

ASHLAND PLANNING COMMISSION
STUDY SESSION
January 25, 2022
AGENDA
<https://zoom.us/j/95710471211>

- I. CALL TO ORDER: 7:00 PM, via Zoom
- II. ANNOUNCEMENTS
- III. PUBLIC FORUM
- IV. DISCUSSION ITEMS
 - A. Croman Mill District Plan Update - Townmakers LLC.
- V. OTHER BUSINESS
- VI. ADJOURNMENT

CITY OF
ASHLAND



In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance to participate in this meeting, please contact the Community Development office at 541-488-5305 (TTY phone is 1-800-735-2900). Notification 48 hours prior to the meeting will enable the City to make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to the meeting (28 CFR 35.102-35.104 ADA Title 1).

Staff Memo

Croman Mill Site Development

Memo

DATE: January 25, 2022
TO: Planning Commission
FROM: Brandon Goldman, Planning Manager
RE: Croman Mill District Update – Townmakers LLC.

In September of 2021, the owners of the former Croman Mill site, and the development team named Townmakers LLC, began conceptualizing the future development of the property for a mixed-use development incorporating commercial, employment, light industrial and residential uses.

The property is comprised of multiple parcels totaling 60.92 acres in size and is currently within the Croman Mill District. All but 6 acres of the property are currently within the City Limits. The 6-acre portion of the property outside the City Limits is located along Siskiyou Blvd., is within the Urban Growth Boundary, and would be annexed as part of the development proposal.

The Croman Mill District currently includes five zones, Compatible Industrial (CM-CI), Mixed Use (CM-MU), Neighborhood Center (CM-NC), Office Employment (CM-OE), and Open Space/Conservation (CM-OS) and is regulated as a special district within Ashland's Land Use Ordinance ([chapter 18.3.2](#)).

In staff's assessment development of the property in the manner envisioned in the concept plan would require changes to the Croman Mill District's underlying zoning designations, allowable uses, road and multi-use path layout, site and building design standards, and residential densities. To redistribute housing to portions of the district where it was not previously envisioned, provide expanded opportunities for mixed-use development, and propose adjustments to the street system plan, a comprehensive Land Use Ordinance Amendment to the Croman Mill District would be the most appropriate procedure to accommodate the applicant's objectives. Land Use Ordinance Amendments, and Large Zoning Map Changes, are legislative actions, with hearings before both the Planning Commission and the City Council.

Townmakers LLC. has created a draft conceptual plan for the site's future development and held a public open house to present the concept to the public on January 12, 2022. Approximately 60 people attended the open house (in person and virtually via zoom), and were able to ask questions of, and provide comments to, the development team. Tonight's Planning Commission study session is a continuation of this public outreach effort by the development team, and an opportunity to present and discuss the vision with the Planning Commission as part of the design process before a formal proposal is prepared.



Townmakers LLC Presentation

Croman Mills Site Development

Welcome to Townmakers LLC

Thanks to everyone (60 total) who came to our Croman Mill Open House on January 12th! The video can be seen [here](#), at the bottom of the page, and comments are posted [here](#). To stay in touch and get email updates, or to email comments or questions, please [click here](#). *Thank you!*

Creating walkable live-work-play neighborhoods

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Croman Mill, Ashland, Oregon



CROMAN MILL DISTRICT - ASHLAND, OREGON - MIKE WEINSTOCK, TOWNMAKERS LLC.
TOWN PLANNERS AND DESIGNERS: QAMAR & ASSOCIATES, AND STUCTURA NATURALIS - JANUARY 1, 2022

Drawing by Laurence Qamar

Croman Mill is the site of a former timber mill that was closed in 1996. The site lies at the southern end of Ashland, and it offers the opportunity for an urban extension of Ashland into a walkable mixed use, live-work-play development that responds to the City's current needs and challenges. Goals of the project include:

