



STAFF REPORT
To The
KELSO HEARING EXAMINER

PRESENTED BY: Steve Langdon, Interim Planning Manager
HEARING DATE: March 18, 2021
APPLICATION NO.: LUA2020-0001
APPLICANT: Youth & Family Link, 907 Douglas Street, Longview, WA 98632
PROPERTY OWNER: Youth & Family Link
REQUEST: Conditional Use Permit in accordance with KMC §17.18.040 to allow “Schools” and “Community Center.”
LOCATION: 1107 4th Avenue South, Kelso, WA (Assessor’s parcel number 23386)
ASSOCIATED CASES: Conditional Use Permit CUP 19-001
ZONING DISTRICT: Residential Single-Family 5 Zone
TYPE OF ACTION: Quasi-judicial

BACKGROUND AND PROPOSAL

On December 22, 2020 Youth & Family Link (Y&FL) submitted an application to the City of Kelso for a conditional use permit. (Exhibit A) This conditional use permit (CUP) will allow Y&FL to construct a 2,700 square foot building on a 0.22± acre lot. The new building will be used for Lower Columbia College Head Start Start/ECEAP classes and neighborhood community center activities. The initial application stated that the building was only going to be used for community center activities. On February 11, planning staff learned that Head Start classes will also be held at the building. The application was then amended and it was declared complete on February 24, 2021. (Exhibit B)

The project involves removing a former single-family residence and two outbuildings and then constructing a 2,700 square foot building. The front yard will have a drop-off drive and an ADA compliant parking space. The rear yard will have five parking spaces for staff that will be accessed via the alley. Because the facility will be located within a half of a block for Wallace Elementary School and it will be used to support the students and families served by the Kelso School District, the District has agreed to allow Youth and Family Link to use their parking when needed. A letter from the school district and Y&FL is included with the amended application (See Exhibit B).

In August 2019, Youth & Family Link was granted a conditional use permit (CUP 19-001) to operate a neighborhood community center out of the former single-family residence. Since then, they have received additional funding. Consequently, they decided to build a new building that will be designed to more specifically meet their needs. Since the project was substantially altered, the Community Development Director determined that a new conditional use permit was needed.

Lower Columbia College Head Start/ECEAP program will provide the Head Start classes. Their services will include up to 18 preschool children and four staff on-site at one time. There will be a morning session and an afternoon session. Youth & Family Link will provide the neighborhood community center services. Per the application, "The proposed project could facilitate up to 50 local residents and would be available for other uses such as Bob Scouts, Girl Scouts, neighborhood meetings, parent meetings, school programs. It would be a kind of 'Urban Grange'."

The site is not on any historic register.

Neighboring land uses:

South – single-family homes.

East – South 4th Avenue, single-family homes

North – single-family homes

West – alley, single-family homes

The Comprehensive Plan classifies the subject property as Lower Density Residential. The parcel is within the Residential Single-Family 5 Zone (RSF5).

The application and emails amending the application are attached as Exhibit A.

SEPA DETERMINATION

The City's SEPA official determined that the project is categorically exempt from State Environmental Policy Act review.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notice of application and notice for public hearing was published in The Daily News on February 27, 2021. The comment period closes on the hearing date. On February 25, a notice was mailed to all property owners within 300 feet of the site. A notice on site was posted on March 3, 2021. As of this writing, no written comments from the public have been received.

APPLICABLE CODE SECTIONS

17.18.030 Official zoning map.

Subsection A states that "The purpose of the residential single-family 5 (RSF5) zone is to maintain neighborhoods where existing development patterns and the availability of infrastructure support smaller lots and higher density single-family residential development."

Staff comment: The Head Start program and community center activities will provide valuable services to the neighborhood. The facility will be located in an established single-family residential neighborhood. The Youth & Family Link project will not negatively impact existing development patterns or infrastructure.

Conditional Use Permit

The purpose of a conditional use permit is to allow uses within a particular zoning classification that may be of service to the area and with minor mitigation, fit within the zone. Topics traditionally addressed through the

conditional use permit process are compatibility with the comprehensive plan, impact to the usability of neighboring properties, noise, light, activity, and traffic.

Kelso Municipal Code does not contain specific criteria for approving a conditional use permit. Instead, staff is using the criteria of site plan approval (KMC 17.10.030) to ensure that basic compatibility is established between this proposal and all other existing development within the City.

The purpose of a site plan review is to help ensure that new development activities do not adversely affect the public health, safety and welfare of residents of Kelso, and that new development activities are compatible with existing patterns of development and the provisions of the Kelso comprehensive plan.

KMC 17.10.030 (C)(1) The project is consistent with the Kelso comprehensive plan and meets the requirements and intent of the Kelso Municipal Code, including the type of land use and the intensity/density of the proposed development.

Staff analysis: Staff finds no conflicts with the comprehensive plan and finds that this proposal will meet the requirements of the Kelso Municipal code.

1. KMC Table 17.18.040, Table of Permitted Uses

Community Centers and Schools are permitted with a Conditional Use permit in the RSF5, Residential single family 5000 zoning classification.

2. KMC 17.22.110 Parking

RSF5 requires parking through analysis.

