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Jefferson County Planning Commission seeks Critical Areas committee members

Port Townsend, WA—The Jefferson County Planning Commission is moving quickly to select representative stakeholders to participate on a “critical areas committee” and to plan the first of a series of committee meetings. The Planning Commission invites interested people to attend its regularly scheduled August 2nd meeting at the WSU Learning Center at Shold Business Park in Port Hadlock. The meeting will begin at 6:30 p.m. with the critical areas workshop beginning around 7:30 p.m.

“The new timetable for revising a code amendment proposal will be reviewed and a general question and answer period will be conducted, in addition to setting up the critical areas committee,” said Al Scalf, Director for the County’s Department of Community Development.

“After hearing from potential candidates on August 2nd, the Planning Commission will establish a working group of stakeholders who represent various sectors of the community, including agriculture, forestry, economic development, environmental protection, property owners, builders and realtors. They’ll meet over the coming months to review scientific information, recommend revisions to the draft ordinance and frame those revisions in the context of the requirement in State law to consider ‘best available science,’ ” Scalf added.

Washington State's Growth Management Act requires local government to designate and protect environmentally critical areas such as fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas, wetlands, geologically hazardous areas, and critical aquifer recharge areas. Under the current schedule, Jefferson County’s Board of Commissioners will consider development code amendments in January 2007.

The first committee meeting is Thursday, August 10th, at the Jefferson County Department of Public Health, 615 Sheridan Street, in Port Townsend, at 7 p.m. Meetings are anticipated to be every Thursday evening at least through September. The committee is expected to deliver a report in October. All committee meetings will be open to the public with dates listed on the County’s Web site. Upon completion of the committee work, the full Planning Commission will review the report as part of preparing a recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners

Information on the critical areas proposal is available online at www.co.jefferson.wa.us/commdevelopment/CriticalAreas.htm or contact Long-Range Planning at 379.4450 or via e-mail at planning@co.jefferson.wa.us.

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