1. Redevelop a brownfield site that is currently in need of cleanup, and is generating truck traffic and noise.
2. Provide a livable amenity for the City of Ashland, with parks, trails, neighborhood center, and compatible businesses, that is able to be used by all the neighbors.
3. Provide a walkable, bikable, mixed-use, live-work-play neighborhood.
4. Provide family-wage jobs, and support the development of new locally-appropriate businesses, products and services.
5. Provide needed housing, including affordable and mixed-income housing.
6. Provide energy-efficient, resource-efficient, low-carbon neighborhood and building systems.
7. Focus on health and wellness, including health-oriented business recruitment, healthy lifestyles, and building technologies (e.g. Passivhaus et al.)
8. Develop innovative urban formats with new technologies where feasible, including electric and data systems, live-works, satellite offices, incubators, neighborhood markets, affordable housing types, "makerspaces," etc.
9. Support Ashland's economic development beyond tourism, including local products, knowledge economy, synergies with Southern Oregon University, et al.
10. Create an "urban extension" of Ashland that builds on its best qualities, including its livability, and its natural and historic beauty.

About the team:

1. Mike Weinstock, the town builder, has a long history and personal connection with Ashland, and is committed to seeing its best qualities preserved and enhanced.
2. Lead Urban Designer Laurence Qamar has a long history of working in Ashland. Laurence was a planner for North Mountain and Railroad Districts in the early 2000s.

3. Lead Planner Michael Mehaffy also has a long history with Ashland. Michael's daughter graduated from Southern Oregon with a degree in biology in the late 1990s, and he and his wife spent many days in Ashland.
4. Executive Team Coordinator, Carlene Chin has owned and operated multiple wholesale and manufacturing businesses in the Pacific Northwest since 1989. Her background in Sales, Marketing, Team Leadership and B2B relationship building is extensive. Carlene thrives on facilitating strong, lasting partnerships with all of those around her.
5. The team from Parametrix civil, infrastructure and transportation engineers has been working with Laurence and Michael for many years. Their technical expertise in delivering walkable, mixed, ecologically sensitive communities is unsurpassed.

We hope you'll help us make the vision for Croman Mill a reality!



A light industrial area including live-works and "makerspaces"; and a neighborhood courtyard with small cottages clustered around it. Drawings by Laurence Qamar

NEWS UPDATE: Croman Mill Open House, January 12, 2022



Sixty people participated in our open house meeting to discuss the future of the Croman Mill site on January 12, at the Bellview Grange in Ashland. Thirteen people were in the room, using masks and social distancing, and 47 people participated via the Zoom link. (Team participants were tested for COVID beforehand.) Comments gathered can be seen [here](#). (Opens in new window.)

Here is the video of the presentation:

Croman Mill Open House Presentation

Welcome to Townmakers LLC

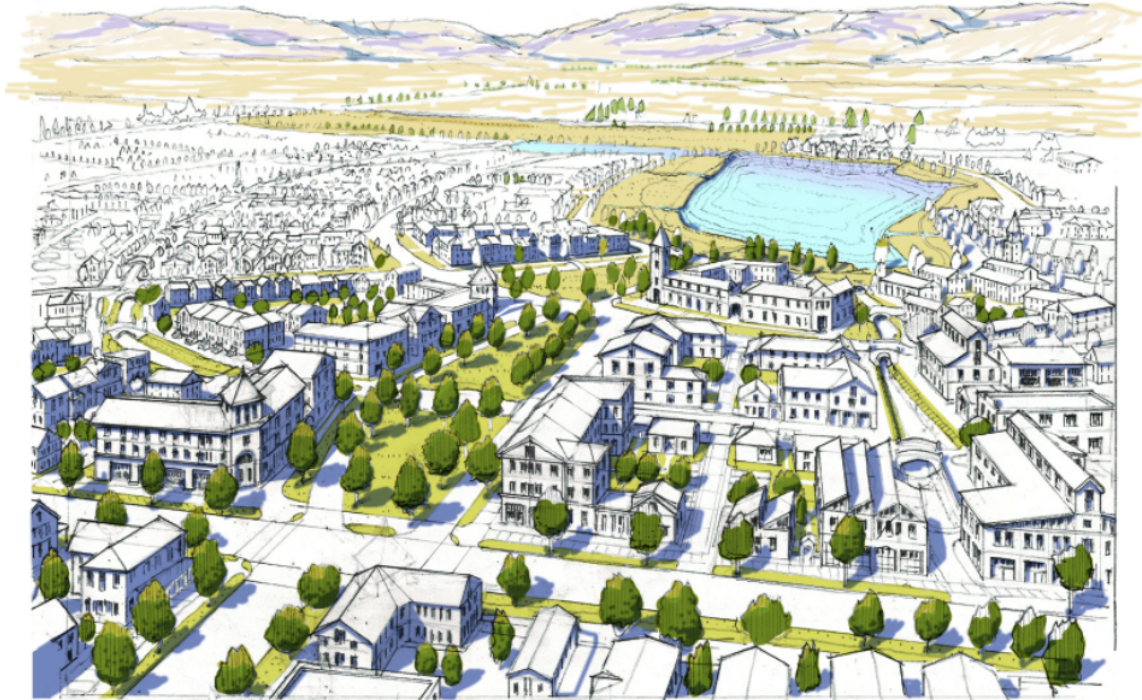
Thanks to everyone (60 total) who came to our Croman Mill Open House on January 12th! The video can be seen [here](#), at the bottom of the page, and comments are posted [here](#). To stay in touch and get email updates, or to email comments or questions, please [click here](#). *Thank you!*

