

**City of Rainier
Planning Commission Meeting
January 10, 2023
6 p.m.
Rainier City Hall**

Chair Erin O’Connell called the meeting to order at 6:07 p.m.

Commissioners Present: Erin O’Connell, Nick Gratzner, Dena Nordstrom and Nina Pogue

Commissioners Absent: Paul Langner

City Staff Present: City Recorder Sarah Blodgett and City Administrator W. Scott Jorgensen

Visitor Comments: There were no visitor comments at this time.

Consider Approval of the Consent Agenda: Consider Approval of the December 19, 2022 Regular Planning Commission Meeting Minutes—Commissioner Nina Pogue moved to approve. That motion was seconded by Vice Chair Dena Nordstrom and adopted unanimously.

New Business

a. Public Hearing on Conditional Use Permit Application for Home Occupation at 30907 Timoney Lane—Chair Erin O’Connell opened the hearing at 6:10 p.m. There were no ex parte contacts, biases or conflicts reported among the commissioners. City Planner Skip Urling gave the staff report. The conditional use application is for a group home for adults with disabilities. Proper notice of the hearing was given. Home occupations are allowed in the city’s R-2 zone. This had to come before planning commission because there will be up to six employees at the home and none will be residing there. Public facilities to the home are adequate and Timoney Lane is a private road. The home is serviced by an eight-inch sewer and 12-inch sewer lines and there is a fire hydrant nearby. The road is passable by a fire truck. He has no objections and finds that the application complies with comprehensive plan policies. Neighbors have expressed concern about the road’s condition. But the proposed use wouldn’t impact the system more than an average house. The state Department of Human Services will regulate Strong Heart Homes. Staff recommends approval. There will be up to three employees at the home at any given time but it won’t be constant. They will be rotating shifts. Nordstrom asked if the residents will have cars. They will not. Urling acknowledged that the road needs attention but is private. Applicant Tom Johnson said he will be bringing gravel in and using equipment to fix the road. There is plenty of room to park on the property. Applicant Dennis O’Brien said there is an agreement among the street residents for its maintenance and a meeting is scheduled for July 1. Those costs are split between the neighbors. There are four houses on the street. No support was given in support of the application. No neutral testimony was given. Timoney Lane resident Jessica Giffin testified in opposition. She submitted a letter for the record that was signed by the street’s current residents. She reiterated that the street is steep, narrow and in disrepair. It’s difficult to get out of there during snow and ice events and trees came down last April. Power goes out often. Deliveries may be difficult on the one-lane road. Johnson said traffic to and from the home will be minimal and deliveries will go to the post office. The home will have generators and emergency preparedness kits. He could also help widen the road. It is a three bedroom, two bath home. The public testimony portion of the hearing was closed at 7:15 p.m. Pogue said her business won’t deliver to many roads in town because of their condition but does deliver to Timoney Lane. O’Connell said the road has been in bad shape but it is up to the neighbors to

find a solution and the applicant is willing to help. The burden is not on him alone, though. Nordstrom moved to approve the application. That motion was seconded by Gratzner and adopted unanimously.

- b. Public Hearing on Site Design Review and Variance for Rainier Oregon Historical Museum at West A Street—The hearing was opened at 7:25 p.m. There were no conflicts, biases or ex parte contacts declared by any of the commissioners. O’Connell and Nordstrom both declared that they’ve recently been near the site. Urling gave his staff report. The Rainier Oregon Historical Museum is proposing to build a museum. It is a permitted use that will create no additional traffic hazards. The proposal meets the city’s height standard. The front is required to face the access street but the museum wants to display an antique fire truck and other vehicles. A variance is being requested to accommodate that. There is adequate parking and half street improvements have been proposed. This will be a great asset to the community and he recommends approval. Matt Alexander from Lower Columbia Engineering said the museum is currently upstairs at city hall but has outgrown the space. It’s a good location near the park, senior housing and the senior center. Jorgensen reiterated the strong support of the project from the city and its council. No neutral or opposition testimony was offered. The public hearing was closed at 7:55 p.m. Nordstrom moved to approve the application. That was seconded by Pogue and adopted unanimously.

