

**CITY OF UMATILLA  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
January 23, 2017  
COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

- I. CALL TO ORDER:** Planning Commission, Vice Chair Sipe, called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

**ROLL CALL:**

- A. **Present:** Commissioners Jodi Hinsley, Heidi Sipe, Ramona Anderson, and Kelly Nobles.  
B. **Absent:** Chair Lyle Smith and Commissioner Craig Simson.  
C. **Staff present:** City Planner Brandon Seitz and Administrative Assistant, Esmeralda Horn.

- II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** For June 22, 2017 & November 28, 2017.

Motion to approve minutes for June 22, 2017 & November 28, 2017 by Commissioner Anderson. Commissioner Nobles seconded the motion. Voted: 4-0. Motion carried.

- III. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:** None

- IV. NEW BUSINESS:**

- A. Lifeways Variance (V-1-2017):** The applicant requests approval of a variance to the six (6) foot height restriction on fences in the McNary Center Mixed Use Zone. The property has been developed with a six-foot fence surrounding the existing treatment center and utilizes a ditch to achieve an eight-foot height as required by state law. The ditch is eroding and has become a safety issue for the facility. Therefore, the applicant is requesting a variance to allow the facility to remove the ditch and replace the existing six-foot fence with an eight-foot fence. The subject property is identified as Tax Lot 6200 on Assessors Map 5N2815AD and the situs address is 290 Willamette Ave, Umatilla, OR 97882. Applicant and property owner, Lifeways.

Vice Chair, Sipe, opened the public hearing for V-1-2017 at 7:04pm. Vice Chair, Sipe, read the procedures for the public hearing. Vice Chair, Sipe, requested the staff report from City Planner, Brandon Seitz. Brandon stated the applicant is requesting a variance to the height of the current fence. Currently, the height restriction is 6'. The facility has been able to achieve the 8' state requirement by utilizing a ditch. With time, the ditch as become a safety and maintenance issue. The variance request would not apply to the entire zone. This variance is specific due to the nature of the facility and services provided, it's a requirement of state law. Brandon recommends approval as the application meets all criteria necessary.

Commissioner Nobles, asked if the height requirement was to keep people in or keep people out. Brandon stated both, but for this application, it is to keep people in.

Vice Chair, Sipe, stated that part of the original application was for Lifeways to offer counseling services to the community of Umatilla. After a year of the facility opening

they ceased to offer counseling service and have become an inpatient facility only. Her concern is that the original promises have not been upheld and if the zone even still allows Lifeways to operate.

City Planner, Brandon, stated that in 2015, the zone was amended and at this point their current use would not be allowed under the current zoning. Since it is an existing facility and it was in part approved as a secured residential facility he believes they have the right to continue the use. As far as the ORS reads it is based off the number of patients not weather it is secured or not secured or if they are offering some sort of treatment or counseling type services.

Vice Chair, Sipe, main concern is that it was only approved on the basis that they did offer counseling services to community members and they did not uphold it. What can be done to enforce original promise?

City Planner, Brandon, stated he will look further into the issue and see if there is anything that can be done. He would have to see if it was a condition of approval or if it was just referenced on the original application.

Commissioner Anderson, inquired on the specification of the fence: if its' location will be in the same place and if it will also be white vinyl.

Vice Chair, Sipe, welcomed any testimony from the applicant.

Suzie Ireland, Facility Manager for Lifeways, 702 Sunset Drive, Ontario, Oregon, 97914. Applicant representative stated it will be white vinyl and they have spoken to a contractor regarding the fence. The contractor stated they would be able to add 2' of fence on top of the existing white vinyl fence to meet the required 8' minimum. To touch base with some previous stated concerns. She stated Lifeways is still providing community services in schools. The problem is that they outgrew the facility so fast. They are not able to add on to the facility, so the solution was to move counseling services to the office in Hermiston. Had they known it would have grown so fast they would have made it originally bigger.

Vice Chair, Sipe, stated she is the Umatilla School District Superintendent, and the services provided are in fact in the schools not the facility.

Representative, Suzie agreed to that statement she thought that they still use the McNary facility offices at off times as well.

Vice Chair, Sipe, asked if there were any public testimony in support of the application. Vice Chair, Sipe, asked if there was any public testimony in opposition of the application. Any further comments or questions?

Chief Huxel, 300 6<sup>th</sup> St, Umatilla, OR 97882. Directed a question to the representative for Lifeways. She inquired if the alarm on top of the fence was going to continue to be maintained on the fence. Suzie Ireland, confirmed the alarm will stay. It is a laser alarm from corner to corner.

Vice Chair, Sipe, asked if there were any further testimony or comment, there were none.

Vice Chair, Sipe, called for a motion. Motion to close the hearing by Commissioner Nobles. Motion was second by Commissioner Anderson. Motion to close 4-0.

Vice Chair, Sipe, stated she is deeply disappointed to approve this request as Lifeways failed to uphold their original promise to offer counseling services to the community of Umatilla. To expect community members to drive to Hermiston for services is completely unacceptable.

Lifeways representative, Suzie, stated Lifeways does have a new CEO and she will state our concerns to him and hope changes are made.

Vice Chair, Sipe called for a motion. Motion to approval Variance Request V-1-2017 by Commissioner Hinsely. Motion seconded by Commissioner Nobles. Voted: 4-0. Motion carried.

## **V. DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

### **A. Mobile Food Vendors – Update**

City Planner Brandon, stated no substantial information to report back at this time. We will be getting to it in the future. Most of our time is consumed updating day to day procedures with the new staff and outdated information.

### **B. Moving Meeting to 6:30.**

City Planner, Brandon presented the idea to possibly move meeting to 6:30 pm if it works for all Commissioners. He doesn't want to put any undue stress on anyone, but it makes it easier for staff who commute.

Vice Chair, Sipe stated she doesn't see the problem if we start in March granted it works for all the other Commissioners. This will be presented at the February's meeting.

## **VI. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:**

### **A. Healthy Communities Policy Guide**

City Planner, Brandon, states this is a document that is a policy guide that Tamra obtained guide during her APA Conference in Washington DC. Tamra is not here to present, so at this time this serves as reading material.

## **VII. ADJOURMENT:** Next meeting will be held February 27, 2018 at 7pm.

Meeting adjourned at 7:23 pm.