Creating walkable live-work-play neighborhoods

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Townmakers LLC is headed by Mike Weinstock, a town builder with over thirty years of experience on projects across the US. Mike grew up on the East Coast but came to the West Coast as a young man, starting in the world of construction and urban development by selling wood windows, and later graduating to larger projects.

Mike's interest is in walkable, healthy, mixed use neighborhoods with the livability of great old American towns, combined with cutting-edge technology and resource-efficient design. Currently he is working on projects in Ashland, Oregon and Ellensburg, Washington, both university towns offering exciting opportunities for locally appropriate economic and urban development to meet local needs and challenges.

Lead urban designer Laurence Qamar, architect, has played a key role in creating some of the most popular and successful walkable mixed-use neighborhoods and even entire new towns in the Northwest, including Seabrook, Washington. Laurence has worked in many cities in Oregon and Washington. In Ashland, Oregon, he was a planner for North Mountain and Old Mill Districts in the early 2000s, and in Kennewick, Washington, he played a key role in masterplanning the Vista Field project, a redevelopment of a former airfield. He has also played a key role in designing popular and industry-leading communities across the USA. Laurence lives with his wife in Portland, Oregon, where she teaches art at Reed College (the alma mater of Steve Jobs).

Lead planner Michael Mehaffy, Ph.D., has played key roles in industry-leading projects in the USA and internationally. He was project manager of Orenco Station in Portland, Oregon, an acclaimed walkable mixed-use and transit-oriented neighborhood. Michael is also a noted educator, having had seven university appointments in six countries. He currently teaches a popular online course on sustainable neighborhood planning at Arizona State University. He received his Bachelor of Arts degree from The Evergreen State College in Olympia. He currently lives in the Columbia Gorge in Washington, and has also lived in Oregon for many years. One of his daughters graduated in the 1990s from Southern Oregon University in Ashland with a degree in biology. Two other daughters graduated from Portland State University, with degrees in environmental science and neuroscience.

Executive Team Coordinator Carlene Chin has owned and operated multiple wholesale and manufacturing businesses in the Pacific Northwest since 1989. Her background in Sales, Marketing, Team Leadership and B2B relationship building is extensive. Carlene thrives on facilitating strong lasting partnerships with all of those around her.

Planning Commission Update
to City Council December 7,
2021

December 7, 2021 Planning Commission Update to Council

Good evening, Honorable Mayor & Council. I'm Haywood Norton, chair of the Ashland Planning Commission which also includes members Lynn Thompson, Kerry Kencairn, Roger Pearce, Michael Dawkins, and Lisa Verner. Commissioner Alan Harper did not renew when his term ended earlier this year, and the Commission thus has one vacancy. I encourage any interested applicants to apply through the City Recorder's webpage.