O’Connell adjourned the meeting at 8 p.m.

Erin O’Connell, Chair

Sarah Blodgett, City Recorder

Areas per Zoning Category

OLD UGB:	1066 ac	
COL. CO. ZONE	Proposed Area Removed	Proposed Area Added
INDUSTRIAL <i>(M1, M2)</i>	0 ac	0 ac
COMMERCIAL <i>(C-3, EC)</i>	0 ac	0 ac
RESIDENTIAL <i>(MFR, RR-5, R-10)</i>	559 ac	442 ac
RESOURCE LAND <i>(PA-80, PF-80, FA-80)</i>	126 ac	151 ac
Community Service Institutional (CS-I)	0 ac	54 ac

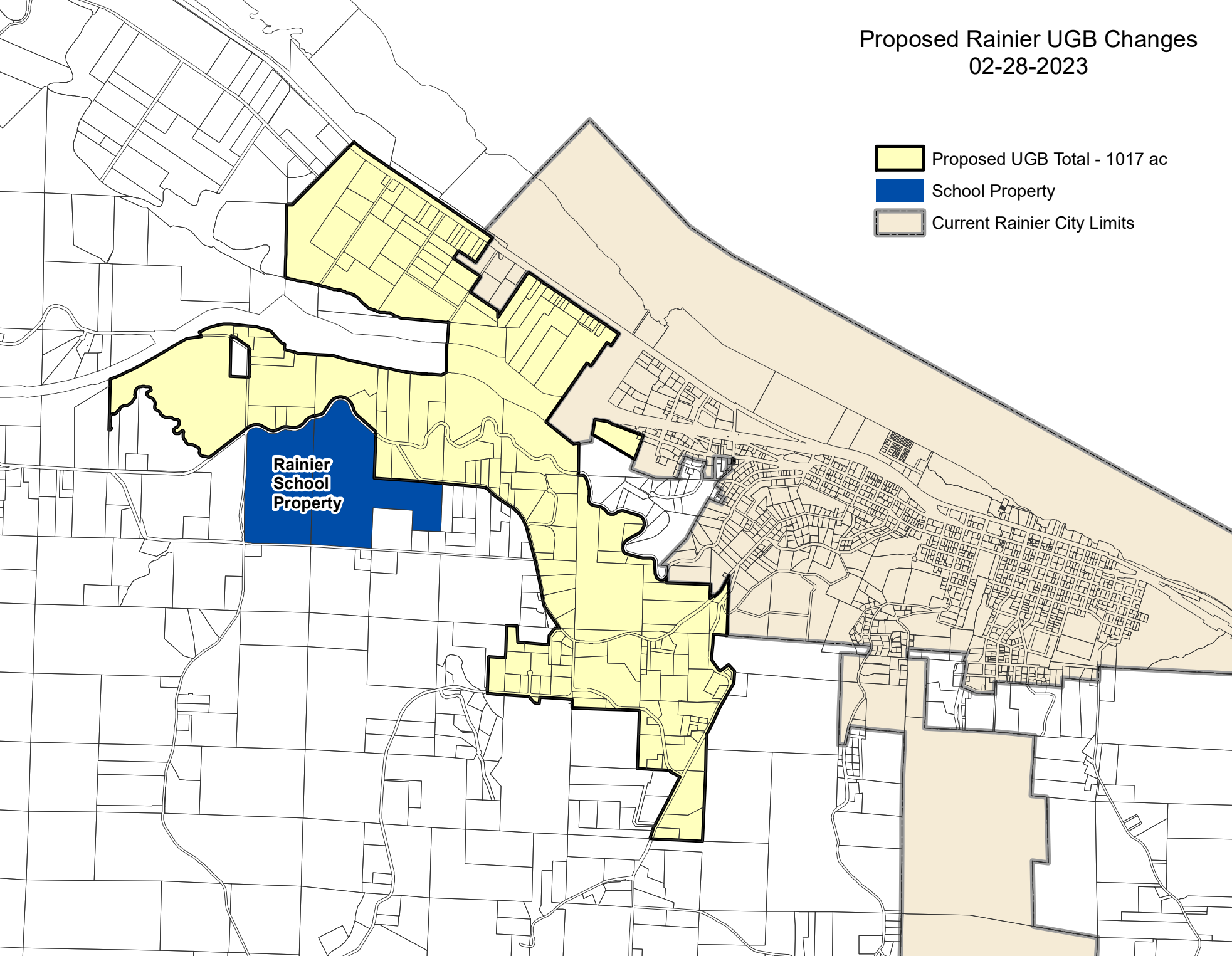
Subtotal:

