MINUTES - Regular Meeting

Thurston County Planning Commission
Wednesday, November 1, 2000
County Courthouse Complex
2000 Lakeridge Drive SW
Building 1 - Room 152
Olympia, Washington 98502

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. by Chair Bower, followed by introductions of Planning Commission members.

a. Attendance

Members Present: Bob Bower, Tom Cole, Peggy Paradise, Brian Fagernes, and Liz Lyman

Members Absent: Barbara Frost and Janet Reiner

Staff Present: Fred Knostman, Jennifer Hayes, John Sonnen, Jeff Fancher, Don Krupp and Sandy Norton

b. Approval of Agenda

The agenda was approved as submitted.

2. Public Hearing: Round II Development Regulation Amendments

Chair Bower declared the public hearing open at 7:05 p.m.

Limitations on Accessory Uses

No testimony.

Providing for Wireless Communication Facilities in Rights-of-Way

No testimony.

Establishing an Expiration Date for Reasonable Use Exceptions

No testimony.
Standardizing Initiating Periods and Expirations for Administrative Variances, Special Use Permits and Hearing Examiner Variances

No testimony.

Alteration/Expansion of Nonconforming Structures

Ms. Hayes handed out a copy of staff suggested clarifications/changes to this amendment and briefly highlighted some of the changes. Ms. Hayes stated that the changes noted on the handout will be discussed during the worksession.

No public testimony.

Revision of Transfer of Development Rights Ordinance

Ms. Hayes briefly described the proposed amendment.

No public testimony.

Chapter 71.09 RCW Less Restrictive Alternative Housing Amendment

Mr. Fancher, representative for Thurston County, described the purpose of this proposed amendment by stating that less restrictive alternative housing for sexually violent predators is an essential public facility that requires County review through a Special Use Permit. Mr. Fancher stated that less restrictive alternative housing pursuant to RCW 71.09.092 would be added to each section of the code where essential public facilities is currently listed.

Terry Anderson, 5223 63rd Avenue NE

Ms. Anderson stated that there was discussion before on how many people would be allowed in a facility like this and she was not sure how the zoning laws work. Mr. Fancher stated there are no specific requirements and what we have at this time is a safety net requiring an application for a Special Use Permit. The County will then look at each specific situation to decide what kind of requirements we may have for the proposal. Mr. Fancher stated that Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) is coming up with some of its own criteria and we may require, in certain instances, different criteria. Mr. Fancher stated that instead of having no permit process, they would at least need to apply so the County can review the proposal. Mr. Fancher also stated that DSHS has their own standards, and they can go by those standards, however, if the County requires additional standards, DSHS can appeal that decision or abide by the decision. Mr. Fancher stated at this time
we have no specific criteria other than they need to apply for a Special Use Permit so the County can review the proposal. Ms. Anderson asked if the County can come up with criteria. Mr. Knostman stated that this is the first step in getting these facilities into the ordinance and the next phase would be to look at the criteria that DSHS comes up with. As part of next year=s code revision process, the County would probably develop review standards for these facilities. Mr. Knostman stated that the County wanted to get this into the ordinance first. Mr. Knostman stated that once DSHS develops their standards we will take a look at their standards, develop our own, and the Planning Commission and the Board would hear that proposal the middle of next year. Ms. Anderson stated that so far the DSHS criteria looks awful and that she is on the committee with DSHS. Mr. Knostman stated that the County=s Special Use chapter has a number of findings that the Hearings Examiner must make and usually through those findings the County can require a lot more information from the Applicant. Mr. Knostman also stated that the Hearing Examiner has a lot of citizen discretion to listen to and to take into account what the specific site limitations might be.

Establishing New Parking Requirements

Wendy Compton, City of Lacey, PO Box 3400, Lacey WA 98509

Ms. Compton stated that John Sonnen and Dave Burns, Principal Planner and herself talked about some of the parking issues that the County is reviewing, and John thought it might be helpful for her to go through some of the things the County is proposing to strike from the ordinance that Lacey adopted earlier this year. Ms. Compton stated that Lacey combined two existing municipal parking ordinances, one for the downtown area and one for the rest of the city. The downtown chapter had maximums and minimums so they decided to apply that to the entire City. In addition, one of the standards in the downtown section for parking was to incrementally reduce the maximum parking standard and so that was applied to the entire City. Ms. Compton stated that County staff have suggested the Commission wait and see how things go in Lacey before applying the phasing requirement to the County. Lacey is in support of that course of action.

