



THURSTON COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

Minutes March 2, 2011

1 **1. 6:30 P.M. CALL TO ORDER**

2 Chair Lane called the March 2, 2011 meeting of the Thurston County Planning
3 Commission to order at 6:30 p.m. Commissioners provided self-introductions.
4

5 **Attendance:** Chair Chris Lane, Commissioners Edward Fleisher, Christopher Earle, Bill
6 Jackson, Liz Kohlenberg, Scott Nelson & Christine Spaulding
7

8 **Absent:** Kathleen O'Connor
9

10 **Staff:** Andrew Deffobis, Cynthia Wilson, Scott Clark, Jeremy Davis & Mike Kain,
11 Resource Stewardship Department
12

13 **2. 6:31 P.M. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

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15 **MOTION: Commissioner Fleisher moved to approve the agenda. Commissioner**
16 **Earle seconded. Motion carried.**
17

18 It was decided to move staff updates before approval of minutes.
19

20 **3. 6:31 P.M. STAFF UPDATES**

21
22 Mr. Clark provided the following staff updates:

- 23 • Staff and Planning Commission have been provided with new safety information
24 including room set-up. It was recommended by the Thurston County Sherriff's
25 Office to purchase a camcorder to record the meetings.
- 26 • The Bio Mass Moratorium has prompted the need for three Planning Commission
27 members to do the findings of fact & be the report writer to bring in citizens for
28 an advisory group that is pro and con. Staff wants the group to come testify to
29 three of the Planning Commission members then the three in return will present
30 the information and do the finding of fact and make recommendations to the
31 Board of County Commissioners (BOCC). This would take place on off Planning
32 Commission meeting weeks.
- 33 • Staff met with US Fish and Wildlife (Ted Thomas and Jody Bush) in regards to
34 the Critical Areas Ordinance (CAO) today. They will be putting out a national
35 press release probably within the next fourteen days that says they are going to
36 move these prairie species from candidates into the formal listing process, which
37 could take from 1-3 years.
- 38 • Thurston County closed its conservation futures ranking, the initial entry. We
39 have received all of the conservation futures applications for this year, and now it
40 goes into a formal ranking process, then to the BOCC to see who gets funded in
41 that regard.
42
43

1 Three volunteers were then chosen to participate in the Bio Mass citizen advisory
2 group. Ed Fleisher, Chris Earle and Christine Spaulding volunteered and staff
3 will be sending them a schedule so that they can continue with the process.
4

5 **4. 6:40 P.M. PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS (Not associated with topics for which**
6 **public hearings have been held.)**
7

8 Dan Farmer – 9546 Marlbrook Court SE Olympia, WA 98516, Board Member for the
9 Lost Lake Farmer’s Association
10

11 Mr. Farmer wanted to introduce himself to the Planning Commission and note that he has
12 given to Jeremy Davis (Planning Department) a code amendment he would like to get put
13 on the docket but the intent is trying to fix what is going on out at Lost Lake Resort.
14 There are a lot of details that are behind it stated Mr. Farmer but he did not want to
15 discuss said details at this time it was just an introduction to the Planning Commission.
16

17 **5. 6:41 P.M. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**
18

19 **Commissioner Nelson moved to approve the January 19, 2011 minutes and accept**
20 **the audio as the official record. Commissioner Fleisher seconded. Motion carried.**
21

22 The official audio is available on line at:

23 [http://www.co.thurston.wa.us/planning/planning_commission/planning_comm_minutes.h](http://www.co.thurston.wa.us/planning/planning_commission/planning_comm_minutes.html)
24 [tml](http://www.co.thurston.wa.us/planning/planning_commission/planning_comm_minutes.html)
25

26 **6. 6:42 P.M. WORK SESSION: CAO – Topics may include: 24.01 General Provisions,**
27 **24.55 Subdivision in Critical Areas, 24.60 Signs & Fencing, 24.70 Surety**
28 **Agreements, 24.90 Emergency Authorizations, 24.91 Amendments, 24.92**
29 **Enforcement**
30

31 *Staff: Scott Clark, Andrew Deffobis, Cynthia Wilson, Jeremy Davis & Mike Kain,*
32 *Resource Stewardship*
33

34 Mr. Deffobis gave the Commission a handout that gives general definitions and
35 explanations or “cheat sheet” for tonight’s discussion. Mr. Davis then passed out
36 separate letters to each commissioner that had been mailed in from the Olympia Master
37 Builders Association. Staff is continuing to work on the draft ordinance and the
38 supporting best available science report and also working on a continued effort to place
39 all information on the web site.
40

