

Jefferson County Planning Commission

Minutes for August 4, 2004

- A. Opening Business
- B. Committee Reports
- C. Discussion on MLA04-28, GMA Comp Plan Update
 - Economic Development Element
 - Housing Element
 - Environment Element
- D. Adjournment

A. Opening Business

Chair Tom McNerney called the regular meeting to order at the WSU Learning Center at 6:30 p.m. Planning Commission members present were Bud Schindler, Dennis Schultz, Tom McNerney, Phil Flynn, Edel Sokol, Allen Panasuk, and Jim Hagen. Eileen Rogers and Jenny Davis were excused.

DCD staff present were Josh Peters, Kyle Alm, and Joanna Sanders (filling in for Cheryl Halvorson, secretary).

There were two members of the public present: Phil Johnson and Nancy Dorgan.

Approval of the minutes of the July 21, 2004 meeting was postponed until the next meeting.

B. Committee Reports

Dennis Schultz reported that the Ag Committee met last week to review roughly 30 new applications submitted before the deadline of July 30th. At next week's meeting, the committee would review the final list and ensure they have plot maps for all applications and make a list of those for which more information is needed. Karen Driscoll should be returning to the office next week and following up with applicants as needed. By next week, the committee should be ready to make their recommendation. It was believed that there are a total of 175-200 application forms, some of which have multiple parcels.

Edel Sokol reported that the Comprehensive Plan Review Committee had finished their review of the Economic Development, Housing, and Environment Plan elements. The Committee solicited Commission feedback on the proposed changes, drafts of which were included in the agenda packet. The Land Use element might be ready for review by the next meeting.

Tom McNerney invited Staff Updates.

Josh Peters reported that the BOCC Public Hearing on the Draft Ordinance to adopt Planning Commission recommendations on Urban Growth Area proposals would be at 2:00 Monday, August 9. This document is posted on the County website. The BOCC extended the written public comment period until August 8. Staff suggested there also be an opportunity to deliberate on some of the issues, giving the BOCC an opportunity to provide direction. The Short Course on Local Planning would also be held on August 9 at 6:30 p.m. at the Tri-Area Community Center. He reviewed the list of presenters and suggested that Commission members bring their Short Course notebooks. Tom McNerney asked to clarify that the presentation of the 2004 update would essentially explain the State requirements, which are similar to the Comp Plan Committee's. Josh corrected that the Comp Plan Committee is responding to a directive from the Unified Development Code to conduct a five-year review - taking a look at the plan and corresponding development regulations and reviewing those against the original intentions of the plans. Josh also asked whether a Sewer Workshop had been scheduled, which Tom McNerney indicated would likely be two to three weeks out, depending on the availability of the Sequim Director of Public Works.

Tom McNerney opened the meeting to public comment.

Nancy Dorgan, Port Townsend, made several comments on the Economic Development chapter of the Comp Plan. The amendment to policy EDP 6.11 on

Pages 7-17 seems to support the expansion of allowed uses at the airport. Her understanding of the regular amendments to be proposed by the Port is that they are to create an essential public facility (EPF) boundary that would include the new parcel purchased by the Port of Port Townsend. While she does not take issue with Port property being designated as an EPF, she objects to the addition of 6.11 that would link the expanded boundary with expanded uses that would essentially turn it into a light industrial LAMIRD, which is close to the new UGA and Glen Cove light industrial LAMIRD. She also questioned the elimination of EDP 9.1 - Promote economic development that does not adversely impact the natural or built environment.

Phil Johnson, Port Townsend, spoke to EDP 9.1, saying it seems that the basic premise of the Growth Management Act is to promote economic growth with the environment in mind.

Josh Peters explained the proposed amendments to be considered in the upcoming Comp Plan amendment cycle. There are two site-specific recommendations - the Airport proposals (by the Port of Port Townsend and People for a Rural Quimper), which were carried over from last year, the Agricultural Lands Rezones, and the GMA Comp Plan Update. He clarified that the Comp Plan Update is a combination of what a committee of the Planning Commission is working on, plus an update of population and capital facilities information to meet the State's mandate. The committee's preliminary review in the agenda packet is based on a January 2004 BOCC directive to have the Commission look for opportunities to consolidate policies and reduce some of the text, which may have become outdated or unnecessary. In late September, the Commission's proposal would be released for more formal public review as part of a full staff report.

