

**Minutes of the Joint Work Session of the  
Veneta City Council and Planning Commission  
July 9, 2007**

Council: Mayor T. J. Brooker, Thomas Cotter, Marion Esty, Darrell Carman, and Sharon Hobart-Hardin

Planning  
Commission: Chairman James Eagle-Eye, Jim Bruvold, Lily Rees

Absent: Len Goodwin and Keith Hartley

Others: Ric Ingham, City Administrator; Margaret Boutell, Community Services Director; Darci Henneman, Assistant City Recorder; Brian Issa, Associate Planner; Amie Collins, Program Coordinator and Jeneca Jones, West Lane News

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1. Mayor Brooker and James Eagle-Eye called the Joint Work Session of the Veneta City Council and Veneta Planning Commission to order at 5:37 p.m.

2. **EAST VENETA DEVELOPMENT (Margaret Boutell)**

At the last Council goals meeting, an item Council wanted to discuss further was development in the eastern portion of Veneta, which currently is outside the City's urban service area. It is zoned Rural Residential (RR) which allows lots no smaller than one acre. The purpose of the RR designation stated in the City's Land Development Code and the larger lot sizes is to "maintain areas outside the City's service boundary for limited rural development within the carrying capacity of the natural resources until conversion to urban residential uses."

Within the last year, some property owners in the area have indicated an interest in developing. The RR designation was intended to be converted to a more dense land use designation. In order to re-zone property in the area, the City's Comprehensive Plan requires demonstration that 1) The City's water supply and distribution system is adequate to provide service to the property proposed for conversion to urban densities; 2) The City sewer treatment and collection systems are adequate to provide service to the proposed property; and 3) Neighborhood streets and drainage systems are adequate.

Within the next fiscal year, the City plans to update the Water and Wastewater Facilities Master Plans which will give the City the needed information for extending public services to East Veneta. Prior to that extension, the City's Land Development Code allows development to occur without connections to City sewer and water. This means each lot could develop at a minimum of one acre with it's own well and septic system. Three issues need to be discussed for this type of development to occur: 1) New wells may have an effect on the City's water supply or by expanding the City's water supply, it may impact existing wells on these properties; 2) Septic systems may leak causing sewage to impact the aquifer; and 3) Eventually greater density is required within the City's Urban Growth Boundary (UGB). If the area is developed as one acre lots in-fill to urban densities will be much more challenging. Also, the rural nature of this portion of the City is cherished by many of its residents. Planning ahead and getting public input for the eventual conversion to urban densities is advisable. A Specific Area Development

Plan (SDP) would allow the City to consider complying with the state's land use goals for creating a variety of housing types, relieving the pressure for housing outside the UGB.

Margaret provided Councilors and Commissioners with several advantages for creating a SDP which included keeping the cost down for extending infrastructure by planning for greater density; providing an opportunity to create design standards specific to the area to preserve some of the existing rural character and natural resources; protecting water quality; and allowing change to happen that neighbors are happy with.

Staff wanted to familiarize Councilors and Commissioners with the issues and provide an opportunity for questions and feedback.

In response to a question from Thomas Cotter, Margaret said the lot minimum could be changed to two acres. The City code requires development in RR and the Highway Commercial (HC) zone on Highway 126 east of Territorial Rd., to hook up to City water and sewer when available but connections are not required for development to occur. The Planning Commission could make the lot size larger on a case by case basis with certain criteria of the carrying capacity of the land, disposal system and type of water supply.

In response to a question from Mayor Brooker, Margaret said there is existing commercial development on Highway 126 and Huston Rd. with private wells and septic systems.

Margaret said septic systems in rural areas are an issue for the City because of possible contamination to the City's water supply. There is no evidence of contamination at this time but if the number of septic systems increase, so does the probability of water contamination. Private wells could also be a source of contamination if they aren't sealed properly and infiltrate the City's water supply.

Margaret said RR zoning could be rezoned to allow several housing types and higher densities in some areas. It may be a good idea to research the area as part of developing a SDP and work with the property owners to consider more dense development on property with wetlands and greenways. Clustering density on the edge of a wetland or greenway would create more open space, making a small lot feel bigger and more spacious. Margaret said planning ahead and creating buffer areas would allow more desirable living space. She said some property owners in the East Veneta area would like to develop their property but the City needs to make sure infrastructure can be extended to the area.