Since last year's presentation, the Planning Commission has conducted land use hearings for a diverse range of projects including:

- ✓ One 11,220 square foot mixed use building
- ✓ Two industrial buildings totaling 28,778 square feet
- ✓ The rehabilitation of the old church at 599 East Main
- ✓ A 24,550 square foot addition to Walker Elementary School
- ✓ A four-unit subdivision on Oak Street
- ✓ The Beach Creek Annexation which includes a 52-unit subdivision with eight-units guaranteed as affordable.

In addition, the Planning Commission upheld staff's approval of a new wireless communication facility installation at Raider Stadium on the SOU campus.

Over the past year, the Planning Commission has also conducted hearings to:

- ✓ Adopt the Housing Capacity Analysis & Buildable Lands Inventory;
- ✓ Adopt a Housing Production Strategy which identifies specific actions, such as revising regulations or providing financial incentives, to promote the development of needed housing within the community as mandated by state legislation;
- ✓ Adopt new codes for duplexes and accessory residential units to implement state-mandated "Middle Housing" rules;
- ✓ Fine-tune the Annexation code;
- ✓ Update the Employment Land Needs and Zoning Requirements in the Commercial and Employment Zones, and review existing ground floor area requirements for commercial uses and create greater flexibility for the development of housing in the commercial and employment zones.

In addition to this land use hearing and code amendment activity, the Kestrel Park and West Village Subdivisions, both with cottage housing components, are in the build-out phase, and Helman School, Walker Elementary School, Ashland Middle School, John Muir Outdoor School and the High School have bond-funded projects underway. Plaza North across from the Post Office is under construction and will complete build-out of the First Place subdivision.

*{*Haywood – We were thinking that you didn't need to read this info in gray, it's provided more for your reference.... And rattling off the numbers might detract from the focus on the Commission's work.}*

There has also been significant activity involving Community Development staff which did not involve the Planning Commission or the City Council. In summary, 2021 Community Development staff activity saw the Current Planning Division process:

- 38** Ministerial Permits *(Boundary Line Adjustment, Plat Reviews)*
- 37** Tree Removal Permits *(Street trees & trees on private property)*
- 67** Fence Permits
- 46** Home Occupation Permits
- 55** Pre-Application Conferences
- 23** Sign Permits
- 29** Administrative Land Use Approvals *("Type I" decisions)*

In addition, between December 2020 and November 2021 Building Division Staff processed building permits for:

- 31** Single Family Residential Units
- 14** Accessory Residential Units
- 34** Building Additions
- 36** Remodels
- 36** Multiple Family Residential Units *(totaling \$7.1M)*
- 3** Mixed Use Buildings *(totaling \$4M)*
- 3** Commercial Buildings, and *(totaling \$11.7M)*
- 24** Tenant Improvements *(totaling \$8.4M)*

In the coming year, the Planning Commission looks forward to returning to in-person meetings while finding ways to incorporate the benefits to broader public participation that Zoom enables, and we also anticipate having an in-person annual retreat for the first time in two years. It also appears likely that, based on a recent pre-application conference, there may be a significant re-development proposal in the works for the old Croman mill site and both staff and the Commission look forward to seeing this move ahead.

Thank you.

Community Development Annual
City Council Update
October 18, 2021

Council Study Session

October 18, 2021

Agenda Item	General Fund Financial Review – Community Development Department	
From	Bill Molnar	Community Development Director
Contact	bill.molnar@ashland.or.us ; 541.552.2042	
Item Type	Requested by Council <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Update <input type="checkbox"/> Request for Direction <input type="checkbox"/> Presentation <input type="checkbox"/>	

SUMMARY

As part of the Council’s General Fund financial review, a summary will be presented of the services provided by the Community Development Department. Essential or core services provided by the department include building plan review and inspections services, Comprehensive Plan maintenance and processing of land use planning applications. The City has a statutory obligation to administer and enforce an approved building inspection program, as well as to maintain the City’s Comprehensive Plan, enact land use regulations that implement the Comprehensive Plan, and make land use decisions in compliance with the Comprehensive Plan and land use regulations.

