

Lewis County Planning Commission

Public Meeting

Lewis County Courthouse, 2nd Floor
Commissioners' Hearing Room
351 NW North Street
Chehalis, WA 98532

January 12, 2010 @ 7:00 P.M.

AGENDA

- I. Call to Order**
 - A. Introduction of Planning Commissioners (roll call)

- II. Old Business**
 - A. Approval of meeting notes from November 10, 2009

- III. New Business**
 - A. Election of Officers
 - B. Review of Planning Activities anticipated in 2010

- IV. Calendar**

- V. Good of the Order**

- VI. Adjourn**

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**Lewis County Planning Commission
Lewis County Courthouse
351 NW North St.
Chehalis, WA 98532**

**January 12, 2010
Meeting Notes**

Planning Commissioners Present: Bob Guenther, Bill Russell, Mike Mahoney, Rachael Jennings, Richard Tausch, Arny Davis

Planning Commissioners Excused: Jim Lowery

Staff Present: Phil Rupp, Barbara Kincaid, Glenn Carter, Lynn Deitrick

Others Present: Please see sign in sheet

Handouts/Materials Used:

- Agenda
- Meeting Notes from November 10, 2009
- 2010 Planning Commission Proposed Agenda Topics

I. Call to Order

Chairman Jennings called the meeting to order at 7:01 P.M. The Commissioners introduced themselves.

II. Old Business

Chairman Jennings entertained a motion to approve the meeting notes from November 10, 2009. The motion was made and seconded. Commissioner Guenther referred to page 5 and his question about the number of 20-acre developments. The minutes do not state that Mr. Butler stated he did not know, although it was addressed later in the meeting. Commissioner Guenther wished Mr. Butler's response to be in the notes.

The motion was changed to modify the notes. The motion carried.

III. New Business

A. Election of Officers

Commissioner Tausch made a motion to nominate Rachael Jennings as Chair. Commissioner ~~Lowery~~ Russell seconded.

Chairman Jennings called for other nominations. There were no other nominations. Commissioner Guenther moved to close the nominations, Commissioner Russell seconded.

The question was called and the vote was unanimous for Ms. Jennings.

Commissioner Russell nominated Richard Tausch as Vice Chair. Commissioner Tausch respectfully declined as he did not believe he would be available often enough.

Commissioner Bob Guenther nominated Jim Lowery; Commissioner Russell seconded.

The Chair called for other nominations. Commissioner Mahoney moved the nominations be closed. Commissioner Tausch seconded. The vote was unanimous for Mr. Lowery.

B. Review of Planning Activities Anticipated in 2010.

Mr. Rupp congratulated Chairman Jennings and the Planning Commission in the completion of the Agricultural Resource Lands work that they had been working on for so many years. It will be good for the County to be out from under invalidity which will allow for development proposals.

Mr. Rupp introduced the County's new senior project planner, Mr. Lynn Deitrick, who started with the County in December.

Mr. Deitrick stated he is originally from Spokane and studied at Eastern Washington University. He has been in planning his entire career, working in Lynnwood, Walla Walla County and most recently in Snohomish County. He is looking forward to working with everyone and getting exposure to the planning in the State of Washington.

Mr. Rupp stated there are a number of items that the Planning staff and the Planning Commission will be involved with in 2010. He briefly described what each item will entail.

The top priority facing the Planning Department and the Planning Commission is the completion of the South County sub area plan as we provide definition to the Comprehensive Plan for Lewis County in terms of land use, transportation, utilities, etc. and strengthening the economic base for the County.

The County is also looking at the feasibility of putting sewer services in Packwood, which will be a growth area for the County and a gateway community to our County. Those are top priorities for planning in terms of long range planning.

The County will be looking at some transportation elements in the Comprehensive Plan, which has been necessitated by impact fees. The Birchfield Fully Contained Community requires that impact fees be in place before the FCC can be completed. Public Works transportation engineers, consultants and the Board are working on the development of transportation impact fees. It has not yet been decided if the Board will adopt impact fees. For now we are working on developing formulas for the application of impact fees should the Board decide to move ahead with them.

Mr. Rupp stated there are a couple of things required under the Growth Management Act. Because we are compliant now there is other work that needs to be done. One item is the update of the Shoreline Master Program (SMP). It was adopted last in the 1970's and we are required to update it under the GMA. While it is a requirement, there is no money available to fund the update. It is a program similar in nature to the Critical Areas Ordinance. It is based on best available science and is a very lengthy process. There is no final word yet if the Legislature will require the County to do that; we are looking at a postponement for a couple of years while we get back on our feet economically.

