



Planning Commission Meeting Minutes January 9, 2023

Call to Order: 6:30 pm

Roll Call

Commissioners Present:

Eric Warnat, Commissioner
Melissa Toner, Commissioner
Patrick Hosterman, Commission Chair
Cody Davis, Commission
Justin Burns, Commission Vice-Chair
Jeff Wheatley, Commissioner

Staff Present:

Tansy Schroeder, City Planner
Audrey Rotrock, Associate Planner

Absent: Monae Birkhofer, Commissioner

Also known to be present: Merle Ash, Kevin Flynn, Kyle Schrader, Tim Schmitt (online), Rick (online)

Public Requests and Comments:

None

Approval of Minutes:

Approval of the minutes from the November 14, 2022 meeting were deferred to be reviewed in February. The minutes were sent out only two hours before the meeting and most Commissioners hadn't yet reviewed them.

New Business:

Election of Officers

At the first meeting of the year, the Planning Commission elects a new Chair and Vice Chair.

- Patrick Hosterman volunteered to continue to be the Chairperson and the Commissioners supported this unanimously.
- Cody Davis was nominated to be the Vice Chairperson and the Commissioners also supported this unanimously.

Money Savers Storage Site Development Public Meeting

The applicant is proposing to construct a 64,765 square foot self-storage facility consisting of 6 separate buildings including an office and caretaker residence. The project is located west of Florence Road and north of State Route 532. The site consists of four parcels for a total of 3.41 acres (148,539 square feet) zoned General Industrial (GI). The proposed development will include storm water management, landscaping, and street improvements. Please note; the Notice of Application incorrectly stated the proposal would be 118,761 square foot due to a typo on the submitted plans.

The applicant previously obtained an approved grading permit (22-0069) in order to bring in fill and elevate the property out of the floodplain for the eventual storage facility. The proposed self-storage use is a vested permitted use under the grading permit application. Frontage improvements are proposed along Florence Road and 270th Street NW. A 15' landscape strip buffers the two single-family residences



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located northwest of the proposed facility. The building design standards for the GI zoning district (SMC 17.112.040) shall apply.

The Commissioners support this project but also had the following questions and comments:

- What kinds of signs will be used for the site? There will be one wall sign and one monument sign. The wall sign will be visible from SR 532.
- Will the tree buffer along SR 532 be maintained? Yes, the developers are also hoping to work with WA DOT to replace some of the alders in the buffer with native species.
- What sort of colors will the building be painted? The developer will be painting the building with a neutral, muted color scheme.
- Make the color scheme fit in with the Downtown Revitalization and Twin City Mile projects.
- Go with a neutral color other than white for the roof. There is a chance it will turn gray/become an eyesore in a short period of time since the surrounding area is industrial and the project is located near the train tracks.
- Stanwood has a need for RV and boat storage.
- The storage facility is a good use of the land in this area/zone.
- Stormwater management will consist of bio-retention cells that treat runoff prior to discharging into Irvine Slough.
- The buildings will be one story.
- The main entrance will be off Florence Road.
- The project should be completed by late summer or early fall of 2023.

Nonconforming Signage Emergency Ordinance

The City has spent the last 20 years planning for the future of Stanwood and emphasizing the importance of economic development and business survival. Chapter 17.110 is the sign code for the City of Stanwood. This Chapter will be reviewed and updated during the Unified Development Code portion of the 2024 Municipal Code Update. Staff is proposing that the Council allow repair and maintenance of existing, nonconforming signs through the use of interim regulations. This emergency ordinance will allow Stanwood's business owners to make repairs to and maintain their existing signs from winter storm damage in a timely manner without having to wait for the Unified Development Code portion of the Code Update.

City Staff recently received the completed survey of the Twin City Mile. Up until this survey was complete, the City did not know where the Right-of-Way boundaries were. Due to not knowing where the Right-of-Way line was, in the past city officials told business owners to construct their signs setback inward from the back of the sidewalk. Business owners adhered to instruction from city staff and there are at least ten individual business signs that were permitted and constructed using the back of sidewalk as the right-of-way line. Now that staff is aware of where the actual Right-of-Way line is, many of these existing signs have been revealed to be constructed within city right of way. Under the existing sign code, any signs constructed in city right-of-way are required to be removed regardless if they were originally permitted. City Staff proposes amending the nonconforming sign section to allow maintenance and repair of legally existing nonconforming signs located in public right-of-way so long as the sign is not located in an area of vehicular travel.



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- The Commissioners agreed to move forward with the ordinance but want to ensure the property owners are well informed that the City may, at a point in the future, need to use the ROW for other purposes and their signs may have to be removed.

