

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

**November 9, 2010 – Public Hearing  
Meeting Notes**

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

**Planning Commissioners Excused:** Jim Lowery, Richard Tausch

**Staff Present:** Bob Johnson, Lynn Deitrick, Glenn Carter, Pat Anderson

**Consultants Present:** Gregg Waddell and Talia Hense, BHC Consultants; Andy Lane, Cairncross and Hempelmann

**Others Present:** Please see sign in sheet

**Handouts/Materials Used:**

- Agenda
- Meeting Notes from October 12 and October 26, 2010
- Comprehensive Plan Text Proposed Amendments to Capital Facilities and Utilities, Economic Development and Land Use Element, Sub area Rural and Urban Element, LCC Chapters 16.15 and 17.20, including Industrial Park at TransAlta

**I. Call to Order**

Chairman Jennings called the meeting to order at 6:59 p.m. The Commissioners introduced themselves.

**II. Old Business**

A. Approval of meeting notes from October 12 and October 26, 2010

Chairman Jennings entertained a motion to approve the meeting notes from October 12 and October 26, 2010. Commissioner Russell moved to approve, Commissioner Davis seconded. The motion carried.

B. Public Hearing on 2010 Comprehensive Plan Proposed Amendments

The Chair recognized Mr. Bob Johnson, Director of Community Development.

Mr. Johnson introduced Mr. Lynn Deitrick, Senior Planner, and Greg Waddell and Talia Hense, BHC Consultants.

Mr. Johnson explained the public hearing process. Staff would summarize the purpose of the hearing and then questions for clarification would be taken from the Planning Commission and the public. The public hearing would then be opened and testimony would be taken from the public. Mr. Johnson thanked everyone for attending and encouraged testimony. All testimony is considered by the Planning Commission for its recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners.

Mr. Johnson stated the county, under GMA, is required to plan for comprehensive land use and to adopt implementing development regulations. The county must review those comprehensive plans for consistency with existing laws and with the policies and direction that the county wants to take with respect to economic development, land use, etc. There are some proposed changes that are the

subject of tonight's hearing and those include some changes to the land use element, the urban and rural sub elements and some glossary changes. The Economic Development Element has been re-written and there are some changes to update the capital facilities and utilities element to make them consistent with the facilities the county has and to make them consistent with the direction the county wants to go with respect to utility services. There are updates to the capital facilities and utilities profile and the economic development profile.

In addition to the comprehensive plan, there are recommended changes to the development code, consistent with the comp plan. The recommended changes are in Chapter 17.20 to clarify the different types of urban growth areas and the potential for designating additional UGAs in the county. Another recommended change is to Chapter 16.15, the subdivision code, with respect to binding site plans.

Mr. Johnson asked if there were any questions. There were none and Chairman Jennings opened the public hearing.

Chairman Jennings stated two documents had been received to be entered into the record. The first was a letter from Mr. Andy Lane, Cairncross and Hempelmann, in support of the Industrial Park at Trans Alta. The second was a letter from Lewis County Economic Development Council also supporting the Industrial Park at Trans Alta.

The Chair opened the public testimony portion of the hearing. She asked speakers to spell their names for the record and stated their time would be limited to three minutes to allow everyone a chance to speak.

Mr. Tim Browning stated when the mine at Trans Alta was closed it was a devastating blow to Lewis County. Mr. Browning joined the board of IPAT six months ago and he has reached four conclusions. 1) IPAT is committed to reasonable, effective and community-friendly economic development. 2) Trans Alta is not only a supporter of our community but is generous in extending its goods and services to the entire county. 3) Lewis County needs quality family wage jobs and economic development. 4) Lewis County needs good quality economic development out of the flood plain. Mr. Browning believes the Industrial Park at Trans Alta meets all of these standards and he urged the Planning Commission to support the changes to the comprehensive plan to allow for the industrial land bank at Trans Alta.

Mr. Alex Goedhard stated he became a member of Community Partners which merged with the Industrial Commission, two organizations dedicated to bringing jobs and a stable tax base to Lewis County. The EDC hired Hovee and Associates to do a study in 1997 profiling Lewis County. The study showed that Lewis County was below state average for wages and below the state average for income, with a relatively high out-worker migration and an above average unemployment rate. The critical need for a well-developed industrial base was an important characteristic of Lewis County's profile.

A search was done to find property with the attributes necessary for siting industry. The Trans Alta site was the best site.

Mr. Goedhard stated IPAT is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for the county to develop a world class industrial park, a park that will improve the lives of generations to come.

Mr. Charles Lascurain stated he worked at Centralia Mining as part of the field engineering staff and he is very familiar with the lands in question and they are well suited for this land bank. During his time with the worker re-training advisory board it was evident that a big problem in Lewis County was the lack of family wage jobs and then the mine shut down and magnified that issue. Mr. Lascurain is in favor or adopting the changes to the comprehensive plan that will allow this industrial land bank to be developed on the Trans Alta lands. He believes the industrial land bank will be a large step forward in providing Lewis County with a much needed chance to offer large scale industrial developments. These developments should in turn offer well paid skilled jobs in Lewis County so its residents can work in Lewis County.

