

## City of Oregon Planning Commission Meeting

The Planning Commission met Monday November 15<sup>th</sup>, 2022, at 5:30 pm.

**Members Present:** Rachel Brunner, Roger Cain, Randy Cropp, Jeff Hallock, Mark Herman, Rick Ryland, Karly Spell.

**Also, Present:** City Administrator Darin DeHaan, Merlin & Melissa Hagemann, City Clerk Cheryl Hilton, Fire Chief Mike Knoup, Commissioner Terry Schuster, and Mayor Ken Williams.

**Present Via Zoom:** Pat Boehler and Commissioner Kurt Wilson.

Chairman Mark Herman called the meeting to order.

Pat Boehler, from Glenwood Equities LLC, presented the Dollar General Project to the Planning Commission. She addressed concerns with the proposed look of the building. She said there have been many improvements to the initial plan including the addition of more windows, raised lettering, and split faced block for the exterior surface of the building. Mayor Ken Williams said this project will be at the entryway to the city from East Route 64 and will set the tone for future development in this area. He also asked about the proposed landscape plan for the project. Pat Boehler said the landscape plan will come after the approval of the project by Dollar General. Roger Cain asked who is purchasing the property and what will happen to the frontage road in front of this location. Pat Boehler said the property would be purchased by Glenwood Equities and leased to Dollar General. City Administrator Darin DeHaan said it may be time to improve the frontage road or abandon it entirely. Mark Herman asked if it was common for a community to have more than one Dollar General store. Pat Boehler said Dollar General does a lot of research before committing to a new project. Roger Cain said he would like to see the food options expanded and more fresh food options available like the Dollar General that is in Mt. Morris. Pat Boehler said the current Dollar General in Oregon is smaller than the proposed project and it would be possible to expand the grocery and food items available. City Administrator Darin DeHaan asked about the timeframe for the project. Pat Boehler said she would like to see approval of the plan from the city before they go any further. Mayor Ken Williams said the Economic Development Committee has also looked at the proposed project. He also stated the property would need to be annexed into city limits.

Mark Herman opened the public hearing at 5:53 pm. He stated the public hearing is regarding an increase in occupancy at River's Edge Experience. He asked if all public hearing requirements were met. City Clerk Cheryl Hilton said yes.

Mayor Ken Williams said the room being discussed is the North room in the building which is one large open room. He stated the request is for a variance because if the fire code were amended, any future buildings built would also be allowed to have the same occupancy numbers as River's Edge Experience but without the extensive passive fire control that Merlin Hagemann has put into place. He stated River's Edge Experience is an exception to what normally happens and would want any future buildings built to follow the current fire code and

have sprinkler systems. He stated the City of Oregon adopted the 2015 International Building Code in total. The city has approved variances to the code previously such as the Trestle Ridge fire lane variance. The variance also expires when the property is sold. He said River's Edge Experience has multiple reasons a variance should be allowed for an increase in occupancy which include multiple exits, firewall, no kitchen, no open flames, and no pyrotechnics, and the room has no hallways and direct access to exits on one floor. He also discussed Fire Chief Mike Knoup's concerns over bowstring roof trusses and presented case studies for the committee to review. Mayor Ken Williams said he relies on the members of the Planning Commission because they represent the people.

Fire Chief Mike Knoup also presented information to the Planning Commission for review. He stated the River's Edge property is an asset to the city. He said the fire code and life safety are his concern. He stated the code was created to save lives and the fire department does not feel occupancy loads should be increased, it is not worth the risk. He said a sprinkler system would protect the building and the occupants against a fire. He also stated that a lot of things were put in to protect the building such as a two-hour rated fire wall but that was to achieve the one-hundred-person occupancy.

Jeff Hallock stated the building being so close to the fire department is part of his consideration. Fire Chief Mike Knoup said they staff two firefighters at the station and others come from blocks or miles away. They also wait for other communities to help when needed. Chicago fire departments have many more resources. Melissa Hagemann said occupancy at the Cork & Tap is one-hundred and twenty-seven people for each floor. She said she can evacuate people much faster at the River's Edge location than at Cork & Tap. Mark Herman asked if the City of Oregon has ever overruled the code. Mayor Ken Williams said only the Trestle Ridge property to his knowledge. Roger Cain said there is a lot of egress at the River's Edge property. He is going to look at that when he makes his decision because all the examples and codes do not take into consideration the amount of egress. Terry Schuster said it seems there are some miscommunications and IBC creates a blanket set of rules and regulations that affects all buildings of a certain type without any regard to specific designs of the individual building. So, the city is willing to make a variance with specific design differences with this building as opposed to other buildings with the same function. He also asked what happens to the business if a variance is not recommended. Roger Cain said two hundred people can be in the building, one hundred per side. If a variance is approved, is Merlin Hagemann going to be able to get insurance for the building with the stance of the fire department. Fire Chief Mike Knoup said the fire department is open to other ideas that were engineered to meet the fire code such as sprinklers. Commissioner Kurt Wilson asked if three hundred occupancy included staff. Merlin stated yes.

Mark Herman moved to close the public hearing at 6:36 pm, Seconded by Karly Spell.

Motion carried. No Nays.

Roger Cain moved to approve recommendation of the Variance of the 2015 International Fire Code to Increase Occupancy from 100 to 300 at River's Edge Experience, 103 S. 1<sup>st</sup> Street to the City Council, Seconded by Mark Herman.

Roll Call: Cropp, Nay. Spell, Aye. Hallock, Nay. Herman, Aye. Ryland, Nay. Cain, Aye.

Brunner, Aye. Wilson, Aye.           Ayes: 5   Nays: 3

The recommendation will be presented to the City Council at the next scheduled meeting.

Rachel Brunner moved to approve the October 24<sup>th</sup>, 2022, minutes, Seconded by Rick Ryland.

Motion carried. No Nays.

Mark Herman moved to adjourn the meeting at 6:42 pm, Seconded by Karly Spell.

Motion carried. No Nays.

Cheryl Hilton, City Clerk