

CITY OF LA GRANDE

Planning Commission Meeting

Regular Session

December 14, 2021

6:00 p.m.

Zoom Meeting

La Grande City Hall
1000 Adams Avenue
MINUTES

COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:

James Hickey
Liberty Avila
Ann Morrison
Dave Felley

COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:

Bruce Weimer

STAFF PRESENT:

Michael Boquist, City Planner
Kendra VanCleave, Planning Secretary

DISCUSSION/DISPOSITION

CITIZENS PRESENT:

Rachel Black

CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL

HICKEY, Chair, called this Regular Session of the Commission to order at 6:00 p.m. and conducted a Roll Call; a quorum was determined to be present.

The Agenda was approved as presented

AGENDA APPROVAL

CONSENT AGENDA

FELLEY introduced the following Motion, with HICKEY providing the Second.

MOTION: That the Consent Agenda be approved as presented for the November 9, 2021 meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

MSC: Unanimous
NONE

NEW BUSINESS

PUBLIC HEARING

- a. Conditional Use Permit
File Number: 13-CUP-21
Sam & Rachel Black

NONE

(PUBLIC HEARING OPENED 6:03 PM)

HICKEY asked for the Rules of Order to be Read.
There were no declarations or challenges.

HICKEY asked for the staff report.

BOQUIST opened with the application to allow for the operation of an air bnb.

1. The subject property is developed with a single-family dwelling, which the Assessor records reflects as having 1 bedroom and 888 square feet of living space. The applicant's narrative, however, describes the dwelling as having 3 guest bedrooms, which will be used for the purposes of this land use application review.

2. The property is located along the East side of N. Birch Street, North of "Y" Avenue. This segment of N. Birch Street is a dead-end. The property includes a wide driveway that provides full unobstructed access to 2 off-street parking space, with a third or fourth parking space available which would be blocked in by the front two spaces. Such stacked parking does not qualify for meeting minimum City code requirements, which the applicant recognizes and plans to widen the driveway and construct an additional parallel parking space in the front yard to satisfy City standards.

BOQUIST continued with the review criteria:

A. That the use is conditionally permitted in the zone in which it is proposed to be located.

Finding: The subject property is located within a Medium Density Residential (R-2) zone. Bed and Breakfast Inns are permitted by Conditional use Permit only, under Land Development Code Ordinance 3252, Series 2021, Section 2.2.006(C)(9).

As defined under LDC Article 1.3, a Bed and Breakfast Inn is limited to five (5) sleeping guest rooms (aka bedrooms). This request includes a three (3) bedroom dwelling. This standard is met.

B. That the proposed development is timely, considering the availability and adequacy of the transportation system, and public facilities and services.

Finding: This criterion generally applies to areas where City standard improvements are missing (e.g. no streets, sidewalks, water, sewer, etc.) and where large projects require the extension or widening of streets and/or constructing other infrastructure improvements. For this request, the subject property is located along Fir Street, which is a fully developed street meeting all City standards. The use of the existing dwelling as a B&B will not require any new public infrastructure or services. This criterion is satisfied.

C. That the location, size, design, and operating characteristics of the proposed development will be compatible with and will not have significant adverse effects on the use or development of abutting properties or surrounding neighborhood with uses permitted in the underlying zone.

Finding: When determining conformance with this criterion, attention should be focused on the "location, size, design and operating characteristics" of the proposed use. In this case, the proposed B&B includes

the use of the entire single-family dwelling (e.g. vacation rental).

For this request, the applicant has provided a narrative that explains their intent to use their entire home as BnB. While the home does have 3 guest bedrooms, for the short term the applicants intend to advertise and only use two bedrooms for guests, and lock the third for use as personal space/storage. This is partially due to only having two (2) off-street parking spaces established. Eventually, the applicant intends to widen the driveway to accommodate three (3) vehicles, side by side, at which time they will have sufficient parking to meet the City Code requirement of 1 off-street parking space per guest bedroom. Upon that time, they may open the third bedroom for guest use

Additionally, no public or agency comments were received.

MORRISON commented the property is recorded with the Assessor as a 1 bedroom and the application is listing as a 3 bedroom. BLACK commented that it has been remodeled in 2017. All bedrooms have closets and windows, unsure if the assessor records are outdated.

FELLEY commented if development of a 3rd parking spot not stacked where will that be. BOQUIST clarified there is plenty of space in front yard to have driveway widened.

HICKEY asked if they would be grandfathered in under current code and not be bound to a new code later on in regards to air bnb's changes. BOQUIST responded yes, the Commission decision will be under current code and if the future standard is more restrictive, they are grandfathered.

HICKEY asked for testimony from the applicant.

BLACK commented they bought the property to invest in the community and have a better return on investment. It is a small house of 888 sq ft and thought it would be big enough to accommodate a short term stay rather than a long-term rental. Additionally, they have talked with surrounding property owners and have received positive feedback.

HICKEY asked for testimony in favor, neutral and opposing. There were none.

COMMISSION DISCUSSION

There was discussion about adding an expiration on the use of the air bnb and if the Commission were to deny an application. BOQUIST commented based on

review criteria C, the Commission would have to identify the adverse impact that could be mitigated with a condition of approval and if you were to deny an application, the Commission would have to identify the significant adverse impact that wouldn't be able to be mitigated to warrant a denial.

FELLEY asked if the 3rd parking space will be developed before the house is rented as a 3 bedroom. BOQUIST commented that the application is proposed as a 2 bedroom and then if the 3rd parking space is developed, the 3rd bedroom could be opened up as a sleeping room. BLACK added that he is planning on working on the parking space in the next couple days.

There was consensus from the group this application has been like the others that have come before the Commission.

(PUBLIC HEARING CLOSED 6:35P.M.)

AVILA introduced the following Motion with MORRISON providing the Second.

MOTION: I move that the Finding of Fact and Conclusions set forth in the Draft Decision Order be adopted and that the Conditional Use Permit be approved.

USC: Unanimous

UNFINISHED BUSINESS:

None

CITY PLANNER COMMENTS:

NONE

BOQUIST commented as the Commission goes into a work session, he wants to steer the direction back to the air bnb changes. With that level of interest on air bnb's the last couple weeks, it would be good to go back to that discussion.

COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

None

There being no further business to come before this Regular Session of the Commission, HICKEY adjourned the meeting at 6:40 p.m. The Commission is scheduled to meet again in Regular Session, Tuesday, January 11, 2021 at 6:00 p.m., in the Council Chambers of City Hall, 1000 Adams Avenue, La Grande, Oregon.

ATTEST:

APPROVED:

Kendra VanCleave
CEDD Secretary
Date Approved:

Chairperson