MINUTES
RICHLAND PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING No. 10-2014
Richland City Hall – 550 Swift Boulevard – Council Chamber
WEDNESDAY, October 22, 2014
7:00 PM

Call to Order:

Chairman Madsen called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM

Attendance:

Present: Commissioners Berkowitz, Boring, Clark, Wise and Chairman Madsen.

Also present were City Council Liaison Phil Lemley, Deputy City Manager Bill King, Parks and Recreation Senior Planner Dave Bryant, Development Services Manager Rick Simon and Senior Planner Aaron Lambert. Commissioner Wallner was excused.

Approval of Agenda:
Chairman Madsen presented the October 22, 2014 meeting agenda for approval.

The agenda was approved as presented.

Approval of Minutes
Chairman Madsen presented the meeting minutes of the September 24, 2014 regular meeting for approval.

A motion was made by Commissioner Berkowitz and seconded by Vice-Chair Boring to approve the meeting minutes of the August 27, 2014 regular meeting with the following change on page 7:

> Commissioner Jones suggested that Commissioner Wise use the new email system to provide the Commission a copy of the sustainability forum information.

THE MOTION CARRIED BY UNANIMOUS VOICE VOTE.

Public Comment

Chairman Madsen opened the public comment period at 7:03 PM.

Justin Raffa, 1214 Allen Avenue, introduced himself as one of three new Richland Arts Commissioners and asked that the Planning Commission consider opportunities for collaboration. The Arts Commission hoped to send one of their commissioners to

Planning Commission meetings to assist in working together for the betterment of the City.

Chairman Madsen closed the public comment period at 7:05 PM.

PUBLIC HEARING

Public Hearing Explanation: Mr. Lambert explained the public hearing notice and appeal process and asked Commissioners to identify any conflicts of interest, ex-parte contact or any other appearance of fairness issues.

New Business

1. **APPLICANT: CITY OF RICHLAND (SM1-2014)**

   APPROVAL OF A SHORELINE SUBSTANTIAL DEVELOPMENT PERMIT AUTHORIZING THE REMOVAL OF NON-NATIVE VEGETATION ALONG THE SHORELINE OF THE COLUMBIA RIVER. THE PROJECT WILL BE FIVE YEARS IN DURATION AND INCLUDES THE STABILIZATION OF ERODED RIVER BANK WITH ROCK RANGING FROM 1 – 4 INCH RIP RAP TO LARGE 2 – 4 FOOT DIAMETER BOULDERS ON THE WEST SHORELINE OF THE COLUMBIA RIVER FROM 486 TO 156 BRADLEY BOULEVARD.

Mr. Lambert presented the staff report for the five year removal project of non-native vegetation and stabilization of the river bank pointing out the affected locations on several digital maps and aerial photographs. He discussed the property zoning and agencies involved in the review.

Chairman Madsen opened the public hearing at 7:11 PM.

Applicant, Kevin Bond, Shiloh Inn General Manager, PO Box 475, asked for the specifics of the development plan. He was particularly interested in the removal and trimming of trees that obstruct the view from the Shiloh Inn.

Chairman Madsen, seeing no others who wished to speak, closed the public hearing at 7:13 PM.

Discussion:

Vice-Chair Boring requested that Mr. Bryant elaborate on the vegetation plan. **Mr. Bryant** explained the systematic removal of Russian Olive trees over a five year period. The Fish and Wildlife Department was an integral part of the planning process. Near the Shiloh, some trees would be cut at the trunk so the roots and bank would not be disturbed.

Vice-Chair Boring asked if the plan was intended to improve public access. **Mr. Bryant** stated that much of the bank would be too steep for public access and it was not part of the proposal. He described the effort of cleaning up invasive species such as the Russian Olive trees so other native trees would be able to grow. The plan included creating better view corridors without disturbing native vegetation. He assured the commissioners that if any ground vegetation were removed, it would be replaced with native vegetation.

