

JEFFERSON COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

MINUTES FOR JANUARY 4, 2006

- A. OPENING BUSINESS
- B. 2006 PLANNING COMMISSION WORK PLAN
- C. ADJOURNMENT

A. OPENING BUSINESS

The regular meeting was called to order at the WSU Learning Center at 6:30 p.m. by Chair Jim Hagen. Planning Commission members present were Bud Schindler, Bill Miller, Dennis Schultz, Edel Sokol, Phil Flynn, Peter Downey, and Allen Panasuk. Mike Whittaker was excused.

DCD staff present were Kyle Alm, Brent Butler, and Cheryl Halvorson, secretary.

There were no members of the public present.

The minutes for November 2, 2005, were approved as submitted.

The secretary announced that DCD would be advertising for the two Planning Commission positions that would be expiring on March 17.

The Chair invited committee reports.

Bud Schindler stated that the UDC Committee had been planning to work on a side-by-side comparison of the Comprehensive Plan and UDC, particularly relating to incorporating the County-wide Planning Policy [CPP] into the Comp Plan. He stated that he would prepare a suggested Comp Plan amendment for the CPP for the Planning Commission to consider proposing for this year. Otherwise, Mr. Schindler suggested that the UDC Committee be disbanded.

The commissioners discussed the deadline for submitting Comp Plan amendments and whether the adoption of the UDC Omnibus would change the date this year. Kyle Alm reported that it was staff's intent that the Comp Plan amendment deadline date be changed to March 1 from February 1 with adoption of the Omnibus. If the Omnibus was adopted too late, the new date would not be effective until next year.

Dennis Schultz suggested that the Planning Commission prepare a suggested amendment regarding incorporating the CPP into the Comp Plan by February 1 in order to consider the issue in this year's cycle. Jim Hagen asked staff to prepare a place-holder suggested amendment on the CPP in time for the Planning Commission to act on it at the next meeting [January 18]. Mr. Hagen pointed out that any citizen, including a Planning Commissioner, could put forward a suggested amendment for the preliminary docket.

Edel Sokol moved that a suggested amendment on the CPP should come from the Planning Commission and it should be raised at the next meeting, with a vote on forwarding it to the preliminary docket at the next meeting. Peter Downey seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

Jim Hagen returned to the suggestion about disbanding the UDC Committee. Kyle Alm urged the commissioners to wait for the discussion on the work plan, because staff would suggest that the UDC Committee take on some of those tasks. The commissioners agreed to wait before making a decision.

B. 2006 PLANNING COMMISSION WORK PLAN

Staff handed out an un-prioritized list of projects for 2006. Kyle Alm reviewed the list of projects. He suggested that the UDC Committee may be the body to work on the TDR (transfer of development rights) issue.

Dennis Schultz raised the issue of the PRRDs [Planned Rural Residential Developments] and that the Planning Commission may want to consider that issue this year. Kyle Alm stated that the PRRD issue may be rolled into the TDR issue.

The issue of the Shoreline Master Program update was discussed. The commissioners discussed having someone from the Planning Commission be on the two advisory committees for the SMP during 2006, the technical committee and the policy committee. Peter Downey volunteered for the policy committee. The commissioners agreed that they should have representatives on each of the SMP committees. Staff agreed to forward copies of the consultant contract to the commissioners so they could review the timeline and deliverables. The commissioner's thoughts about having representatives on the committees related to keeping the Planning Commission informed, since the SMP would come before the Planning Commission as part of the adoption process.

Jim Hagen raised the issue of the Housing Needs Assessment Committee, noting that the City Planning Commission had a representative on the committee. He suggested that the County Planning Commission should have a representative on that committee as well. Brent Butler stated that there were two commissioners on the committee, although they had been invited as representatives of other economic segments. The commissioners agreed that there should be Planning Commission representation at those meetings. The commissioners discussed whether they wanted an official representative on the committee versus merely attending the meetings. The consensus was that the commission preferred official representation.

The commissioners discussed what process the Planning Commission would need to follow in order to have a commissioner appointed to the Housing Needs Assessment Committee. That raised the issue of Planning Commission representation on the WRIA 17 group, along with other WRIA groups in the county. The commissioners thought it made sense to have a Planning Commission representative on both the Housing Needs Assessment Committee and on the WRIA 17 committee. They thought the commissioner should only represent the Planning Commission instead of doing "double duty" as representing both the Planning Commission and some other societal segment.

Concerning the housing needs assessment issue, some commissioners were concerned that it not merely generate another plan that was not used and just sat on a shelf. Bud Schindler commented that was one reason he suggested it be part of a Comp Plan amendment and be integrated into the Comp Plan as a strategy. Kyle Alm suggested that it was more appropriate as a 2007 work plan item, because the report would not be coming out until July. That would give the county more time to prepare for it in the 2007 amendment cycle.

The commissioners returned to the issue of representation on the WRIA groups. They agreed that the Planning Commission representative should have full voting representation on the committees instead of being non-voting members. It was pointed out that the Planning Commission represented the people of the county, as opposed to special interest groups such as the tribes or Fish and Wildlife. Those special interests had voting representatives and the commissioners thought the people should have the same representation. Jim Hagen stated that the commission had submitted a letter to the BOCC but had not had a reply. He stated that he had also submitted an application for membership on the WRIA 17 group, but had not had a reply to that as yet either.