Staff analysis: With the conversion from a single-family lot to a school/community center, parking demands will increase. According to the applicant, both the Head Start program and community center activities will be oriented towards the local neighborhood. Thus, they expect many of the trip to and from the property will be via walking or biking.

On-street parking is limited to one side of the street along the side opposite of the subject property. Much of this parking is already used by the residents along the street. The subject property is only 9,500± square feet in size. In addition to the building, the proposed activities need outdoor open spaces. Thus, space for off-street parking is limited. Originally the applicant proposed to have one ADA compliant parking space on site with no drop-off drive. The majority of the parking was to take place at the nearby Wallace Elementary School per agreement with the Superintendent of Schools. In discussion with City staff, the applicant readily agreed add a front drop-off drive and 5 more parking spaces accessed from the alley. Parking at the nearby school is still needed.

Permission for the applicant to use Wallace Elementary School parking is from a letter from the Superintendent of Kelso Schools. In order to ensure long-term availability of parking, city staff is recommending that a more formal shared parking agreement be reached. The shared parking agreement should be approved by the Kelso School Board. The applicant and school district have agreed to negotiate a more formal agreement.

Staff finds that, with a shared parking agreement in place, the applicant meets the intent of this section of the code.

3. KMC 17.22.100 Landscaping

(A)(2) Providing vegetated screening between single-family residential areas and adjoining land uses.

(A)(4) Encouraging the retention of existing vegetation, tree stands and significant trees by incorporating them into the site design.

(G) Perimeter Landscaping Buffer Requirements.

Staff analysis: Preliminary landscaping plans are not traditionally required at this step in the land use process.

Staff finds general compliance with this requirement and compliance will be more specifically addressed during the building permit approval process.

(2) The physical location, size, and placement of the development on the site and the location of the proposed uses within the project minimize impacts to any critical resource or floodplain area to the greatest extent possible or are compatible with the character and intended development pattern of the surrounding properties.

Staff analysis: The subject property is located in a fully-developed lot and block type neighborhood. No critical resources are nearby and the area is in a floodplain protected by a levee system. Thus, staff finds there will be no impact to critical resources or floodplain areas.

(3) The project makes adequate provisions for water supply, storm drainage, sanitary sewage disposal, emergency services, and environmental protection to ensure that the proposed project would not be detrimental to public health and safety.

Staff analysis: Staff finds that as a fully developed neighborhood all utilities and emergency services are present.

(4) Public access and circulation including non-motorized access, as appropriate, are adequate to and on the site.

Staff analysis: The subject property is within a developed lot and block type neighborhood. In general, public access non-motorized access in this neighborhood is good. The addition of a front drop-off drive provides for the safe loading and unloading of young passengers. Staff finds compliance with this criterion.

(5) Adequate setbacks and buffering have been provided. Any reduction to setbacks or buffer widths is the minimum necessary to allow for reasonable economic use of the lot and does not adversely impact the functional value of the critical resource area or adjoining land uses.

Staff analysis: Staff finds compliance with this criterion.

(6) The physical location, size, and placement of proposed structures on the site and the location of proposed uses within the project are compatible with and relate harmoniously to the surrounding area.

Staff analysis: Staff finds no additional impact to neighborhood as the result of physical location, size, and placement of proposed structures.

(7) The project adequately mitigates impacts identified through the SEPA review process, if required.

Staff analysis: The Kelso SEPA official determined that the project and conditional use application are categorically exempt from the SEPA process.

(8) The project would not be detrimental to the public interest, health, safety, or general welfare.

Staff analysis: Staff finds that this project will not be detrimental to the public interest, health, safety, or general welfare.

17.10.140 Permit Processing.

(B) The City may, in approving an application, impose such conditions as may be required to comply with this title and to protect the public health safety and welfare. These conditions and safeguards include but are not limited to the following:

- a. Measures identified during the environmental review process;
- b. Measures necessary to comply with the provisions of the Kelso comprehensive plan;
- c. Measures necessary to comply with provisions of the Kelso Municipal Code; and/or
- d. Measures necessary to ensure compatibility of the proposed development activity with neighboring land uses, and consistency with the intent and character of the zoning district.

Staff analysis: Staff finds that, with the recommended condition as set forth herein, the proposed application complies with the Kelso comprehensive plan, and Kelso municipal code and further that that the proposed development activity is compatible with neighboring land uses and consistent with the intent and character of the zoning district.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends approval of Conditional Use Permit LUA2020-0001 for the Youth & Family Link facility project at 1107 4th Avenue South with the following conditions:

- A. *Prior to receiving a final occupancy permit, Youth & Family Link shall submit to the Kelso Community Development Director for his/her approval a shared parking agreement for the Head Start and Community Center activities to use Wallace Elementary School parking facilities. The agreement that is approved by the Kelso School District needs to contain a long-term commitment to provide the parking. The applicants must demonstrate that the school parking facilities are readily (physically) available for those activities.*
- B. *Prior to receiving a final occupancy permit, Youth & Family Link shall install a sign(s) directing drivers to the Wallace Elementary School parking. The number, size, location and content of the sign(s) shall be approved by the Kelso Community Development Director*

EXHIBITS

- A. Conditional Use Permit Petition with applicant's narrative including applicant's site plan
- B. Modifications to application

Staff report date: March 10, 2021