Mr. Bill Lotto commended the Planning Commissioners for the hours they work, volunteering their time. Mr. Lotto submitted a letter from Centralia Mayor Harlan Thompson in support of the Trans Alta project. At the Planning Commission work session, Mr. Lotto spoke about the specifics of the project. The industrial park at Trans Alta could not happen in almost any other area of the northwest. One of the unique characteristics of Lewis County is people care and want to be involved in solving their own problems rather than asking the government to solve them. It has taken many years to find a site, get a state law passed and set up procedures to allow the development to take place.

Mr. Lotto stated in addition to wanting good paying jobs in this community, there is a need to be involved and be supportive of expanding skills training. If we are successful in finding jobs but are not able to have those filled with local people with the necessary skills and they are filled by people outside the area, we have lost a lot of what we were trying to accomplish. It is another piece that we recognize as important and we intend to recognize and be supportive of those who are providing those services.

Mr. Dan Keahey read a letter on behalf of Mr. Craig Kline. Mr. Kline is the president of the Industrial Park at Trans Alta and serves on the board of directors of the Lewis County EDC. He strongly supports the Industrial Park at Trans Alta. He has seen the community suffer from high unemployment and lack of family wage jobs. The tax base is contracting as citizens go elsewhere for jobs and commerce. Lewis County's location on I-5 between Seattle and Portland should answer strategic necessities of many major industries. Coupled with the location and the 100+ acre manufacturing sites IPAT can provide, Lewis County will have a unique and attractive industrial land base to provide jobs and a tax base that is desperately needed.

The Industrial Park at Trans Alta is not a government entity. It is a private, non-profit corporation with a local board of directors who care about the future of our communities and the future generations.

Mr. Kline strongly urged the Planning Commissioners to approve the issue before them.

Mr. Frank DeVaul reiterated the need for good paying jobs, a stronger tax base and the fact that Lewis County solves its own problems. He stated twenty years ago he went to Memphis to help recruit a company to locate in Morton, the first non-timber related industry to locate in the east end of the county. This is the same type of moment where there is an opportunity to respond to a community need that is one of the most significant we have faced and to make sure we can answer the call to provide family wage jobs, keeping the workforce in the area, and having partners in the community such as Centralia College and others. These partners will provide a mechanism to adapt the local work force to the skills needed in these new industries and help our local people develop the skills for the new

industries that are in our future. Mr. DeVaul encouraged the Planning Commission to approve this project and create another historic moment in Lewis County's history.

Mr. Andy Lane stated the legislature amended the Growth Management Act to allow this sort of industrial development at the Trans Alta site. The amendments before the Planning Commission on the comp plan and the development code are necessary to implement the provisions in the GMA. The Comprehensive Plan amendment sets out the policies and designation requirements for the site and the code includes the technical details about what the application requirements are and the review process for specific developers.

Mr. Lane stated Mr. Johnson explained that the code provisions the Planning Commission reviewed at the October 26 workshop had been revised. The new set is in the Commissioners' packets and it is the new set we are supporting and has that workshop date on it.

Ms. Barbara Hins-Turner is the Executive Director of the Pacific Northwest Center of Excellence for Clean Energy housed at Centralia College. Ms. Hins-Turner stated Centralia College and the president and executive management team adheres to the philosophy that business goes where the workforce is. Considerable grant funding has been made available to the Center and it believes a skilled workforce can be trained for Lewis County, however, we need businesses and industries and a place to put them. Centralia College and the Energy Program has become a national testing site this year for the Edison Electric Institute. That means we can place students anywhere in the country, and stated it would be better to keep them here in Lewis County. She submitted for review the latest newsletter and placement list for the Centralia College students.

The Chair asked if anyone else wished to provide testimony. There was no one. She stated written comments would be accepted until close of business on Tuesday, November 16. Chairman Jennings closed the public hearing.

### **III. Calendar**

The next meeting will be on November 23, a workshop on the Comp Plan Amendments and transmittal of recommendations on the Comp Plan amendments. A subarea workshop will not be held.

### **IV. Good of the Order**

Commissioner Guenther stated he heard many times during the oral testimony about family wage jobs. Looking at the Economic Development Element of the comp plan, page 3-4, under the strengths, he would like to change bullet 3 which speaks to competitive labor and stable workforce relative to the urban areas of the region. It states competitive wages in Lewis County can provide savings to existing and new businesses in the area. He would like it to read "competitive wages will provide opportunities for existing and new businesses."

Mr. Johnson stated that can be discussed during the next workshop, which will be on November 23.

No one else wished to speak.

### **V. Adjourn**

The Chair entertained a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Russell made a motion to adjourn, the motion was seconded and adjournment was at 7:37 p.m.