Chairman Madsen informed Mr. Bond that he could access the staff report on the City website or contact Mr. Bryant for additional detail.

Commissioner Wise questioned if recommendations from the Department of Ecology and the Department of Fish and Wildlife were incorporated into the plan. **Mr. Lambert** recalled that the Department of Ecology had not given their final approval for vested rights to the property for the five year plan. He discussed specific trees and vegetation. **Mr. Lambert** noted that the Department of Ecology also desired a re-vegetation plan and that the steep slope was prohibitive to certain actions. Where possible, softer methods for the work would be used. **Mr. Bryant** discussed cutting trees at the trunk as they became dormant for the year to maximize their efforts.

Commissioner Wise expressed concern about the re-vegetation plan and methods and materials used, possible damage to habitat and desired a more thorough explanation. **Mr. Bryant** shared that in some areas there were limitations because of the steep bank, but they planned to review soil stabilization options with the help of the Corps of Engineers and the Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Commissioner Clark asked about erosion near the old landfill, the zoning designation and if there were plans for that area. **Mr. Lambert** stated that the property could be remediated and developed in the future. **Mr. King** informed that the landfill could not be built on in its current state, but staff was exploring a grant with the Department of Ecology to study the removal of the landfill. If successful, the study would occur next year.

Commissioner Berkowitz inquired how the shoreline plan would result in no loss of ecological function on the shoreline. **Mr. Lambert** stated that over time, the vegetation would be replaced with other native plants. However, during the five year period, there could be bare spots that would need time to grow.

Commissioner Berkowitz expressed concern over the lack of a plan to rebuild vegetation and cautioned that hydro-seeding hadn't been very successful in the past. She desired specifics on vegetation management for city parks and assumed this was the first portion of that plan. **Commissioner Berkowitz** noted the loss of the following functions with the removal of Russian Olive trees: food supply, shelter, shade and nesting areas. She believed the plan to be incomplete and requested additional

information. She also noted that Sumac was a native plant that should not be removed. **Mr. Bryant** stated that they could revise the plan which was originally drafted with and approved by the Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Department of Ecology and the Corps of Engineers ten years prior. Russian Olives were considered invasive and he believed their removal would allow other native trees to thrive and create a better habitat.

Chairman Madsen remarked that the plan would be hammered out with the help of the agencies mentioned above. **Mr. Bryant** concurred stating there would be many conditions and approvals required.

Commissioner Berkowitz remarked that the area in front of Bush Motors had been taken over by weeds after the Russian Olives were removed. **Mr. Bryant** pointed out the need for flexibility and sometimes trial and error to find the best solution. He stated his willingness to work with any suggestions that were offered and did not consider this to be a final plan. **Mr. Lambert** reminded all that the plan was intended to be flexible in order to provide the best possible product.

Chairman Madsen and **Mr. Bryant** briefly remarked that the vegetation near Bush Motors was removed without any kind of plan in place.

Vice-Chair Boring shared that she considers the plan a work in progress with trust placed in the various agencies involved. She was in favor of preserving the shoreline so it was not eroded to the point of being dangerous or unusable.

Chairman Madsen asked if there were opportunities for citizens to participate or observe future discussions for the plan. **Mr. Bryant** believed citizens could be involved and notification could be provided.

Commissioner Clark opined that removing the Russian Olives was an initial step and as long as they were in place, native vegetation would struggle to survive. He considered the no net loss concept a long term endeavor and offered his support of the project. **Commissioner Clark** expressed concern for the follow up activities after re-vegetation. He suggested the maintenance of those areas needed to be part of the initial plan rather than an afterthought. **Mr. Bryant** noted the concern and suggestion.

A motion was made by Vice-Chair Boring and seconded by Commissioner Clark to concur with the findings and conclusions set forth in Staff Report SMS1-2014 and approve a shoreline substantial development permit authorizing the shoreline stabilization and vegetation management plan as requested by the City of Richland Parks and Facilities Department subject to the conditions of approval included in Exhibit 1.

