MINUTES – Public Hearing

Thurston County Planning Commission
Wednesday, September 4, 2002
County Courthouse Complex
2000 Lakeridge Drive SW
Building 1 - Room 152
Olympia, Washington 98502

1. Call to Order

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

   a. Attendance

      Members Present:  Bob Bower, Liz Lyman, Tom Cole, Brian Fagernes and Mark Lovrien

      Members Absent:  Janet Reiner, Peggy Paradise, Thomas Smith and Barbara Frost

      Staff Present:    Jennifer Hayes, John Sonnen, Fred Knostman and Sandy Norton

      Guests:          Jim Bachmeier, Water and Waste Management; Dick Blinn, Water and Waste Management; Scott Schimelfenig, Water and Waste Management; Michael Welter, Thurston County Parks and Recreation; Gary Murrow, Central Services.

   b. Approval of Agenda

      The agenda was approved.


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

Michael Welter, Director Thurston County Parks & Recreation Department

Mr. Welter stated that Parks has been working on a project called the “Bridging the Gap”, which is to connect the northern and the southern portions of the Chehalis Western Trail via three bridges; one over Pacific Avenue, one over I-5, and one over Martin Way. This item was not previously placed into the Capital Facilities Plan (CFP) because we were using TEA-21 Funds, which are federal highway funds. This project typically showed up in the Roads and Transportation Services Departments CFP. It is not there this year so we thought we would place it into a CFP. We chose to place it in Parks, for the reason that the Thurston Regional Planning Council has allocated $500,000 to this “Bridging the Gap” project to acquire the right-of-way necessary for preparation of the bridges to be constructed in the future. Those funds are coming directly to the Parks department now as they were originally going as a TEA-21 grant to the Roads and Transportation Services. That grant has been shifted to the City of
Lacey and the City of Lacey will contribute the amount of money needed for right-of-way acquisition to the Parks Department. We have added it in as an item to the CFP plan in preparation for that right-of-way activity to occur.

Commission Bower asked if Referendum 51 had money for the bridges. Mr. Welter stated that Referendum 51 has $1.7 million in it, should it pass. That money will go to the WSDOT who will begin the design and construction aspect of the I-5 portion of the three bridges. That will be used as leverage money as well as right-of-way money to seek federal funds to add enhancement to the project. The bridges will be built with a combination of federal and state funds.

Chair Bower closed the public hearing at 7:10 p.m.


Ms. Hayes stated that Departmental staff is available for Commission questions.

Commissioner Bower asked if all subdivisions are responsible for their own on-site stormwater. Dick Blinn of Water and Waste Management stated that subdivisions are typically responsible for their own on-site stormwater.

Chair Bower inquired about Mallard Pond and asked if the subdivision and/or homeowners association is paying for any of the work. Mr. Blinn provided background on the efforts to improve water quality in McAllister Creek. Mr. Blinn stated that ratepayers pay for all CFP projects in the stormwater utility. We have not been specific in saying that only people in this subdrainage basin get the benefit of capital projects that we build in. We have funds that have been collected on the CFP side of our rate structure and used them to construct CFP project that the Stormwater Advisory Board has ranked the highest. A discussion followed on what the standards were at the time the development was built compared to today’s standards.

Chair Bower expressed concern with funding of stormwater projects and the County paying for stormwater improvements in some subdivisions and not others. Mr. Blinn stated that all of the work on the CFP projects completed since 1999 has been a general benefit. None of the subdivisions benefiting from the projects have specifically paid for the project. A number of the subdivisions were constructed before stormwater standards were in place. The residents are indirectly benefited by a project like Mallard Pond where our goal is to improve water quality in McAllister Creek.

Jim Bachmeier stated that the County does hold subdivisions responsible for pond maintenance. This is separate from the Mallard Pond project. The Mallard Pond project is about creek preservation, restoration as a salmon habitat issue. Those communities within the UGA pay 91 percent more for contributions to the CFP program. These people have been paying 91 percent since 1999 for a share of County fixes. These people are paying a proportionate portion of their repair.

Mr. Blinn stated that the Stormwater Advisory Board sets the priorities for these projects and looks uniformly within the rate area to find projects that need to be fixed.
Chair Bower expressed concern with the fairness and appropriateness of the financing.

Commissioner Cole expressed concern with not having a master plan for county facilities and monies being spent on a project one year and then finding out the following year that the project may not have been necessary. Commissioner Cole also expressed concern with projects being listed in what looks like priority order when we know those items will not be completed in that order.

Commissioner Bower expressed concern with placeholders being placed in the CFP to identify projects that might be done in the next 6 years, but aren’t actually going to be done unless the funds become available.

