

**CITY OF COOS BAY**  
**PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES**  
**Wednesday, October 13, 2017 at 6:00 P.M.**  
**Coos Bay City Hall, 500 Central Avenue, Coos Bay**

**ATTENDANCE**

**COMMISSIONERS:** Chairman Rex Miller, Commissioners Jim Berg, Christine Coles, Chris Hood, Jeff Marineau and John Peery.

**STAFF:** Tom Dixon, Planning Administer  
Debbie Erler, Planner

**SIGNED-IN GUESTS:** None

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**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Approval of the Planning Commission minutes of September 20, 2017.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Coles – Approve the Planning Commission’s minutes of September 20, 2017 Planning Commission hearings as submitted.  
**SECOND:** Commissioner Hood  
**ABSTAIN:** Commissioner Berg and Peery  
**VOTE:** Unanimous

**CCI/PUBLIC COMMENTS** None

**PUBLIC HEARING**

**ITEM A: SITE PLAN REVIEW (SPR) #187-ZON17-055 - CONTINUED**

Improvements to the south side bleacher area of Marshfield High School’s Susick Stadium including: the installation of permanent seating, a roof cover over the spectator and bleachers area, a new press box, restrooms, a memorial plaza, and enhanced access for ADA mobility in the Urban Public district.

Chairman Miller opened the public hearing.

Planning Administrator Tom Dixon update the Planning Commission on the applicants request for an additional continuance. He read into the record the applicants submitted request for additional time for further assessment and related cost. They waived the 120-day land use decision time limit.

Chairman Miller closed the public hearing.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Coles – Continue the public hearing on Site Plan Review SPR #187-ZON17-055 to the November 14, 2017 public hearing before the Planning Commission.  
**SECOND:** Commissioner Marineau  
**VOTE:** Unanimous

**ITEM B: VACATION #187-ZON2017-062** The applicant is proposing to vacate the portion of Hemlock Avenue, located between US HWY 101 and the bay, found in Section 26BB, Township 25, Range 13 West of the Willamette Meridian, Coos County, Oregon.

Chairman Miller opened the public hearing.

Planner Debbie Erler read disclosure statement and summarized the applicants request and the Staff Report. She indicated that the Port of Coos Bay's Board meeting for October was canceled so the request will not be reviewed until their meeting on November 20, 2017. Ms. Erler stated the decision hearing before the City Council will also have to be moved to December 5, 2017 to accommodate that change.

Commissioner Hood asked if the vacation the right of way will in any way affect the ability to access the property. Ms. Erler stated that because of the railroad, access to the development will need to be approved by ODOT and the Port of Coos Bay. Site plans have not been submitted so we don't know where they are proposing their access.

The Planning Commission discussed that there may be a frontage road and that a section of the railroad may need to be relocated.

Annie Donnelly, 90962 Oxford Lane, Coos Bay, stated that access Front Street is off the highway at this location and she wanted to verify that the access to Front Street would not be affected by the proposed vacation. Ms. Erler stated that only Hemlock Avenue is proposed to be vacated and the access to Front Street at that location is HWY 101.

Steve Greif, member of the Coos History Museum, stated that when they vacated a portion of Fir Street they had to get signatures of surrounding property owners. He asked if that is the same process for this proposed vacation.

Ms. Erler stated that the CBMC offers two options for initiating a vacation. The first option is owner initiated and requires notarized signatures of all abutting and two-thirds of the affected area. The second option is City Council initiated and since the applicant owned the property on both sides of the proposed vacation and because of the possible benefits to the public through development of the site, the applicants request for the City Council to initiate the vacation to start the public process was approved.

Steve Grief, stated that the museum was not notified of this meeting for the "Front Street Plan" and as the City moves forward with the "Front Street Plan" that the stake holders are invited to participate in the process.

Commissioner Hood asked why the City Council choose to initiate this application. Ms. Erler stated that one reason is that the applicant owns the property on both sides of the vacation. Commissioner Marineau stated that it is his understand that the City is interested in assisting with the development of the area. Commissioner Berg stated that the City wants to see something happen.

Chairman Miller closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Hood stated that in the Staff Report there is a statement of finding and fact that indicates access to the waterfront area would still be available to the public to the north and south of the proposed vacation; and that the owner of the property intend to provide access to the waterfront as part of their future development. He said he is concerned that with the proposed vacation we are eliminating legal public access.