FY2020-21 saw a marked increase in development activity and total annual construction permit valuation. New residential units increased over the previous biennium by 119%; permits totaling 183 residential units were issued in FY2020-21 compared to 83 residential units in FY2019-20. The total value of all new building residential and commercial construction increased from \$25.6 million in FY 2019-20 to \$77.1 million in FY2020-21. As a result, it was necessary to shift staff resources from the Long-Range Planning program to the Current Planning program to address the increase in development activity in order to maintain required permit application timelines.

The department also has responsibility for administering the City Housing Program and handling municipal Code Compliance actions. The Housing program focuses on affordable housing activities through public education and outreach, zoning initiatives, grants and direct funding, and other financial incentives such as permit fee waivers targeted for low to moderate housing projects. The Code Compliance services include one on one mediation of municipal code infractions as well as direct enforcement actions through the municipal court.

As part of the BN 2019-2021 General Fund Balancing proposal, Planning Division staffing was reduced by 1 FTE. The proposal also included the goal of improved cost recovery within the Building Division. An update of City building fees was completed and became effective on January 1, 2020. This was first comprehensive increase permit fees for the Building Division is over 20-years, resulting in a projected \$150,000 to \$200,000 increase in permit revenue over an average year of construction activity.

POLICIES, PLANS & GOALS SUPPORTED

Council Goal 1 -Develop current and long-term budgetary resilience

Council Goal 2 - Analyze City departments/programs to gain efficiencies, reduce costs and improve services

BACKGROUND AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The Community Development Department's two divisions include Planning and Building. The Planning Division maintains and updates Ashland's Comprehensive Plan and Ashland Municipal Code (AMC) Title 18 Land Use, reviews and conducts the public noticing and hearing process for development proposals, evaluates building permits for compliance with land use standards and provides staff support for four advisory commissions and the City's Planning Commission. The Housing program is located within the Planning Division and focuses on affordable housing activities through public education/outreach, zoning initiatives, grants and direct funding and other financial incentives such as permit fee waivers targeted for low to moderate housing projects. The Housing Program Manager administers and manages Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), Social Service Grants and the Housing Trust Fund. The total annual award for these three funding sources is approximately \$400,000. Last, the City's Code Compliance Specialist responds to an average of 800 calls for service annually, addressing a range of issues with respect to infractions of Ashland's Municipal Code.

The Building Division implements Oregon's Statewide Building Codes program by administering a comprehensive building plan review and inspection program. Building permit applications are reviewed for consistency with statewide building codes for all residential and commercial projects within the city. Everything from a minor home remodel to large commercial developments undergo a thorough review process to ensure construction plans meet building code requirements. Following permit issuance, projects undergo a series of inspections during the construction stage to verify the work being done is consistent with the approved plans and all fire and life safety measures are met. The Building Division also works closely with the City's Fire, Electric and Public Works departments to coordinate approval requirements to ensure state and local requirements are met.

Department Goals and Projects

Some of the Community Development Department's key goals identified in the BN 2021-2023 Budget and addressed over the current biennium and beyond include:

- 1. Adoption of Wildfire Hazard Mitigation Code** – These new requirements require the use of non-combustible or fire-resistant materials for all new residential structures. Completed. Effective Date – October 1, 2021
- 2. Adoption of Housing Capacity Analysis (HCA)** – Update the Housing Capacity Analysis and implementation strategies to increase the supply of needed housing as required by HB 2003 (mandated by state legislation). Completed June 30, 2021
- 3. Housing in Employment Lands** – Review existing ground floor area requirements for commercial uses and create greater flexibility for the development of housing in the commercial and employment zones. Currently under review at Planning Commission.
- 4. Emergency Shelter** – Expand pallet shelter program through use of \$300,000 ESG Grant to establish an emergency shelter. Received County Approval. Estimated Opening Date - October 30, 2021
- 5. Adoption of Housing Production Strategy** – Prepare a Housing Production Strategy after the completion of the Housing Capacity Analysis that identifies specific actions the City will take, such as revising regulations or providing financial incentives, to promote the development of needed housing within the community as required by HB 2003 (mandated by state legislation). Received Approval of State Funding – October 5, 2021

6. **Update City Annexation Code** -- Evaluate and draft code amendments to address issues raised on appeal before the Oregon Land Use Board of Appeals (LUBA) with the goal of addressing inconsistent and ambiguous language in the annexation chapter. This item was also identified as part of the recently adopted Housing Capacity Analysis (HCA) as an action in the upcoming Housing Production Strategy. Public Hearing before Council on Draft Code - November 2021.
7. **Wireless Communication Facilities (WCF)** – Community Development will assist and support the Legal Department with their effort to update the Ashland Municipal Code to address design standards for small cell wireless facilities on both public and private properties. A request for proposals is being developed for assistance by an outside consultant.

