



UNION COUNTY

Planning Department

Inga Williams,
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Union County Planning Commission Regular Session August 25, 2025 Meeting Minutes Misener Conference Room

Approved

ATTENDANCE

Present: Mat Barber, Joel Hasse, Mace Cadwell, Stacy Warren, Chas Koenig on phone, Doug Wright
Union County Public Works Director

Excused: Sam Delano, Geoff Robinson, Amanda May

Staff: Inga Williams, Pam Hall,

Mr. Hasse called the meeting to order at 7:05p.m.

I. OLD BUSINESS

There is no old business.

II. NEW BUSINESS

There is no new business.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes approved from July 25, 2025. Mrs. Warren motioned to approve the minutes and Mr. Barber 2nd the motion. All approved.

IV. HEARING

Application 20250031 – Weston Weaver – Major Partition

Planning Commission Deliberation

The subject property has an R3 zoning that requires a minimum 10 acre parcel size for new parcels. This property was included in multiple land use applications to amend the size of the parcel: a partition in 1976, two property line adjustments and a minor partition in 2018. An application to partition in 2022 by Weston Weaver was denied by the Planning Commission. The reasons for the denial were listed as the access road not meeting safety sight distance requirements, oral testimony, and staff update. An attached memo from Anderson Perry, Attachment A, indicates that a new study concluded that the stopping sight distances and intersection sight distances for the proposed road satisfy recommended minimum requirements.

Ms. Williams opened deliberations for the Planning Commission on the Weaver Major Partition Application.

Mr. Hasse stated his personal opinion that it is a 10-acre zone, everything out there is 10-acres or more and it is the legal standard. He is allowed to do this with his land. I don't feel it's our right to change the way the legal standard is. I understand that people exceed the speed limit out there. He feels that unless something major comes up, he doesn't feel we can say "No" but,

hopefully it does not put more of a burden on the neighbors. He does have concerns about the construction of the road, however, it is an engineering problem. I do have concerns on how the road it is going to be built and the how culverts may be used. The Wetlands belong to the State Department of Lands and ODF&W so they can take that on. This application is for a major partition approval which is the first step in the process.

Mrs. Warren agrees with Mr. Hasse's opinion. She also states that Anderson & Perry are highly respected firm in the community so she does not have a problem with the study. Her only other issue is that in the conditions, taking out #13 that restricts building to the west 2/3 of the property. It might be better to wait until they want to build. ODF&W may have a better solution for each home on the parcel. She also remembers a LUBA case years ago in a 10-acre zone and the decision was left up to ODF&W since it was in that zone.

Mr. Hasse read the concern from a neighbor on the road going all the way through to the property boundary. Ms. Williams stated that it is a code/statue requirement for the road to go through but, if we did that, then the last parcel would go below 10-acres. There was much discussion on an easement vs road. An easement goes with the land but a road does not, this is a public right of way. It would require Mr. Weaver to get a variance since the parcel would fall under 10-acres. Mr. Hasse is concerned by not having the road go all the way through to the property boundary that this will set up a precedent down the road. The Planning Commission has been down that path before and it can get messy, leading to more roads being put in. Mr. Koenig asks "would this application meet the criteria if the road was designed "as is," then have an easement for the rest of the road?" Mr. Hasse called on Mr. Wright Union County Public Works Director for his opinion. Mr. Hasse stated that he does not like that we have in the past allowed dead end roads and he does not like how they end up needing more down the line. Mr. Wright states he would have to agree with him because if there is more development further on, you would want the road to circle around. He was asked if there was a way to do the road with an easement and not dedicate it so he does meet the 10-acre minimum. Mr. Wright responded that you can do this as long as parcel 1 buyer knows when they purchase the property, it has the easement on it and it will be good. One thing you don't want to do is try to get the easement after the fact because it never works out.

Ms. Williams is wondering how this would be funded. There was discussion around a bond but it could be 20 years before someone wants to develop the land. Mr. Hasse agrees that this would be part of the property owner's responsibility. We gave him the easement. Mr. Wright lets the Planning Commission know that when they design the road, it has to be like it is going through to the property boundary. It may take a little more engineering to meet the standards.

Mr. Hasse asks for everyone's thoughts. Mrs. Warren asks if we are on the same page. She went through the conditions #12 and #13 asking for questions and thoughts. In the discussion, they all agreed that the property owners should work with ODF&W individually. Each parcel may have a better spot to build than the other. #13 was in response to the big game habitat. It states "new structures should be located as close as possible to the adjacent structure." Ms. Williams thought it would be best to put this in a CC&R so the property owner would be aware of the condition when they go to build. Mr. Koenig would like to delete #13 and keep #12. He agrees with the consulting with ODF&W for educational purposes. What he really thinks on this entire application is:

"We're not talking about building homes, we're not talking about site buildings, we're not talking about putting in permeable surfaces, we're talking about dividing this chunk of ground to these different zones and putting it in a road. So, it's kind of like the cart before the horse, it might fit in to have all these discussions for all of these future what if scenarios when I believe it's Mr. Weaver's intention to develop this land and put in the road to sell the properties."

