

**Woodburn Planning Commission  
Meeting Minutes  
February 8, 2024**

**Convened:** The Planning Commission met at 7:00 p.m. both in person and through a public online/virtual session via Microsoft Teams.

**Roll Call:**

Chair	Ellsworth	Present
Vice-Chair	Hernandez-Mejia	Present (arrived at 7:05)
Commissioner	Bartel	Present
Commissioner	Berlin	Present
Commissioner	Bravo	Present
Commissioner	Corning	Present
Commissioner	Lassen	Present

**Staff Present:**

Chris Killmer, Assistant City Attorney  
 Chris Kerr, Community Development Director  
 Colin Cortes, Senior Planner  
 Heidi Hinshaw, Associate Planner

**Introduction:** Chair Ellsworth opened the public hearing at 7:00 p.m. and asked Staff to begin roll-call. Chair Ellsworth led everyone through the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Minutes:** The minutes were from January 25, 2024. Chair Ellsworth asked for any corrections, additions, or modifications; there were none. Commissioner Corning made a motion to approve of the January 25, 2024, minutes. Commissioner Berlin seconded. The vote was unanimous and the January 25, 2024, minutes were approved.

**Business from the Audience:** None.

**Communications from Staff:** None.

**Public Hearings:**

VAR 23-08

Chair Ellsworth stated that they have one quasi-judicial public hearing tonight. She opened the public hearing of VAR 23-08: AWARE Food Bank on 152 Arthur St. She explained that it's a sign variance request from AWARE Food Bank to allow signage to extend above the canopy. Chair Ellsworth then asked if the Planning Commission had any ex-parte contacts, site visits, declarations, or potential conflicts of interest they would like to report, and there were none. Chair Ellsworth asked if there were any challenges to the Planning Commission and there were none. Assistant City Attorney Chris Killmer read the public hearing statement.

*Vice-Chair Hernandez-Mejia arrived at the Planning Commission Meeting at 7:05pm.*

After the statement, Community Development Director Chris Kerr introduced Associate Planner Heidi Hinshaw to the Planning Commission. Associate Planner Hinshaw began the staff report for VAR 23-08: AWARE Food Bank on 152 Arthur St. After her presentation, Associate Planner Hinshaw asked if the Planning Commission had any questions or comments for her. Chair Ellsworth asked if the letters for the sign were cut out individually and Associate Planner Hinshaw said yes. Commissioner Corning commented that the sign looks good, but asked if this would set a precedent for every business downtown

to bypass the rules for signs in the **Woodburn Development Ordinance**. **Vice-Chair Hernandez-Mejia** commented that the choice of coloring for the sign might make it difficult to see what the sign is saying. **Associate Planner Hinshaw** commented that the photo is imperfect and when **Staff** went to examine the sign at night, it was clearly visible to see, as the area is well illuminated at night. She also wanted to note that the sign's color and cutout nature isn't part of the variance request. Specifically, the variance request is to have the placement of the signs as is because the applicant didn't think the sign would work anywhere else. **Chair Ellsworth** reiterated that the applicant built the sign already, only to find out that it's not a permitted sign and is now applying for a variance to keep the sign there. **Director Kerr** commented that he appreciated the applicant working with staff to try to fix the problem. He commented that when the **City** is faced with an already built structure, it either has to be removed or brought into compliance. **Director Kerr** added that the sign looks good and while it violates one small component of the sign code, **Staff** thinks it fits in well with this site. He then talked about what a variance is, which is where it must be site specific, granting a request to alter code due to a unique circumstance. **Chair Ellsworth** asked if anyone had more questions or comments for **Staff**, of which there were none. She then moved onto testimony by applicant.

**Testimony by Applicant: Ian Dixon-McDonald, 3790 Saxon DR S Salem, OR 97302. Applicant Dixon-McDonald** is the Vice-President of Programs of Marion-Polk Food Share, who's the owner and operator of **AWARE Food Bank**. He was also the project manager for the construction of the new building. **Applicant Dixon-McDonald** agreed with what was presented by **Staff** and he wanted to express his appreciation for the consideration of this variance. He commented that the sign looked good, and he apologized for missing the sign ordinance, leading to them building a sign in violation. His final thought was that the sign looked good where it was and hopes the **Planning Commission** would take their variance into consideration. **Chair Ellsworth** asked if anyone had more questions or comments for **Staff**, of which there were none.

**Testimony by Proponents & Opponents: None.**

**Chair Ellsworth** closed the public hearing and moved onto the deliberation. **Commissioner Bartel** commented that she supported the variance. **Chair Ellsworth** commented that the **Planning Commission** really likes that building and it's a great asset to the community. **Chair Ellsworth** entertained a motion. **Commissioner Corning** moved that the **Planning Commission** approved of **VAR 23-08: AWARE Food Bank on 152 Arthur St**, and an order be prepared for signature of the **Chair**. **Vice-Chair Hernandez-Mejia** seconded the motion. **Chair Ellsworth** called for a vote, and it was unanimously in-favor. Therefore, **VAR 23-08: AWARE Food Bank on 152 Arthur St** was approved.

*Work Session: Commission Training & Feedback*

**Chair Ellsworth** opened the work session. **Director Kerr** spent time discussing the Development Activity Map, State Legislative Updates, and Land Development 101. He then asked for helpful feedback for **Staff** from the **Planning Commission**. Once that was concluded, **Chair Ellsworth** closed the work session.

**Business from the Commission: None.**

**Updates from Staff: Director Kerr** stated that there is no **Planning Commission Meeting on February 22, 2024**. The next meeting will be on **March 14, 2024**. He also noted that the number of quasi-judicial items have lowered over the last 5 years, and this year would end up focusing on more legislative amendment rewrites.

**Assistant City Attorney Killmer** explained that one of the items that he and **Planner Dan Handel** are working on is the regulation of food carts. **Vice-Chair Hermamdez-Mejia** asked if they would be using other city's regulations as a guiding point and **Assistant City Attorney Killmer** said he yes. **Commissioner Bravo** stated that he's excited to see what **Staff** comes up with.

**Adjournment: Chair Ellsworth** entertained a motion. **Commissioner Corning** motioned to adjourn the meeting. **Commissioner Berlin** seconded. **Chair Ellsworth** called for a vote, and it was unanimously in-favor. The meeting was adjourned around 8:55pm.

Approved \_\_\_\_\_

Lisa Ellsworth  
Chair of Planning Commission  
City of Woodburn, Oregon

\_\_\_\_\_ Date

Attest \_\_\_\_\_

Chris Kerr, AICP  
Community Development Director  
City of Woodburn, Oregon

\_\_\_\_\_ Date