Looking Ahead - Significant Issues

Considerable staff resources will continue to be allocated to the following issues:

1. **Above Average Construction Activity**

During the past two years, the department has experienced above average development activity which has created an increased demand for development services within the Building Safety and Planning Divisions.

2. **State Legislation Requiring Staff Resources**

New legislation at the State and local government level will continue to impact the Department's workload and influence how staff resources are allocated. At the beginning of the 2021 session of the Oregon Legislature, approximately 1800 draft bills were submitted, with many of the bills addressing housing, wildfire protection and relief, land use and climate change.

3. **Addressing Ashland's Housing Needs**

Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD) just notified Ashland that it will fund completion of a Housing Production Strategy as required by House Bill 2003. The Housing Production Strategy is the partner to the Housing Capacity Analysis, another study required under HB 2003, which was completed in June 2021 with funding assistance from DLCD. The Housing Production Strategy is required to identify specific actions the City will take over an eight-year period, such as revising regulations or providing financial incentives, to promote the development of needed housing within community.

Other Challenges and Opportunities

In addition to department goals and projects, as well as the other significant issues noted above, looking ahead staff anticipates the future will bring additional challenges and opportunities. While these items will compete for staff resources, they are important in furthering the public's interest in such key areas as citizen involvement, the local economy, infrastructure development and housing.

1. **Advisory Commission Support**

In addition to the City's Planning Commission, Community Development provides technical and administrative support for the Historic Commission, Tree Commission, Housing and Human Services Commission and Public Arts Commission. These commissions carry out important functions as described in their powers and duties under AMC Chapter 2. Each can play an important role in advising Council and the Planning Commission on legislation,

formulation of new City programs and land use/development applications. Staff support for these commissions, however, places demand on staff resources particularly in times of higher-than-normal development activity. Staff will continue to evaluate ways to harness the expertise and diverse perspectives of City commissions while recognizing limitations of existing staffing.

2. Croman Mill District Plan – Revisions

Staff has had several conversations with a prospective development group that is considering acquisition of the old Croman Mill property. The property consists of 65-acres at the east part of town and lies within the CM-Croman Mill zoning district. The potential purchasers have done several mixed-use, residential, and small employment projects throughout the west, specifically Washington and Oregon. If acquired, the development group likely will consider amendments to the existing Croman Mill Master Plan, which would necessitate considerable City staff involvement.

3. Union Pacific Railroad Property Clean-Up

Union Pacific Railroad, Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (ODEQ) and Jacobs Engineering have developed a tentative site remediation plan for 15-acres of vacant land, located north of A Street and the Historic Railroad District and commonly referred to as the “railroad property”. The land has deep areas of heavy petroleum contamination and to a much lesser degree lead and arsenic, which are the result of past railroad operations. A public meeting on the recommended remediation plan could occur within the upcoming months. Completion of a site remediation plan is anticipated to take 12 to 15 months. Once complete, the property would be suitable for a variety of land uses, including employment and certain types of housing. Similar to the Croman Mill area, the process for clean-up, site planning and land development will necessitate involvement, oversight, and guidance from a variety of City staff.

FISCAL IMPACTS

This is an informational item that will include a presentation on the services provided by the Community Development Department, including specific accomplishments in the last biennium as well as future opportunities and challenges.

Fiscal impacts associated with Community Development Department services and programs are described and illustrated in the adopted FY2021-2023 City of Ashland Budget document.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Does Council have any questions about the services and programs administered by the Community Development Department, or identified goals and projects identified for the remainder of the biennium and beyond?

SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS

None

REFERENCES & ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 - Community Development Department Presentation - *Draft*