

# CITY OF LA GRANDE

## Planning Commission Meeting

### Regular Session

March 8, 2022

6:00 p.m.

### Zoom Meeting

La Grande City Hall  
1000 Adams Avenue  
**MINUTES**

#### **COMMISSIONERS PRESENT:**

Liberty Avila, Chair  
Ann Morrison, Vice Chair  
Dave Felley

#### **COMMISSIONERS ABSENT:**

#### **STAFF PRESENT:**

Michael Boquist, City Planner  
Kendra VanCleave, Planning Secretary

#### **DISCUSSION/DISPOSITION**

#### **CITIZENS PRESENT:**

#### **CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL**

AVILA, 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 MORRISON providing the Second.

**MOTION:** That the Consent Agenda be approved as presented for the February 8, 2022 meeting.

#### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

**MSC:** Unanimous  
NONE

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

##### **PUBLIC HEARING**

- a. Conditional Use Permit  
File Number: 03-CUP-22  
Lucas Glick

NONE

##### **(PUBLIC HEARING OPENED 6:05 PM)**

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

AVILA asked for the staff report.

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

1. The subject property includes a single-family dwelling that is 1,864 square feet, with three (3) bedrooms or guest sleeping rooms.

2. This three (3) bedroom home is required to have three (3) fully accessible parking spaces. In this case, the subject property includes a main driveway along the South side of the house that accommodates

2 side-by-side parking spaces, with addition parking at this location in a stacked arrangement. Additionally, a second driveway was recently added on the North side of the property that accommodates an additional 1+ vehicles. These improvements satisfy City parking requirements.

3. The property is zoned Medium Density Residential (R-2). Bed and Breakfast Inns are permitted by Conditional use Permit only.

For this request, the applicant has provided a narrative that explains their intent to use their entire home as BnB and how they feel it is a compatible use within the surrounding neighborhood, including references to other BnB's in the area.

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.

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: For this request, the subject property is located along Second Street, between "D" Avenue and "F" Avenue. Second Street is a fully developed street with a paved street, curbs and sidewalks. The use of the existing dwelling as an Air BnB will not require any new public infrastructure to be constructed. 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: The applicant intends to use their entire home as BnB and feel it is a compatible use, including references to other BnB's in the area.

AVILA asked for testimony from the applicant. There was none.

AVILA asked for testimony in favor, neutral or opposition.

BOQUIST commented 2 letters of opposition were received and were read into the record.

1. Les and Cathy Patterson, 405 First Street. Mr. and Ms. Patterson submitted a letter in opposition to the request. Their property is located adjacent to rear yard of the proposed Air BnB, they have a clear view of the proposed BnB from the back of their home, and have raised the following concerns:

- a) The majority of the dwelling in the neighborhood are single-family homes filled with owners or long-term occupants.
- b) Home owner occupants and long-term renters alike promote a sense of security, community and stability in a neighborhood.
- c) Short-term rental tenants are transient in nature with minimal sense of community or responsibility.
- d) While we respect that many short-occupants would be quite and respectful, there is a higher likelihood of noise disturbance and property damage from frequently changing tenants who have no long-term pride of ownership or feeling of responsibility to the property and neighborhood.
- e) Unlike a motel/hotel, of which there are many such short-term rental options already available in La Grande, there may be no round-the-clock onsite management or surveillance.

2. Rob Miller, 502 2<sup>nd</sup> Street. Mr. Miller submitted testimony via email in opposition to the request. Mr. Miller presented the following:

- a) The applicant, Lucas Glick, currently rents the house out and he works out of town.
- b) There is a known drug house across the street at 501 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, which generates a lot of traffic to and from the house.
- c) There is enough burden on the neighborhood as it is. The area is not able to support this new activity.

#### COMMISSION DISCUSSION

MORRISON commented the application met all the criteria but concerned about neighborhood compatibility and opposition from the two neighbors is that enough to not permit it. BOQUIST commented that based on the Rules of Order criteria to be based on factual

information related to the review criteria and does the testimony indicate a specific impact. This application would be the first in the vicinity and does one change the compatibility of the neighborhood. AVILA stated changing one house into an air bnb doesn't change the character of the neighborhood like having three on one block would.

MORRISON commented the two objections from the neighbors are speculative and raises the issue how to define neighborhood compatibility and interpret.

FELLEY commented on neighborhood compatibility when he first was appointed to the Commission the argument in objection is an air bnb is a rental and the short-term rental is different from a long-term rental and not necessarily less impact.

AVILA commented the application meets all criteria and added that no specific impacts were stated. Criteria C indicates will not create significant adverse impacts and felt the opposing letters didn't list out impacts that would adversely affect neighbors, but do respect the concerns and share the concerns in a larger sense.

There was consensus that the air bnb meets the criteria

**(PUBLIC HEARING CLOSED 6:29P.M.)**

MORRISON introduced the following Motion with AVILA 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

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**CITY PLANNER COMMENTS:**

BOQUIST commented the mask mandate will end of the week and starting next week all City Commission's will go back to in person unless some circumstance requires back to remote. The meetings will still be teleconferenced and recorded live on Facebook, to allow people to join remotely.

BOQUIST continued that the next meeting for the Commission will be the 28<sup>th</sup> with the City Council and Parks Department to talk about the Parks Master Plan. BOQUIST commented he would like to cancel the March 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting with the Planning Commission and if no

**COMMISSIONER COMMENTS**

applications are submitted the April 12<sup>th</sup> meeting will be a work session in person.

FELLEY commented he is still wrestling with the air bnb's and the housing needs analysis. If air bnb's are not restricted to some degree might have to figure out other housing needs opportunities.

MORRISON agreed so far, every application has had an air bnb and has a concern that another housing unit is being taken off the market.

AVILA agreed she has concerns about housing being taken of market month by month with air bnb's. Additionally, she is happy that it is an economic outlet for property owners, but removing housing that people need is a concern overall.

BOQUIST commented this concern should be brought up to City Council. There are only about 30 or so air bnb's and not sure how many of those are operating. The question that comes back is what is the adverse impact air bnb's are making and what is the evidence. This has to be justified and brought to Council to get them to take a look.

MORRISON commented this is an issue continuing to percolate and the direct connection is approving these air bnb's month after month while there is a housing shortage.

BOQUIST stated Council is where to start to consider a moratorium.

FELLEY asked if there is something on the TRT dollars collected to tell the Commission how many nights each air bnb rent and how many are operating. BOQUIST commented possibly the Finance Department has a report that could have that information.

There being no further business to come before this Regular Session of the Commission, adjourned the meeting at 6:42 pm. The Commission is scheduled to meet again in Regular Session, Tuesday, April 12, 2022 at 6:00 p.m., in the Council Chambers of City Hall, 1000 Adams Avenue, La Grande, Oregon.

**ATTEST:**

---

Kendra VanCleave  
CEDD Secretary  
Date Approved:

**APPROVED:**

---

Chairperson