



City of Rockaway Beach

Planning Commission Meeting Minutes

Date: Thursday, October 17, 2024
Location: Rockaway Beach City Hall, 276 HWY 101 - Civic Facility

1. CALL TO ORDER

Planning Commission President Hassell called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. ROLL CALL

Start time: [05:02:23 PM \(00:02:02\)](#)

President: Bill Hassell

Commissioners: Sandra Johnson, Nancy Lanyon, Pat Olson (arrived 5:25 p.m.), Zandra Umholtz, and Stephanie Winchester

Commissioners Excused: Georgeanne Zedrick

Council Members Present: Mary McGinnis, Planning Commission Liaison

Council Member Excused: Charles McNeilly, Mayor

Staff Present: Luke Shepard, City Manager; TJ Fiorelli, Contract Planner; Melissa Thompson, City Recorder; and Elizabeth Avila, Administrative Assistant II

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Start time: [05:03:23 PM \(00:03:01\)](#)

a. September 19, 2024 Meeting Minutes

Umholtz made a **motion**, seconded by Winchester, to approve the Thursday, September 19, 2024 Planning Commission Meeting Minutes as written.

The **motion carried** by the following vote:

Aye: 5 (Johnson, Lanyon, Umholtz, Winchester, Hassell)

Nay: 0

5. PRESENTATIONS, GUESTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS – None Scheduled

6. STAFF REPORTS

Start time: [05:04:39 PM \(00:04:18\)](#)

City Manager Shepard noted that City Planner Johnson was on leave. Shepard reported that the website Community Development page included maps and zoning ordinance information, as well as FEMA Biological Opinion (BiOp) information. The page included a form for land use inquiries.

Shepard introduced Contract Planner TJ Fiorelli and explained he would be assisting with some planning activities while Johnson was on leave.

Shepard announced that Sarah Absher would be presenting a public information session on the FEMA Biological Opinion (BiOp) on October 28, 2024. Staff would be participating in additional meetings regarding the BiOp and was working on the issue.

7. PUBLIC HEARING

Start time: [05:08:11 PM \(00:07:49\)](#)

a. Consideration to Approve the Proposed Amendments to the Rockaway Beach Zoning Ordinance 143, Section 4.050 Sign Requirements, and Recommend its Adoption to the City Council

Hassell opened the public hearing at 5:08 p.m.

Hassell provided an introduction and read opening statements, public hearing disclosure statements and procedures, and testifying instructions.

Contract Planner TJ Fiorelli presented the Staff Report. (A copy of the staff report is included in the record for the meeting.)

Hassell invited Commissioners to ask questions of staff regarding the amendments.

Shepard explained to Lanyon that the public hearing notice included state provisions regarding appeals for the Land use Board of Appeals.

Lanyon inquired if there was consideration for sign location placement for Short-Term Rentals (STRs) and discussion ensued. After discussion, there was consensus to add a provision referring to STR sign requirements.

Johnson suggested that a provision be added to address volunteer and non-profit groups that post signs for events, but do not have a physical location. The Commission concurred. Johnson declared a potential conflict of interest, because she is associated with groups that use sandwich board signs, including Rockaway Beach volunteers, Meals for Seniors, and SOLVE.

Lanyon suggested adding "County" to exempt signs and adding an exemption to flashing signs for emergency notification. Johnson suggested allowing no flashing signs except for emergencies (including governments).

Hassell invited public testimony. There were no guests present.

City Recorder Thompson reported that no written testimony was received.

Winchester made a **motion**, seconded by Johnson, to close the Public Hearing at 5:25 p.m.

Olson arrived at 5:25 p.m.

The **motion carried** by the following vote:

Aye: 5 (Johnson, Lanyon, Umholtz, Winchester, Hassell)

Nay: 0

Abstain: 1 (Olson)

Hassell invited the Commission to deliberate.

There was further discussion regarding allowing an exemption for flashing signs for governments in the case of emergencies. There was discussion regarding the reader board sign the City proposed to install that prompted the proposed changes to the ordinance. Shepard noted that the sign was already in production, and explained that the Planning Commission could have further discussion in the future regarding the specifics of how it would be operated.

After discussion, there was consensus to add "County" to exempt signs, add a reference to STR sign requirements, and to loosen restrictions on placement of sandwich board sign placement for non-profits and volunteer entities for special events.

Johnson made a **motion**, seconded by Olson, to direct staff to craft language consistent with discussion to include STR reference, sandwich boards and exclusion for governmental agencies.

The **motion carried** by the following vote:

Aye: 6 (Johnson, Lanyon, Olson, Umholtz, Winchester, Hassell)

Nay: 0

Umholtz made a **motion**, seconded by Lanyon, that the Planning Commission approve the proposed amendments to the Rockaway Beach Zoning Ordinance 143, Section 4.050 Sign Requirements, with the three recommendations to be added, and forwarded to the City Council for adoption.

The **motion carried** by the following vote:

Aye: 6 (Johnson, Lanyon, Olson, Umholtz, Winchester, Hassell)

Nay: 0

8. CITIZEN INPUT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Start time: [05:59:36 PM \(00:59:15\)](#)

No audience members were present.

9. OLD BUSINESS

Start time: [05:59:53 PM \(00:59:32\)](#)

a. Request from The City Council for further Review of the Small Community Grant to Clarify “Community Entities”

Hassell invited public comment. No audience members were present.

City Manager Shepard explained that the Planning Commission approved the Small and Large Community grant materials, and the City Council reviewed them in a Workshop. Shepard shared that the Council asked the Planning Commission to clarify “community entities”, expressing concerns whether funds can or should be granted to individuals. Shepard explained that the City Attorney confirmed that there is no legal issue with the city awarding grant funds to individuals, provided that they acknowledge responsibility for the project. McGinnis noted that the grants could help community entities that may evolve into nonprofits.