Discussion of the Motion:

Commissioner Berkowitz assumed the motion would pass and asked to be notified regarding any future discussions.

Commissioner Wise expressed mixed feelings about the proposal stating that management of the shoreline and enhancement of the view scape were necessary, but he desired a more comprehensive plan. He strongly preferred that the project was done right to avoid negative consequences.

Chairman Madsen concurred with Commissioner Wise and hoped the other agencies would contribute and that all would follow through so the end result was worthy of the effort. **Mr. Bryant** stated they would work closely with outside agencies to ensure the end result.

THE MOTION CARRIED 3-1 with Commissioner Berkowitz voting in opposition and Commissioner Wise abstaining.

2. **APPLICANT: PREMIER PREMIERE ORCHARDS, LLC (Z2014-108) CONSIDERATION OF APPROPRIATE ZONING FOR A PROPOSED ANNEXATION OF PROPERTY LOCATED EAST OF DALLAS ROAD AND SOUTH OF I-182**

Mr. Simon presented the staff report for the proposed annexation of approximately 15.6 acres along Dallas road, authorized by City Council. Staff recommends R-1-12 Single Family Residential zoning for the site that is designated as Low Density Residential under the current comprehensive plan designation.

Chairman Madsen opened the public hearing at 7:45 PM. With no one wishing to speak, the public hearing was closed at 7:46 PM.

Commissioner Wise asked if the annexation was part of a larger strategy for expansion. **Mr. Simon** responded that as part of the comprehensive plan the annexation was part of a larger land use strategy. However, there was no strategy in place as to the annexation of this particular parcel prior to another. Those decisions are determined by property owners.

Commissioner Clark inquired about the structures on the southern half of the property and how they would fit into the proposed zoning. **Mr. Simon** informed all that the structures supported orchard operations and management. Initially, the structures would be considered legal non-conforming uses with possible replacement in the future.

Vice-Chair Boring shared her support of the R-1-12 zoning for the purpose of consistency with the contiguous area.

A motion was made by Vice-Chair Boring and seconded by Commissioner Clark to concur with the findings and conclusions set forth in Staff Report (Z2014-108) and recommend to the City Council assignment of R-1-12 Single Family Residential zoning.

THE MOTION CARRIED 5-0.

Communications:

Mr. Simon

- Reminded all that the next regular meeting and workshop would be held on December 3rd and November 12th respectively.

Mr. Lambert

- Thanked Commissioners Boring and Madsen for stepping into leadership roles.

Mr. King

- Reminded all of the Sustainability Forum at the Convention Center in Kennewick on October 23rd. Several staff members planned to attend and he hoped some of the Planning Commissioners would as well.

Chairman Madsen

- Thanked all for their attendance and hoped each would thrive in their new roles.
- Hoped Ms. Wallner would get well soon.

Commissioner Wise

- Invited all to attend the Sustainability Forum with excellent speakers on the agenda.

Vice-Chair Boring

- Appreciated all for their attendance and participation.
- Noted that she would not be available for the November 12th workshop.

Commissioner Clark

- Requested information about sustainability requirements by the City.

Mr. Simon

- The City provides energy conservation programs, but there were no city wide sustainability requirements in place.

Mr. King

- Noted a Green Awards video excerpt, available on the website that recognized work done by the Timbers Apartments and highlighted Energy Services' conservation programs used.

Chairman Madsen

- Suggested re-doubling efforts to ensure meeting dates and times are properly published.
- Requested that anyone interested apply to the open Commissioner positions.

ADJOURNMENT:

The October 22, 2014 Richland Planning Commission Regular Meeting 10-2014 was adjourned at 7:57 PM. The next regular meeting of the Planning Commission will be held on December 3, 2014.

PREPARED BY: Penny Howard, Recorder, Planning and Development

REVIEWED BY: _____

Rick Simon, Secretary
Richland Planning Commission