



Planning Department Newsletter

2015 IN HINDSIGHT

Inside this issue:

*Pending Land Use
Proposals* 6

The planning department engaged in a wide variety of activities during the past 365 days. This edition of the newsletter is devoted to a summary of goings-on in the department during 2015.

Land Use Development

After successive record-setting years in 2013 and 2014, building permit activity in Pullman was reduced somewhat this year. The total value for all 2015 permits issued thus far is \$45.9 million. The average total value annually over the past 20 years was \$39.1 million. The total value of permits in 2013 and 2014 was \$75.8 million and \$98.7 million, respectively.

A significant change in the city's permit system occurred in July of this year when the city started to issue permits for developments on the Washington State University campus. In all, the city issued 11 permits for WSU projects valued at \$6.0 million, including a \$2.0 million annual permit for smaller, miscellaneous undertakings. The most extensive project permitted on campus was the renovation of Troy Hall, valued at \$2.6 million.

Residential construction in the community was solid this year. So far, the city has issued permits for 50 single

family homes and 126 apartments. The average number of single family houses and apartments permitted each year for the past 20 years was 60 and 136, respectively. The bulk of the apartments were added at the Golden Hills complex at Old Wawawai Road (60 dwellings permitted) and The Flats at Terre View development on NE Terre View Drive (42 dwellings permitted).



At \$2.6 million, the improvement project at Troy Hall on the WSU campus had the highest value of any single permit issued in 2015.

The extent of commercial projects in the community was much less than previous years. Valuation of commercial construction topped \$15 million each year from 2011 to 2014, but in 2015, the value of all business-related permits issued thus far is only \$3.9 million. The total number of commercial permits issued this year were about the same as in previous years, but the jobs were generally smaller in nature. The commercial project with the highest

permit value in 2015 was the construction of a new hangar at the airport for Schweitzer Engineering Laboratories, Inc. (SEL) at \$997,000. Other notable commercial permits issued in 2015 involved a major interior and exterior remodel at SEL’s building at 2270 Hopkins Court (\$880,000), repair of fire damage at the Planned Parenthood structure on King Drive (\$460,000), and an addition to an existing SEL hangar at the airport (\$300,000).

Only one subdivision was submitted for review this year. The Whispering Hills West 2.0 preliminary plat, which will provide 59 residential lots on 17.1 acres near Old Wawawai Road, was approved by the City Council in March.

The department reviewed 21 site plan applications in 2015. (Site plan applications are required for major residential and commercial proposals in the community.) Site plans currently under review include the Courtyard at Marriott Hotel at North Fairway Road on the WSU campus (involving 122 guest rooms and a restaurant), a new building at the Hilltop Inn on Olsen Street (which would contain three offices and 28 additional living units), another hangar for a private individual at the airport, and a major parking lot addition for Decagon Devices, Inc. in the Port of Whitman County Industrial Park.

City Population

In June, the Washington State Office of Financial Management (OFM) announced that the official population estimate for Pullman is 32,110. This is



Pullman is one of the fastest growing cities in eastern Washington.

the highest population figure ever recorded for the city, demonstrating that the community is continuing its steady growth. The estimate was determined by OFM based on information provided by the planning department.

Pullman’s 2015 population figure represents a 7.8 percent increase over the city’s 2010 census count (29,799). Of the larger cities in Washington state (the 37 municipalities which each contain more than 30,000 people), Pullman ranks 13th in population growth rate over the past five years. With regard to the larger cities in eastern Washington, Pullman ranks third in population growth rate behind Pasco and Richland.

Comprehensive Plan Revision

With respect to the ongoing Comprehensive Plan update, the planning department made progress this year despite some unexpected setbacks. In February, a selection panel formulated by the department chose David Evans and Associates, Inc. (DEA) as the preferred consultant to assist with the plan revision. The Council confirmed this decision in March by approving a pertinent agreement with the company.

In April, the Planning Commission conducted a workshop with DEA project manager Lisa Key to discuss issues and opportunities for the community. In June, the Planning Commission and Historic Preservation Commission held another workshop with Ms. Key to talk about proposed goals and policies for the city, building on the results of the neighborhood meetings and Planning Commission public forums conducted in the fall of 2014.