41 The first chapter that was discussed was General Provisions which has been expanded.
42 This chapter provides the introductory information for the CAO and establishes the
43 overall purposes of the ordinance. These are things such as minimizing the loss of life
44 and property in critical areas in which is appropriate for the concern, maintaining water
45 quality, protecting critical areas and habitats and also implementing the goals of the
46 Growth Management Act. This chapter also designates what critical areas are being
47 considered under the ordinance and state law. Mr. Deffobis continued with the first
48 chapter changes that had been made and the Planning Commission asked questions of

1 Mr. Deffobis and other staff. Lastly the General Provisions also discusses the general
2 requirements of the CAO. Projects must first seek to avoid impacts and where those
3 impacts cannot be avoided but are still permitted by the CAO they would need to be
4 minimized and mitigated. The property assessment relief is spelled out in the general
5 requirements; the Assessor will look at what the critical areas are on a property and
6 provide adjustments to property evaluation as necessary.

7
8 Staff met with the Assessor's Office recently and brought up the concerns that citizens
9 have been asking about in regards to critical areas impacting their property values. The
10 Assessor's Office is concerned about this issue and wants people's property values to
11 accurately reflect what is on their property and what that may or may not mean as for
12 their ability to use their property as they had intended. The new Assessor has been in the
13 role for only two months, is bringing himself up to speed and is interested in having an
14 open dialog between everyone so no information is misconstrued.

15
16 The Subdivisions in Critical Areas chapter, 24.55 establishes the provisions for
17 subdividing property that may contain critical areas and buffers. Generally speaking lots
18 that are partially impacted by critical areas they may be subdivided subject to standards.
19 One of the provisions is in order to subdivide you must have sufficient buildable area
20 outside of the critical area and buffer to site a home. Lots that are completely within a
21 critical area may or may not be subdivided. Questions were then asked of staff and a
22 discussion ensued.

23
24 In 2007 the county approved the innovative technique. This was to provide for a variety
25 of rural densities as required by the growth management act. Essentially it affects
26 approximately 26,000 parcels and it totals about 183,500 acres zoned for RRR 1/5. There
27 is approximately 44, 000 areas of mapped critical areas. The specific affects of the
28 technique are assessed on a site by site basis and innovative technique does not change
29 the zoning areas for the county's that zoned 1/5 or residential one unit per five acres.
30 Essentially how it works is the acreage of the critical areas is subtracted from the parcels
31 acreage before calculating the density under the allowed number of lots. This does not
32 include all critical areas, but the listed; high ground water hazard areas, wetlands, marine
33 bluff hazard areas, landslide areas, rivers, streams, marine shorelines, 100 year flood
34 plains and the submerged land of lakes actually applies to a density reduction of all
35 zoning districts. Examples were then discussed.

36
37 The next chapter that was discussed was proposed chapter 24.60 critical areas signs and
38 fencing. The proposed chapter recognizes that signs and fencing may be necessary to
39 mark the boundaries of some critical areas and also discusses the types of discretionary
40 signage that would be allowed within those critical areas. This includes things such as
41 interpretive signage or a trail head for example, street signs within approved right of
42 ways, critical areas identification signs and survey signs and monuments. Signs under
43 the proposal are required within wetlands, Fish and Wildlife habitat conservation areas,
44 landslide hazard areas, marine bluffs and the buffers of all of those. Signs that are
45 required would need to be located where lot lines intersect with critical area buffers at
46 corners where critical area buffer changes direction and then in general at reasonable
47 distances where people can see them. General sign verbiage is also discussed here.
48 Fences are permit able on the outer boundary of wetland buffers or important habitat

1 areas and buffers. Fencing can encroach on wetlands and habitat buffers along the
2 perimeter of lawful development. Fencing may also be required when there is an
3 adjoining use that may threaten the functions of a wetland habitat area or buffer. The
4 signs and fencing accordingly must be designed and placed to minimize impacts to
5 wetlands, wildlife habitat, wildlife travel and connectivity.
6

7 Surety Agreements, Emergency Authorization and Amendments then were shortly
8 discussed with questions of staff. The rest of the draft chapters should be completed by
9 the end of March and then will be handed out to the commission.
10

11 **7. 7:47 P.M. CALENDAR**

12
13 March 16, 2011 – Ed Fleisher may not be in attendance
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15 **8. 7:48 PM ADJOURN**

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17 With there being no further business, Chair Lane adjourned the meeting at 7:48 p.m.
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22 _____
Chris Lane, Chair
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24 Prepared by Carrie Toebbe, Recording Secretary