

Lewis County Planning Commission

Public Meeting

In-Person & Virtual Meeting via Zoom

March 11, 2025 - Meeting Notes

Planning Commissioners Present: Jason Alves, District 1; Jeff Skutley, District 2; Lorie Spogen, District 1; Frank Corbin, District 3; Roger Moore, At-Large; Gretchen Fritsch, District 3

Staff Present: Mindy Brooks, Director of Community Development; Guilherme Motta, Senior Long-Range Planner;

Materials Used:

- Agenda
- Draft Meeting Notes – February 25, 2025
- Staff Report and Comp Plan Q&A
- Lewis County Comprehensive Plan Internal Review Draft
- Lewis County Policy Matrix

1. Zoom Guidelines

The clerk dispensed with the Zoom Guidelines.

2. Call to Order

A. Determination of a Quorum

7 Commissioners were present; there was a quorum.

3. Approval of Agenda

The Chair entertained a motion to approve the agenda for March 11, 2025. Commissioner Russell made the motion to approve the agenda; seconded by Commissioner Spogen. The motion carried unanimously.

4. Approval of Meeting Notes

The Chair entertained a motion to approve the meeting notes for February 25, 2025. Commissioner Russell made the motion to approve the agenda; seconded by Commissioner Spogen The motion carried unanimously.

5. Public Comment

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

6. Workshop

A. Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update

Mindy Brooks, Lewis County Community Development Director, gave a presentation on the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update. *See presentation for details.* The following questions and discussion occurred throughout the presentation.

Mindy noted tonight, we are going to focus on land use and housing. Lewis County has 5,000 properties that have proposed zoning changes. All property owners who have a zoning change proposed were sent a letter today with all the information on how to look up all changes, as well as anyone within a ¼ mile of the change, we sent out about 9,000 letters today.

Commissioner Corbin made mention of the quarter mile radius of the proposed zoning change was a result of the planning commission voting to increase the radius from 200 yards to a ¼ mile to increase communication between the Planning Commission and the public.

Commissioner Fritsch asked if the master plan resort is something that the landowners were aware of and asking for similar to the YMCA. Mindy said that it was not something that the landowners asked for but was something that was identified by the advisory committee during Packwood Subarea Plan Phase 1 as an opportunity. Commissioner Fritsch followed up by asking if the letters landowners are receiving starting today, is this the first time that they are hearing of this proposed zoning change. Mindy said that it is likely to be the first time that property owners are hearing of this change unless they have been attending open house meetings. Mindy stated that it is an overlay – it does not change the base zone. What this means for the property owners is that they will have the base zone and additional uses – it's up to them to develop.

Commissioner Russell thanks Commissioner Fritsch for her question – it helped clarify things for him.

Commissioner Skutley asked if water and septic can be shared between several. Mindy said that with a ¼ acre lot size, you will need to have a shared well. Septic is harder to share but it is not impossible, just more difficult.

[Regarding RRC changes] Commissioner Skutley asked how much development is there now. Mindy said that we have not done an analysis on what the build out is today, but the vast majority have a lot of build out already in them. They were designated as LAMIRDs because they were

concentrated development to begin with or they wouldn't have qualified to start. This is just trying to make them all consistent.

Commissioner Fritch asked why the zoning that is marked RDD-5 but clearly the lots are less than that, why the discrepancy. Even with legal non-conforming, why bother putting RDD-5 on something that is already a smaller acreage. Mindy said when RDD-5 was applied many of the lots were already subdivided under RDD5. In the beginning of the growth management act, there was really a bright line that you could not zone below 5 acre lots.

Commissioner Spogen asked if Mindy was not going to try to do some work to allow smaller lots in some areas. Mindy said that we are only focusing on the Rural Residential Centers (RRC) areas to preserve rural and resource lands.

Commissioner Russell asked if there is any talk of a waste treatment facility on that side of the river [referring to High Valley in Packwood]. Mindy said absolutely there is talk of a waste treatment facility on that side of the river, however it would very expensive to do a LOSS system, to have people hook up to and then people pay rates to maintain it. But from a water quality standpoint, it would be good to consider in the future.

Commissioner Russel said that he is glad that Packwood is in the county because he has great faith in the county in protecting the critical areas.