During the summer, DEA informed the planning department that Ms. Key had departed the firm. Over the next couple months, the company rearranged its personnel to address the city’s plan revision tasks. The new project manager is Ken Geibel, Senior Civil Engineer, who works in DEA’s Spokane office. The new planning professional assigned to the job is Gigi Cooper, Senior Planner, from DEA’s Portland office.

Since the transition to these new staff members at DEA created a delay in the process, the planning department worked with the consultant to assemble an amended schedule for finishing the draft

Comprehensive Plan. The original schedule involved completion of the draft plan in April of 2016; the revised schedule shows the conclusion of the draft plan in October of 2016. The Planning Commission endorsed this amended schedule at its meeting last month.

Currently, planning staff is working with the consultant to develop draft documents related to existing conditions and future projections for the community, and proposed goals and policies for Pullman. These documents will be presented to the citizenry for review and comment at public workshops to be conducted over the next few months.

Shoreline Master Program Update

Throughout 2015, the planning department continued to advance on the city’s update of its 1974 Shoreline Master Program (SMP), designed to promote appropriate activities along the South Fork of the Palouse River. With the assistance of a consultant team (The Watershed Company from Kirkland and BERK Consulting, Inc. of Seattle), the city has engaged in this state-mandated project as a cooperative venture with Whitman County and some of the smaller towns in the county.

Following a November 2014 open house conducted at City Hall to obtain public feedback on local shoreline issues, the consultants produced a complete draft SMP update for Pullman. In March, the Planning Commission entertained a presentation



The Shoreline Master Program divides the city’s applicable shorelines into various “environment designations” depending on their characteristics.

on the draft document by the consultants, and discussed some of the particulars with staff from the consultant team and the Washington State Department of Ecology (DOE). In July, the Commission held a public hearing on the proposed SMP. After accepting comments from two citizens, the Commission recommended approval of the document with minor amendments.

The City Council conducted its preliminary review of the draft SMP at a meeting in mid-August. Representatives from the two consulting firms were in attendance at the session to provide an overview of the shoreline planning process and the provisions of Pullman’s proposed SMP. When the consultants completed their summary, Council members expressed satisfaction with the status of the project.

After the August Council meeting, the consultants transmitted the draft SMP to the Department of Ecology for review. DOE staff requested several changes to the document, all of which were incorporated by the consultant team. Planning staff is currently reformatting the document to be consistent with the structure of the city code. Staff anticipates that the draft SMP update will be presented to the Council for final action by February of 2016.

Marijuana Facilities

Pullman’s first recreational marijuana retail store opened on Bishop Boulevard in October of 2014. The second retail shop started operations across the street in June, 2015. Earlier this month, the city issued a building permit to allow the installation of a modular structure in the same vicinity for the purpose of establishing a third marijuana retail store.

In April of this year, the state enacted a new law entitled the “Cannabis Patient Protection Act.” This legislation merges the largely unregulated medical marijuana system with the comprehensive regulatory framework established for recreational marijuana, and it requires licensed marijuana retailers to obtain a medical marijuana endorsement to sell medical-grade marijuana to qualifying patients and designated providers. To accommodate the need for marijuana shops that possess the medical marijuana endorsement, the Cannabis

Patient Protection Act requires the Washington State Liquor and Cannabis Board (LCB) to increase the maximum number of retail marijuana outlets in the state. The LCB announced two weeks ago that it would accept applications for a maximum of five marijuana store licenses in Pullman.

At a Council meeting in late October this year, city attorney Laura McAloon said it was likely the city would need to revise its current regulations concerning marijuana operations given the substantial changes set in motion by the Cannabis Patient Protection Act. She suggested the imposition of a six-month moratorium on the establishment of additional marijuana facilities in Pullman while city staff prepares the proposed code amendments. In November, the Council approved an ordinance adopting the moratorium. Planning staff will produce relevant draft provisions for review by the Planning Commission and City Council during the first few months of 2016.

Zoning Map Changes

This past year was a busy one for proposed changes to the city’s zoning map. In a typical year, the department processes one or two such proposals. During 2015, planning staff administered four zone change applications.