Sharon Hobart-Hardin supported the idea of a SDP because this is a large area of our community. She felt prior to developing this area, the City should make sure the future plan is what the City wants. She said the opportunity to create more open space and parks will be needed as the City develops.

Margaret said if the City initiates a SDP, it comes with a cost. Large property owners in the area may be willing to partner with the City on the cost of the Plan. LCOG provided an estimate of \$11,000 to \$12,000 to create a SADP for the East Veneta area.

In response to a question from Darrell Carman, Margaret said the City could negotiate with the large property owners to work with the City for specific development on their

land and not the whole area.

Thomas Cotter said in the winter months the area floods and there is a significant problem with septic systems overflowing.

Sharon Hobart-Hardin said given the history, if the City is going to focus on the area, a SDP should be done in a methodical and analytical way.

Thomas Cotter said building a sewer system would benefit the environment in the area but he's not sure how much benefit it is to property owners who own less than an acre. They wouldn't have the opportunity to recover their costs for development. He doesn't want to see more septic systems allowed in the City, however, this is a large area and until the City is able to handle the increased sewage, we shouldn't be forcing property owners to develop their property.

Margaret said it would be the large land owners in the area that want more density and development.

Jerry Elliott said the design at the treatment plant is the build-out that Margaret outlined. There is some existing capacity at the plant now, but if it were to supply an immediate development it would go that much faster.

In response to a question from James Eagle Eye, Jerry said the existing capacity does not include the Southwest Area Plan build-out. He said the plant is working well but it hasn't been taxed. We need to plan the necessary infrastructure before we start taxing the plant.

Ric said the facility was not designed to have capacity for the RR area. It depends on how fast the western part of the city comes on-line.

Mayor Brooker felt a SDP is not necessarily limiting the development, it actually is placing a plan for eventual development of the area.

Margaret said the SDP answers different questions: How does the City help current property owners, who enjoy the rural nature that currently exists in the area, get used to the idea of more dense development; and how do we protect residents from being adversely impacted by the development so they no longer want to live there. The City needs to create a plan the residents will be happy with. The wastewater and water question will be answered by the master planning for the Wastewater and Water.

Mayor Brooker agreed with Sharon Hobart-Hardin that there is a need for SDP and the City should begin the process but he felt commercial and residential development should be separated. The commercial development plan needs to be thought through more. He doesn't want to see commercial development using septic systems, especially within City water supply areas. He felt we should limit commercial development until the sewer and water systems are developed. He is aware the City allows that development to happen now but he thinks it should be dealt with outside of residential development.

Darrell Carman said commercial development often doesn't have the need for septic use as dense as residential.

Mayor Brooker said if the City is responsible for the well head protection and seepage into the City's water supply from septic systems, he felt the City needs to take better control of understanding how septic systems are being built and how they relate to where the City's water supplies are. He said Fern Meadows is a perfect example of allowing half acre lot development in an area with stormwater and septic overflow problems.

James Eagle Eye said currently the City approves one acre lot development with septic systems. In the future how can we expect residents to abandon their systems and hook up to City services? This would create a huge problem. He said drainage in the area is a problem and suggested applying the SDP to the entire area instead of individual land owners.

In response to a question from Darrell Carman, Margaret felt the SDP would not create an issue with Measure 37 claims as long as the landowners were involved in the decision making and they agree with the SDP.

Brian said having coordination through the developmental process will only benefit potential development for those larger acreage parcels. If the City is already working on infrastructure, including tree cutting, drainage and wetlands, it would give the developers a clearer idea of what the City is planning. With a SDP, all the issues will be addressed before development happens instead of dealing with each issue individually.

Mayor Brooker is concerned with the septic systems near the wetlands and natural channels of high water flow. He said hopefully we can plan to extend the City's existing wastewater system. He said the facility plan should take precedence over a SDP.

Brian said the Southwest Area Plan is zoned general residential and stormwater, sewer, wastewater and transportation studies were conducted for the site as a whole.

Ric said there are two to three developers who own the majority of the property south of Hunter Rd. We could have our own plan to survey the area and then take on some control because the facility's infrastructure will be there so it could be zoned for lower density rather than rural residential.

Margaret suggested talking with large property owners to partner with the City on the cost of updating the Wastewater Plan and creating a specific SDP. If the City puts forth some funds they might be interested in doing the same.