Nancy Dorgan said she was unclear whether these were proposed amendments and asked for clarification regarding control or the process by which information gets released for public input. Tom McNerney clarified that this was the Commission's first opportunity to review text. The Committee's work is a preliminary draft; the public will see whatever the Planning Commission as a whole agrees to submit. Staff is also working to ensure that the plan is in compliance with State law. He pointed out that the Committee also attempted to eliminate duplicative language. Nancy Dorgan also offered her opinion that something would be lost if the "develop, refurbish and maintain" in 8.3, were replaced with "preserve."

Even though this package is under one file number, Josh Peters believes that it would be important to distinguish for the reader those elements on which Staff is responding to the State mandated 2001 update and those from the Planning Commission's review under the direction of the Commissioners. Kyle Alm indicated that while Staff has not yet reviewed the content, he has assisted the Comp Plan committee in its review.

Edel Sokol said those items addressed in the UDC have been removed from the Comp Plan.

Nancy Dorgan commented that it appears this should be the other way around: How could you have development regulations that are based on things that are taken out of the document that is supposed to guide development regulations? Policy should guide regulations. Kyle Alm and Tom McNerney clarified that what the Committee has done is, for example, to remove language about developing a regulation since that regulation is in the UDC. When the Comp Plan was written there was no UDC.

Josh Peters said that while the document might be slimmed down, its guiding policies should remain. Hopefully, an update of other areas would provide enough background and history.

There being no further public comment, Tom McNerney closed the public comment period.

C. MLA04-28 GMA Comp Plan Update

The Commission then began a review of the Economic Development and Housing plan elements. One suggestion was that the Committee provide the rationale behind the strikeouts. The Committee indicated they had attempted to provide a stronger, more concise statement of purpose in the Economic Development section. Jim Hagan also read the GMA planning goal on economic development. The Commission then began reviewing the wording in the table summarizing issues identified and addressed in other elements of the plan, stopping for a discussion where Commissioners had questions about or suggestions. The Commission worked through and Staff recorded proposed changes. A review of terminology was recommended to ensure terms such as "small villages and crossroads" fit the UDC classifications. The Commission had considerable discussion about proposed changes to the Environment section of the Economic Development table. Edel Sokol noted that on page 7-4 and 7-5 much information had been removed because the information (e.g., names of organizations and wage and employment tables) was expected to quickly become obsolete and might instead simply be listed by reference. Tom McNerney also mentioned that some of the information was thought to be more historical than planning related.

In discussing the housing element related to UGAs and rural village centers, a question was how Cape George or Kala Point would be characterized. It was suggested that these residential limited areas of more intensive rural development (LAMIRDS) should be addressed in the plan and that this topic would be discussed more when reviewing the Land Use element. Given that Bud Schindler had suggestions for significant wording changes, he agreed to attend the meeting rather than review each change.

Jim Hagan noted that on page 5-5, there is mention of the relationship between household income and housing cost. Just as the City's plan addresses what is called the jobs/housing imbalance, he would like to see the goals and strategies section reflect a policy to "Promote an economic development strategy that provides income for housing affordability." He agreed to provide the Committee some more precise language.

Discussion ensued about Jefferson County's median income and whether the County could come up with policies to create opportunities for affordable housing. Allen Panasuk spoke about how growth management regulations have increased housing prices and reduced the availability of affordable housing. He agreed to work on language mentioning some of the impacts to the County of the Growth Management Act. There was interest in the Commission coming up with policy language for the housing element that would address the need for cheaper land, such as to reduce the governmental costs of building and create infrastructure within the UGA for affordable housing. This language was already thought to be included in the housing section, but the Committee might propose revisions.

Phil Flynn spoke about how the adoption of the international building code would undoubtedly increase housing costs. Tom McNerney commented that while

it replaces the Uniform Building Code, he does not necessarily agree it would make building more expensive. Phil Flynn asked if the Commission would be trying to address the minimum lot size of five acres in the County, which places further restraints. There is also mention in the plan of living wage jobs, which he sees as a big challenge. There was a brief discussion of the relatively small percentage of developable land in Jefferson County.

