

Lewis County Planning Commission *Workshop*

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

October 11, 2016 - Meeting Notes

Planning Commissioners Present: Jeff Millman, District 2; Bob Whannell, District 3; Mike Mahoney, District 1; Stephen Hueffed, District 2

Planning Commissioners Excused: Sue Rosbach, District 2; Leslie Myers, District 1; Russ Prior, District 3

Staff Present: Fred Evander, Glenn Carter, Pat Anderson

Others Present: Please see sign in sheet

Handouts/Materials Used:

- Agenda
- Meeting Notes
- Comp Plan Staff Report
- Economic Development Element
- Transportation Element

1. Call to Order and Introductions

Chair Mahoney called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. The Commissioners introduced themselves; there was a quorum.

2. Approval of Agenda

There were no changes to the agenda.

3. Approval of Meeting Notes

Chair Mahoney entertained a motion to approve the meeting notes from September 27, 2016. The motion to approve as presented was made by Commissioner Whannell, seconded by Commissioner Millman. The motion carried.

4. Workshop on Comprehensive Plan Update

A. Review the draft Economic Development Element

Mr. Evander stated this is the first time the Commissioners will discuss the Economic Development Element. He explained to the public that he is striving for a simpler Comprehensive Plan. If the goals and policies make sense there will not be any changes made; some need simplified language and some need less restrictive language. Currently the Plan is very text-heavy and Mr. Evander would like to go to a more visual document, and a more user-friendly document.

Mr. Evander summarized the document, explaining the graphs and proposed changes to the goals and policies.

Commissioner Whannell asked if the county has funds dedicated to promote vocational training-type programs. Mr. Evander stated no, and that is why he put in the words “encourage collaboration.” He stated the school superintendents meet regularly and are collaborating on certain things.

Mr. Evander stated the key is to develop strategic priorities and then identify the sources of money that can get them going.

Chair Mahoney referred to Policy 4.3, Natural Resource Industries. He stated the first bullet should read “protect existing natural resource lands from the conversion to non-resource uses.” In Policy 6.11, he stated we cannot encourage on-farm housing because the zoning does not allow it. Mr. Evander stated the policy is already in there, and the reason he made the language very clear is to build a bridge from here to the development regulations. He is confident that the county can do this.

Commissioner Whannell asked if this would tie in with the cluster development that was discussed earlier. Mr. Evander stated cluster development and farm housing can be done.

Commissioner Millman spoke to the employment graph, and asked Mr. Evander what the plan was to increase the 243 job gain from 2001 to 2014. Mr. Evander stated he thought it would be “silver buckshot” rather than a silver bullet. He this means to try to do many things, including broadband, infrastructure enhancements (water and sewer), quality of life improvements, small businesses, business retention, workforce training, and attracting large industries. For a long time there has been a focus on attracting large industries but he is convinced that that type of things works along the I-5 corridor. There is a large county outside of the I-5 corridor and if we want to enhance jobs everywhere else then small businesses and entrepreneurship and the other things he mentioned are key. The likelihood of attracting a big industrial user in Packwood is challenging.

Commissioner Millman thought the Board of County Commissioners should make it a priority to develop the Winlock industrial site. There is the potential there to create 1000 new jobs. Mr. Evander stated the north county access is another large project to promote, and there needs to be a way to get utilities to them.

B. Review the draft Land Use Element

Mr. Evander stated the Land Use Element had been discussed at the previous meeting and that the Commissioners wished to show the federal lands on the maps. He stated he would like to add a cluster development, in addition to the farm cluster and the rural residential. He asked that the Commissioners let him know if there were other changes or additions.

C. Review the draft goals and policies of the Transportation Element

The paper that is before the Commissioners is only the goals and policies. The Transportation Element and the Capital Facilities Element require a lot of work. Mr. Evander is waiting for the Transportation model to complete the element; the capital facilities element still needs some work.

Chair Mahoney stated generally speaking, pedestrian and bike facilities are not compatible with any of the roads in the county (page 12). Commissioner Hueffed stated he supported most of Mr. Evander's policies, and the creation of alternative routes. Mr. Evander stated bike facilities would not be encouraged where it is not safe. These decisions will be made by the county engineers.

Commissioner Whannell stated on page 5, Alternative Transportation Modes, the word "to" should be left in the first goal.

5. Calendar

The next meeting will be on October 25, 2016. Chair Mahoney asked any Commissioner who could not make it to that meeting to please let Pat Anderson know.

6. Good of the Order

Glenn Carter stated he attended a meeting on the Programmatic EIS for the Chehalis Basin flood protection alternatives. There will be a public meeting on October 18, 6 pm at the Veteran's Museum. He encouraged the Planning Commissioners to attend.

One of the proposals is a flood retention facility in the upper Chehalis. There is a no-action alternative, an alternative that only protects I-5 and there is a fourth alternative which proposes to take approximately 10,000 acres of active farmland and convert it to a flood plain enhancement project. That would return the stretch of the river from Adna west to Pe Ell to natural conditions. It proposes to convert the agricultural acreage and relocate the people on that land to other places in the county. It would provide for woody debris and other changes so that the water would come up over the river banks more often and would spread out across the flood plain. The flood plain would then be converted to forest lands for purposes of slowing the waters down and restoring the flood protection qualities of the flood plain.

He thought it would be helpful for the Commissioners to hear the presenters talk about this and it will provide an opportunity for comment. The PEIS is available on the Chehalis River Basin Flood Authority site [as well as at local libraries].

Chair Mahoney asked if there was any indication of how this fourth alternative would be implemented. Mr. Carter stated this is a 30,000 foot view so it is vague. It provides for acquisition, preferably voluntary.

The comment period ends on October 31 and the County needs to participate in the process.

7. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.