Mayor Brooker agreed with Margaret. He suggested she contact the developers and property owners to get an idea of what their future plans might be and their thoughts on a SDP.

Ric said if there was any indication of water contamination issues with new or existing septic systems, the City could put a moratorium on development in that area.

Jim Bruvold said the Drinking Water Protection Plan suggested inventorying existing wells for a 10 year time. He suggested doing a survey and find out where septic drain fields and wells are and create a map so Councilors and Commissioners have a basis for making decisions.

Mayor Brooker said we need to understand what the budget issues will be over the next few years to begin to determine what the facilities plan will be.

Thomas Cotter suggested requesting Lane County to require more environmentally friendly septic systems for high water areas.

Ric said in Jerry Elliott's investigation, he found the bigger wells (Well 9) and aquifers are all on Huston Rd. but we also know that area has a lot of septic systems and high groundwater.

### **3. DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AND HIGHWAY COMMERCIAL STANDARDS**

As part of the Downtown Master Plan (DMP) project, the City had an arrangement with the Transportation Growth Management Code Assistance Program, sponsored by ODOT and DLCDC to hire a consultant, Siegel Planning Services, to help Veneta evaluate the DMP and develop amendments to our land use code. This work session will focus on implementing the DMP by proposing land use zones and creating amendments to further appropriate downtown retail-oriented development; along with a few changes to the Highway Commercial (HC) zone and Industrial Commercial (IC) zone and making a recommendation on the Specific Development Plan Sub-zone (Northeast Employment Center).

Amie Collins presented the proposal for the two new zones; one for the Territorial Commercial (TC) area and one for Broadway Commercial (BC). Both zones allow mixed use development but have different design standards that are intended to give each area a distinct character, consistent with the DMP.

A question for the Councilors and Commissioners is whether the proposed TC standards are also appropriate for the existing Community Commercial (CC) area north of Highway 126 or if the CC zone should apply or be amended for this area.

The Residential Commercial (RC) zone is intended to blend residential with mixed use development to create a downtown neighborhood. Neighborhood-oriented uses including small scale commercial development, mixed-use live/work, and town-homes are encouraged. The zone will also support a balance between housing and commercial uses, consistent with the DMP. The consultant proposed building and site design standards consistent with the DMP. He did not recommend minimum density standards (for new housing) or making mixed-use development mandatory.

The Highway Commercial (HC) zone was evaluated by the consultant. He found the HC zone allows land uses that may inappropriately compete with intended downtown uses. Some automobile-oriented uses, i.e., drive-through restaurants, gas stations, and auto sales may be discouraged under the current HC regulations. Smaller commercial and speciality retail are examples of uses that should be focused in the downtown area but are currently allowed in all commercial zones. Drive-through commercial, bulk retail and industrial uses should be limited to the HC zone and the Northeast Employment Center. Regulations for drive-through uses should be added to the HC and IC zones.

Mayor Brooker suggested designating the corner of Territorial and Broadway as the City's gateway area, and zone it HC.

Margaret said Jack Kelley Drive has visibility from the highway and should be zoned HC. Drive-through facilities are not currently allowed and museums and art galleries should be moved to the BC area.

Darrell Carman said eliminating certain products to be used for exterior siding on new business may discourage potential retailers from coming to the area.

Margaret said the code is open to adjustment if the City wanted to allow certain materials.

Sharon Hobart-Hardin suggested incorporating the use of drought resistant plants into the plan for all commercial zones.

Jim Bruvold suggested requiring businesses to have "green roofs" so impervious surfaces would be reduced. He also suggested energy efficiency standards be incorporated into the plan.

Mayor Brooker said conceptually the City could recommend energy saving construction and "green roofs" could be allowed but we don't want to require too much building criteria or we may not get any at all.

Margaret suggested offering incentives for energy efficiency construction and "green roofs".

4. **OTHER**  
None

5. **ADJOURN**

Mayor Brooker and Chairman James Eagle Eye adjourned the Joint Work Session of the City Council and the Planning Commission at 6:58 p.m.

  
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T.J. Brooker, Mayor

  
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James Eagle Eye, Chairman

ATTEST:

  
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Darci Henneman, Assistant City Recorder  
(minutes prepared by dhenneman)