



City of Rockaway Beach

Planning Commission Meeting Minutes

Date: Thursday, August 21, 2025

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

Commissioners Present: Bill Hassell, Penny Cole, Lydia Hess, Sandra Johnson, Nancy Lanyon, Jason Maxfield, and Stephanie Winchester

Council Members Present: Charles McNeilly, Mayor; and Mary McGinnis, Planning Commission Liaison

Staff Present: Luke Shepard, City Manager; Abram Tapia, City Planner; and Melissa Thompson, City Recorder

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Start time: 5:01 p.m.

a. July 17, 2025 Meeting Minutes

Motion by Johnson, seconded by Cole, to approve the July 17, 2025 Meeting Minutes as presented.

Motion carried by the following vote:

Yes: 6 (Cole, Hess, Lanyon, Maxfield, Winchester, Hassell)

No: 0

5. PRESENTATIONS, GUESTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS – None Scheduled

6. STAFF REPORTS

Start time: 5:02 p.m.

Tapia provided the following Planning Department updates:

- One zoning permit was issued in July.

- High volume of calls and inquiries, with several applications in progress but not yet complete.
- LUBA case public hearing scheduled for September 9th. Hearing will be a de novo review with new evidence and arguments allowed limited to two assignments of error remanded by LUBA. Hearing will be recorded.
- Two grant applications submitted to the Department of Land Conservation and Development.

7. PUBLIC HEARING – None Scheduled

8. CITIZEN INPUT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

Start time: 5:04 p.m.

- Jerry Horton, resident, advocated for allowing drive-thrus in the zoning code.

9. OLD BUSINESS

Start time: 5:07 p.m.

a. Deliberation & Decision on #CU-25-2: Consideration of an Approval for Conditional Use at 127 South Miller Street for Expansion of Non-Conforming Use in the C1 Zone

- At 5:07 p.m., McNeilly and McGinnis excused themselves from the meeting to ensure they remain impartial should the matter come before the City Council on appeal.
- Hassell explained that the Planning Commission held a public hearing on this matter July 17th, 2025, and the record was closed on July 24, 2025 after receipt of the applicant's final written argument.

Declarations of Conflict of Interest or Bias:

- Maxfield declared potential conflict of interest and potential appearance of bias due to owning a retail store near the subject property, and a past attempt to purchase the subject property. Maxfield stated he believed he could remain impartial, would participate in the hearing, and would abstain from voting only if further cause came up during the hearing.

Declarations of Ex-Parte Contacts:

- Maxfield declared that he frequently walked by the site.
- Winchester declared she stood near the site several times and observed the building and how it was situated on the lot, including parking, and imagined it being 3 stories.
- Lanyon declared she walked by, observed the large parking area behind the building, and tried to visualize how the existing footprint would be 3 stories. Lanyon stated she still had questions, but no concerns.

- Cole declared she walked by the building and drove around back to try to visualize how the proposed structure would look.
- Johnson declared being in the area incidentally several times since the last hearing, and looking at building from across the street, tried to imagine a three story building.
- Maxfield declared he was frequently in the area and wondered what it would look like in the future.
- Hess declared she had observed the building and imagined it as three stories.

Staff Report:

- Tapia shared updated slides, including a review of the subject property, applicant's request, and criteria for providing a conditional use.
- New information provided by the applicant most relevant to criteria included that the proposed use will be 3 separate living units, first floor will retain ability for future commercial use, and additional floors will include ADA access.
- Tapia concluded staff findings were that the criteria had been met.

