

CITY OF PORT ORCHARD

Planning Commission Minutes

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Planning Commission Meeting Minutes January 22, 2008

COMMISSIONERS:

Present: Chairman Gil Michael, Stephanie Bailey, Tim Drury, Noel Larsen, Kim Ruona, Annette Stewart.
Absent: Bek Ashby.

STAFF PRESENT:

Assistant Planner Tom Bonsell.

CALL TO ORDER:

Chairman Michael called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

AUDIENCE COMMENTS:

James Weaver introduced himself to the Planning Commission. He will be taking the position as the City Development Director on February 4th. He's worked with Mayor Coppola previously for three years on the South Kitsap Sub-Area Plan, which would be intended to serve as a foundation for the Port Orchard Comprehensive Plan Update. He has served as Senior Planner for long-range planning for Kitsap County, where his role was to coordinate efforts with the adjacent jurisdictions through comprehensive plans and inter-local agreements. He looks forward to working with Port Orchard Planning Commission.

OLD BUSINESS:

Public Meeting (continued):

A. Rezone (R-1166) and Conditional Use Permit (CUP 027-07). Applicant: Westland Keys, LLC. Location: Northeast side of Plisko Lane and north of Mile Hill Drive.

Assistant Planner Tom Bonsell stated that the applicant's property is currently zoned R4.5 and is requesting Commercial zoning. If approved, the zoning would match the Comprehensive Plan designation of Commercial. The 1.97 acre parcel is currently vacant, mostly pasture. The owner wants to use it for an equipment rental facility, which is currently located further up Mile Hill Drive. Equipment rental is conditionally allowed within Commercial zoning, which is the reason for the conditional use permit application. The plan calls for a 2-story structure with a 5,000 square-foot footprint, with additional 25' x 50' covered outdoor storage. An environmental determination of Mitigated Determination of Non-Significance (MDNS) was issued on December 08, 2007. Staff has concluded that all conditions have been met by the applicant.

Mark Kuhlman, Team4 Engineering, Project Engineer, stated the intention is to relocate an existing equipment rental business from Mile Hill Drive in Kitsap County, to this location within the Port Orchard city limits. Maintenance and repairs would also take place on site. The parcel has a Commercial Comprehensive Plan designation, which is the same for the surrounding properties. Although not all of the surrounding property is zoned Commercial, the applicant views their parcel as part of the Mile Hill Drive commercial corridor. The parcel fronts on Mile Hill Drive as well as Plisko Lane, but because of the grade, the access will be off Plisko.

Mr. Kuhlman stated the intention is to use landscaping for both a visual and audible buffer from the adjoining properties. The grading differential will also serve as a buffer.

Utilities will be provided by Port Orchard for water, and West Sound (formerly Karcher Creek) for sewer. Stormwater will be managed by construction of a bio swale, two detention ponds, and a treatment facility. Sewer will be pumped to Mitchell Avenue, where it will enter a gravity system.

Under conditions of approval for traffic and roads, the applicant will provide half-street frontage improvements including ADA-compliant access. City Engineer, Maher Abed, had included improvements to the southerly side of Plisko Lane as far as the entrance to the facility as a condition. Mr. Kuhlman made the case to Mr. Abed that frontage improvements were typically asked for on the applicant's side, not the opposite side, which in this case is a vacant lot. Normally that owner would provide frontage improvements as it's fare share of impact to the city. Additionally, existing improvements don't stay within the south side right-of-way, and the applicant would have no right to go into the other parcel to make improvements. Mr. Abed sent an email in which he agreed. Mr. Kuhlman therefore requested that condition #6 be reworded to say, "*Curb, gutter, and sidewalk on the east side of the intersection of Plisko Lane with Mile Hill Drive should be improved as proposed by the applicant with connecting handicapped access ramp*". The applicant will include parking along Plisko Lane along the fence in addition to on-site parking.

Planning Commission Chairman Gil Michael asked what elevations would be seen. Mr. Kuhlman stated that it would be the south and east faces. There would be a retaining wall of varying height which would serve somewhat as a visual barrier. The building would have metal siding above with other architectural covering on the first story. The upper story would house the rental floor office as well as party rentals.