Staff and the commissioners discussed the Industrial Land Bank [ILB] project. Peter Downey commented that it would be helpful to have a schedule of due dates for 2006 and 2007 on the issue. Kyle Alm stated that the EDC was currently working on the required inventory, which was the first step. Mr. Alm stated that the issue should come before the Planning Commission in the 2007 Comp Plan amendment cycle in order to meet the legislative deadline. The commissioners and staff discussed the legislative requirements on ILBs. Mr. Alm stated that the EDC's report on the inventory should be available this year, possibly this summer. Jim Hagen stated that the ILB was something that should be addressed in the CPP. He pointed out that the Growth Management Steering Committee had not met since April, 2005, and offered the opinion that the reason was because the meeting had been contentious and the subject of the meeting was the ILBs. Mr. Alm agreed that the ILBs should be addressed in the CPP if it was going to stand up to scrutiny and work. That was a very important step that needed to be done.

The commissioners and staff discussed at length how TDRs might work. Kyle Alm stated that the details were something that needed to be worked out and was a topic he would suggest for the UDC Committee.

The commissioners and staff discussed the settlement agreement with Washington Environmental Council concerning the critical areas ordinance. It was pointed out that the Planning Commission would be reviewing any changes to the UDC and/or the Comp Plan that resulted from that settlement during 2006.

Staff noted that, after the UDC Omnibus was adopted, there would be a 60-day appeal period. The commissioners and staff discussed the fact that the BOCC could still make changes to the UDC Omnibus before they adopted it, although any "substantial" changes that had not received public participation would need to come back before the Planning Commission.

The commissioners and staff briefly discussed other appeals, and whether there would be possible appeals of the 2005 Comp Plan amendment docket.

Kyle Alm briefly reviewed the remainder of the work plan list.

Concerning suggested Comp Plan amendments, Jim Hagen commented that there had been some thought that the county should look at all areas of the county to see if there were other parcels similar to the Nelson/Monroe amendment where we had 5-acre or smaller parcels that were zoned at 1:20 or 1:10, which seemed to be an error. Also, the commission had discussed clarifying the designation criteria for the Rural Residential zones. Kyle Alm stated that zoning was set up to guide future subdivisions. Dennis Schultz stated that the Planning Commission, in 2005, had discussed changing the Comp Plan so that the Rural Residential zoning was discussed more generally in the Comp Plan with the designation criteria and rezones being done through the UDC rather than through a Comp Plan amendment. Rezones under the UDC could still be heard through a Planning Commission public process, although it could be done through a Hearing Examiner process instead. Mr. Alm stated that the hard part was coming up with defensible zoning criteria. The commissioners suggested that a suggested amendment be done this year to address the issue. Mr. Alm offered the opinion that it would take quite a lot of time. Mr. Schultz agreed, stating that it may be a multi-year project, but the county should begin the work on it. Peter Downey stated that the commission should be careful about the policy implications. Mr. Schultz agreed, stating that you still had to have the rules and designation criteria. His point was that

the actual rezone and density change would not be a Comp Plan amendment. Mr. Hagen thought the policy would be the same; it would just be switched from the Comp Plan, which was not supposed to be a regulatory document, to the UDC. Then rezones could be done at any time rather than only during the Comp Plan amendment cycle. Mr. Alm suggested focusing on TDRs or formulating more clear zoning standards. He thought both topics would be fairly contentious and would take a large amount of resources. Mr. Downey did not accept that we could not do both because there were other counties that had addressed both issues that we could draw from.

Dennis Schultz moved that the Planning Commission submit a place-holder amendment to revise the Comp Plan to take out the zoning densities, but to keep the general zoning and the Comp Plan map, and put that into the development code. Edel Sokol seconded the motion which carried unanimously.

Brent Butler asked whether the commission wanted to form a TDR Committee. It was agreed that the UDC Committee could take on the TDR issue. Peter Downey volunteered to be on the UDC Committee for the TDR issue, although he was not as enthusiastic about other UDC issues. The next UDC Committee meeting was scheduled for January 24. Bud Schindler commented that there appeared to be a conflict between WRIA meetings and UDC Committee meetings. Jim Hagen commented that having four members on the UDC Committee could alleviate the conflict issue and still allow the UDC Committee for be productive.

The commissioners briefly discussed the activities of the WRIA 16 and WRIA 17 planning groups.

The commissioners discussed submitting a place-holder Comp Plan amendment for general amendments to the Comp Plan. Bud Schindler stated that there were issues related to inconsistencies between the Comp Plan and UDC. Mr. Schindler stated that he had developed a short list of inconsistency issues. Kyle Alm stated that staff could prepare a suggested amendment if Mr. Schindler had a list of inconsistencies prepared. Peter Downey commented that technical amendments, that were not policy amendments, should be alright. Mr. Schindler stated that there were things that we should all agree upon concerning the intent, but the text did not say it. Jim Hagen was concerned about place-holder amendments that were not specific enough. He suggested that we compile a list throughout the year of such inconsistencies and then submit a suggested amendment next year for all of them. He stated that one of the fears people expressed was that it would open up the whole Comp Plan. The commissioners agreed that Mr. Schindler should bring in examples of inconsistencies that the commission could consider.

The commissioners and staff discussed holding a joint workshop with the BOCC, possibly for the next Planning Commission meeting.

C. ADJOURNMENT

Bud Schindler discussed a segment on the television show "20/20". It addressed misconceptions that people had on different issues. One of them happened to be on forest management. The biggest misconception was that we were over-logging, and that we were ruining the environment for wildlife, and that we were losing our forest lands. He stated that the Forest Service had facts and data to prove they were misconceptions. In fact, there was more forest land available now than there was 100 years ago. He thought that, from a policy perspective, the county should get those statistics and review them, and take them into account when we develop our policies for resource

land use, particularly forest lands. Edel Sokol commented that it was more of an emotional issue than it was related to facts.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:18 p.m.

D. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

These minutes were approved this _____ day of January, 2006.

Jim Hagen, Chair

Cheryl Halvorson, Secretary