TOTAL:	685 ac	647 ac
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NEW UGB:	1016 ac
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Proposed Rainier UGB Changes
02-28-2023

- Proposed UGB Total - 1017 ac
- School Property
- Current Rainier City Limits



City of Rainier Planning Commission
Code Update Priorities for 2023

Already in Progress:

- Increase minimum square footage for garages from 120 to 240 feet
- Provide a definition for “sandwich board signs” and add them to the list of exempt signs

Continued Discussions:

- Shipping containers
- Tiny homes
- feather banners—define and make a temporary use
- “air dancers”
- change code so meetings are Mondays
- simplify partition process
- look into Planned Unit Developments
- ADUs—**wait to see what changes the Legislature will make**

Recommendations from Columbia County Housing Implementation Plan:

- Permit cottage cluster housing in R-1, R2 and high density residential (R-3) zones
- Permit duplexes and/or two-unit townhouses in R-1 zones
- Reduce minimum lot size for duplexes and/or two-unit townhouses in R-3 zoning from 8,000 to 5,000 square feet
- Reduce minimum lot size for triplexes and/or three-unit townhouses in R-3 zoning from 11,000 to 7,000 square feet

-Permit ADUs in Suburban Residential (SR), low density residential (R-1) and medium density residential (R-2) zones—**wait to see what changes the Legislature will make**

- Reduce minimum lot size for duplexes and/or two-unit townhouses in R-1 zoning from 15,000 to 10,000 square feet—NO**
- Reduce minimum lot size for duplexes and/or two-unit townhouses in R-2 zoning from 15,000 to 6,000 square feet--NO**
- Reduce minimum lot size for townhouses with four or more units in R-2 zoning from 3,000 square feet/unit to 2,500 square feet/unit—NO**
- Reduce minimum lot size for townhouses with four or more units in R-3 zoning from 2,500 square feet/unit to 1,500 square feet/unit--NO**
- Reduce minimum lot size for multifamily in R-3 zoning for three units from 11,000 to 7,000 square feet/unit and four or more units from 2,000 square feet/unit to 1,500 square feet/unit—NO**

Proposed Subdivision and Zoning Code Amendments

- Create a planned unit development option for subdividing property
- Amend the preliminary plat code to make the planning commission the final decision maker, with an appeal to the city council
- Re-tool the sign code
- Include adult group homes in selected zoning districts as uses permitted outright
- Amend the partition code to clarify that the administrative decision on preliminary plats is final, as opposed to recommended, with appeals heard by the planning commission
- Amend various codes that identify the public works superintendent as the chief code administrator or decision maker and replace with the city planner
- Amend the property line adjustment code to make it a Type I decision
- Amend the similar use code to make the decision a Type II action, with appeals to the planning commission
- Create provisions for accessory dwelling units in selected zoning districts
- Delete RMC 2.15 Article II regarding meetings, organization, election of officers, duties of offices, operations and conducting business, conflicts of interest and appearance of fairness, and public hearing procedures. Replace these items with a formal rules of procedure resolution
- Other amendments identified by the planning commission