Ms. Compton stated that the City is proposing to do 50 percent compact stalls throughout the entire City and this was something that had worked well in the downtown area so the city decided to implement it citywide, as would the County for the UGA.

Ms. Compton stated that the bike parking was one of the things the City of Olympia has done and has worked pretty well for them. Dimension standards for covered parking and showers are included as part of the requirement to encourage people to use alternative modes of transportation. Ms. Compton stated that County staff have since talked to the City of Olympia and apparently the dimensions are something they do not use. Lacey is supportive of the County not using these requirements. Ms. Compton stated that what is in the city code does not necessarily have to be in the County code. Ms. Compton stressed that covered parking was intended to help encourage bicycle
commuters and was important to the bicycle community, but if the County wasn’t interested in supporting covered parking, Lacey is ok with that.

Ms. Compton stated transportation demand management was adopted to encourage folks to use the minimum amount of parking or go below that. Ms. Compton stated that Lacey had worked with Intercity Transit and the city transportation division and they were both supportive.

Commissioner Cole asked Ms. Compton if there is any evidence anywhere that reducing the parking to encourage people to use alternate means of transportation has ever worked? Ms. Compton stated that this is something the Department of General Administration is working on and they say that reducing parking will encourage people to use alternative modes of transportation. Commissioner Cole stated he has heard a lot of evidence that it does not work and that is why he is asking the question if there is any evidence that it does work. Ms. Compton stated that this is what the theories say and that this is one way to encourage people to use alternative modes such as transit and bicycle parking, carpools, and vanpools. Commissioner Cole asked Ms. Compton if there was any evidence or any studies. Mr. Knostman stated that he does not know if we have any studies and he thinks this probably works in more high density cities like New York City and Chicago where you have high densities and no parking so people do use alternate means of transportation. Mr. Knostman also stated that in lower density communities like we have, it probably will take some time before this theory starts working.

Chair Bower closed the public hearing 7:31 p.m.

3. **Work session**

**Limitations on Accessory Uses**

Mr. Sonnen distributed a comment letter and four photographs received from Pat Rush regarding the proposed amendment on Limitations on Accessory Uses. The Commission took a few moments to read the letter and review the photographs. Mr. Sonnen briefed the Commission on the proposed amendment then stated that Ms. Rush is supportive of this amendment and Ms. Rush initiated work on this ordinance amendment through Commissioner Oberquell’s office. A discussion followed. The discussion included: options 1 and 2 of the proposed amendment, the February 1, 2003 date for removal of nonconforming junk vehicles and enforcement. Mr. Sonnen stated that at the bottom of page 1, additional language has been added stating a size requirement for exempt satellite dishes.

The Commission agreed with the proposed amendment and selected option 2 of section 8 (storage). They also decided that one year was sufficient time for removal of nonconforming vehicles.
Proposed Amendments to the Lacey UGA Zoning Ordinance, Title 21

Mr. Sonnen responded to Planning Commission concerns from the October 4, 2000 meeting in regards to the proposed increase in allowed compact parking spaces from 25 percent to 50 percent, the ratio of parking spaces to beds at Providence Hospital, and the proposed reduction in the required amount of parking for multifamily housing using the response sheet which was included in the Commission mailing. A discussion followed. The discussion included size of vehicles compared to size of parking spaces, and maneuvering area in isles.

Commission agreed to the proposed amendment. No changes made.

Wireless Communication Facilities

Mr. Sonnen stated that copies of the draft were mailed to all the wireless carries that do business in Thurston County to give them an opportunity to comment. Mr. Sonnen also stated that no comments have been received. Mr. Sonnen went on to brief the Commission of the proposed changes. A discussion followed. The discussion included maximum pole height.