Deliberation and Decision:

- Commissioner questioned how the property would be made ADA accessible, since the applicant didn't specify. Staff confirmed it wasn't specified, and addressing that issue would require findings based on criteria.
- Commissioner was encouraged that applicant shared intention for some long-term rental use.
- Commissioner commented that they initially had concerns about the application due to the Comprehensive Plan's goal of preserving the limited business district for commercial use, but acknowledged that the property already has conditional use approval. The addition of two new residential uses helps outweigh the consideration for the commercial use requirement. Commissioner recommended approval subject to condition that they have three residential units, with the bottom floor being constructed to accommodate commercial uses.
- Commissioner expressed concern about commercial property and the very finite number of businesses, but was inclined to support the application, as it was an improvement to density and increased housing. Commissioner desires a mixed use standard in the downtown commercial area.

Motion by Johnson, seconded Winchester, that based on the facts and evaluations presented by the City Staff Report, and evidence presented, the Planning Commission approve Conditional Use Application 25-02 to allow for an addition to be constructed on the condition that the construction will result in the building having three residential use units, with the bottom floor constructed to allow it to be customized for a commercial use in the C1 zone, subject to the Standards outlined in the City Zoning Ordinance, and direct staff to prepare findings and conclusions, and authorize the chair to sign an order to that effect.

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

Yes: 7 (Cole, Hess, Johnson, Lanyon, Maxfield, Winchester, Hassell)

No: 0

10. NEW BUSINESS

Start time: 5:28 p.m.

McNeilly and McGinnis rejoined the meeting at 5:28 p.m.

a. Staff Presentation: SB406 (2023) Updates and Comprehensive Plan Amendments

- Tapia gave a presentation explaining two grant applications submitted to the Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD) 2025-2027 Housing Planning Assistance Grant Program, background on Senate Bill (SB) 406 updates and Comprehensive Plan amendments.
- Tapia answered clarifying questions from the Commission.

11. PLANNING COMMISSION COMMENTS & CONCERNS

Start time: 5:58 p.m.

- Lanyon expressed concerns about the quantity and spacing of advertising banners on sidewalks.
- Winchester hoped to address the balance of mixed use in the commercial zone with future code amendments. Winchester commented on the Salmonberry Trail and hoped to look at opportunities for partnering with the community. Winchester expressed that the train was an important part of community and hoped the city would take a leadership role and continue to utilize that historic element to cement the community in the region.
- Hess advocated for adding safety signage to identify access points at the beach, as riptide warnings. Brief discussion about existing signs.
- Maxfield commented on the success of the Neah-Kah-Nie Coast Art and Music Cultural Foundation (NCAM) festival, and hoped to see more events three or four times a year. Maxfield commented on Wayside power supply issues. Shepard noted that Public Works was present to help. Maxfield thanked volunteers.
- McGinnis commented on the success of the NCAM music festival, noting it began with a Community Grant. McGinnis acknowledged Cole's contributions to NCAM.

- Cole noted the NCAM event brought new visitors to Rockaway Beach. Cole shared a positive interaction with manager of the new Pelican Brewing tap room.
- McNeilly shared personal connections to railroads. McNeilly urged taking a broader perspective when considering the Salmonberry Trail and the railroad, sharing concerns about costs, environmental risks and financial instability of the Oregon Coast Scenic Railroad (OCSR). McNeilly noted that decisions about the railroad right-of-way rested with the Port of Tillamook Bay Board, not Rockaway Beach. McNeilly noted the Salmonberry Trail's potential to create connectivity between communities.
- Hassell asked for volunteers on Saturday to help distribute emergency information. Hassell shared that the drone had started mapping riptides, but they do change. Hassell shared he is now Trail Ambassador for the big cedar trail. Hassell announced a Salmonberry guided trail event on September 6th from Anchor Street to the big cedar. Hassell advocated for ADA accessible exceptions to the short-term rental cap. Hassell stated that the NCAM festival was fantastic.

12. ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Hess, seconded by Maxfield, to adjourn the meeting at 6:17 p.m.

Motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 7 (Cole, Hess, Johnson, Lanyon, Maxfield, Winchester, Hassell)

Nay: 0

MINUTES APPROVED THE
18TH DAY OF SEPTEMBER 2025



William Hassell, President

ATTEST



Melissa Thompson, City Recorder