



JEFFERSON COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

621 Sheridan Street, Port Townsend, WA 98368

(360) 379-4450 planning@co.jefferson.wa.us

www.co.jefferson.wa.us/commdevelopment/PlanningCommission

Minutes for Wednesday, December 16, 2009

- A. Opening Business**
- B. Discussion: 2010 Planning Commission Work Plan**
- C. Adjournment**

A. Opening Business:

The meeting was called to order at the WSU Learning Center at 6:35 p.m. by Chair Peter Downey. Planning Commission members present were Peter Downey, Bill Miller, Richard Hull, Tom Brotherton, Patricia Farmer, Tom Giske, Henry Werch. Andrew Reding and Ashley Bullitt were absent and excused.

DCD staff present: Al Scalf, DCD Director, Stacie Hoskins, DCD Planning Manager, and Zoe Ann Lamp, Associate Planner

There were no members of the public in attendance.

Approval of Minutes: December 2, 2009 minutes were approved as amended.

Staff Updates:

Stacie Hoskins discussed the ad in the Port Townsend Leader from Henry Souza entitled "Get Your Building Permit Now". The Deputy Prosecuting Attorney and staff have reviewed the Bonney Lake/Abbey Rd. Supreme Court decision. The county's position is that SPAADs are a vesting permit which is acknowledged in the Shoreline Master Program (SMP) adopting ordinance. DCD always encourages people to get building permits. The county is waiting to hear from the Department of Ecology.

Director Al Scalf reported the 2009 Comprehensive Plan Amendment for the port was approved by the Board of County Commissioners 3-0. Vice Chair Miller asked Director Scalf about the UGA appeal. The hearing is scheduled for January 5, 2010.

Committee Reports:

Commissioner Farmer reported on her first meeting with HAPN. She is impressed with the involvement and sincerity of the participants. Jim Rozanski had reported on his proposal to create 36 units north of Glen Cove. A construction company had quoted him \$10.00/sq. ft. Commissioner Farmer mentioned the Affordable Housing Land Inventory conducted by the county and the city. HAPN watched a video from the Lopez Community Land Trust showing how artistic and attractive affordable housing can be.

B. Discussion: 2010 Planning Commission Work Plan

Director Scalf drew a diagram of the county's organization and asked where the Planning Commission (PC) fits. The Planning Enabling Act says the Planning Commission assists the department but is appointed by the Board of County Commissioners (BoCC) which can create tension between the responsibilities to the department and to the BoCC.

Group discussion was interspersed with comments such as:

- The goal is to work in concert with DCD. We will disagree at times but respect each other's points of view. The Planning Commission does the best it can interpreting laws and regulations since there is no legal advice. The expectation is to work cooperatively with DCD and for the most part it is working.
- Sometimes it seems the BoCC starts the entire process over again because DCD and the Planning Commission do not agree. Would prefer to have the differences between DCD and the PC resolved before it goes to the BoCC.
- Concern about deadlines and the length of time PC has to review and deliberate.
- Would like an explanation by staff as to why they think like they do. It cheats everyone when that doesn't happen. Staff is professional and it would be a good time to educate the PC.
- Staff felt the PC's ears were shut.
- PC contributes to problems by trying to draft its own planning document. Feels this is a mistake. Focus on ideas and concepts that the PC wants presented in the staff draft document and let staff write the planning document.
- PC is appointed to obtain input from the public and mix that with the judgment and impact on the proposed planning document.
- Would like more time upfront for an education process so there is more of a chance for a document we all agree on so there isn't competing language between staff and PC.
- If I were a county commissioner I'd want to hear the diverse opinions.
- How can the PC be educated and brought up to speed before the process starts?
- Both the PC and DCD want to give the BoCC the best document. PC would like direction from BoCC.
- Is it bad that DCD and PC disagree?
- PC and DCD have different perspectives. When the public cries out DCD goes into interpretation mode. The PC tries to understand the situation to see if there is a common sense way it can be worked out.
- Process is what we need to focus on. It is important the PC be involved earlier.
- Are the Comprehensive Plan goals and policies still appropriate?
- The PC and DCD could generate a list of issues that can be presented to the BoCC. The BoCC can then provide input and direction on the issues if they want.
- Staff felt that they are required to behave to a standard that is more respectful than the PC is required to behave toward staff. That was not the intent of the PC. There was miscommunication on both sides.
- Suggestion of a process whereby the PC gets input from the public and asks DCD's opinion on how the WACs, RCWs and other regulations impact the proposal. This way the PC can determine if they want to proceed according to the regulations or if it wants to stick its neck out on an issue. The education process needs to happen earlier.
- The PC doesn't get to see the day-in-day-out process where DCD is trying to workout issues and it appears DCD is entrenched.
- If we could start out working together earlier we could avoid a lot of conflict.