The Commission agreed that the language in Chapter 20.33.080, Design Standards for Freestanding WCFs and Remote Freestanding WCFs, section 1c should state 135 percent of existing poles or 100 feet, whichever is less, unless you can prove greater. No other changes made.

Alteration/Expansion of Nonconforming Structures

Ms. Hayes stated that changes have been suggested to this amendment proposal by current planning staff since the worksession held at the November 1, 2000 meeting. Ms. Hayes referred to the suggested clarifications to nonconforming structures amendment handout which was made part of the Commission mailing. Ms. Hayes also stated that some of the changes are substantive and the major changes clarify what the definition for Atotal replacement@ means.

Chair Bower addressed concerns with holding a public hearing when major changes have been made since the mailing and notification of the public hearing. Commissioner Lyman shared the concerns of Chair Bower and stated that she wants to give the public as much of an opportunity to consider changes that may impact them. Commissioner Lyman also stated we should provide the public with that opportunity. The Commission agreed they did not feel comfortable with moving forward on this amendment without public awareness of the proposed changes.

The Commission agreed to hold a public hearing, set for November 15, 2000, on this proposed amendment.
Establishing an Expiration Date for Reasonable Use Exceptions and Standardizing Initiation Periods and Expiration for Administrative Variances, Special Use Permits and Hearing Examiner Variances

Commission agreed with the proposal. No changes made.

Clean-up Amendment for Consistency with the UBC

Commission agreed with the proposal. No changes made.

Revision of Transfer of Development Rights Ordinance

Commission agreed with the proposal. No changes made.

Chapter 71.09 RCW Less Restrictive Alternative Housing

Commission agreed with the proposal. No changes made.

Action

Commissioner Cole moved, seconded by Commissioner Lyman to approve the Round II Development Regulation Amendments as amended excluding the proposed amendment to the Thurston County Critical Areas Ordinance, Chapter 17.15 TCC, Alteration/Expansion of Nonconforming Structures and the Proposed Amendments to the Thurston County Zoning Ordinance, Lacey UGA, Tumwater UGA, and Olympia UGA Zoning Ordinances Title 20, 21, 22, and 23 TCC, Alteration/Expansion of Nonconforming Structures and Existing Uses. Motion carried unanimously.

4. Planning Commission and Staff Updates

Ms. Hayes stated that Commissioner Leo Deatherage has submitted a letter of resignation. Chair Bower stated that Commissioner e.j. Curry has also resigned.

Ms. Hayes updated the Commission on the annual dinner with the Board of County Commissioners. Ms. Hayes stated that January 11 or January 18 are dates that have been recommended to the Board and hopefully she will be able to schedule the dinner by the November 15, 2000 meeting. Ms. Hayes asked the Commission to try and keep both dates available on their calendar.

Mr. Krupp stated the County has been informed by the State Office of Community Development that Thurston County will be the recipient of a Growth Management award. Mr. Krupp stated that the Growth Management Act has been in effect for ten years and the state is honoring cities and counties
across the state that have done an exemplary job and they have selected Thurston County for the work that it has done. Mr. Krupp also stated that Linda Hoffman will be receiving the award on behalf of the County on November 9, 2000 at the Woodland Park Zoo.

5. Approval of October 4, 2000 Minutes

Commissioner Lyman moved, seconded by Commissioner Paradise to approve the minutes for October 4, 2000. Motion carried unanimously.

6. Calendar

Ms. Hayes stated that an updated calendar for November and December was included in the Commission mailing. Ms. Hayes stated that in addition to the public hearing on November 15, 2000, Holly Gilbert from TRPC will be briefing the Commission on Regional Benchmarks Report. Ms. Hayes handed out a copy of the report to each present Commission member to allow time for review prior to the briefing.

Ms. Hayes reminded the Commission of the ESA Seminar on Endangered Species which is scheduled for November 18, 2000, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Olympia Community Center. This seminar is open to the public.

Ms. Hayes stated that a worksession is being scheduled for the Commission on December 6, 2000 to talk about SEPA, shorelines, and critical areas and how they work.

The next Planning Commission meeting/public hearing is scheduled for November 15, 2000.

7 Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

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Bob Bower, Chair