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| white salmon logo | **CITY OF WHITE SALMON**  **Planning Commission Meeting - Wednesday, March 13, 2019** |

**COMMISSION AND ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL PRESENT**

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|  | **Commission Members:**  David Lindley  Anne Medenbach  Tom Stevenson  Ross Henry | **Staff Present:**  Pat Munyan, City Administrator  Ken Woodrich, City Attorney  Erika Castro Guzman, Associate Planner |

1. **CALL TO ORDER/ ROLL CALL**

Planning Commissioner Chairman David Lindley called the meeting to order at 5:30 PM.

1. **MINUTES OF RECORD**
2. Minutes of November 14, 2018.

Moved by Anne Medenbach, seconded by Ross Henry.

Motion to approve minutes of November 14, 2018. CARRIED 4 – 0

1. Minutes of January 30, 2019.

Moved by Tom Stevenson, seconded by Anne Medenbach.

Motion to approve minutes of January 30, 2019. CARRIED 4 - 0

1. **PUBLIC HEARING**

***Proposed Variance 2019.001 Applicant: David and JoAnna Sala, 396 NW Lincoln Street***

The public hearing for Variance 2019.001 opened at 5:32 PM. Chairman Lindley recited the Appearance of Fairness Doctrine. Chairman Lindley disclosed his property is within 300-feet of the applicant's subject parcel; Commissioner members nor the applicants held no objection to his participation. Commissioner Tom Stevenson recused himself as a developer adjacent to the applicant’s property. Commissioner Anne Medenbach and Commissioner Stevenson disclosed they had a brief conversation questioning the width of the platted Russell Street right-of-way.

The public hearing proceeded with the presentation and reading of the staff report by Associate Planner, Erika Castro Guzman, and City Administrator, Patrick Munyan.

***Orientation and Background***

The applicant is seeking to obtain a variance to Section 17.24.040(H) of the White Salmon Municipal Code for a lot located at 396 NW Lincoln Street, White Salmon. The applicant is seeking relief from the minimum fifteen-foot setback requirement, and asking the Planning Commission to reduce, through variance approval, to an eight-foot setback from the flanking Russell Street property line of the corner-lot setback.

***Applicant’s Comment***

JoAnne Sala, the applicant, introduced their representative, Brooks Heard, who rebutted the following:

* Page 3 of 9 of Variance Report: Believes there is no intersection at NW Lincoln Street and Russell Street.
* Page 4 of 9: Clarified his client is not interested in the lengthy vacation process and would encourage egress and ingress of Russell Street.
* Page 5 of 9: Believes the width of Russell Street has more than sufficient space, but doesn't agree Russell Street meets the legal definition of the street, that it is only a street in the name. He estimates Russell Street’s slope to be 24%. Staff rebutted by informing the planning commission an engineer quoted about 16% slope on Russell Street.
* Page 8 of 9: Heard states that the agency comment directly on the utilities, not the street and states he does not see the road being developed any time soon; re-identifies the definition of a street.

Commissioner Ross Henry requested clarification of the variance request as to if this was concerning the parking lot layout or placement of the proposed home site plan. Heard stated he had previously spoken with the City's Building Official who said a retaining wall on the property would be allowed. Additional discussion of a proposed wrap around porch was identified to be placed in the flanking-street setback area of the requested variance.

Chairman Lindley articulated the definition of a variance and how its narrow avenue is rooted in a physical characteristic of the property. Further stated, their application did not give a clear indication of a hardship and its constraint that the applicant was seeking relief from may seem to be created by the placement of the desired home size and style. Heard then described the topography to be rocky and steep to work with if the construction of the home was not built on the existing cut-bank/ flat area. He added it has already entailed downsizing the house for an elderly couple who wish to create a single-story home.

Applicants, David and JoAnne Sala, stated they fell in love with said property and decided to purchase two adjacent lots ideally to design and build a single-family home near town that best fits with the neighborhood. States they are not financially able to do further earthwork to the property.

Commissioner Anne Medenbach questioned as to why the proposed variance is detrimental to the public’s welfare. Staff stated that the proposed variance is at the steepest part of the property where, if approved, the house would be canter levering six to eight-feet above ground. The slopage caused by backfill closer to utility lines (within Russell Street), while digging, may cause the material to slide. Staff additionally addressed the construction of the driveway approach off an existing neighboring driveway would be accepted.

***Public Testimony***

Keith Anderson, 352 NW Lincoln Street

Testified as a proponent. Mr. Anderson stated he is an adjacent property owner of Russell Street. He shared the history of Russell Street, the previous use of the subject property concerning the "old hospital," and the steepness of this driveway that is partly in the public platted access. Believes Russell Street does not exist, nor will ever be constructed.

Shelley Baxter, 1006 NW Cherry Hill Road

Testified as neutral. She stated that she will soon be in a similar position and requests fairness for all to follow the rules when designating propose to appropriate setbacks.

Note: Written testimony from Greg Chamberlain, previous property owner of the subject’s property, is in support and a proponent.

\*\*Staff and commissioners clarified the following for the audience: density provisions are measured from a property line – not an existing, or non-existing road in this case. Commissioners requested clarification for reasonable use verses ideal use. Staff stated the development of Russell Street is anticipated to be a required access for an adjacent large parcel upon application. It is the developer’s responsibility to research zoning code provisions. Additionally, there will be no further public hearings with commentary for this proposed variance.

Commissioner Anne Medenbach and Ross Henry initially discussed tabling the matter to allow the applicant's representative to supply further topography details comparing the proposed site versus the hardship to construct within the appropriate setbacks. Upon further discussion, Heard stated the residential plans had been developed before the knowledge of the setbacks to Russell Street because it does not look like a street. Therefore, Commissioners concluded discussion and no supplemental information was requested.

Public Hearing Closed at 7:57 PM.

Moved by Anne Medenbach, seconded by Ross Henry

*Motion to deny Variance 2019.001 and to adopt Staff’s facts and findings and conclusion.* CARRIED 3 – 0

***Deliberation***

Commissioners discussed that there were no unique hardships demonstrated to the subject's property or application. Further discussion entailed how it is not the Planning Commission’s decision to determine an ideal home size (or financial hardship) to grant a variance that does not interfere with the reasonable use of a property.

1. **2019 City Contract Planning Consultant**

The Planning Commissioners would like to meet and interview both consulting firms as Staff’s scoring was close in ranking. Staff shall coordinate for the presentations on the following meeting date.

1. **Comprehensive Plan Update**

Consensus to move Item 6. Comprehensive Plan Update, discussion item to switch with Item 5. City Vision and Goals.

All commissioners are in agreeance to move forward with coordinating alongside Klickitat County's buildable land studies. Commissioners requested Staff to contact Klickitat County for an update on progress.

Moved by David Lindley, seconded by Anne Medenbach

*Motion to accept process to complete the comprehensive plan update including participating*

*in the county’s urbanization/building lands study, pursuing a joint management agreement*

*with Klickitat County and hiring a transportation planning consulting to complete a*

*transportation system plan.* CARRIED 4 – 0

1. **City Vision and Goals**

Commissioner Tom Stevenson shared that he believes a vision statement should not be broad, but instead specific and original to White Salmon. Commissioner Anne Medenbach would like the vision to reflect White Salmon’s green space and topography.

Commissioners tabled the matter and are to rank the Comprehensive Plan's Scoping Summary for designation of duties discussion on the following meeting date, March 27, 2019.

**4.** **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:55 PM.

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| David Lindley, Chairman | Erika Castro Guzman, Associate Planner |