

**PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES  
FOREST GROVE COMMUNITY AUDITORIUM**

September 19, 2016–7:00 P.M.

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**1. CALL TO ORDER:**

Chairman Beck called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

**Planning Commission Present:** Tom Beck, Sebastian B. Lawler, Lisa Nakajima, Phil Ruder and Hugo Rojas.

**Absent:** Carolyn Hymes (excused), Dale Smith (excused)

**Staff Present:** Jon Holan, Community Development Director; James Reitz, Senior Planner; Marcia Phillips, Assistant Recorder.

**2. PUBLIC MEETING:**

**2.1 PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD FOR NON-AGENDA ITEMS:** None.

**2.2 PUBLIC HEARING:**

**A. Conditional use permit for a special education center to provide vocational and life skills classes for young adults ages 18-21 at 2050 Douglas Street (Washington County tax lot 1S306BA00100).**

Chairman Beck opened the public hearing, and asked for disclosure of any conflicts of interest, ex-parte contacts, bias, or abstentions. There were none. He then called for the staff report.

Because the electronics in the public auditorium were not working, Mr. Reitz held up pictures of the site, and had the Commissioners refer to the same pictures in their packets. He said picture # 1 shows the building that sits on the corner of Douglas Street and 21<sup>st</sup> Avenue. He pointed out that there are accessibility ramps on three of the four corners of the intersection, but there is no ramp on the curb where this building is located. Reitz explained that pedestrian accessibility has become a priority to the City, and ramps are being picked up where possible, so one of the conditions of approval is that a curb ramp must be installed.

Mr. Reitz showed picture # 2 and explained that there is a drive approach in front of the building with no useful purpose (there are no bay doors). He said staff proposes the drive approach be removed and made smooth for pedestrians who may be walking, especially at night, and may not see the dip in the sidewalk. Reitz pointed out the utility pole to the left in the picture, and stated that it would be best to keep a distance from the pole and from the corner for clearance when planting street trees. He said there is 60 linear feet of frontage, and leaving a distance from the pole and corner, two street trees would fit.

Mr. Reitz showed picture # 3 (the rear of the building) and pointed out the two dumpsters. He explained that the second dumpster creeps down and blocks the pedestrian way. Reitz explained that any new project in the City is required to enclose dumpsters.

Mr. Reitz showed the last picture of the 21<sup>st</sup> Avenue frontage showing the fire hydrant that is not marked as a red zone. He explained that it is possible to have the loading/unloading zone on the 21<sup>st</sup> Avenue side, which would take up only one on-street parking space. On Douglas Street the loading zone would take up two on-street parking spaces, but handicapped students would have easier access to the front door of the building.

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Mr. Reitz explained that these students are 18-21 year olds who are not in high school any more, and this program has been in existence for a number of years at Tuality Medical Complex. He said there will be about 25 students who will walk to this facility or arrive by bus, and four staff people for a total of approximately 30 people present at one given time. Reitz stated there are four parking spaces at the rear of the building, but two more spaces could be made. He said school hours are 8am to 3pm, so the noise from the live band in the La Sierra restaurant should not conflict with school hours.

In response to a question from Chairman Beck, Mr. Reitz stated that because the students will not be driving, the parking requirements do not exceed the available parking.

Commissioners Ruder and Nakajima agreed that 21<sup>st</sup> Avenue is used for parking by Pacific University students, and is full of cars for one or two blocks.

Mr. Reitz said Pacific University has bought and demolished a house on Cedar Street, and their intent is to put in parking.

Commissioner Nakajima stated that area is totally packed. She said it would be good to look at the rear of the building to see if parking could be reconfigured for more parking.

Commissioner Lawler said the main parking lot is never full, and asked if parking spaces there could be designated for staff parking.

Chairman Beck explained that the Planning Commission has no control over that. He said we can only talk to the applicant about it. Beck suggested that 21<sup>st</sup> Avenue could be marked 2-hour parking, so staff and students do not park there all day. He pointed out that the sidewalk goes to the end of the building, and then ends. He asked if the sidewalk could be extended.