Johnson declared a conflict of interest and recused herself from the discussion since she has applied for a grant in the past, and may in the future, for the Rockaway Beach Volunteers, which is not a formal non-profit.

Lanyon suggested changing language to “community service or enhancement entities”. Shepard and McGinnis commented that the grant criteria defined the type of community entity that is eligible.

Winchester noted that the intent of the Planning Commission was to include community entities that are not designated as non-profits.

Umholtz made a **motion**, seconded by Winchester, to accept the Small Community Grant as is and send it to the City Council for adoption.

The **motion carried** by the following vote:

Aye: 5 (Lanyon, Olson, Umholtz, Winchester, Hassell)

Nay: 0

Recused: 1 (Johnson)

10. NEW BUSINESS

a. **Consideration to Approve Request for One-Year Extension for Lake Lytle Estates Phases IV-VII - Preliminary Subdivision Case File #23-01**

Start time: [06:09:25 PM \(01:09:03\)](#)

Hassell invited public comment. No guests were present.

McGinnis recused herself from the meeting.

Johnson declared a potential conflict of interest because her daughter lives adjacent to the project. Hassell declared a potential conflict of interest because he lives adjacent to the property.

Contract Planner TJ Fiorelli read aloud the staff report prepared by City Planner Johnson. (A copy of the staff report is included in the record for the meeting.)

Johnson made a **motion**, second by Olson, based on the facts and evaluations presented in the City Staff Report, that the Planning Commission approve a 1-year extension of time, until November 13, 2025, for Lake Lytle Estates Phases IV-VII - Preliminary Subdivision Case File #23-01, to allow the Applicant to file a Final Subdivision Plat with the City of Rockaway Beach, and direct staff to prepare findings and conclusions, and authorize the Chair to sign an order to that effect.

Lanyon expressed concerns that facts were in flux due to the FEMA BiOp and discussions regarding amendments to middle housing code provisions. Winchester explained that when each property is developed, they will be required to comply with all land use ordinances at the time of development. Fiorelli confirmed that Winchester's explanation regarding development was correct. Fiorelli further explained that nothing in the request for extension appeared to be in conflict with the FEMA BiOp or Senate Bill 406 (SB406) middle housing provisions.

Umholtz stated that the approval was just for plots and recalled extensive conditions of approval. There was brief discussion regarding the conditions. Umholtz inquired about the applicants' comment in the request regarding water and sewer utilities. Shepard explained that meeting the City's utility technical specifications and design requirements may take time.

Johnson asked if the applicant were to seek another extension, after significant changes to ordinances were made, if the Commission would need to further evaluate whether changes needed to be made prior to approval. Fiorelli stated that could be the case, but for the current request, nothing significant has changed, and the application was not being relitigated. Johnson suggested the request was reasonable, given the number of conditions required of the applicant. Fiorelli confirmed for Winchester that if something significantly changed the intent of the original application, or if it was a condition of approval, that it would come back to the Planning Commission for review.

Shepard confirmed for Umholtz that there is a 10-year timeline on the original Planning Commission preliminary subdivision approval.

The **motion carried** by the following vote:

Aye: 5 (Johnson, Olson, Umholtz, Winchester, Hassell)

Nay: 0

Abstain: 1 (Lanyon)

Lanyon explained that she was abstaining because she was uncomfortable with the position that nothing had changed, and was uncomfortable with an extension because she believed the criteria was in flux.

11. PLANNING COMMISSION COMMENTS & CONCERNS

Start time: [06:30:15 PM \(01:29:54\)](#)

Winchester shared she was excited to look at findings from the Great Shakeout and hoped to look at evacuation areas in the future to ensure they are obtainable.

Lanyon advocated for considering the acquisition of the Rockaway Roastery property to be used as a meeting space, based on public comments desiring more community spaces. Lanyon commended staff.

Olson stated he was glad to be a part of the city moving forward.

Commissioner Johnson concurred with Olson, and was especially pleased with the exploration to acquire Jetty Creek watershed. Johnson thanked staff for their work.

Umholtz shared that the Great Shakeout was a great event and stressed the importance of practice. She thanked staff.

McGinnis complemented emergency management and commented on the increased level of engagement in the Great Shakeout event. McGinnis reported she attended a Salmonberry Trail Foundation event and a DEQ drinking water workshop. She commended staff for work on the watershed acquisition. McGinnis encouraged the Commission to visit the Wilder community in Newport, sharing that it was a good example of mixed-income housing and development related to SB406.

Hassell shared his experience during Great Shakeout and concerns regarding aging emergency equipment. Hassell advocated for additional rest benches at each turnout on the Old Cedar trail and shared he was working on ways to get benches that don't obstruct wheelchair access. Hassell proposed that a bench be dedicated in honor of David Elkins.

12. ADJOURNMENT

Start time: [06:42:52 PM \(01:42:31\)](#)

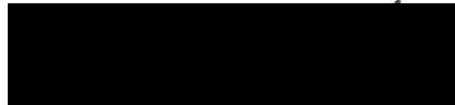
Olson made a **motion**, seconded by Johnson, to adjourn the meeting at 6:43 p.m.

The **motion carried** by the following vote:

Aye: 6 (Johnson, Lanyon, Olson, Umholtz, Winchester, Hassell)

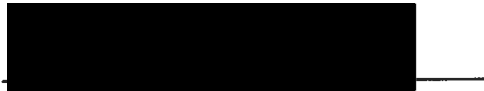
Nay: 0

MINUTES APPROVED THE
21st DAY OF NOVEMBER 2024



William Hassell, President

ATTEST



Melissa Thompson, City Recorder