Commissioner Hood said he has seen in other areas that vacations done over time have eliminated public access to water for long distances and that is a concern to him. He stated that since is it a finding of fact, we should make it a condition of approval, that there be public access to waterfront from the property. He stated he just attended a meeting regarding updates the Coos Bay Estuary Management Plan and everyone's main concern was that public access to the bay be maintained. We have the opportunity to insure public access to the bay is maintained, through a condition of approval.

Commissioner Hood recommended an added condition of approval that "*Public access be provided to the waterfront as part of any future development to the satisfaction of the Planning Commission through the Site Plan Review process*".

Commissioner Berg stated he wants to be careful not to overburden a possible developer. Commissioner Hood stated the applicant has indicated a desire to provide public access. Commissioner Marienau stated that if the developer had any concern about what decision we would make, they should have been at the hearing.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Coles - Based on the Findings and Conclusions, and the applicant's submittal, attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference as Attachments A, recommend the City Council approve the Vacation application#187-ZON2017-062, subject to the following revised Conditions:

1. Prior to vacation of the proposed right-of-way, the Board of Commissioners for the International Port of Coos Bay must approve the vacation.
2. If needed, a perpetual, non-exclusive easement to construct, install, maintain, repair and replace existing utilities and all necessary appurtenances thereto on, under, over and across the vacated portion of Hemlock Avenue right-of-way.
3. Public access be provided to the waterfront as part of any future development to the satisfaction of the Planning Commission through the Site Plan Review process".

**SECOND:** Commissioner Marineau  
**VOTE:** Unanimous

**ITEM C: Adoption of the Front Street Action Plan #187-ZON17-065** The City of Coos Bay has initiated, as part of a Brownfield Grant through the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Front Street Action Plan (FSAP) which is intended to support and guide future re-development decisions along the City's core waterfront area.

Chairman Miller opened the public hearing.

Planning Administrator Tom Dixon outlined the Brownfield Grant process that has led to the "Front Street Action Plan". He summarized the goals of the plan through a Power Point Presentation. The City is proposing to adopted this plan as a policy plan and not part of the Comprehensive Plan. He said once the plan is adopted there are a variety of grants that the City can apply for to help facilitate development in the area.

Chris Hood asked about the storm drain system in the Front Street area and how many source points are there on the bay with outlets. Mr. Dixon said there are about six, but he does not know for sure. The Commission discussed the condition of the existing pipes and the impacts and cost of replacement.

Ralph Mohr, 1165 Ferguson Avenue, Coos Bay, representing Marshfield Sun Printing Museum, stated that he noticed that there is no mention of the Marshfield Sun Print Museum in the report. He said the printing museum has a similar status as the Coos History Museum and it should be listed as an opportunity site on page 11 of the report. He said the Marshfield Sun Building was built in 1911 which pre-dates almost everything on Front Street and it is on the list of Cultural Recourses in the Comprehensive Plan and is on the National Historical Register. He said that if you want to celebrate Front Street history this building should be included. He said the museum has been recognized as a major asset to the history and tourism in Coos Bay. He is asking that the Marshfield Sun Printing Museum be added as an opportunity site on page 11 of the report and as a Community Partner in the report on page 15.

Mr. Mohr stated he also represents the Boat Building Center and they have a couple point of interest in the Front Street area. He said they are happy to see the plan has a boat ramp next to the Coos Historic Museum. He added that Coos Bay currently does not have enough dock space from more than two tall ships to anchor at the Boardwalk. He recommends that when a new dock is built that it can accommodate at least one additional tall ship. They would like to see all the tall ships in Coos Bay next time. He said on the place identified for future light non-motorized crafts, he recommends you don't provide vehicle launch boat ramp or you will have every fisherman in the area parking there and no one else will be able to use the area, and you don't have enough parking. He said a possible slogan for the area could be "Walk the Working Waterfront of Coos Bay". In closing he pointed out that in the first bullet point on page 6 there is no verb in the first sentence and he wanted to know if anyone has considered a boat shed for the public to view historic boats on display. He knows of a couple boats that people would donate if we had a shelter to protect them.

Scott Timberlake, 1245 Embarcadero Circle, with Connect the Boardwalk, stated they don't have an active leadership at this time. He said he thinks at the north end of the boardwalk they need to put a stairway overpass with an ADA accelerator on both sides and do the same thing next to the paper museum because going over the railroad may be the cheapest and easiest.