Mr. Reitz explained that this is a tenant improvement, and we need to keep in mind portionality.

Chairman Beck stated that the ramp on Cedar Street is essential, but he would rather spend the school's money paving the sidewalk on 21<sup>st</sup> Avenue than leveling the drive approach in front of the building.

**Brad Bafaro, Special Education Director for the School District, 2726 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Forest Grove, OR.** Mr. Bafaro stated that the operation was at the Tuality Medical Complex, but now has to find a new space. He said the property owner has agreed to remove one tree at the rear of the building to make an additional three spaces for staff parking, so staff does not have to park on the street. He explained that these transitional young adults do not drive. Bafaro said some of the students take TriMet, but most of them are dropped off in the morning around 9 a.m. and are picked up in the afternoon around 3:30 p.m. He said the school could live with a loading zone on 21<sup>st</sup> Avenue, but the further the students are dropped off from the front door, the more difficult it is for the handicapped. Bafaro said the school wants the drive approach leveled.

Chairman Beck stated that if the tree is a large and mature, he would rather leave the tree – it breaks up a long blank wall.

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Commissioner Lawler agreed that if it is a healthy tree, it should not be taken down.

Commissioner Ruder stated that there are three trees at the rear of the building, and the third tree is not that great looking.

In response to a question from Commissioner Lawler, Mr. Bafaro stated that the number of students reflects a five year average for the program.

In response to a question from Chairman Beck, Mr. Bafaro stated that the facility could handle 30-50 students. He said staff parking is less important to the school than where the students are dropped off.

Mr. Bafaro stated that the school would prefer that the students be dropped off on Douglas Street in front of the building instead of the students being dropped off on 21<sup>st</sup> Avenue and having to go around the building to get to the front door. In response to a question from the Commission, Mr. Bafaro explained that the owner of the building currently being used by the school plans to get rid of that building, which necessitates their move.

**Raeen Johnston, Director of the Forest Grove Senior Center, 2323 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Forest Grove, OR.** Ms. Johnston said she is concerned about parking. She stated that with Pacific University in full session, 21<sup>st</sup> Avenue is chock full of parked cars for two blocks. She explained that GroveLink needs to park their buses, and GroveLink uses the Senior Center's office space and uses the Center's water to wash the buses. Johnston explained that Senior Center staff tries to park as far away as possible to free up parking spaces near the Center for the older folks. She explained that when the special needs bus and the casino bus come, they double-park on the street while loading and unloading. Bafaro said Mondays are their worst day. She suggested the school load and unload on 21<sup>st</sup> Avenue.

In response to a question from the Commission, Mr. Bafaro said they currently have one student in a wheelchair.

Ms. Johnston stated her concern about seniors walking in the street to get to the Senior Center. She stated her concern about Pacific University students parking on the street, and wanted to ask if more parking could be made available. She was concerned that the school's loading zone would take up too much needed parking spaces.

Chairman Beck asked about a time restriction on parking.

Ms. Johnston said it only works if it is enforced, so it would work better if the loading zone was a loading zone all the time.

Commissioner Lawler asked if there was any way to condition the paving around the fire hydrant so it could be used for loading/unloading.

Commissioner Ruder stated that the loading zone on Douglas St. makes sense because the kids are unloaded near the front door, but it does not make sense on 21<sup>st</sup> Avenue.

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Ms. Johnston encouraged the City to go after the Pacific University students parking on Cedar St. and 21<sup>st</sup> Avenue.

Chairman Beck commented that it is human nature to park as close to the door as possible, so if designated parking spots are too far away they will not use them. He said there is nothing to do except post 2-hour parking and enforce it. This is the only way to get Pacific University students to park away from 21<sup>st</sup> Avenue.

**REBUTTAL:** The applicant said he saw no need for rebuttal.

Chairman Beck closed the public hearing at 7:53 p.m.