**Commissioner Lovrien moved seconded by Commissioner Lyman to accept the 2003 – 2008 Capital Facilities Plan as amended and recommend to the Board of County Commissioners that they adopt it as Chapter 6 of the Thurston County Comprehensive Plan.**

**Motion Carried.**

Chair Bower stated that he objects to the areas in the County being assigned a lower level of service, primarily Yelm Highway and Mud Bay Road between the urban growth boundary and Highway 101, while monies are being taken from transportation funds and used elsewhere. He asked the Commission if they had any objections to a comment being added to the recommendation letter to the Board. Commissioner Lovrien said that he would object unless the issues affected the county as a whole.

Commissioner Bower stated that he will be drafting a recommendation letter to the Board and suggest that Commission members call him if they additional comments that should be added.

4. **Public Communications**

None.

5. **Briefing/Set Hearing: Open Space Tax Program Application**

Ms. Hayes stated that John S. Moench submitted an application for Open Space classification. The Application and staff report was made part of the Commission mailing. Ms. Hayes spoke briefly on the site characteristics, public benefit rating system, estimated tax shift, and staff’s recommendation. Staff recommends approval of the reclassification of 14.12 acres, less a .7 acre home-site, from Open Space – Farm and Agriculture to Open Space-Open Space for current use assessment, with a 50 percent reduction in market value.

Commission discussed the point system, process for removal of the Open Space classification, and monitoring.
Commissioner Fagernes moved seconded by Commission Lyman to set a public hearing for October 2, 2002 at 7:00 p.m. to take public testimony on the application for Open Space Classification, Case CUSE 020540, John S. Moench. Motion Carried.

The Commission further agreed that the Public Benefit Rating System be revisited in the future to consider providing more incentives for property owners in sensitive areas of the County such as Green Cove.

6. Briefing: Natural Resource Lands Update – Results of Public Outreach

Ms. Hayes provided a handout titled “Summary: Natural Resource Lands Public Outreach Project.” Ms. Hayes stated that the handout summarizes public outreach and participation conducted May – August 2002 in conjunction with reviewing Chapter Three of the Thurston County Comprehensive Plan, Natural Resource Lands. This public outreach project was conducted with support from a grant by Washington State Department of Community Trade and Economic Development. Ms. Hayes then highlighted the goals of public outreach, outreach methods, discussion of public outreach results, and the next steps.

Also attached to the handout was a summary of issues and ideas from the feedback at the public Open House held at the Violet Grange on August 28, 2002. Ms. Hayes stated that no prioritization or analysis has yet been done on the issues raised. The issues are unfiltered views of the community concerns.

Commissioner Cole, Fagernes, and Bower shared some of the concerns/issues raised at the open house.

Commissioner Bower raised the issue of clustering houses and stated that the clustering of houses is not rural character.

Commissioner Lyman requested literature on clustering of houses to look at the effects of clustering and impacts to a density bonus in a rural area.

7. Briefing: Critical Areas Ordinance

Mr. Sonnen referenced the tables made part of the Commissioner mailing, which list individuals and groups proposed to be involved in updating the Critical Areas Ordinance. Mr. Sonnen asked the Commission if they knew of any other groups/individuals who should be or would like to be involved.

Commissioner Lyman suggested Rob Rice, Gemini Corporation and David Trout of the Nisqually Tribe be added to the Riparian Habitat work group list and Robin Downey of the Pacific Shellfish Growers Association be added to the Shellfish work group list. Commissioner Lovrien also requested to be added to the Shellfish group.

Mr. Sonnen asked the Commission to call or email him of other individuals or groups that may be interested in participating in a work group.
8. **Approval of August 21, 2002 Minutes**

   Commissioner Lovrien moved seconded by Commissioner Lyman to approve the minutes for August 21, 2002. Motion carried.

9. **Planning Commission and Staff Updates**

   **Resignation**

   Chair Bower stated that Commissioner Thomas Smith has resigned effective immediately. Commissioner Smith represented District 2. Mr. Knostman stated that the letter would be forwarded to the Board.

   **Cooper Point Wastewater Treatment Facility**

   Chair Bower asked the status of the appeal. Mr. Knostman stated that Jeff Fancher has made oral arguments before the State Supreme Court and we are waiting for a decision.

10. **Calendar**

    The next Planning Commission meeting is scheduled for September 18, 2002.

11. **Adjourn**

    The meeting adjourned at 8:48 p.m.

   ________________________________
   Bob Bower, Chair
   Peggy Paradise, Vice Chair
## Thurston County Planning Commission

### REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

#### SUMMARY SHEET

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE OF REQUEST</th>
<th>ISSUE/REQUEST</th>
<th>AUTHOR</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>06/06/01</td>
<td>Is a Planning Commissioner prohibited to testify as a member of the public on issues before the Commission if they are not acting as a member of the Planning Commission</td>
<td>Lyman</td>
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<tr>
<td>06/05/02</td>
<td>Legal position of the Commission relating to inviting private interest groups to a Commission meeting to provide a presentation on their point of views on a topic when inviting a governmental agency to speak on a topic. Chair Bower also wanted to know the number of private interest groups the Commission would need to invite.</td>
<td>BOWER</td>
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