The first of these proposals was a request to rezone 1.8 acres next to the Cougar Ridge Apartment complex on NE Terre View Drive from R4 High Density Multi-Family Residential to C3 General

Commercial to allow the opportunity for small business operations in the midst of this dense residential neighborhood; the City Council approved this request in February. The second application involved an amendment from C3 to R3 Medium Density Multi-Family Residential for 1.8 acres on Stadium Way to accommodate the construction of new duplexes at the site of the former Divine Savior Lutheran Church, and the third proposal entailed a change from R2 Low Density Multi-Family Residential to C3 for 47.9 acres of land owned by SEL between Hickman Court and Eastgate Boulevard to permit future business operations there; the Council granted both of these applications in April. The fourth submittal was a proposed revision from C3 to R4 for 3,774 square feet of land occupied by a single family house on SW McKenzie Street for the stated purpose of obtaining a lower interest rate on a mortgage; citing insufficient grounds for a rezone, the Council denied this proposal in June.

Properties Added to Historic Register

During 2015, the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) added four properties to the Pullman Register of Historic Places. All four of these properties are currently occupied by single family homes. In February, the HPC acted upon the first three nominations. They involved the former Kappa Delta Sorority House at 520 Howard Street (built in 1924), the Drucker House at 965 B Street (built in 1927), and the Phelps House at 970 Monroe Street (constructed in 1919). In July, the HPC approved for listing the Zlatos House at 630 Garfield Street (built in 1925). With these additions, there are now seven properties on the Pullman Register. The sites previously listed were the former St. James Episcopal Church at 600 Oak Street, the Star Route and Palouse St. Brick Road on Maple and Palouse Streets, and the Pullman Veterans’ Memorial at the intersection of Main and Spring Streets. (The Star Route and Palouse St. Brick Road is also listed on the National Register of Historic Places.)

In 2015, the HPC also approved applications for changes to two local historic properties, noting that the proposed changes were in keeping with the



The City Council granted a rezone near the Cougar Ridge apartment complex to allow for commercial development there.

historic character of the buildings. The HPC issued “Certificates of Alteration” for the former St. James Episcopal Church to convert previous worship space into a six-bedroom apartment, and for the Zlatos House to renovate many of its exterior features.



In 2015, the HPC listed the Zlatos House on the local register, and granted the owner a certificate to conduct appropriate home improvements.

Committee Activities

Aside from those matters already mentioned above, the committees which assist the planning department engaged in a number of pursuits this year.

The Planning Commission held eight meetings in 2015. Early in the year, the committee was asked by a local business owner to initiate a zoning code amendment to allow commercial kennels in the C2 Central Business District zone; after accepting all input, the Commission decided to deny the request. Also, the panel recommended approval of a proposal to vacate 60 square feet of the Davis Way right-of-way near NW Olsen Street. In June, the Commission recommended approval of the proposed Capital Improvement Program and Transportation Improvement Program for Pullman. Last month, the committee reviewed the draft Center Street Speed Reduction and Safety Study, conducted an assessment of the status of the College Hill Core Neighborhood Plan, and participated in Open Public Meetings Act training.

The Historic Preservation Commission met on 10 occasions this year. At its opening session, the committee adopted its 2015 goals to promote historic preservation in the community. In the spring, the HPC helped prepare a grant application designed to formulate a mobile application for electronic devices that would supplement the information in a previously prepared brochure highlighting historic resources in the central part of town. Although the state turned down this application, the HPC decided later in the year to attempt to develop this mobile application by soliciting the assistance of a student intern. Also, early in the year, the committee met with city parks staff to discuss historic preservation interests in relation to Grand Avenue Greenway plans. Over the course of several meetings, the HPC worked to refine the nomination form for listing properties on the Pullman Register of Historic Places. Late in the year, the HPC considered the creation of historic markers for local heritage sites, and the committee completed Open Public Meetings Act training.

The Board of Adjustment met just twice during the year. All of the Board’s cases in 2015 involved zoning code variance requests. In July, the Board held three public hearings; it approved applications for a reduced front yard setback and expanded driveway for a proposed house on Granite Court on Military Hill, and for an oversized sign at Pullman Building Supply. The third hearing that month was postponed, and later cancelled, when the applicant withdrew her request involving a reduced setback for an animal pen on West Main Street. In December, the panel approved another variance, this one related to the expansion of a garage on NW Olsen Street. Like the other committees, the Board received Open Public Meetings Act training late in the year.