**COMMISSION DISCUSSION:**

Commissioner Lawler was concerned that the loading zone on Douglas Street wipes out two on-street parking spaces, and preferred the loading zone to be on 21<sup>st</sup> Avenue which wipes out only one on street parking space. He stated that until there are some major infrastructure improvements, the problem will not change.

Chairman Beck suggested that the Commission follow the staff report about the bus loading zone posted for morning and afternoon use only, encourage the City to post time restrictions for parking in this area, and ask the applicant to work with the owner to get three off-street parking spaces at the rear of the building.

Commissioner Ruder said it could be done if they would reline the rear parking area.

Chairman Beck said he was willing to leave it up to staff about whether or not the tree should be removed – it is an ugly building and he would prefer to keep the tree.

Mr. Reitz explained that he was scheduled to look at street trees tomorrow, and would add this one to the list. He stated that there is 60 linear feet of frontage, and allowing for the power pole and vision clearance, two street trees would fit.

Chairman Beck stated his concern that there needs to be room to unload kids, so only one tree should be planted.

Commissioner Nakajima said the fire hydrant looks great, but the curbs need to be painted red. She said there was a car parked in front of the fire hydrant that day.

In response to a question from Commissioner Ruder, Mr. Holan explained that timed parking should be addressed to the Traffic Control Review Committee (TCRB) through the City's Engineering Department.

Chairman Beck said parking should be timed along both sides of Douglas Street, and on one side of 21<sup>st</sup> Avenue.

Commissioner Nakajima restated that enforcement is the key.

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Mr. Reitz said he saw the parking officer writing tickets on University Avenue, and her comment was a \$15.00 parking ticket is not enough. He stated that the City is “booting” autos now for parking violations. Reitz commented that clientele with big front windows can keep an eye on the loading zone and call in violators.

Commissioner Nakajima said she thought it should be a loading zone all day from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Commissioner Ruder commented that the 2-hour parking limit on Douglas St. and 21<sup>st</sup> Avenue would make up for the two lost spaces for the loading zone.

Chairman Beck volunteered to “bulldog” the 2-hour parking with the TCRB.

Chairman Beck summarized the Commission’s amendments to the staff recommendation by stating the owner needs to supply three additional on-site parking spaces behind the building, there should be only one street tree planted, and the fire hydrant curb needs to be painted red.

Commissioner Nakajima made a motion to approve the conditional use permit for a special education center to provide vocational and life skills classes for young adults ages 18-21 at 2050 Douglas Street (Washington County tax lot 1S306BA00100) with amendments to staff’s recommendation as noted. Commissioner Lawler seconded. Motion passed 5-0.

**2.3 ACTION ITEMS:** None.

**2.4 WORK SESSION ITEMS:** None.

**3.0 BUSINESS MEETING:**

**3.1 APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** The minutes of the August 15, 2016 meeting were approved with one correction on Page # 5 of the spelling of Mr. Gutierrez’s name.

**3.2 REPORTS FROM COMMISSIONERS/SUBCOMMITTEES:** None.

**3.3 DIRECTOR’S REPORT:**

Mr. Holan said looking forward the next Commission meeting will be held on October 3<sup>rd</sup> and will be regarding the Parks & Recreation Master Plan. He said on October 17<sup>th</sup> the Commission will review at least one proposed grow site at the Matsushita building and perhaps another one near Saki One. He said on November 7<sup>th</sup> staff is targeting a work session on the Westside Planning Project about infrastructure and financing.

In response to a question from Chairman Beck, Mr. Holan reported on projects that had already been approved by the Commission. He said the Tokola project is waiting for an evaluation by BOLI regarding prevailing wage, but it is expected shortly. Holan said they will more than likely break ground this month or next. He said the Hawthorne Street apartments have submitted a grading permit application and an application for infrastructure. Holan said there has been no movement on the Gales Creek Terrace PRD.

**3.4 ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEXT MEETING:** Next meeting will be held on October 3, 2016 at

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7 p.m.

**3.5 ADJOURNMENT:** The meeting was adjourned at 8:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by:

Marcia Phillips

Planning Commission Coordinator