Another program that is required under GMA is the review of urbanization throughout Lewis County, which involves looking at buildable lands inventory in the urban areas to determine if those lands can accommodate the projected population that we get from the Office of Financial Management (OFM). We look at the UGAs every year through the Planned Growth Committee (PGC) and the Planning Commission receives the jurisdictions' comments. In the last five years there has been some urban

growth areas attempted to be modified based on population allocation. Again, we do not know if this will be required under GMA or if it can be deferred due to lack of funding. What we do know, and it relates to the sub area regional plan, is that we must look at some degree to the urbanization patterns and urban development patterns throughout the County for economic development reasons, as well as for population allocation. Some work will need to be done on that as it relates to the South County plan and the establishment of a possible Urban Growth Area there or in east County. While these are mandated, they are unfunded mandates. Ms. Kincaid is the lead on the South County sub area plan and she will be updating the Commission on that issue as information becomes available.

Mr. Rupp stated the Countywide Planning Policies (CWPP) will be reviewed in 2010. The PGC looks at the CWPPs to ensure they are consistent with the jurisdictions' individual growth expectations and they must be looked at from a County perspective to be sure they are consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and the economic development objectives. The PGC recommended changes on the CWPPs will be brought to the Planning Commission later in the year.

Mr. Rupp stated there are 150 applications for rezones that we can now begin processing since we are out of the invalidity order. We separated the applications into groups: one group is outside of the invalidity area, which have been processed. Another is those applications that fell within the area of invalidity, and how they fit into the overall growth patterns in the County. We are required to look at the aggregate impact of any changes that may occur. We also have requests from a group of ten or twelve property owners who were designated ARL in 2008-2009 that were not previously designated for ARL. They have requested a review of the process that led to the ARL designation. We accepted applications for the review of those properties and they will be included in the entire batch of rezones this year. There is not a time frame on these. The Planning Department expects to put a calendar together for the staff work and the Planning Commission so we can schedule public hearings. This will be a lengthy process.

Another item regarding rezones is the Mineral Lake proposal, through Forecastle Timber. The BOCC remanded that back to the Planning Commission for review. We anticipate that the applicants will come back with a modified application, although we have not heard from them yet. The Planning Commission will be taking another look at their request to re-designate properties from Forest Resource Land of long term commercial significance to Forest Resource Land of local importance.

Commissioner Russell asked if there was a deadline for submitting applications for consideration this year.

Mr. Rupp stated the application was automatically included by the remand from the BOCC.

Commissioner Russell asked if the same application with some modifications would be used.

Mr. Rupp stated no, it was remanded back with the suggestion that the applicants look again at what they are proposing to do.

Commissioner Russell asked if they are submitting a new application, should it not follow the same guidelines as any other application.

Mr. Rupp stated it is a revision, not a new application. That application has been on the books since 2002. Part of the remand stipulation was that if the applicant wants to return with a revised proposal then it will be remanded. The alternative was to deny it outright.

The process to be used to notify people that the rezone process has begun will be to send out postcards to those original applicants to see if they are still interested or if the property has changed hands. We may be able to cull the 150 applicants down.

Commissioner Mahoney stated he understands Ruckelshaus has been granted a delay for their decision until September or later. Anything we do affecting agriculture may depend on that decision.

Mr. Rupp stated the SMP trumps the critical areas ordinance. When we do the SMP we will need to keep that in mind.

Commissioner Mahoney asked if there is any anticipation of work with Birchfield this year.

Mr. Rupp stated it is hoped that the pending issue with Birchfield will be resolved. This could happen by legislation that has been introduced to the State to remove the impact fee requirement from the FCC RCW, which would allow the BOCC to approve the FCC without the impact fees. The BOCC may decide to go ahead with impact fees in which case the Planning Commission would be involved in the review of that ordinance. Another possibility is that the BOCC will decide not to implement impact fees. Mr. Rupp does not know the consequences of that possibility. Given the Hearing Examiner recommendation, the Board cannot approve the FCC without the impact fees.

Commissioner Mahoney stated without the impact fee issue being resolved there is nothing to be done with Birchfield; or, if impact fees are passed then Birchfield will be back before the Planning Commission.

Mr. Rupp stated the Planning Commission will not see it again as it is at the Board level now and the Board can approve the FCC once the impact fees are in place.

Commissioner Mahoney asked about the long term planning policy and more specifically the Packwood area. He thought it would be a good idea to be familiar with that before getting to the rezone requests. It would not be beneficial to rezone property and then change UGA boundaries.

Mr. Rupp stated the rezones are more related to rural and resource lands than to UGAs. It does fall into the long-range planning. Mr. Rupp anticipates the work at Packwood taking longer than we have to deal with the rezones. The rezones must be dealt with this year and get recommendations. We are working with a consultant to do a Packwood feasibility analysis for a sewer system. Once that occurs, the question is if the next step is the development of a UGA. That has not been determined. The situation is dire in terms of growth in Packwood because there is no sewer system there.

Commissioner Mahoney asked about the status of the Channel Migration Zone work along the Cowlitz.

Mr. Rupp stated that issue has been put on hold for a couple of reasons. Defining the CMZ requires a lot of mapping and neither the Federal Government nor the County has the money to do the final mapping.

