

STAYTON PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Tuesday, May 27, 2025

COMMISSIONERS: Larry McKinley – Chair (present)
Peter Bellas (present)
Amy Watts (via Zoom)
Melissa Sutkowski (present)

STAFF MEMBERS: Jennifer Siciliano, Community & Economic Development Director
Susan Bender Public Works Office Specialist

OTHERS PRESENT: Steve Sims, City Councilor, 2110 E Santiam St, Stayton, OR 97383
James Baxter, 1435 N Second Avenue, Stayton, OR 97383
Evelyn Bertoli, P.O. Box 5, Stayton, OR 97383

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Chairman Larry McKinley called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. All Planning Commissioners are present.
2. **APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** No minutes available. This agenda item was tabled.
3. **LAND USE FILE #5-02/25 PUBLIC HEARING:** Application to Vacate the Alleyway between N First Ave and N Second Ave, running from E Pine to E Fir Streets.

Commencement of Public Hearing- Chair McKinley read the opening statement and opened the hearing at 7:00 pm. No objections were made by the audience to the notice in this case or the jurisdiction of this body to hear the case. There were no declarations of conflict of interest, *ex-parte* contact, or bias by members of the Planning Commission. Vacation of streets and alleys is the subject of Oregon Revised Statute. The statute establishes criteria for determining that the vacation would not prejudice the public interest. All evidence, arguments, and testimony must be directed towards this approval criteria, or to such other rules, laws, regulations, or policies.

a. Staff Introduction and Report – Ms. Siciliano discussed that there are no Stayton municipal codes for such vacation, so State of Oregon regulations apply. Requirements met by applicant. Staff sent out public notices to abutters and all pertinent interested organizations. SCTC indicated they have service in the area of concern, so they will require an easement. Staff suggested that upon recommendation, allow for utility easement in the alleyway. Staff outlined Planning Commission recommendations and the next step with the City Council. Chair McKinley reiterates the role of this body to hear testimony and makes recommendation vs the City Council which has approval authority.

b. Applicant Presentation - The applicant James Baxter outlined the impetus for the application including chronic issues with people parking and using the area as a campsite and trash dump. These activities impede traffic through the alley. The camping activity triggers dogs which then disturbs the neighborhood. Vacation would allow possible construction of fencing to deter parking and camping.

c. Questions from the Commission- The Planning Commission discussed how abutting properties currently access the alley and how a future utility easement would be identified. The applicant indicated plans to install a fence along surveyed property lines and acknowledged neighbor impacts. Staff suggested a gate be added for utility access if the alley is vacated. Concerns about illegal camping and related trash issues were also discussed, with confirmation that code enforcement was involved.

d. Questions and Testimony from the Public- None

e. Applicant Summary- Nothing more to add.

f. Staff Summary- Nothing more to add.

g. Close of Hearing- Chair McKinley closed the hearing at 7:19 pm.

h. Commission Deliberation- The Planning Commission discussed the proposed alley vacation, noting that the need for the alley has diminished with increased activity on First Street and that notices were sent to all adjacent property owners.

i. Commission Decision - Commissioner Sutkowski moved and Commissioner Bellas seconded for the Stayton Planning Commission to recommend the vacation of the alley between N First Avenue and N Second Avenue, running from E Pine to E Fir Streets, with a Public Utility Easement for maintenance and access. The vote was unanimous.

4. ADJOURN –Chair McKinley adjourned the meeting at 7:23 pm.