Annie Donnelly, 90926 Oxford Lane, Coos Bay state that in the committee discussions they always came back to existing working business in the area, real people doing real things and that they need to be preserved and we need to keep them going. She said it is not possible to have a boardwalk completely along the waterfront because of the working waterfront. She added that when the State required the City to buy the Museum lot they had to provide a 16-foot public access walkway and they did not attach that same requirement to the Central Dock property, so it is good to have the proposed condition on the requested vacation.

Commissioner Hood stated that because the Action Plan is not part of the Comprehensive Plan it will be easier to revise and amend as needed. Mr. Dixon stated that as an adopted plan it would have to go through the Planning Commission and City Council for changes/amendments.

Commissioner Coles stated that about 20 years ago the design standards were initiated and nothing had ever happened. Having served on that committee and this committee she hopes it doesn't get shoved in a closet, but where does it blend with the current design standards.

Mr. Grief thanked the group that developed the plan, the first day that Annie Donnelly arrived and they talked about everything they wanted to see on Front Street, and they have found everything in this plan. He said they wanted the Museum to be more than a museum and more of a community center. More than 8,000 people have visited the museum's exhibits since January and that doesn't include people that have come for special events/meetings. Everyone one of the States has been represented, as well as, the District of Columbia and 22 countries. Even with the barriers mentioned in the report, with access being one of the main ones, 8,000 people have managed to get to the site (some with RV's and trailers). He said the biggest issue is connectivity, so please connect us to the Downtown core. He added that the Marshfield Sun Print Museum is another factor that makes the whole Front Street work. Our museum integrates with them, we have every 5<sup>th</sup> grader visit both museums. It has been highlighted on Portland TV stations and you have to include them in the plan. He said he agrees with Ralph about the boat launch not being a vehicle launch boat ramp. He also agrees with the Connect the Boardwalk Committee on bridging or bringing a light closer to provide easier pedestrians access to the waterfront. He said that bus companies want more businesses to visit when they come to the area, a lot of businesses benefit from their visits. Finally, the museum is listed three different ways in the report and he said they want to be known as the "Coos History Museum". Tourism is the way to go and they totally support this plan.

Chairman Miller closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Hood asked if there was any discussion during the process about the rail ceasing operation in Coos Bay and North Bend and starting on the North Spit. Commissioner Berg stated a lot of freight comes from south of Coos Bay and without that business the rail line become questionable. The Planning Commission discussed the railroad and the possibility of bridging over the railroad. Commissioner Berg described a couple local cases where bridging only worked if pedestrians had no other option but to use the overpass. Commissioner Coles said technology has changed and there may be other options. Commissioner Miller stated he recently rode the rail and it serves a ton of business. Someone from the audience stated you can't have a harbor without a railroad system.

**MOTION:** Commissioner Coles - Based on the Findings and Conclusions, and the applicant's submittal, attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference as Attachments A, recommend the City Council approve Adoption of the Front Street Action Plan #187-ZON17-065 the Front Street Action Plan, which is intended to support and guide future re-development decisions along the City's core waterfront area.

**SECOND:** Commissioner Peery

**VOTE:** Unanimous

### **ADMISTRATIVE**

Ms. Eler informed Planning Commissioner's Berg and Marineau that their terms will end in December and informed them that notice of the openings will be sent in November. She stated the vacant seat of Planning Commissioner Flores is now being advertised and will close on October 27<sup>th</sup>. She said Flapper's Coffee House is have their grand opening on October 25<sup>th</sup>, with ribbon cutting at 5:30 p.m. (flyers will be emailed).

**COMMISSION COMMENTS**

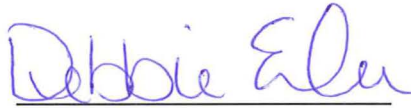
Commissioner Coles stated that the Coos Bay Parks Commission presented the "Parks Master Plan" to the City Council at their September 26<sup>th</sup> meeting and she will give a summary to the Planning Commission at the November 14<sup>th</sup> meeting. She gave the Commissioners a copy and directed them to the ten-year capital improvement plan on page 87. She said don't forget the second annual "Ghost and Grave Yard Tour" fundraiser for Coos Bay/North Bend.

**ADJOURNMENT**      7:41 p.m.



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Rex Miller, Chairman  
Planning Commission  
City of Coos Bay  
Coos County, Oregon

ATTEST:



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Debbie Erler, Planner

**APPROVED AS SUBMITTED NOVEMBER 14, 2017**