1. **Call to Order**

Chair Bower called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m., followed by introductions of Planning Commission members.

   a. **Attendance**

   Members Present: Bob Bower, Tom Cole, Liz Lyman, Barbara Frost, Peggy Paradise, and Thomas Smith

   Members Absent: Brian Fagernes and Janet Reiner

   Staff Present: Jennifer Hayes, Fred Knostman, John Sonnen, Don Krupp, Cindy Wilson, and Sandy Norton

   b. **Approval of Agenda**

   The agenda was approved as submitted.

   c. **Approval of Minutes**

   *Commissioner Cole moved, seconded by Commissioner Lyman to approve the minutes for December 6, 2000. Motion carried unanimously.*

   Don Krupp introduced Cathy Wolfe as our newly elected County Commissioner for District 1.

   The Planning Commission greeted new Planning Commissioner Thomas Smith, appointed from District Two.

2. **Public Communications**

None.

3. **Election of Officers**

Chair Bower opened the floor for nominations for Chairman.

*Commissioner Frost nominated Commissioner Bower for Chairman. Commissioner Cole seconded the nomination. Commissioner Bower accepted the nomination. Motion Carried unanimously.*

Chair Bower opened the floor for nominations for Vice Chairman.

*Commissioner Paradise nominated Commissioner Lyman for Vice Chairman. Commissioner*
Frost seconded the motion. Commissioner Lyman accepted the nomination. Motion carried unanimously.

4. Briefing: Environmental Regulations “101”

Mr. Krupp gave a brief introduction to the Environmental Regulations. Mr. Krupp handed out several articles that illustrate the importance of this issue. Those articles are as follows:

a. Pesticides threaten salmon’s sense of smell
b. Tribes lobby for salmon recovery
c. Local groups offer takes on new salmon rules
d. Lack of water could limit growth
e. Tsunami risk sparks wave of worry
f. Growth and the environment
g. Wildlife squeezed out as development encroaches
h. Climate change outstrips forecasts
i. Safeguarding our water
j. Both sides prepare to sue over stricter salmon rules
k. Group threatens to sue PSE over salmon losses

HISTORY

Mr. Knostman gave a brief history of Environmental Regulations in Thurston County. Mr. Knostman stated that the voters of the state approved the Shoreline Management Act in 1971 that required the cities and counties to adopt local shoreline management programs to regulate development and uses adjacent to rivers, streams, lakes, and marine shorelines. Mr. Knostman stated that Thurston County has six cities in the County that have shorelines and that Rainier was the only community that has no shorelines. Mr. Knostman stated that this program review started in 1972 and was adopted in 1976.

Mr. Knostman stated that on September 1, 1980 Thurston County adopted it’s first County-wide zoning ordinance and Thurston County had environmental regulations as part of the zoning code, covering wetlands over one acre in size, geologically hazardous slopes (slopes in excess of 15 percent), critical wildlife habitat areas, salmon habitat, and under what conditions fill was permitted within sensitive areas.

Mr. Knostman stated that the first Critical Area Ordinance was adopted by the County on December 20, 1993. Mr. Knostman stated that this was a requirement of the Growth Management Act. Mr. Knostman stated that the Critical Areas Ordinance identifies aquifer recharge areas, geological hazards, important habitat and species, special management areas, and floodplains, streams, and wetlands. The ordinance also provides specific standards for each critical area and the types of uses and development standards. Mr. Knostman stated that the Critical Area Ordinance has had periodic revisions since 1994. Mr. Knostman stated that the Shoreline Environment Policy Act (SEPA) was adopted in 1971 and the Board of County Commissioners adopted a resolution in 1975 and the first ordinance was adopted July 1976. Mr. Knostman stated that not much has changed other than appeals of SEPA now go to the Hearing Examiner.
CRITICAL AREAS ORDINANCE
Mr. Sonnen gave a brief overview of the Critical Areas Ordinance touching on landslide hazard areas, floodplains, high groundwater, earthquakes, wetlands, and buffers using overheads and maps for illustration.

Mr. Sonnen stated that our current regulations do not allow for any structures within the 100-year flood plain. Mr. Sonnen stated that the Hearing Examiner could grant approval for developing within a floodplain through a Reasonable Use Exception application process.

Mr. Sonnen identified the wellhead protection areas in Thurston County by using a map titled “Designated Wellhead Protection Areas.” Mr. Sonnen stated that wellhead protection areas are areas where wells that serve over 1000 connections are located. Mr. Sonnen stated that smaller water systems are routinely tested as a requirement of the state. Mr. Sonnen stated that individual wells could be tested for bacterial coliform by purchasing a testing kit from the Permit Center.

Mr. Sonnen stated that there are three classifications of wetlands, which are as follows:

1. Class 1 wetland - wetland that is of high quality and irreplaceable
2. Class 2 wetland - wetland that provides important habitat and is difficult to replace
3. Class 3 wetland - wetland that is less diverse, smaller, isolated or not in a natural state

Mr. Sonnen used an overhead illustration to identify wetland buffers ranging from 50–300 feet depending on the classification of wetland.

Mr. Sonnen used the Thurston County Critical Area Inventory Map to identify wildlife protection habitat areas and habitat along streams.

SHORELINE MASTER PROGRAM UPDATE
Jennifer Hayes gave a brief overview of the updated Shoreline Master Program. Ms. Hayes stated that Department of Ecology adopted the new rules on November 29, 2000 and the legislature is now considering a funding package that could provide us the money needed to comply with the rules. Ms. Hayes used overhead illustrations to highlight on key issues needed to comply with the new rules. Those key issues included determining how our shorelines perform so we can protect ecological function, determining what environmental designations and corresponding land use standards are appropriate, how to better protect shoreline vegetation, what standards would apply to agriculture, and how to better regulate shoreline armoring.

SEPA
Cindy Wilson gave a brief overview on the State Environmental Protection Act (SEPA). Ms. Wilson stated that there are thresholds that trigger SEPA review for development projects. Ms. Wilson stated that SEPA asks the applicant to provide environmental information on a specific site through an environmental checklist. The County reviews this and other sources of information about the property to determine the potential impact of a development. When a SEPA determination is issued it is
distributed to the public to allow the public an opportunity to comment on the project. SEPA determinations include: Determination of NonSignificance (DNS), Mitigated Determination of NonSignificance (MDNS), and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). Ms. Wilson provided a graph illustrating the different types of projects reviewed each year. Commissioner Bower asked staff to provide numbers on how many SEPA projects took place in the UGA versus the rural area of the County.

5. Planning Commission and Staff Updates

Ms. Hayes stated that the Joint Planning Commission meeting with Olympia is scheduled for January 29, 2001 beginning at 7:00 p.m. at the Olympia Center.

Ms. Hayes stated that a field trip to see site-specific rezone areas is tentatively scheduled for February 3rd or 10th from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Ms. Hayes stated that the presentation from Holly Gilbert on the Regional Benchmarks Report is scheduled for March 7.


6. Calendar (Tentative)

The next Planning Commission meeting is scheduled for February 7, 2001.

7. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 9:38 p.m.

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Bob Bower, Chair
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<th>DATE OF REQUEST</th>
<th>ISSUE/REQUEST</th>
<th>AUTHOR</th>
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<tr>
<td>01/24/01</td>
<td>What percentage of SEPA projects were in the Urban Growth Area last year?</td>
<td>Bower</td>
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