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3 **BEFORE THE HEARING EXAMINER FOR THE CITY OF PUYALLUP**

4 Emily Terrell, Hearing Examiner

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| 6 RE: Sparks Stadium Parking<br>7 Expansion<br>8 Conditional Use Permit<br>9 Amendment<br>10 PLCUP20240081 | <b>FINDINGS OF FACT, CONCLUSIONS<br/>OF LAW AND DECISION.</b> |
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11 **INTRODUCTION**

12 The Puyallup School District has applied for a conditional use permit amendment to  
13 alter conditions of a 1986 prior Conditional Use Permit. The District seeks to expand  
14 the existing parking lot on their property at Sparks Stadium from 158 spaces to 209  
15 spaces with lighting, landscaping, stormwater facilities, access improvements and the  
16 pavement of an adjacent public alley. The new parking will be located in a currently  
17 unused portion of the grounds adjacent to the existing parking. The stadium itself will  
18 not be altered. The application is approved subject to conditions.

19 **ORAL TESTIMONY**

20 A computer-generated transcript of the hearing has been prepared to provide an  
21 overview of the hearing testimony. The transcript is provided for informational  
22 purposes only as Appendix A.

23 **EXHIBITS**

24 Exhibits 1-28 of the Exhibit List were entered into the record during the February 27,  
25 2025 hearing.

**FINDINGS OF FACT**

24 **Procedural:**

25 1. Applicant. Rick Hand and Brian Devereaux on behalf of the Puyallup  
School District, 601 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue SW, Puyallup, WA 98371.

2. Hearing. The Hearing Examiner conducted a virtual hearing on the application at 10:00 am on February 27, 2025.

**Substantive:**

3. Site/Proposal Description. The Puyallup School District (District) has applied for a conditional use permit amendment to alter conditions of a 1986 prior Conditional Use Permit. The District seeks to expand the existing parking lot on their property at Sparks Stadium from 158 spaces to 209 spaces with lighting, landscaping, stormwater facilities, and access improvements. The project also includes the pavement of an adjacent public alley as required by City code. The new parking will be located in a currently unused portion of the grounds adjacent to the existing parking. The stadium itself will not be altered.

Condition #8 of the 1986 Conditional Use Permit states:

*“If additional property becomes available along 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue SW in the area between 5<sup>th</sup> Street SW and the stadium parking lot the district should consider expanding the one site (sic) parking spaces by up to 50 stalls.” CUP 86-65-015*

There are currently 158 parking spaces in the Sparks Stadium parking lot located adjacent to 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue SW. The District proposes to develop a currently vacant portion of the property adjacent to the existing parking with additional parking stalls, as contemplated in the 1986 conditional use permit. (CUP 86-65-015). However, the 1986 approval permitted only an additional 50 parking spaces in this area. Current parking standards require both higher numbers of parking stalls for the use and the inclusion of compact spaces. Stadiums and athletic fields with seating are required to have one space for each five seats (PMC 20.55.010(36)). Wherever five or more spaces are required, 30% of the required parking must be compact spaces and up to 50% may be compact spaces (PMC 20.55.025). Given the new parking codes, more than 50 spaces are both required and are desirable to reduce the burden of on-street parking on the surrounding residential neighborhood. The total number of trips generated by the existing stadium use will not change as the use is not expanding. The new parking will simply allow for off-street parking in an already congested, largely residential area.

The new landscaping and redesigned egress points will remove nine existing spaces from the current total of 158 spaces in the existing parking lot. The expansion lot will be built to accommodate 64 new parking spaces in a mix of standard and compact spaces plus ADA spaces. The new lot will also comply with current landscaping, lighting and stormwater regulations. The total parking capacity at the Stadium along 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue SW will be increased to 209 spaces with 64 in the new parking area and 149 remaining in the existing parking area for a net increase of 55 new stalls, or a 10% increase over the number of spaces contemplated in the original 1986 CUP decision. The current configuration of parking is 158 stalls (154 standard and 4 ADA). The expansion area will include 64 stalls (5 standard, 3 ADA, 56 compact). The final configuration will be 209 stalls (145 standard, 8 ADA and 56 compact). Even with the

new lot consisting of mainly compact stalls, the end result will still be 27% compact which is slightly less than the 30% minimum compact stalls requirement of PMC 20.55.025). Achieving the required ratio of compact stalls over the entire parking area is outside the scope of the project.

4. Characteristics of the Area. The Sparks Stadium has been in existence since 1934. It has been renovated several times over the years to serve the needs of the Puyallup School District. The stadium is surrounded predominantly by residential uses. In addition to these uses, to the south is a parking lot owned by the Washington State Fair, which the District contracts with for use as excess stadium parking. The Washington State Fair is located to the southeast of the stadium site. To the east is a pizza restaurant and the Downtown Regional Growth Center. To the north is Meeker Elementary School. There are no critical areas on or affecting the project site.