Mrs. Warren says there a lot of conditions to meet like storm water management, the road issue, and just a lot of things that have to be done. Mr. Koenig continues that he has been trying to narrow down the amount of opinions and letters regarding this application to what is factual to the application itself. When he does this, 90% of these arguments and “what if” scenarios just don’t apply to the application. Mr. Barber clarified that right now we are approving that he can split the property into 10-acres but when someone does want to build what happens. Ms. Williams responds that Mr. Weaver will have to complete the conditions before he gets his final plat. My thought was most people will start to create the site plan before talking to us and this will not always work. It is very difficult to tell them that site does not work because.....This discussion does not go well. My thought was with the CC&R we could put something in that lets them know they need to be careful siting their house. Ms. Warren asks then should we have the future owners work with ODF&W instead of Mr. Weaver. This way the owners will have the information and can decide how to proceed. This would be one less thing Mr. Weaver has to do.

There was discussion about deleting a condition, changing this one and keeping part of this one. Ms. Williams summarized: we are removing #13 and #12, removing #14c & d, and creating a new #12c to require the property owners to work with ODF&W. Mr. Warren asked if we were eliminating the hammerhead and putting in an easement. Mr. Hasse clarified that the hammerhead has to be constructed for now, then at the time the easement is done, the hammerhead can be removed. Mr. Barber replies that we need to make sure the easement lines up with the road as a final design of the road.

Mrs. Warren states I move that the planning commission and up to a major partition based on the analysis and findings and effective work, information in the application, all written testimony, permitted report of application, and all verbal testimony and the report of the use at the last hearing. This motion includes the requirement for the applicant to complete all conditions of approval listed in section two staff report as amended tonight during this meeting. Deleting #12 and #13 and #14c & d and adding a new #12c. Along with a new condition regarding the extension of an easement to the north property. Mr. Barber seconded the motion.

Roll call: Mr. Barber—yes, Mr. Cadwell—yes, Mr. Hasse---yes, Mr. Koenig---yes, and Mrs. Warren---yes. Mr. Weaver your application has been approved and you will receive a written notice within five working days.

City of La Grande Comprehensive Plan Amendment, Mike Boquist Application #20250035, Ordinance 3283-2025

Ms. Williams opened with this is an Amendment to the Comprehensive Plan. This will be a recommendation that you make to the Board of Commissioners for approval.

Mr. Boquist, City Planning Director, stated this is the second phase of the Urban Growth Boundary expansion. The first phase was the Economic Opportunities Analysis that was done a couple of years ago. It basically it showed the city needs 60 acres of commercial land and 120 acres of industrial land. The second phase was going through an effort to try to locate property to satisfy this need. That is what this analysis before you represents. We started with doing a radius around the city’s urban growth boundary 1 mile of current boundary. It goes outside of Island City and Hot Lake by the highway. We clearly didn’t want to run those distances but the State Law says that you have to first do an analysis and then you can start ruling out property. The first property ruled out was high value farmland and then we start looking at the urban services. What we ended up with was six areas that are identified in A-F

on your map and areas D-F were the eligible properties when the city has an opportunity to expand. Area A is the Fairgrounds, Area B is the May Lane area and Area C is the Gekeler, Mulholland, RD Mac area. Area D is the Livestock yards heading up to the Pepsi Plant. Area E is kind of around the city business park to Pilot and the last is Area F is out by the Airport.

Mr. Boquist stated that they had neighborhood meetings, a number of property owners attended, which ruled out properties on the north boundary. The final map ended up with Area C, which is the RD Mac area and Area E is the city business park area as the most viable. These areas have the most transportation facilities in place and basically the city services could be expanded if needed. So, this is the conclusion of the report if the city were to expand the boundaries. As we went through the effort, we did not have any property owner interested in being added to the city growth boundary, now we are just adopting the report and if the opportunity arises or someone would be interested then we could add it to the city UGB in the future. So at this point we are just adopting the report and not changing any boundaries. Any questions on the report?

Mr. Hasse made the comment that the maps were a "little small". Mr. Boquist replied that they are small but the electronic version is a bit friendlier. Most of what you are looking at on the colored maps is the sequence of events on how we ruled out property. The Wetlands and Floodplain area also got ruled out. The hillside area kind of ruled out most of the south and west sides of La Grande. Ms. Williams asked "how long did it take for the study". Mr. Boquist said about a year, year and a half. The Oregon process is roughly a four year process that is very cumbersome. If we actually do go through an Urban Growth expansion, there still will be a number of steps we have to do. Since we did not have an actual development scenario to run traffic studies, it was based on a hypothetical scenario. We will continue to look at traffic studies in case we do need to make any upgrades to the infrastructure. It may be the Gekeler/McAlister area needing upgrades if Area C is the contender. Mr. Hasse asked if the north boundary of Area C was Cove Avenue/Buchanan. Mr. Boquist replied that it was originally the area but was scaled back to the Gekeler intersection. The gray range is the north and everything south of Gekeler. Mr. Hasse asked if we were getting commercial, kind of, we haven't gained anything on this. Mr. Boquist stated: "We haven't gained anything other than just identifying eligible properties." So if someone came in interested, we would have to see if it made sense for commercial land or industrial. The only commercial land available is behind Miller's owned by Mike Becker and some land around Starbucks-Commerical Tire area. We have a need for 60 acres of commercial land and 120 acres of industrial land.

Mr. Hasse opened for Public Comment. There was no comment in person or on the phone. He asked for a motion.

Mrs. Warren made a motion to recommend the application to the Board of Commissioners with all the information we can see and for one last time. Mr. Barber seconded the motion.

Mr. Hasse asked if there was any further discussion.

Question: Matt – yes, Mace – yes, Joel – yes, Chas – yes and Stacy – yes. The motion as been approved. Good Luck.

Mr. Hasse adjourned the meeting.

Respectively Submitted

Pam Hall
Union County
Planning Department Specialist