

Lewis County Planning Commission

Public Meeting

In-Person & Virtual Meeting via Zoom

October 28, 2025 - Meeting Notes

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

Staff Present: Mindy Brooks, Director of Community Development; Natalie Kamieniecki, Senior Long Range Planner; Megan Sathre, Administrative Assistant

Materials Used:

- Agenda
- Draft Meeting Notes – October 14, 2025
- Staff Report: Critical Areas Ordinance

1. Zoom Guidelines

The clerk dispensed with the Zoom Guidelines.

2. Call to Order

A. Determination of a Quorum

6 Commissioners were present; there was a quorum.

3. Approval of Agenda

The Chair entertained a motion to approve the agenda for October 28, 2025. Commissioner Alves made the motion to approve the agenda; seconded by Commissioner Russell. The motion carried unanimously.

4. Approval of Meeting Notes

The Chair entertained a motion to approve the meeting notes for October 14, 2025. Commissioner Moore made the motion to approve the meeting notes; seconded by Commissioner Russell. The motion carried unanimously.

5. Public Comment

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

6. Workshop

A. Critical Areas Ordinance

Natalie Kamieniecki, Senior Long Range Planner for Lewis County Community Development, gave a presentation on the Critical Areas Ordinance. *See presentation for details.*

Commissioner Russell suggested that in LCC 17.38.465 (4), "pre-existing Type F stream" should be changed to "any DNR classified stream."

Commissioner Russell suggested that there be clarification to the Hazard Tree Removal section to specify that a hazard tree within a wetland buffer should remain in the wetland buffer as woody debris when fallen. This is addressed in the proposed code amendment.

Commissioner Russell commented that he likes the wording of "clearly indicating" in LCC 17.38.0102. However, Russell expressed that "appropriate fencing and signage" is restrictive. Natalie responded that fencing and signage serve two different purposes. Russell asked if we could change the language to require signage and/or fencing depending on the scenario. Commissioner Alves agreed that the code should not require fencing unless necessary. Commissioner Skutley added that staff should consider the impact of using equipment to put in a fence near a critical area. Natalie responded that clarification will be added to the code.

The Planning Commissioners asked clarifying questions about the wetland buffer for steep slopes. Natalie explained that in all scenarios, a minimum 50-foot buffer is required when there is development proposed near steep slopes. If development is near a steep slope, a geotechnical report is required, which will further specify development requirements. The geotechnical buffer could not be reduced to less than 25-feet if a wetland was also present unless a reasonable use or variance was approved. Commissioner Russel remarked that if the development simply stays 50 feet back from the top of slope, then it would not trigger the requirements.

Commissioner Skutley asked when the draft code revisions will be provided. Mindy responded that the language clarifications will be provided as draft motions in a staff report prior to the public hearing.

7. Good of the Order:

A. Staff

Mindy shared that new Advisory Group code is being developed. This will create a consistent way for the BOCC to establish and maintain groups, committees, boards, and commissions. Because many of the requirements in 2.11 LCC for the Planning Commission are not contained in 2.50, Advisory Groups, staff is also amending 2.11 LCC. In addition, staff will be bringing amendments to the Planning Commission's bylaws forward and these will include a process by which the

Planning Commission will vet and nominate new members or reappointments. The nominations will go to the Board of County Commissioners to consider for appointment.

Staff will use the new advisory group code to form the Short-Term Rental Advisory Group. Mindy suggested that the initial group applications should be vetted and members nominated by the Planning Commission because of their heavy involvement in the process. After the group is established the Board of County Commissioners will manage the participants.

The Permit Center will be launching the new SmartGov permitting software on December 1st. There will be some interruptions to service during the month of November as staff are trained to use the new software. Notifications will go out to the public ahead of time for these interruptions in service.

B. Planning Commissioners

Commissioner Fritsch asked about BOCC's lack of conversation on Short Term Rentals at the last BOCC meeting. Mindy responded that Commissioner Brummer wanted more time to review the materials prior to a conversation. They will discuss it again on Wednesday, October 29th at 9:00am. The outcome of the conversation will be shared. Additionally, a new website will be created to answer STR frequently asked questions.

Commissioner Russell shared that he is going to be stepping down from Planning Commission as his term ends this year. Russell thanked the staff and the Board of County Commissioners for the opportunity to serve. Staff and the Planning Commissioners thanked Russell for his service.

Commissioner Corbin noted that prior planning commissioner Lorie Spogen expressed interest in the Short Term Rental Advisory Group.

8. Calendar:

The next Planning Commission meeting will be on November 10, 2025, and the agenda item will be a public hearing on the Critical Areas Ordinance. Please note, this meeting is on a Monday due to Tuesday, November 11, being Veteran's Day.

9. Adjourn

Commissioner Alves made a motion to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 6:57 pm.