MINUTES – Special Meeting

Thurston County Planning Commission
Thursday, February 27, 2003
Lacey Community Center
6729 Pacific Avenue
Lacey, WA 98503

1. **Call to Order**

Chair Lyman, followed by introductions of Planning Commission members, called the meeting to order at 6:40 p.m.

   a. **Attendance**

   Members Absent: Mark Lovrien and Tom Cole
   Staff Present: Nancy Pritchett, John Sonnen, Jeff Fancher and Cami Olson

   b. **Approval of Agenda**

   The agenda was approved.

2. **Public Hearing: Wireless Communication Facilities (WCF)**

John Sonnen gave an overview and opened the public comment session concerning the “Wireless Communication Facilities and Antenna Support Structures, Proposed Amendments to the Thurston County Zoning Code” document. A question was asked concerning the timeline for this proposed amendment. Ms. Lyman stated that the Commission will hold another worksession on this subject and at that time will make any revisions necessary to the “Wireless Communication Facilities and Antenna Support Structures” document. The final document will then be forwarded to the Board of County Commissioners and the public will, at that time, have another opportunity to participate in this proposed amendment to the Thurston County Zoning Code.

Chair Lyman opened the public hearing at 6:45 p.m.

**Delbert Parkinson – Lacey**
Mr. Parkinson provided a document titled “International Radio Wave Exposure Standards.” Mr. Parkinson provided his background and a brief overview of his handout, concerning the levels of radio emission exposures associated with cell towers.

**Suzanne Nichols – P.O. Box 920, Rainier**
Ms. Nichols commended the Planning Commission for the proposed Wireless Communication Facilities amendment to the Thurston County Zoning Code. She made substantive comments listed in her letter.

**Jane Hartough – 1328 5th Ave, Olympia**
Ms. Hartough stated that she is a representative of the National Audubon Society of Washington State. Ms. Hartough provided written testimony dated February 27, 2003, which included attachments. Ms. Hartough stated that the Audubon Society’s primary interest is to minimize the incidents of bird
mortality due to WCFs located in flyways. Ms. Hartough discussed the items listed in her written testimony, which included portions of the proposed WCF amendments that the Audubon Society strongly support, as well as the Audubon Society’s suggested addition to Section 20.33.080, item 1d1, that discusses requirements for siting.

Charlene Anderson – 4217 Libby Rd., Olympia
Ms. Anderson submitted written testimony dated February 27, 2003. Ms. Anderson gave a brief overview of her written testimony, which include suggested changes to the WCF Proposed Amendments to the Thurston County Zoning Code. Ms. Anderson commended the Planning Commission for its work on the proposed zoning changes.

Hilary Lewis – 4211 Libby Rd. N.E., Olympia
Ms. Lewis provided written testimony, which includes several attachments. Ms. Lewis commended the Planning Commission for the proposed amendments to the Thurston County Zoning Code. Ms. Lewis discussed her suggested changes to the WCF Proposed Amendments to the Thurston County Zoning Code that she provided in her written testimony. Ms. Lewis stated that she would like additional clarification of Section 20.33.080, item titled “Option”, due to her concern that the WCF be located in approved areas only.

Susan Ensign, 2424 36th Ave S.E., Olympia
Ms. Ensign stated that she is supportive of the changes made to the proposed WCF regulations and stated that she believes it is of vital importance to make the County codes stronger for its citizens. Ms. Ensign expressed her concern with the increase of WCFs within Thurston County and she would like to see stronger codes for the construction of the WCF facilities. Ms. Ensign asked that the Planning Commission consider the changes to the WCF Proposed Amendments to the Thurston County Zoning Code which has been submitted by the public, and take those suggestions to the Board of County Commissioners. Ms. Ensign asked why the radius for notification of a proposed WCF is only 1400 feet, and stated that in her opinion the radius is inadequate and should be enlarged.

Steve Mishkin, Thurston County
Mr. Mishkin stated that Section 20.33.060, item 2d, should be changed to require WCFs be tested on a regular basis and not limit this to only when a major modification has occurred. Mr. Mishkin stated that in addition to revoking a Special Use Permit due to non-compliance, a fine should also be issued. Mr. Mishkin emphasized that he would strongly appose the placement of antennas in residential areas and would like the notice provision radius increased.

Mike Wright – 15844 Bald Hill Rd., Olympia
Mr. Wright provided written testimony containing his suggested changes to the WCF Proposed Amendments of the Thurston County Zoning Code. Mr. Wright highlighted the points of his written testimony and stated that he does not support the idea of towers that are camouflaged and suggested that there be fewer, yet larger towers that are spaced farther apart.

Edward Wiltsie – 16621 Rifle Rd., Rainier
Mr. Wiltsie provided a handout containing maps depicting microwave transmissions in the county and outlined his work experience as a licensed professional engineer. Mr. Wiltsie gave an overview of his handouts.
Amber Wiltsie – 16621 Rifle Rd., Rainier
Ms. Wiltsie described an incident her family had experienced with a cellular telephone provider and expressed her concern and support for stronger regulations.

Kristi Park – 2445 140th Ave N.E., Bellevue
Ms. Park provided written comments dated February 27, 2003, which included an informational pamphlet regarding wireless siting. Ms. Park stated that she is a representative for Cingular Wireless, and gave an overview of her written comments.

Stephany Ray – P.O. Box 175, Yelm
Ms. Ray stated that she was involved in counseling and educating the town of Rainier’s council members concerning the safety of wireless communication. Ms. Ray discussed the findings of her research concerning large corporations who provide a specific service, and the health threats created due to the services provided. Ms. Ray stated that public research concerning the possible health hazards of wireless communication is important and will and raises questions for public awareness.

Robert Brown – P.O. Box 114, Yelm
Mr. Brown stated that he would like to represent the citizens who do not want to own and use cellular telephones. Mr. Brown stated that large corporations are “doing the unthinkable” by focusing on profit instead of public safety. Mr. Brown also expressed his concern for the disassembly of towers when they are no longer providing service.

Ken Lyons – 19807 North Creek Parkway North, Bothel
Mr. Lyons stated that he is a representative of the cellular company T-Mobile and commended the county for creating clear guidelines for the design standards of WCFs. Mr. Lyons stated that the code that is being proposed, however, is based on the fear of perceived threats. Mr. Lyons asked if the county had performed a property evaluation analysis for any WCF facilities constructed in order to measure the impact on property values. Mr. Lyons discussed the issue regarding the possibility of cellular towers falling down and asked if there have been any incidents of this occurring. Mr. Lyons stated that the proposed WCF Amendment to the Thurston County Zoning Code is not fair and balanced due to three main issues:

1) the large size of T-Mobile’s antennas are not included
2) the use of repeaters does not apply because repeaters are not used in the standard application of wireless communications
3) the proposed code is in violation of the 1996 Telecommunications Act due to its attempt to regulate the issues of health effects even though the county does not have the proper authority to do so.

Mr. Lyons felt that this code would damage competition and definitely be challenged in court.

Chair Lyman closed the public hearing at 8:02 p.m.

3. Adjourn

The meeting adjournded at 8:16 p.m.

Liz Lyman, Chair
Mark Lovrien, Vice Chair

Thurston County Planning Commission
February 27, 2003 Public Hearing
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