Lewis County Planning Commission

Public Hearing

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

March 24, 2009 @ 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 March 10, 2009
B. Public Hearing: Open Space
C. Workshop and Letter of Transmittal: Open Space
D. Discussion of Agricultural Resource Lands Maps 15a, Glenoma Area

III. Calendar

The next meeting will be March 31: Public Hearing: Agricultural Resource Lands - Bob Lyle Community Building, Morton

VI. Good of the Order

V. Adjourn

This meeting site is barrier free.
People needing special assistance or accommodations should contact The Planning Division 72 hours in advance of the meeting. Phone: (360) 740-1146.
Lewis County does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion or age.

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

March 24, 2009 – 7:00 P.M.
Meeting Notes

Planning Commissioners Present: Bill Russell, Mike Mahoney, Bob Guenther, Rachael Jennings, Richard Tausch, Arny Davis
Staff Present: Phillip Rupp, Barbara Kincaid, Dianne Dorey, Pat Anderson
Consultants Present: Andy Lane, Cairncross and Hemplemann
Others Present: Please see sign in sheet

Handouts/Materials Used:

- Agenda
- Meeting Notes from March 10, 2009
- Memo from Dianne Dorey
- Recommendations for Open Space Classification
- ARL Maps 15A, Glenoma area

I. Call to Order

Chairman Rachael Jennings called the meeting to order 7:05 P.M. Commissioners introduced themselves.

II. Old Business

A. The Chair entertained a motion to approve the meeting notes from March 10, 2009. Commissioner Russell made the motion, Commissioner Mahoney seconded. Motion carried.

Chairman Jennings stated the agenda would be modified, continuing with the discussion of ARL maps 15A, item D.

Mr. Lane stated there was an area for ARL designation which previously did not have a map. This map has since been prepared, identified as 15A. The map was included in the packet that was distributed for the public hearing. Also included was an amendment to the Summary of the Application of the ARL WAC criteria explaining the proposed amendment to this area.

Commissioner Mahoney asked if there was no other ARL designated land immediately adjacent to this piece.

Mr. Lane stated that is correct; the area shown is about four parcels, or (-/+)100 acres.

Commissioner Mahoney stated given an isolated area, immediately adjacent to Glenoma and a heavily parcelized area split by Highway 12, it doesn't seem logical to consider it.

Mr. Lane stated as with all the lands considered for designation, the criteria has been looked at for this parcel.

Commissioner Mahoney suggested there may be two or three criteria that would disqualify this parcel for being considered for long-term commercial agricultural use.

Commissioner Russell asked to have the aerial shown on the screen and overlay a topographical. The area is extremely steep. There are approximately 35 acres that could actually be farmed. The area on the south side of Highway 12 is flat and floods most of the time. He asked if it was the soils that brought this into consideration; he does not believe this is agricultural land.

Mr. Lane stated that is correct; it is considered prime if drained, and was not considered in 2007.

Commissioner Mahoney has compared the maps to the soils book. Most of the soils are IIIw (wet soils) and IIIe (erodible). In the Lincoln Creek and the Boistfort area there is prime if drained soils and immediately adjacent is the IIIe soil, which is usually steep. The IIIw soils are very marginal for agricultural use, regardless of what NCRS calls them. At this time of year they are covered with water, and while we may have had to do this exercise, we are looking at land that has no long term commercial significance in agriculture. The NRCS book states that the majority of the soils that are designated as prime in the County are suitable primarily for the production of grass, which is dependent on an animal industry, and our animal industry is suffering. These are things we must consider before we send out recommendations to the BOCC.

Commissioner Russell asked, regarding the previous discussion on the designation of this entire area, if the consultants would look into it.

Mr. Lane stated it would be looked at, as well as an area on the east side of this map that was discussed, to confirm the LAMIRD boundaries and the previous designations of this particular area.

B. Public Hearing: Open Space

Chairman Jennings opened the public hearing on open space.