After another eventful year, the planning department looks forward to 2016 when it expects to complete several long-term projects and continually work to ensure that new development fits in comfortably with its surroundings. If you have any questions, comments, or suggestions along the way, please do not hesitate to contact us.



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
Comprehensive Plan Revision	full-scale revision of city's Comprehensive Plan	Citywide	PC and HPC workshop held 6/10/15; consultant preparing draft goals for public review
College Hill Design Standards	formulate design standards for new construction	College Hill Core	staff reviewing responses to recent stakeholder questionnaire
Shoreline Master Program Update	revise city's Shoreline Master Program in collaboration with Whitman County	Citywide	PC recommended approval 7/22/15; CC discussion held 8/18/15; CC final action scheduled for January
Harrington Garage Setback/Lot Coverage Variance (V-15-4)	expand garage resulting in 5-foot rear setback and 43 percent lot coverage	230 NW Olsen Street	BOA approved application 12/21/15
VanWinkle Animal Request (15-7)	keep up to 4 chickens on residential property	1115 SW Alvar Street	staff approved request 12/16/15
Storm Water LID Retrofits 2016 site plan (15-7)	add storm water treatment/control features to two parking lots	Neill Public Library (210 N. Grand Avenue) and South Street Lot (across from 775 SE South Street)	staff approved site plan 12/8/15
Glendimer Apartments site plan (15-8)	rebuild retaining walls and reconstruct parking area	125 NW Larry Drive	staff requested applicant to revise site plan
Decagon Devices Parking Lot Addition site plan (15-11)	establish off-site parking lot with 90 spaces	northeast side of NE Nelson Court	staff requested applicant to revise site plan
Coulter Airport Hangar site plan (15-13)	construct 4,800-square-foot hangar with attendant facilities	Pullman-Moscow Regional Airport	staff requested applicant to revise site plan
Campus Commons Maintenance Shop site plan (15-14)	build 525-square-foot shop at existing apartment complex	1920 NE Terre View Drive	staff requested applicant to revise site plan
TH Consulting Shop site plan (15-16)	install 1,440-square-foot modular building and attendant parking for recreational marijuana retail sales	1320 SE Bishop Boulevard	staff approved site plan 12/7/15
Hilltop Suites/Apartments site plan (15-18)	construct new building for 3 offices and 28 living units	310 NW Old Wawawai Road	staff awaiting complete application
Courtyard by Marriott Hotel site plan (15-19)	construct 122-room hotel with restaurant and meeting rooms	1295 NE North Fairway Road	staff requested applicant to revise site plan
Golden Hills Maintenance Shop Addition site plan (15-20)	build 230-square-foot addition to maintenance structure	260 NW Golden Hills Drive (Golden Hills Manufactured Home Park)	staff approved site plan 12/16/15
Rima RV/Boat Storage Lot site plan (15-21)	establish 21,000-square-foot RV storage lot	1200 Block of SE Johnson Avenue	staff reviewing 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; HPC: Historic Preservation Commission; DOE: State Department of Ecology; DAHP: State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation

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.





*Planning Department
325 SE Paradise St.
Pullman, WA 99163*

Phone: 509-338-3213

Fax: 509-338-3282

Email: bethany.johnson@pullman-wa.gov

Pullman Planning Department Staff:

Pete Dickinson, Planning Director
Jason Radtke, Assistant Planner
Bethany Johnson, Public Works Administrative
Assistant
Tana Crawford, Public Works Administrative
Specialist

Planning Commission Members:

John Anderson, Vice-Chair
Brent Carper
Cheryl Clancy
Chris Clark
Marcus Crossler
Norma Crow
Dave Gibney, Chair
Liza Morris
Scott Vik

This newsletter is an occasional and voluntary publication of the planning department and does not take the place of official notices required by law. Information provided in this newsletter is subject to change. Please contact the planning department or review official notices distributed by the city to confirm the information contained herein.

For any readers who are not currently receiving this newsletter by email and who wish to register for this service, please contact the planning department for assistance.

WE'RE ON THE WEB!

WWW.PULLMAN-WA.GOV
