

A work session of the Astoria Common Council was held at the above place at the hour of 1:00 pm.

Councilors Present: Brownson, Herman, Rocka, West, and Mayor Jones.

Councilors Excused: None

Staff Present: City Manager Estes (via telephone), Finance Director Brooks, Public Works Director Harrington, Contract Planner Mike Morgan. The meeting is recorded and will be transcribed by ABC Transcription Services, Inc.

REGULAR AGENDA ITEMS

Item 3(a): Clatsop County Housing Study Update

Brendan Buckley, Johnson Economics, said he and Matt Hastie, Angelo Planning Group had been working together for the last year on the Clatsop County Housing Study. He provided details of the processes used to conduct the study which included events and meetings with the public and stakeholders to discuss interim findings as the study proceeded. The final documents, which included the Housing Strategies Report and three appendices, had already been submitted to the County.

Mr. Buckley and Matt Hastie, Angelo Planning Group presented the report via PowerPoint, focusing on Astoria and reviewing housing trends, projected housing needs, the current availability of residential land, identified issues and gaps, and strategies and recommendations. During the presentation, Mr. Buckley and Mr. Hastie answered clarifying questions from the Council about statistics included in the report.

The Council discussed the report with Mr. Buckley, Mr. Hastie, and Staff with the following key comments and considerations:

- Emerald Heights is a good source of land for future housing, however the current landowners may have no intention to develop their properties or make their properties part of an urban growth boundary (UGB). However, the existing UGB could be reconfigured using part of Emerald Heights and other outlying parcels. The City has had limited projects in the Astor East Urban Renewal District recently, so funds could be built up for bigger future projects. [
- Community land trusts might be interested in a development project in Astoria. In most cases, the trusts receive funds from the city in which they are working on specific projects. State funding is also typical.
- Reducing the cost of land for a developer is a huge incentive and each deal with developers can be different. In addition to reduced land cost, developers would also look for other sources of funding for affordable housing projects.
- Cottage cluster housing might be ideal in Mill Pond or at 8th and Irving. However, it is likely those neighborhoods would be opposed. Developers have said the property at 8th and Irving would be difficult and expensive to develop into multifamily housing. Previous issues with the lot resulted in involvement by the Land Use Board of Appeals (LUBA). And more recently, a developer decided not to pursue a project at Mill Pond due to opposition by the residents.
- Regulating short-term rentals should be considered separately from residential housing, especially with regard to the benefits to the community. The Council has to balance the community's desire to keep rentals out of neighborhoods with the need to provide housing.
- Accessory dwelling units (ADU) add housing units but create density and parking problems. Additionally, statistics show that ADUs do not provide the type of housing that is needed. They are expensive to build and make a minimal impact on available housing. However, ADUs are one tool in the toolbox.
- Incentivizing low-income units in multi-family developments should be done in partnership with a developer that commits to working with a non-profit to reduce costs and ensure the housing will be affordable over the long-term.
- Many of the recommendations in the study have been pursued by the City in the past. Mayor Jones believed the Council should revisit those options because they provide flexibility. The Council discussed the reasons that some of the options were not implemented. Moving forward will require compromises and the Council will need to be assertive with its proposals.
- While housing is needed in Astoria, new housing will continue to be attractive as second homes. However, incentivizing and/or supporting housing developments built by certain entities that are targeted to low- and moderate-income people can offset that.

- Councilor West was opposed to making codes more flexible because doing so would not address the issues enough. She believed working with non-profits would address housing on a large scale and the public would be more supportive.

City Manager Estes reminded that Council had already directed Staff to amend the ADU ordinance. Staff would like more work sessions to discuss uses in multi-family zones and other recommendations included in the housing study.

Mayor Jones called for a recess at 2:40 pm. The work session reconvened at 2:52 pm.

Item 3(b): Uniontown Reborn Project

Scott Richman Jacob's Engineering, Portland, explained that the Uniontown Reborn Project was an Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) and Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD) Transportation Growth Management (TGM) program project. He gave a PowerPoint presentation on the project, which included details of the project's objectives, timeline, and outreach efforts, as well as methods used to collect input from stakeholders and technical data and a map of the project area.

Mr. Richman and Matt Hastie, Angelo Planning Group, presented recommendations for land use, transportation, and public improvements via PowerPoint. During the presentation, they answered clarifying questions about how the codes would apply, data used in the traffic analysis, parking, pedestrian and bike safety, roadway improvements, and State requirements.

The Council, consultants, and Staff discussed the presentation and recommendations with the following key comments.

- Councilor Brownson was concerned about the availability of off-street parking. Staff said there were multiple opportunities for locating and getting urban renewal funds for parking areas.
- Access to the public restrooms at the Doughboy is tricky, but that has not been considered as part of the project. Renovation of the restrooms would likely require ADA upgrades through a partnership.
- Four-story housing along Marine Drive would be appropriate. Buildings up to 45 feet tall would not block views in this area. Additionally, the City could require that four-story buildings have residential units above the first floor.
 - The community has expressed concerns about new development, but people might be more accepting of mixed-use projects with housing, particularly if the project did not include a hotel.
- Much of the Gateway property is derelict and property owners do not want to sell or develop the properties likely because of environmental hazard issues. Staff explained that the City would have to acquire the gas station in order to widen Portway, which is a project identified in the Transportation System Plan (TSP). Staff also shared details about the TLC Credit Union site, which will be capped for parking by the Rivershore Hotel.
- Recommended improvements to Basin Street will facilitate left turns without interfering with pedestrian crossings.

Councilor Herman excused herself from the meeting at 3:52 pm.

Staff listed next steps, which were to hold the final advisory committee meeting, refine the recommendations, and schedule the public hearings with the Planning Commission and City Council. The master plan needs to be complete and adopted in September in order to meet funding obligations. Once the plan is adopted, Staff can begin working on the necessary code amendments and looking for funding mechanisms. The planning horizon timeline is tentative and projects could be built sooner than anticipated.

ADJOURNMENT

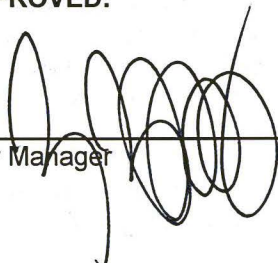
There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:10 pm.

ATTEST:



Finance Director

APPROVED:



City Manager