Ms. Dianne Dorey, Lewis County Assessor, brought the recommendations for the Public Benefit Rating System on various lands in the County that have applied for conservation purposes. This is not to be confused with zoning; it is taxation based on the current use of the land, and there could be situations where a land could be zoned as commercial/industrial but is applying for an open space taxation break because it has an area that is not useable, due to wetlands, and would like it conserved. In 1970 the Legislature created this designation to allow people to conserve their property and keep it from being subdivided and developed.

Commissioner Russell has sat on the committee for this designation and understands the properties have been studied quite thoroughly. He asked if each of these properties was discussed with the benefit rating panel.

Ms. Dorey stated each one was discussed. Commissioner Mahoney was on the committee for these particular applications.

Commissioner Guenther asked Commissioner Mahoney how he felt about the process.

Commissioner Mahoney stated it was a good committee that was well represented. There were originally 54 properties; some owners withdrew their request; there were four that did not qualify and were denied. There was a consensus on reaching the decisions about designation.

As part of the process, the reduction in tax varied on how each piece was scored. The size, use and the value of keeping it as open space were part of the criteria.

Ms. Dorey stated the reduction is based on the market value, not a flat reduction.

Chairman Jennings opened the public testimony portion of the hearing. No one wished to give testimony on the Open Space and the Chair closed the public hearing and opened the workshop.

C. Workshop and Letter of Transmittal
Mr. Rupp stated there is a Letter of Transmittal for the Planning Commission to sign and move forward to the BOCC if it desires.

Commissioner Mahoney asked if there was any reason to keep this hearing open for written testimony.

Mr. Rupp stated he did not believe it needed to be kept open.

Commissioner Mahoney made a motion to send the Letter of Transmittal with attached documents with a recommendation to the BOCC. Commissioner Tausch seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Chairman Jennings thanked Ms. Dorey for attending and making her presentation.

III. Calendar
The next two meetings will be public hearings on the designation of Agricultural Resource Lands. The first will be March 31 at the Bob Lyle Community building in Morton and the second will be April 1 at the Courthouse in Chehalis. Both meetings will begin at 6:00 P.M.

Commissioner Russell stated that during the Good of the Order at the last meeting some documents were submitted. He did not receive those documents in his packet and asked if he could get copies.

Mr. Rupp stated those documents would be sent to the Planning Commission prior to the public hearing and apologized for the oversight.

VI. Good of the Order

Ms. Kincaid stated there was a letter for the record dated March 24 from VanderStoep, Remund, Blinks and Jones and copies of that were distributed to the Commissioners.

Mr. Jay Hall, 160 Carroll Rd, Chehalis, distributed a handout which discussed Map #5. He pointed out the parcel at the intersection of Harmon Rd, Haight Rd. and Carroll Rd. He does not want his parcel included in the ARL, partly because of its proximity to other urban growth areas. He understands that has not been accepted by the Growth Management Board but he thinks is bears consideration in this case. Other reasons are predominant parcel size, land use patterns and their compatibility with agricultural practices, the intensity of nearby land uses and the history of land development permits issued nearby.

Mr. Hall included a map with his parcel highlighted, which is 24.6 acres. He gave the history of the property. He stated the land has raised cattle and it is not economically feasible; it is not a commercial operation and money cannot be made on 24 acres.

Mr. Hall stated that in past meetings it was said that the Planning Commission did not want to establish islands. That is what has been done in this case. Three 20 acre parcels have been selected in the midst of the surrounding parcels that are as small as .18 acres. There is a mobile home park nearby and he does not believe agricultural use is a compatible use.

The development in that area is not part of the Napavine or Chehalis UGAs but Mr. Hall has no doubt that one day it will be.

Mr. Hall encouraged the Planning Commission to reconsider this designation.

V. Adjourn

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn. The motion carried and adjournment was at 7:35 P.M.