Another issue is defining the flood plain or zone throughout the County, whether it is the Chehalis Basin or the Cowlitz Basin. We most likely will not be working on the CMZ until we have more definitive maps.

Commissioner Mahoney asked if we are under any pressure from the Federal government to get this done.

Mr. Rupp stated no more than last year. They recognize that it takes money to do this. You will hear about the definitions of flood plains and flood zones as it affects the Chehalis Basin and the lower area before we deal with the CMZ in the Cowlitz Basin.

Commissioner Mahoney asked if the ARL maps or zoning maps are up to date now.

Mr. Rupp stated they are up to date and they are on line. The public hearing on lifting the moratorium is scheduled for January 25 before the BOCC. After that property owners can apply for development permits.

Another item to be looked at is some revision to LCC Chapters 15, 16 and 17. The Code was written early in the planning process of Lewis County and there are internal inconsistencies that need to be resolved. One thing we would like to do is get a group of stakeholders together to work through those known inconsistencies. That will result in some modification of those chapters and will be brought to the Planning Commission later in the year. We do not anticipate major changes but to clean up some inconsistencies and provide clarification and definition to the Code.

Commissioner Russell asked how Packwood is zoned currently.

Mr. Rupp stated it is a LAMIRD with a variety of zones within that LAMIRD.

Ms. Kincaid stated that LAMIRD on either side of the highway is mostly small town mixed use (STMU) and rural residential center (RRC). With Commissioner Mahoney's concern, which is a good point to raise about not wanting to rezone some of these properties and then create a UGA, there are no applications for people with property within a LAMIRD; they are in the rural areas or resource lands.

Commissioner Russell understands in order for something to get on the calendar before the Planning Commission a Planning Commission member can request it. He asked how much lead time staff requests for an item to be brought forward since we will be looking at Chapters 15, 16 and 17.

Mr. Rupp stated the sooner the better. We have not put together a stakeholder's group yet. If the Planning Commission would like to have a member on that stakeholder's group it would be appreciated.

Commissioner Russell stated he would not object to being on the committee. There is an item that he does not think the County will look at that he thinks needs discussion. In the LAMIRDS, particularly in Randle and Glenoma, there is a 5,000 square foot limit on commercial buildings. He would like this limit to be looked at and possibly increased.

Commissioner Mahoney stated at this time we do not know whether or not we will get in the Shorelines Master Program.

Mr. Rupp stated we will wait to see what the legislature has to say about fulfilling the GMA mandates when there is no funding for it. We know we have to revise the SMP; we also recognize it will be a lengthy and technical process and there are only three planning staff members. We do not have the ability to do that properly and it will take outside consulting similar to the Critical Areas Ordinance.

Commissioner Guenther asked if staff could provide a running total of urban growth areas in acreage that we have available. He has heard statements that Lewis County has no industrial land available and he believes there is.

Mr. Rupp stated some work needs to be done on this. We not only need to look at land in those UGAs but land that is vacant and available and serviced. That is part of the analysis we need to do. We can get you a total acreage within the UGAs by next meeting.

Ms. Kincaid asked if Commissioner Guenther would like to know the amount of industrial zoned land. The UGA may contain residential zones and others.

Commissioner Guenther stated that would work. He heard a legislator suggest that the State needs to look at legislation to remand the GMA as long as our area is above 10% unemployment. Commissioner Guenther thinks we do have the land and would like to know the acreage.

Commissioner Mahoney stated when the property was looked at north of Centralia and east of I-5 and it was included into the UGA, one reason for doing that was Centralia would have control of it and could stop residential sprawl there. We need to do that type of long term planning. An answer for Commissioner Guenther is the property not only has to be in the right location but be the right size to be acceptable for certain industrial applications. If they are five or ten acre parcels or have wetlands they are not buildable sites. It would be nice to know what is out there.

Commissioner Davis stated Lewis County EDC is going to be a good resource for that. A problem we ran into when we looked at north Centralia and talked about the Trans Alta site is we miss out on some of the big employer producers because they need contiguous 200-300 acres to accommodate all of their operations as well as sub businesses.

Commissioner Guenther stated that is one thing that the Industrial Land Bank is looking at for Trans Alta. He is on that board and it is looking at 100-acre sites.

Chairman Jennings stated 100 acres is the minimum requirement.

Mr. Rupp stated the Planning Commission will be looking at a comprehensive plan land use designation change for the Trans Alta Industrial Land Bank.

IV. Calendar

Chairman Jennings stated there will not be another meeting in January. Mr. Rupp stated we will meet on the second Tuesday in February. It is questionable whether we will have anything at that meeting but the Commission and the public will be informed ahead of time.

V. Good of the Order

Commissioner Guenther asked, regarding the rezones, if some of these folks are asking for a reduction from RDD 10 to RDD 5.

Mr. Rupp stated the majority of the requests are to increase the intensity of land use in some manner, whether it's moving it out of a resource designation into a rural development district, or move from RDD 20 to RDD 10 or RDD 5.

VI. Adjourn

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 7:41 P.M.