2022 Year in Review

During the 2021 / 2022 biennial budget years, the Community Development Departments workload included:

Parks:

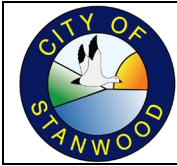
- Staffed the Park and Trails Advisory Committee (PTAC)
- Adopted the Church Creek Master Plan
- Obtained a grant and prepared design plans for the Stanwood Port Susan Trail
- Negotiated an agreement with PUD regarding tree replacement at Heritage Park for the Power Line Upgrade project
- Prepared and implemented the Park and Recreation Feasibility Study
- Purchased the Downtown Park and began site cleanup work

Long Range Planning:

- Staffed the Planning Commission
- Updated the Stanwood Municipal Code Permitted Use Matrix
- Updated the Park Impact Fee and Impact Fee Regulations
- Began the 2024 Comprehensive Plan update
- Began the Stanwood Municipal Code Update project
- Received a grant and prepared the Housing Needs Assessment
- Established and staffed the Comprehensive Plan / Municipal Code Advisory Group
- Prepared the 68th Avenue and 80th Avenue traffic studies
- Updated the North County Regional Fire Authority Interlocal Agreement
- Managed the City Hall / Police Station project
- Participated on the SR 532 Existing Conditions Study group with WSDOT

Economic Development/City Beautification:

- Staffed the Economic Development Board
- Implemented a new City banner program
- Installed 6 new banner poles in downtown (w/ Public Works)
- Installed wayfinding landscaping and community group signage at 72nd Avenue
- Entered into a partnership with the Stanwood Camano Arts Advocacy Commission
- Updated the Farmers Market Lease Agreement
- Established the Twin City Mile project concepts and staffed Steering Committee
- Designed the 88th Avenue Arch
- Prepared the first draft of the Storefront Improvement Program
- Staffed, processed, and managed approximately 20 special events



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- Supported business ribbon cutting events

Current Planning:

- Processed two final plat applications
- Processed two preliminary plat applications
- Processed the Kottsick Annexation
- Over the last two years the City has grown by 127 new single family and attached single family (townhouse) units and 161 multifamily units

Permit Activity Review:

The number of permits submitted per year reflects the Community Development Departments workload: each permit submitted is processed and reviewed by city planners, the building official and / or the City engineering team. The average number of permits submitted over the last 5-years is 463, with 2018 being the peak year at 596 permits and 2020, the first full year of the Covid-19 pandemic, being the lowest permit activity year at 330 permits. 2021 and 2022 were similar with 417 and 429 permits submitted per year.

The City also tracks the number of residential permits issued per year. Submitted and issued permits are not the same number as several permits cross over years between when they are submitted and when they are issued. 2022 had a significant decrease in the number of residential permits issued due to the lack of platted and available residential lots. 2023 will be a better reflection on the state of the economy as there are currently 263 lots in approved subdivisions or pending subdivision approval. There is also one large multi-family / mixed use application in the permit stage.

Residential units by type is another measurement of the City's growth and is used to track if the City is growing per the Comprehensive Plan growth targets. The following table shows the number of residential units by type issued over the last four years.

The following table represents the types of permits submitted by year.

- Building Permits: the city receives around 238 building permits per year – based on a 6-year average. In 2022 the city received slightly higher than the average. The most common building permit types fell into three categories: mechanical permits, single family residential permits, and plumbing / renovation / commercial permits.
- Land Use Permits: the city receives around 44 land use permits per year; floodplain permits are the most common requested land use permit.
- Engineering Permits: the City receives on average 65 engineering permits per year; right-of-way permits are the most common requested engineering permit.

The Commissioners were pleased to hear about all the hard work the Community Development Department has been doing.



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Old Business:

Economic Development Policy Review and Discussion

Comprehensive plan edits concentrate on simplifying the text, removing redundant policies and adding new policies addressing regional planning policies. More policies do not mean better policies. The Economic Development Element goals and policies listed below include four general changes:

- New – identified new regional or local policy gaps
- Revised – existing policies that can be revised to address policy gaps
- Moved – policies that have been moved from other sections to better flow
- Renumbered – existing policies that were renumbered based on added or deleted policies

The Commissioners approve of and are supportive of the changes made to the Economic Development Policy and find it is a better working document. They would also like to see the senior community represented in the policy as they are also an important part of Stanwood.

Miscellaneous Business:

Two virtual Open House meetings were held in December that discussed the proposed Mixed-Use zone in downtown and the Industrial Lands zone. Overall, the community was supportive of these changes.

Recent Council Action on Commission Items:

None

Upcoming Items:

- Commissioner position expirations and re-appointments.
- Municipal Code Titles 9 and 13.
- Comprehensive Plan – Land Use Element

Adjourn: 7:54 pm