

ELLENSBURG ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

**February 17, 2021 Regular Meeting
(5:17 p.m. to 6:32 p.m.)
Remote Meeting via Zoom**

Members Present: Kristine Steinkoenig, Andrea Sledge, Christina Wollman, James Rivard, Laura Busby, PJ MacPhaiden, and Annie Schlanger

Members Absent: Emily Jacobs (excused),

Also present: Nancy Lillquist, Council Liaison; Suzanne Noble, and Laura Wilson, Planner

Commissioner Wollman called the meeting to order at 5:17 p.m.

AGENDA

There were no changes to the agenda.

ELECTION OF NEW OFFICERS

Laura Wilson, Planner, explained the nomination process.

Motion

Commissioner Busby motioned to nominate Commissioner Wollman to serve as Chairperson for another year. Commissioner MacPhaiden seconded the motion. The motion passed with all in favor.

Motion

Commissioner Sledge nominated Commissioner Rivard to serve as Vice Chairperson. Commissioner Busby seconded the motion. The motion passed with all in favor.

MINUTES

Commissioner MacPhaiden moved to approve the December 16, 2020 Environmental Commission regular meeting minutes as presented. Commissioner Rivard seconded the motion. The motion passed with all in favor.

CITIZEN COMMENT

Suzanne Noble attended the meeting to introduce herself to the Commission. She stated she was a volunteer for the Ellensburg Glass Recycling Cooperative and wanted to know more about the Environmental Commission. There was a brief discussion about glass recycling efforts in the county.

NEW BUSINESS

P20-113 Bender Plat SEPA

Council Member Lillquist recused herself from the discussion and left the meeting.

Mrs. Wilson presented the Bender Plat SEPA. She gave a brief history of the project which included information on a pre-annexation agreement with the City. The agreement allowed residential densities of the three parcels to be consolidated onto on 4.5 acre parcel, this was in part because of possible wetlands and the airport overlay zone. The plat is for 49 lots; 47 lots on the 4.5 acre parcel and the two remaining parcels would be allowed to place one single family residence. Restrictive covenants will be recorded that limit density to one unit per parcel on the two larger parcels. The applicants proposed to building project in 3 phases. Mrs. Wilson briefed the commission on the comments received from Washington State Department of Historic Preservation (DAHP), Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW), Public Works, and Kittitas County PUD. DFW noted there wouldn't

be an impact on habitat but did caution the high water table. DAHP requested the owner have a cultural resources survey done on the property. When the first comment period the owner was given an opportunity to respond. The owner acknowledged the comments but declined to have a cultural resources done. Mrs. Wilson stated the SEPA was in its second comment period and several comments had been received. The comments were from the Yakima Nation requesting a cultural resources survey and the other comment was from Department of Ecology requesting more information on the presence of wetlands on the property. A preliminary MDNS was issued for this project.

There was a brief discussion on future development and future road extensions and connections to the East. Mrs. Wilson explained city code required connectivity to other roads. Commissioner Sledge asked for clarification on wetlands caused by irrigation and other wetlands and if there would be protection requirements. Mrs. Wilson referenced the wetland report submitted by the applicant and Department of Ecology's request of a wetland delineation and rating. There was some discussion on Department of Ecology's wetland rating system and how the delineation and rating would indicate if there was a presence of wetlands on the parcels. It was noted that city code would need to be followed if it were determined to be a wetland. There was a brief discussion that Bender was a non-motorized transportation route and the required bike lane as part of the half street improvement.

Motion

Commissioner Wollman motioned that the Environmental Commission encourage the City to require an additional wetlands study as recommended by the Department of Ecology. Commissioner MacPhaiden seconded the motion. The motion passed with all in favor.

P21-004 Meng Chou Mixed Use Building SEPA

Council Liaison Lillquist recused herself from the discussion and left the meeting.