Jim Hagan said he believes one of the founding principles of GMA - addressing economically depressed rural counties and their economies - is not being followed.

Tom McNerney proposed that the Commissioners send specific questions or suggestions for language modifications to Staff, to be gathered and consolidated for further Committee work. Bud Schindler also agreed to attend the next committee meeting to discuss his suggested revisions.

Tom McNerney opened the meeting to public comment.

Regarding the Economic Development element, page 7-8 under the header Industrial and Manufacturing Sites, Nancy Dorgan asked that the Committee work with Staff to make a complete list of properties and uses, including the proper terminology for the areas of industrial and manufacturing. She specifically suggested mentioning the light industrial manufacturing zone LAMIRD in Quilcene and the two different zoning categories that now exist in Glen Cove, one of which is exclusively for light industrial. She asked the Commission to reconsider the language stricken at the top of page 7-13. She noted the addition of adjectives on page 7-15 and in other areas of this chapter, to describe those agencies involved in economic development. She asked what kind of agencies the Commission might be trying to "shoulder out" by adding the word "accountable," which would seem to imply an accountability to the public or the taxpayers. She noted that the County has agencies and groups that are not subject to open records or open public meetings and they are not accountable to the public; however, they do get tax money in some cases - EDC, MainStreet, etc. On page 7-4, she believes growth management indicators are required as part of findings for amendments to the plan. She is uncertain of the impact of removing indicators and trends.

Recognizing that the Commission is trying to condense the Comp Plan, Phil Johnson noted many references to the 77% of Jefferson County that is National Park or National Forest Land, which seem to reflect a disappointment that there are such Federal lands in the County.

There being no further public comment, Tom McNerney closed the public comment period.

Josh Peters observed that the Commission focused its edits on the table that is intended to summarize issues identified or addressed in other areas of the plan. He suggested that it might be better to finish with the table.

Tom McNerney summarized that Bud Schindler would aid the committee in this review work. Bud Schindler then noted that the table in the Environmental element did not include an Urban Growth Area interface in the table. He also expressed concern that while goals had been stricken, their associated policies remain.

There was some concern on the Commission that the Committee would not be able to have this document ready for the next meeting.

D. Adjournment

Josh Peters noted that on August 18 there would be more discussion on the preliminary committee work on the Comp Plan amendment. August 24 and 25th were slated for the Committees to finalize their work so that Staff can begin working these revisions into a package for formal public comment. The September 1st Planning Commission meeting was intended for presentation of the Committees' final recommendations, at which point the Commission could decide whether or not it is comfortable putting those proposals out as a Planning Commission preliminary proposal. He also reminded that the Ag Lands committee recommendations and airport proposals would also be discussed. September 15 would be Staff's opportunity to hear final feedback from the Commission on what is contained in the Comp plan proposal packet. After the public comment period, which ends October 6, the Commission would deliberate on the Comp. Plan amendment docket and then prepare a BOCC recommendation.

When asked at what point Staff would be making their recommendations, Josh indicated that with other conflicting priorities, it is unlikely Staff would be looking at the plan until September 22, essentially at the same time the public is reviewing it. A Staff memorandum might be able to be produced to include with the package of public comments for consideration prior to the October 20 meeting. Regarding the airport proposals, Josh Peters indicated that he would like to orient new associate planner Kevin Russell to the issues and have him draft a preliminary Staff recommendation, which potentially incorporates ideas favorable to both parties. When this information is released to the public, there might be three versions plus the Staff report: the original versions submitted by the applicants and docketed by the board, then Staff's version that might or might not be amenable to the two parties involved. It was noted that if there is not agreement, the Commission might need to produce its own recommendation of goals and policies that have to do with the airport. Tom McNerney agreed to talk with other Commissioners and Staff about creating an Airport committee.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:06 p.m.

E. Approval of Minutes

These minutes were approved this _____ day of August 2004.

Thomas McNerney, Chair

Cheryl Halvorson, Secretary