

# Lewis County Planning Commission

## Public Meeting

In-Person & Virtual Meeting via Zoom

**September 26, 2023 - Meeting Notes**

**Planning Commissioners Present:** Lorie Spogen, District 1; Jason Alves, District 1; Bob Russell, District 2; Gretchen Fritsch, District 3

**Planning Commissioners Absent:** Corbin Foster, AL; Frank Corbin, District 3

**Board of County Commissioners Present:** Sean Swope, Scott Brummer, Lindsay Pollock

**Staff Present:** Mindy Brooks, Senior Long Range Planner; Megan Sathre, Office Assistant Senior; Lee Napier, Director; Barbara Russell, Prosecuting Attorney

### Materials Used:

- Agenda
- Draft Meeting Notes – September 12, 2023
- Staff Report: Periodic Update Overview
- Staff Report: Mandatory Updates

### 1. Zoom Guidelines

The clerk dispensed with the Zoom Guidelines.

### 2. Call to Order

A. Determination of a Quorum

4 Commissioners were present; there was a quorum.

### 3. Approval of Agenda

The Chair entertained a motion to approve the agenda. Commissioner Russell made the motion to approve the agenda; second by Commissioner Alves. The motion carried unanimously.

### 4. Approval of Meeting Notes

The Chair entertained a motion to approve the meeting notes from September 12, 2023. Commissioner Russell made a motion to approve the notes as presented, second by Commissioner Alves. The motion carried unanimously.

## **5. Workshop – Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update Scoping**

### **A. Staff Presentation: Comprehensive Plan & Periodic Update Overview**

Mindy Brooks, Senior Long Range Planner with Community Development, gave a presentation on the Comprehensive Plan and Periodic Update Overview (*see presentation for details*).

### **B. Staff Presentation: Mandatory Updates**

Eric Eisenberg, Housing & Infrastructure Specialist for Lewis County, gave a presentation on the Mandatory Updates Summary (*see presentation for details*). The following questions/comments were made throughout the presentation.

Concerning climate change and environmental justice planning under HB 1181, Commissioner Swope asked Eric to define environmental justice. Eric responded that it is not very well specified in law. The jurisdiction needs to see if there are communities that are getting disproportionately impacted by climate change, for example low-income residents living in a frequently flooded area. We need to consider the impacts on those people and make sure they are engaged in the update of the Comprehensive Plan. We need to address mitigation to lessen the burden.

Concerning removing limits on unrelated persons living in a single dwelling unit (HB 5235), Commissioner Pollock asked how we would address the idea of using the number of bedrooms for septic sizing. Eric responded you can have a law that says you can't have any more people in a house than the septic but what you can't do is you can't say it doesn't count as a single family residence if you have X number of unrelated people living in it. Mindy added that the issue here in Lewis County is that we don't regulate short term rentals and there are many older houses with septic systems designed for two people per bedroom and now the house is being rented for double that capacity of people. We could set a maximum occupancy for short term rentals to address the septic system issue.

Commissioner Fritsch asked if single family residence is determined as used by one family. Eric responded that our current code has several different definitions in the relevant section, and those will need to be updated. Fritsch responded that the point she is trying to make is that short term rentals are not a residential use, it's not housing.

Concerning use of objective design standards only (HB 1293), there was a discussion about how to address design standards to make them not subjective, which is a requirement of the new state laws. Essentially, if the code is going to address design, then the rules have to be clear and objective and not require a "design committee" to review. Lewis County doesn't have many

design standards, but this will need to be considered when finalizing the Packwood Subarea Plan and with respect to rural character.

### **C. Group Exercise: Brainstorm Priorities**

Mindy Brooks, Senior Long Range Planner with Community Development led the Planning Commissioners and Board of County Commissioners in a group brainstorming exercise. First, each commissioner was instructed to write down 5-10 priorities for Periodic Update that are not mandatory updates. Next, each commissioner was instructed to circle their top three priorities. After that, staff paired the commissioners up to share their results and select between them, their top three highest priorities to then rewrite into clear, short statements. Next, the commissioners shared with everyone the results of their activities, which were captured using Padlet (*see attached*). Finally, the group agreed upon the top 3 highest priorities to accomplish by June 30, 2025.

### **D. Next Steps**

Over the next 4 months staff will be holding community meetings to share the commissioners' priorities with the public and to hear their priorities. Staff will come back to both the Planning Commission and the BOCC with the results of that engagement and to determine which priorities staff can complete during Periodic Update and which may need to wait until after.

## **6. Public Comment**

There were no members of the public who wished to provide public comment.

## **7. Good of the Order:**

### **A. Staff**

There were no items from staff for the good of the order.

### **B. Planning Commissioners**

There were no items from the planning commissioners for the good of the order.

## **8. Calendar**

The next meeting of the Planning Commission will occur on October 10, 2023, and the agenda items are workshops on Rural Housing Alternatives and Transportation Plan Updates. Mindy went through the calendar for the rest of the year, which is also available online. Oct 24 is a training session. Both meetings in November are cancelled. The first meeting in December will be on the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update and the last meeting in December is cancelled.

## **9. Adjourn**

Commissioner Russel made a motion to adjourn. The meeting adjourned at 7:58 p.m.

Lewis County Planning Commission  
September 26, 2023 Meeting Notes  
Attachment – Padlet Results of Group Brainstorming

Highest priority - Energy

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**Periodic Update Priorities**  
Planning Commission & BOCC Workshop

Water Availability	UGAs	Energy	Short Term Rentals	Development along I5	After Periodic Update	Mandatory
Ensure access to existing water systems without requiring urban or UGA zoning.	Better utilize existing UGAs or new UGAs through transfer creation to help cities drive smart growth.	Incentivize, plan for, and promote energy resource development including hydrogen fusion, bioeconomy development opportunities.	Addressing short term rentals - ensuring they don't displace a community	Encourage mixed use campus development along the I5 corridor to support economic diversity.	Elimination of simple segregations.	LAMIRD redevelopment.
	More robust planning inside the UGA and Urban Boundaries.	IPAT UGA Development Regulations				Lower barriers in rural areas to encourage more affordable housing.
	Streamline the development process across jurisdictional lines. (SB 5290)	Limit energy production to sites currently in use.				Rural Housing Initiative with appropriate infrastructure.
		Industrial zoning planning.				Protect the critical area interface with the urban interface.
						Incentivize, plan for, and promote large and small plot agriculture and farm forestry.