Mrs. Wilson presented the Meng Chou Mixed Use Building SEPA.. She explained that staff was using the optional process which resulted in one comment period rather than two comment periods. She noted that staff received one comment so far from DAHP (Department of Historic Preservation). They had requested a survey to determine if the corner house could be eligible for the National Registry. Mrs. Wilson shared that Stacey Henderson, City of Ellensburg Historic Preservation Planner, acknowledged a significant amount of alterations had been made to the structure which may render it ineligible. The use will be mixed use to include retail on the main level and four dwelling units on the second level. All design standards of city code will be met..

There was a brief discussion on open space and the number of required parking spaces. The commission expressed concern with how much the site would be developed with parking. Mrs. Wilson clarified that the required number of spaces was dictated by city code, but only 9 or 10 parking spaces were on site and the rest would be street parking. The site would be required to provide open space, but the code allowed open space to be provided in a variety of ways such as private balconies or a common green space. The commissioners asked if allowing the interior materials to be recycled or salvaged could be an option. Mrs. Wilson shared that the owner had planned on donating the structures to the fire department for training, but the Environmental Commission could request the building materials be recycled or salvaged.

Motion

Commissioner Rivard moved that the Environmental Commission recommend the owner allow material salvage or pick up of materials of historical value or significance to other homes in the community. Commissioner MacPhaiden seconded the motion. The motion pass with all in favor.

BICYCLE ADVISORY

Council Member Lillquist provided an update to the Environmental Commission. She read an email from Josh Mattson, Assistant City Engineer, regarding the following projects the city is working on.

1. Design is complete on Helena Ave Complete Streets filling in sidewalk gaps on the north side. The

city is currently working to get full width of right of way. Hoping it will get built this year! This project will maintain the no parking area on the north side of the street (from Walnut to Water) and add sharrows to the wider traffic lanes.

2. Gateway I is nearing design completion. We are also hoping for this project to be built this year. It has a 12 foot wide shared use pathway on the south side from Wenas St to the Critter Care Animal Clinic.
3. We are planning to install sharrows on the Walnut St/Chestnut St bike route from Mountain View Ave to University Way.
4. Design will start soon for the Reconnect Trail section on Alder St from the PTC trailhead to Dean Nicholson. We are selecting a design consultant this week. This project will be built next year.
5. All new signals being installed have video detection, which includes bike detection. So far, this advanced detection is up and running at Vantage & Pfenning, Canyon & Umptanum, Main & Manitoba, Main & Capitol, Water & 15th, University & Wildcat, Wildcat & Dean Nicholson, and Walnut & 18th (phew!). This year we plan to install new or upgrade signals with the same advanced detection at Dolarway & 5th, University & Reecer, University & Main, Main & 5th, and Main & 3rd. Another signal is planned for 2022 at Alder St & Dean Nicholson with the Reconnect Trail project.
6. We are also hiring a consultant to update our Traffic Impact Fees. As part of this effort, we are going to ask the consultant how and if non-motorized projects can be included in the fee schedule.

STAFF UPDATE/DISCUSSION ITEMS

Mrs. Wilson informed the commission that she was drafting the 2021 Water Quality Grant for Mid-Columbia Fisheries. She reviewed past meeting minutes and noted there was a conversation about potentially forming a sub-committee to discuss conditions on the agreement regarding changes in thresholds on water quality grant agreements. Mrs. Wilson asked if the commission would like to form the sub-committee. The commission discussed forming the sub-committee, concluding one wasn't necessary. Discussion ensued regarding what percentage a budget line item could change before they would want to be informed.

Motion

Commissioner Busby moved that the Environmental Commission amend the agreement with Mid Columbia Fisheries to state that prior to making changes to their budget in more than 10% per line item, they will need to come back to the commission to approve and amend the agreement. Commissioner Sledge seconded the motion. Discussion on the language to be used for the motion, the commission will take the next month to work on the language and it will be voted on next month. Commissioner Busby tabled her motion.

Jill Scheffer wanted to inform the commission that their storage shed at Helen McCabe Park was broken into and equipment that was possibly purchased by grant money was stolen.

The meeting adjourned at 6:32 pm.

Respectfully Submitted by
Alicia Winbauer
Recording Secretary (Drafted 2/18/2021)