Commissioner Spogen asked about the areas that are being taken down to a ¼ acre lots in the Boistfort area that are served by Boistfort water, is the Boistfort water system going to be able to handle that. Mindy said that it is all dependent on water availability, which is considered when a development proposal comes in. Commissioner Spogen clarified that while this is allowed [referring to RRC ¼ acre lots], it may not be available to all. Mindy said that is correct, even though it's allowed, it may not be possible.

Commissioner Fritsch asked if she missed somewhere in the housing section, the RHA section. Mindy said that we are going to hold until after Periodic Update.

Commissioner Skutley asked how far away from a well does a building have to be. Mindy said that the state law doesn't say how far from a well does a building have to be, it says that anything that could contaminate the well needs to be outside of a 100-foot radius. Mindy said she thinks that a structure can get up to 5 feet from your well if it is a single well serving one property. Mindy said that she is speaking a little bit passed her knowledge because she is not a sanitarian, but she can confirm all of this with our sanitarian.

Commissioner Skutley stated that the whole intersection at I5 and Hwy 12 and Avery Rd and N Military is really difficult to get through now, what changes will happen there? Mindy said that in order to do any development, the transportation impact assessment will need to happen. Commissioner Skutley asked what kind of commercial are we talking about? Mindy said during the development regulations we will bring a full list of allowed uses, but it is things like gas stations,

convenience stores, hotels, light industrial, construction staging equipment, etc.

Commissioner Spogen asked for clarification, the gray on the TransAlta map will be energy producing. Mindy said that is our goal. Commissioner Spogen asked for an example of an energy production. Mindy said that right now, it's coal, but it could be hydrogen or natural gas. Commissioner Corbin asked if we have deposits of natural gas currently or is it piped in.

Commissioner Corbin asked if north of TransAlta is Thurston County, how do they have it zoned? Mindy said mining, as well as forestry, farm and RDD. Commissioner Corbin confirmed that there are some windmills in Thurston County north of TransAlta as well.

Commissioner Spogen asked a question regarding the Freeway Commercial Highway 12 Zoning map and why the map on the right, the zoning doesn't go all of the way to Koontz Road. Mindy stated that we followed a property line when creating the zoning. Mindy said it comes from our policy; we have a policy right now in the comp plan that says that within 1,000 feet of an interchange and I5 we should consider the freeway commercial zoning. We have went a little further in some circumstances like Ritchie Brothers, that is already existing. We are trying to stay true to that policy. Commissioner Russell stated that he appreciates the clarity from Mindy of the 1,000-foot radius near the I5 interchange.

Commissioner Skutley asked what the zoning is for the Toledo area now? Mindy said she believes it is currently RDD20.

Commissioner Fritsch asked regarding the Centralia UGA, when removing these zones from the UGA, why are we not zoning them as RRC instead of RDD 5. Mindy said that RCC only exists in a LMRD.

Commissioner Corbin stated that we have previously discussed setting an RDD 2.5, but that did not fly. Mindy stated that she thinks we could come back to that in the future but would be too risky to add to what we are changing now.

7. Good of the Order:

A. Staff

Mindy reminded the Planning Commission of the following 3 hearing dates: March 25, 6:00 pm – Onalaska Subarea Plan and Zoning (125 NW Chehalis) April 8, 6 pm – Packwood UGA and zoning (Packwood Community Hall, 12935 US-12, Packwood) April 22, 6:00 pm – Comprehensive Plan Report and Zoning (125 NW Chehalis)

Staff is going to give a short presentation at each hearing because there may be community members that have not attended our workshops. Mindy asked the commissioners to please send her any questions that they may have please be emailed to her ahead of the hearings so we can move forward with the hearings in a timely manner.

Mindy let the commissioners know that on April 22, we can close the record and make recommendations, or we can close the record and recess to May 13 to make a recommendation.

Mindy and Commissioner Russel confirmed that the Qualified Professional code amendment will come back to the Planning Commission with the rest of the development regulations this summer.

B. Planning Commissioners

Commissioner Corbin reminded everyone that good-of-the-order is to share information that is pertinent to Planning Commission and the work we are appointed to do. Questions or comments about personal projects or permits, or other non-Planning Commission topics, should be brought to staff outside of the public meeting.

No Commissioners had any other questions.

8. Calendar:

The next Planning Commission meeting will be on March 25, 2025, and the agenda item will be a public hearing on the Onalaska Subarea Plan.

9. Adjourn

Commissioner Spogen made a motion to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 7:35 pm.