5. Adverse Impacts. As conditioned, no adverse impacts are anticipated. The new parking area will be across the street and across an alley from four existing residential homes (610, 616, 624 and 627 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue SW). These residences could potentially be impacted by the extra noise and headlight sweep associated with the new parking area. However, aerial photos show informal striping in the grassy area of the new parking lot, suggesting this has been a historical, if informal use in this area. The new project will improve the informal parking with asphalt, landscaping, shielded lighting and adequate stormwater facilities. These improvements should improve safety and reduce the impact of headlights by providing perimeter landscaping. The most likely impact is to the residence at 627 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue SW. Any new impact to this residence, if any, is likely mitigated by the presence of an existing fence on the property. The District staff testified the alley will not be a prominent entrance to the new parking lot. The main entrance from 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue SW will be designed to be very visible and more accessible than the area adjacent to the alley which should reduce the amount of traffic coming to and from the alley.

## CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

### Procedural:

1. Authority of Hearing Examiner. PMC 20.80.005 authorizes the hearing examiner to hold a hearing and issue final decisions on conditional use permit applications. PMC 20.80.031 allows administrative approval of minor additions or modifications to sites and structures in an existing valid conditional use permit. However, the proposed changes for this permit amendment exceed the threshold for administrative approval.

### Substantive:

2. Zoning Designation. The property is currently zoned PF, Public Facilities.

3. Review Criteria. PMC 20.80.010 governs the review criteria for approval of conditional use permit applications and amendments to existing valid conditional use permits exceeding the threshold of administrative authority for minor additions or modifications. Pertinent criteria are quoted below and applied via corresponding conclusions of law.

**PMC 20.80.010:** *Each determination granting a conditional use permit shall be supported by written findings of fact showing specifically wherein all of the following conditions exist:*

*(1) That the use for which the conditional use permit is applied for is specified by this title as being conditionally permitted within, and is consistent with the description and purpose of the zone district in which the property is located;*

4. Criterion met. The proposed use is the expansion of an existing parking lot serving an existing long-term stadium public facility use that is permissible within this public facilities zone given approval of a conditional use permit. There is a valid existing conditional use permit approval (CUP-86-65-015). The expansion of the parking lot was a contemplated condition of approval under the existing conditional use permit approval (COA #8 of CUP-86-65-015).

**PMC 20.80.010(2):** *That the granting of such conditional use permit will not be detrimental to the public health, safety, comfort, convenience and general welfare, will not adversely affect the established character of the surrounding neighborhood, and will not be injurious to the property or improvements in such vicinity and/or zone in which the property is located;*

5. Criterion met. The proposal is consistent with established character and will not be detrimental for the reasons identified in Findings of Fact No. 3 and 5. The expanded parking will reduce the on-street burden of parking at a popular facility while complying with modern parking, lighting, landscaping and stormwater management standards. The public will benefit in reduced on-street congestion and improved local traffic safety.

**PMC 20.80.010(3):** *That the proposed use is properly located in relation to the other land uses and to transportation and service facilities in the vicinity; and, further, that the use can be adequately served by such public facilities and street capacities without placing an undue burden on such facilities and streets;*

6. Criterion met. The existing stadium has been in place since 1934 and predates many adjacent uses. The expanded off-street parking will improve public facilities and street capacities by reducing the current demand of off-street parking in the area.

**PMC 20.80.010(4):** *That the site is of sufficient size to accommodate the proposed use and all yards, open spaces, walls and fences, parking, loading, landscaping and other such features as are required by this title or as are needed in the opinion of the hearing*

examiner are properly provided to be compatible and harmonious with adjacent and nearby uses;

7. Criterion met. As identified in Finding of Fact No. 3, the expanded parking area will comply with all landscaping, lighting, access, stormwater and parking requirements while providing for a more compatible and harmonious relationship with adjacent uses.

**PMC 20.80.010(5):** *That the granting of such conditional use permit will not be contrary to the adopted comprehensive plan, or to the objectives of any code, ordinance, regulation, specifications or plan in effect to implement said comprehensive plan.*

8. Criterion met. As described in the staff report (Ex. 1), the proposed project is consistent with the objectives of the City of Puyallup's Comprehensive Plan. It supports the plan's goals of improving public infrastructure, enhancing community facilities, and providing safe and accessible amenities. Further, it supports the goal of supporting visitor serving uses and events. The project complies with all applicable codes, ordinances, and regulations, ensuring alignment with the City's broader objectives for sustainable development and community enhancement.

## DECISION

Based upon the findings of fact and conclusions of law above, the requested conditional use permit application is approved subject to the following conditions:

1. The Applicant shall comply with the conditions set forth in the December 30, 2024 City of Puyallup Final Design Review Team letter.
2. All conditions listed in Conditional Use Permit #86-65-015, issued in 1986 and binding upon the subject site, remain fully valid and enforceable, with the exception of Condition #8 which is modified by this permit approval to permit the parking lot expansion to include the scope of the current application.

Dated this 13<sup>th</sup> day of March 2025.



Emily Terrell,  
City of Puyallup Hearing Examiner

## Appeal Right and Valuation Notices

This decision may be appealed to the City of Puyallup Appellate Hearing Examiner by filing a petition for review with the City of Puyallup Planning Director as regulated by PMC 2.54.150 et. seq.

Affected property owners may request a change in valuation for property tax purposes notwithstanding any program of revaluation.

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