcoming pamphlet to each household in the College Hill Core to promote responsible living. Planning staff called a meeting of various College Hill stakeholders in July to discuss this matter. Based on input from these stakeholders, staff from the planning department and administration office assembled the pamphlet (displayed in last month's Planning Department Newsletter). In the fall, planning staff worked with the SAE fraternity to deliver copies of the pamphlet to each residence in the neighborhood.

### Providing for Future Growth

In 2010, the planning department administered several projects related to future growth of the community. In July, planning staff started processing the Mader North Annexation proposal, submitted by Steve Mader, which involves approximately 510 acres of land north of Military Hill. The proposal was accepted by both the Planning Commission and City Council, but Mr. Mader then learned that he did not control the necessary percentage of assessed value of the property to advance the proposal to the next stage of the review process. So, he filed his annexation application anew under a different method in October. As with the original request, this proposal was accepted by the Planning Commission and City Council. Mr. Mader is currently preparing a formal petition to fulfill the final requirements of his annexation application.



The proposed Mader North Annexation encompasses land on both sides of Albion Road.

In March, the City Council approved an annexation of 37 acres located north of Old Wawawai Road and west of Big Sky Court. Most of this land is owned by the Hinrichs family, although the property does include the Radio Palouse, Inc. radio station. This annexation eliminated what was a "peninsula" of county land surrounded by the city limits on 97 percent of its boundaries. Another noteworthy aspect of this proposal was the length of time it took to accomplish. The petitioners submitted their original application back in November of 2004, and because of a variety of factors (including property ownership issues and difficulties encountered in creating accurate legal descriptions), they were not able to complete the process until this year.

Over the past few years, the planning department has been reevaluating Pullman's urban growth area map at the request of the City Council to ensure that there is sufficient land available for future city expansion. Work continued on this project during 2010. In October and November, the Planning Commission reviewed updated versions of the proposed urban growth area map for the year 2060. This map, which was created to accommodate a projected population of 46,000, shows expansion of the community's growth area in a concentric pattern around all parts of the city. Planning staff anticipates a Planning Commission public hearing on this proposal early in 2011.

In a related matter, Whitman County officials submitted a proposal to the city in February that would establish a tax sharing area encompassing certain properties outside the current city limits. Within this area, new sales tax revenue from commercial retail sales would be split 50/50 by the city and county, as opposed to the current arrangement that furnishes 100 percent of sales tax revenue to the county for land outside the city limits and provides for an 85/15 city/county revenue split for land inside the city limits. The City Council reviewed the county's proposal at two separate meetings in March. More discussion on this matter is expected in 2011.

### Development Activity

The big news in local real estate development for 2010 was the opening of the Walmart Supercenter on October 27. The building permit for the 155,000-

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square-foot store on Bishop Boulevard was issued in December of 2009. Contractors took advantage of last year's mild winter to complete this major project in a timely fashion. The original application materials for this development were submitted to the city in October of 2004. Several appeals and project revisions delayed the construction of the facility.



Since its opening in October, the Walmart Supercenter has seen a steady flow of customers.

Other significant commercial development in 2010 came in the form of remodels. Dissmore's grocery store conducted a \$180,000 interior remodel early in the year. Rolling Hills Eye Care relocated from downtown to North Grand Avenue with the help of a \$160,000 upgrade. The Wysup auto dealership on South Grand Avenue expanded its showroom with an investment of \$125,000. Also, the Valhalla Tavern on Colorado Street performed a \$129,000 remodel.

On the residential side, the city issued permits for 35 single family houses in 2010 (as of the date of this writing). Permits were also issued for 28 multi-family residences (including the 26-unit Tomason Place apartment building on NE Terre View Drive). The total number of permitted residential units in 2010 was 66, which exceeds the city's 2009 total by one. Total valuation of all permits issued in 2010 (again, as of this writing) was \$16.9 million. Total valuation for permits in 2009 was \$28.9 million (which included the \$12.5 million valuation for the Walmart Supercenter).

Currently, the planning department is reviewing site plan applications for two hotel projects (an addition to the Hilltop Inn on Olsen Street and a new Hampton Inn on Fairmount Drive) and a proposed multi-family development (another 26-unit structure in the Tomason Place apartment complex). In September, the City Council approved a zone change

from industrial to residential for 38.5 acres of land owned by Schweitzer Engineering Laboratories south of the Port of Whitman County Industrial Park to provide for future housing. And, in October, the Council approved a rezone from WSU to commercial for 7.5 acres of property on North Fairway Road to allow for development of a new hotel and conference facility on the WSU campus.