Mr. Michael asked if they had considered orienting the building so that instead of being north-south, it would be east-west with the garage bays facing toward the service area in the back. Mr. Kuhlman stated the importance of being able to drive around the facility without needing to back up and turn around. If situated differently that would require multiple access points off Plisko Lane, which they wanted to avoid. The site plan presented provides the best layout for the need. It also follows the existing topography much better than alternatives that would require significant excavation. Mr. Michael stated that the priority with a conditional use permit is for the project to have minimal impact on the community and how it is viewed from the street. He did not think that the nature of the site would allow landscaping to fully screen the facility from Mile Hill Drive. Someone driving by to downtown Port Orchard would be able to look down on it and see it. Mr. Kuhlman stated that their proposed orientation was intended to be sensitive to the surrounding area, with the garage bays facing existing commercial use (a mini-storage). He stated that as sited, the area is about 15' below street grade, with a relatively short distance to see it when passing. Mr. Michael disagreed, stating that the work area in front of the bays could be seen while sitting at the traffic light on Mile Hill Drive.

Tim Mears, property owner, stated that a lot of the work would happen inside with a 5,000-square-foot building, as compared to their present location where they only have 1,600 square-feet indoors. The covered outdoor space is in part intended to help screen the activities in the work area. He stated that they would be willing to extend the wall or provide additional landscaping. Planning Commissioner Tim Drury stated that a big wall might look worse. Mr. Bonsell stated that staff considered a wall and determined it was not the best way to go, that tall evergreens would be more suitable. Commissioner Ruona stated that the landscaping will screen it better than it is now.

Commissioner Stephanie Bailey asked about how the water would be handled from washing the equipment. Mr. Mears stated they provide "cradle-to-grave" handling. They use 1,000 gallon stacked tanks which are monitored and maintained similar to a hot tub. The dirt settles and the water is filtered and treated. The recycled wash water is emptied into the sewer every 1 – 2 months.

Ms. Bailey asked if everything was paved other than the storm ponds. Mr. Kuhlman stated there is a bio swale area and landscaped areas.

Lary Coppola, 103 Rockwell Avenue, Port Orchard, stated that he was concerned that the Planning Commission was trying to function as a design review board, which is not within the scope of review for a rezone and conditional use permit.

Ms. Bailey thought that condition #18 regarding wash runoff should match the wording of the SEPA mitigation #2. Mr. Bonsell stated that repeating identical conditions can be problematic in case of appeal. After discussion, it was decided to remove condition #18, as it was already stated in SEPA mitigation #2. Commissioner Ruona stated that Traffic/Roads/Building conditions should be renumbered to follow consecutively to the preceding ones.

Commissioner Drury made the motion to recommend that the City Council approve the Site-Specific Rezone (R-1166) for the Premier Rental project with the accompanying requested Conditional Use Permit (CUP 027-07) with the changes to conditions as stated. Commissioner Annette Stewart seconded the motion. Upon vote, the motion carried 4 – 0, with Commissioner Bailey abstaining because she was not at last month's meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

A. Selection of New Planning Commission Chairperson, and Vice-Chair.

Commissioner Bailey nominated Gil Michael as Planning Commission Chair. Commissioner Drury seconded. The vote in favor was unanimous, 5 – 0.

Commissioner Stewart nominated Tim Drury as Planning Commission Vice-Chair. Commissioner Bailey seconded. The vote in favor was 4 – 0, with Mr. Drury abstaining.

B. Discuss goals for 2008: Prioritizing reviews and updates.

Chairman Michael stated that he met with Mayor Coppola and they talked about goals for the Planning Commission.


Mr. Drury asked what the Hearing Examiner would do, and what would be the role of the Planning Commission. Mr. Weaver stated that the Hearing Examiner process is one that has been adopted by the County and most cities, and is viewed as being more streamlined in hearing land use cases. Also, if a case is appealed, it's been found to be a more substantial legal defense when an attorney (the Hearing Examiner) has determined the findings. Any land use application submitted prior to the beginning of the year has the option to vest under the old rules. If an applicant decides to do so, the case would come before the Planning Commission. Mr. Weaver stated that the Planning Commission would be tasked to help provide the vision, goals, and review of the Comprehensive Plan update this year. The Hearing Examiner process is seen as providing efficient government service, while allowing the Planning Commission to provide leadership and vision for the future. He stated that staff will create a draft outline and schedule for the Planning Commission goals and accomplishments for the upcoming year.


APPROVAL OF MINUTES – December 17th meeting:

Commissioner Stewart made the motion to approve the minutes of December 17, 2008. Commissioner Drury seconded the motion. Upon vote, motion carried unanimously, 5 – 0.

ADJOURN:

Chairman Michael adjourned the meeting at 8:23 p.m.


James Weaver, City Development Director


Gil Michael, Chairman