- On the UGA we can complete the process and open it back up after it is settled. See if someone appeals and in the meantime we are going in the direction we want to go. It's not pretty but it's one way to handle it.
- Thought the UGA process went well. Majority and minority opinion. Should not reopen things when it doesn't go the PC's way.
- PC is most successful when they are able to persuade and encourage DCD to convey thoughts to the BoCC. The PC is least successful when there were multiple opinions that were brought to the BoCC. This is because DCD is the opinion the BoCC ultimately listens to,
- Most successful thing PC has done is the Critical Area Stewardship Plan. An innovation that came out of a very messy process but it may actually be a better solution for the environment and a better solution for the property owner.
- There were a couple of rezones where DCD was entrenched. DCD went forward with their idea. The PC listened to the citizens, thought there must be some way through this and found the middle ground.
- Create a matrix that shows what the PC wants to encourage and what the PC wants to discourage. How is the current code effecting what we want? Present the matrix to the BoCC for feedback.
- Preference for having the information to be presented at the meeting ahead of time. Some learn by reviewing the document.

Chairman Downey synthesized the discussion: 1) PC and DCD should coordinate earlier on issues and make a list they want to work on 2) Present the items to the BoCC for their information. The BoCC can react or they don't need to react. Give the BoCC an opportunity to give feedback. It would demonstrate that DCD and the PC are working together.

Commissioner Werch suggested DCD present other county's planning documents across the state and DCD's first cut of what needs to be done.

Director Scalf cautioned the PC that DCD is working as hard as it can. There's not enough time. Would prefer to get concepts from the PC and then DCD rewrite the code based on the PC/DCD discussion instead of the PC writing code.

Planning Manager Hoskins suggested having working meetings at the two scheduled planning commission meetings per month. Example: Two - three committees consisting of two-three commissioners each with a staff person working on its own chapter. Review things that have to be changed, want to be changed, possibly include the public input during the session. The committee would present their results to the full group at the end of the meeting. Potentially the PC would go through three chapters per night.

Chairman Downey expressed concern about opening up the Critical Areas Ordinance (CAO) again. Director Scalf agreed it should not be opened again. The Shoreline Master Program (SMP) and CAO are done. Planning Manager Hoskins recommends not opening up the UGA again.

Other process ideas discussed included:

- Staff review and evaluate the Comprehensive Plan and determine whether a change is “required”, “needed” or “desired”. This is not a rewrite of the Comprehensive Plan it is an update.
- Planning Commission Subcommittee: DCD would like to staff it but doesn’t have the people to staff this concept.
- RCW/WAC changes: Commissioner Brotherton volunteered reviewing all of the legal changes and present a report at every meeting.
- DCD would use docket to propose update.
- One staff member from DCD and one member of the PC assigned to each chapter. Remember there are other departments involved: Public Works, Central Services, Parks and Recreation.
- Create Policy Committee and Technical Committee similar to the SPAC and STAC during the SMP update.
- Publicize the first meetings and conduct a citizen outreach scoping meeting so there is public input from the beginning.

Planning Manager Stacie Hoskins explained the Dept. of Commerce checklist that is in the PC packet. Staff will need to complete the checklist after the Comprehensive Plan update has been completed. Al and Stacie explained the process that Planner Michelle McConnell is going through now that the SMP has been locally approved for submittal to the state . A similar process is required after the adoption of the updated Comprehensive Plan.

Commissioner Tom Giske expressed concern about getting caught up in the line-by-line administrative changes. He feels the PC should focus on policy changes. Others expressed that it may be necessary to get into the wording of both administrative and policy changes.

A decision on process for the update will be made at the first meeting in January, 2010.

Commissioner Henry Werch requested staff prepare a presentation about other county’s Comprehensive Plans in order to compare how others have handled the same issues. There may be an ability to simplify what is in the Comprehensive Plan.

Director Al Scalf suggested staff come back at the next meeting with a presentation on GMA and the required elements of the Comprehensive Plan and what Jefferson County will be evaluated on.

Chairman Peter Downey appreciates a minimalistic approach given that so many of the statistics will be outdated shortly after it is adopted.

Prior to the meeting Commissioner Tom Brotherton conducted research on the internet. He suggested that Economic Development is something the PC could work on. He found

an article entitled Community Economic Development in Rural Washington. The article proposed that there are two basic ways communities have done economic development.

- 1) Industrial Recruitment
- 2) Community Economic Development
 - a. Legitimacy of Alternatives
 - b. Broad Diverse Networking
 - c. Sufficient Land Appropriately Zoned for Development

The last point is something the PC can focus on.

Planning Manager Hoskins suggested a representative from Team Jefferson be invited to the next meeting to address what barriers it sees to economic development within the Comprehensive Plan and the UDC.

WDFW recently issued a guidance document on Salmon recovery. Members expressed a desire to invite this person to a meeting to discuss Salmon recovery and the comprehensive plan.

Commissioner Tom Giske expressed he wants to hear what barriers are preventing good things from happening in Jefferson County.

Next Meeting:

- 1) 7 year update overview – AI to give PowerPoint presentation on GMA.
- 2) Team Jefferson to present barriers to economic development related to Comprehensive Plan and UDC
- 3) 2010 PC Workplan Discussion

C. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 9:35 p.m. Chairman Downey announced he will not be able to attend the January 6, 2010 meeting. Commissioner Farmer will try to be at the January 6, 2010 meeting but may not be back from her skiing trip.

Approval of Minutes:

These minutes were approved this 20th day of January, 2010.


Peter Downey, Chair


Michelle McConnell, LRP Lead