### Historic Preservation

On December 7, the City Council approved an ordinance to establish a Certified Local Government (CLG) program for historic preservation. This program, created by the U.S. Congress in 1966, involves a federal/state/local partnership that provides financial support, technical assistance, and regulatory control for the purpose of preserving historic resources in a city or county. The city has been working to develop this program for the past couple years. The basic elements of a CLG system are a local Historic Preservation Commission (HPC), a Local Register of Historic Places, architectural design review standards for construction activity on Local Register properties, special property tax valuation for authorized historic property improvements, and various reporting and educational activities. Mayor Glenn Johnson is currently recruiting citizens to serve as members of the HPC. If you have an interest in participating on this committee, please contact the mayor's office.

### Counting Population

In each year that ends in zero, the U.S. Census Bureau conducts its decennial count of every resident in the United States and Puerto Rico. Leading up to Census Day in 2010, the planning department assisted the Census Bureau by providing a complete listing of local addresses, furnishing an update on city limit boundaries, and promoting full participation in the event. Official Census numbers for Pullman have yet to be supplied, but they are expected soon.

Meanwhile, planning staff conducted its annual population estimate activities in April as required by law. Until the Census data is released, the city's official population count for 2010 is 27,920.



## Pending Land Use Proposals

Displayed below are land use applications submitted to the planning or public works department or city-generated proposals for planning provisions that require a public meeting, public notice, or site plan review in accordance with the city code.

PROJECT	DESCRIPTION	LOCATION	STATUS
Certified Local Government Program	establish historic preservation program for community	Citywide	CC approved ordinance 12/7; city recruiting historic preservation commission members; staff assembling CLG application materials
College Hill Architectural Design Standards	formulate design standards for new construction	College Hill Core	PC public forum held 7/28; PC meeting to set direction held 9/22; staff preparing draft standards
City Urban Growth Area Expansion	expand urban growth area to accommodate future growth	greater Pullman area	PC public forum held 4/29/09; PC meetings to provide direction held 7/22/09, 10/27/10, and 11/17/10; PC hearing to be scheduled for early 2011
Mader North Annexation	annex 510 acres to city	north of Military Hill between Palouse Highway and Brayton Road	PC recommended approval on 10/27; CC accepted proposal on 11/15; awaiting petition from applicant
Duprel Zone Change (Z-10-6)	rezone 16,700 square feet of land from C3 to R2	730 and 732 NW Ritchie Street	staff reviewing application
Beasley Apartments Conditional Use Permit (C-10-2)	develop two buildings with 14 dwelling units each in R2 zone	210 NW Terre View Drive	staff reviewing application
Hilltop Inn Addition site plan (10-7)	demolish Hilltop Restaurant and construct 54-room addition to existing motel	928 NW Olsen Street	staff requested applicant to revise site plan
Tomason Place Apartments Phase II site plan (10-10)	develop 26-unit apartment building on 3.2-acre parcel	555 NE Terre View Drive	staff reviewing revised site plan application
Hampton Inn Hotel site plan (10-11)	construct 93-room hotel on 4.3-acre site	785 SE Fairmount Drive	staff requested applicant to revise site plan

KEY TO ZONING DISTRICTS: R1 Single Family Residential; RT Residential Transitional; R2 Low Density Multi-Family Residential; R3 Medium Density Multi-Family Residential; R4 High Density Multi-Family Residential; C1 Neighborhood Commercial; C2 Central Business District; C3 General Commercial; I1 Light Industrial; I2 Heavy Industrial; IRP Industrial Research Park; WSU Washington State University

KEY TO ABBREVIATIONS: CC: City Council; PC: Planning Commission; BOA: Board of Adjustment; DOE: State Department of Ecology; LC: Landmarks Commission

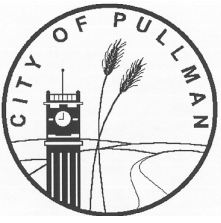


NOTES: 1) If an applicant fails to act on a pending application for a period of six months, said application will be dropped from the above list. 2) Numbers in parentheses are planning staff's internal file numbers. 3) Site plan review by city staff is generally conducted for proposed construction of developments other than single family homes, duplexes, or manufactured homes; it does not apply to most construction on the WSU campus.

## HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

**Season's Greetings from all of us here at the Pullman planning department! We wish you and yours all the best as we celebrate the holidays. We look forward to another fulfilling year for local planning in 2011, and we will keep you informed of our activities in each edition of this newsletter.**





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