THURSTON COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
Thurston County Courthouse Complex
Building #1 - Room 280
2000 Lakeridge Drive SW
Olympia, WA 98502

MINUTES

Wednesday, July 28, 2004 - Special Meeting

1. Call to Order

Commissioner Lyman, followed by introductions of the Thurston County Planning Commission members, called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

   a. Attendance

Thurston County

Members Absent: None

Staff Present: Ryan Andrews, Jennifer Hayes and Cami Petersen

   b. Approval of Agenda

Commissioner Cole moved to approve the Agenda. Commissioner Paradise seconded. The Agenda was approved.

The Planning Commission requested to add the following items after agenda item #5:
- Discussion concerning the number of additional Planning Commission meetings scheduled
- Update Planning Commission members on the outcome of the July 13, 2004 Critical Areas Board of Commissioners update
- Commissioner Lyman is considering creating another sub committee and would like to inform the Planning Commission
- Discussion concerning the current requirements for a Planning Commission quorum during staff briefings

   c. Approval of Minutes and Tapes

Commissioner Cole moved to approve the July 7, 2004 minutes. Commissioner Roper seconded. Motion carried.

Commissioner Kohlenberg moved to accept the tapes from the July 7, 2004 as the official record of the meeting. Commissioner Ottavelli seconded. Motion carried.

2. Public Communication
3. **Briefing: GMA Update – Amendments to Special Use Permit Regulations**  
   Staff: Ryan Andrews


Mr. Andrews directed the Planning Commissioners to insert this update into their yellow packet and remove the old version of this section.

The discussion on the proposed amendments to Special Use Permit regulations included the following:

**Community Clubs and Community Centers**  
*Commissioner Roper recused herself from this discussion.*

- Why has the limit been set at a 4500 square foot building and is there a limit as to how many 4500 square foot buildings allowed on each parcel? A building of 4500 square feet or less and thirty parking stalls would not require a SEPA review. There is no limit to the number of buildings allowed per project provided each building is located on a separate parcel. The Planning Commission decided that a separation requirement (minimum distance between buildings) should be added to this section to limit the number of buildings per project in a given geographical area.

- Parking – Why is the 4500 square foot building limited to 30 parking spaces and how are the number of parking spaces determined? A discussion ensued as to how the number of parking spaces is determined by square footage, SEPA thresholds, and how parking provisions could be added here to limit the number of parking spaces and amount of impervious surfaces.

- What is the difference between a community center vs. regional facility? A discussion followed concerning the difference between a community center and a regional facility, how many parking stalls would be required, what impact this could have on a rural community, would a large facility be allowed, etc.

**Golf Facilities and Athletic Facilities**  
*Commissioner Roper recused herself from this discussion.*

- Why has a golf facility been limited to a 9-hole course in this section? Staff explained that the County Commissioners have requested this limit on proposed golf courses in the rural county. The Planning Commission agreed that the size of a golf course should not be limited to 9 holes and they will include their opinion in their letter to the Board on this Comp Plan section.

- Landscaping – why is the residential character only protected for golf facilities and the rural character is protected for athletic facilities? The Planning Commission agreed that the
language should be consistent.

The Planning Commission stated that it is very difficult to review this section of the Special Use Chapter without having the entire chapter in front of them. It was suggested that in the future, staff should provide the entire chapter so the Planning Commission and the public could better understand where these proposed changes fit within the chapter.

The Planning Commission continued to discuss SEPA thresholds - how they are created and changes that should be made. Staff suggested that this discussion be continued at a future meeting because these thresholds are not before them for review at this time.

- Parking for athletic facilities – Why are there only 30 stalls allowed? It was explained that the county’s threshold for SEPA review is 30 parking spaces although the state threshold is 40. The Planning Commission discussed adding language to allow an increase in parking spaces by an administrative decision, however a SEPA review would still be required.
- Is there a maximum building size and does this allow something as large as an equestrian center? Ms Hayes stated that equestrian facilities are covered under a different SUP section.

Campgrounds, Resorts and Retreats and Parks and Trails
Jennifer Hayes addressed the Planning Commission concerning the proposed SUP language for count-owned parks and trails. Ms. Hayes explained that the proposed changes would allow smaller parks projects a special use permit without Hearing Examiner approval, while additional park uses would be permitted outright.

Staff also reported on updates to sections of the special use permit chapter pertaining to commercial trade schools, family day care providers and neighborhood convenience commercial uses.

- Notification – the Planning Commission agreed that adjacent property owners within an unspecified radius should be notified of any proposed projects.
- The Planning Commission agreed that the county should be held to the same Special Use Permit process, as any other citizen or developer, and the majority of those proposed projects should be sent to the Hearing Examiner.
- The Planning Commission decided that only specific county park projects should be listed as permitted uses in the zoning code, and any other proposals should be sent to the Hearing Examiner. Ms. Hayes will speak with the parks department to put together a list of possible uses to be listed.

A discussion followed concerning the Special Use Permit process and requirements. Several commissioners expressed interest in revisiting how the special use permit chapter is put together. Staff explained that the entire Special Use Permit process is not before the Planning Commission today for review.

- Resorts and lodges – Should the building size be determined as a percentage of the parcel instead of designating a specific square footage? Mr. Andrews will look into the percentage for building size and parcel size and report back to the Planning Commission.
4. **Briefing: GMA Update – Housing Chapter**  
   Staff: Ryan Andrews  
   Postponed to a future date to be determined.

5. **Briefing: GMA Update – Economic Development Chapter**  
   Staff: Ryan Andrews  
   Postponed to a future date to be determined

6. **Additional Agenda Items/ Calendar**

   a. The Planning Commission discussed the desire to amend their Rules of Procedures to allow the Planning Commission to receive staff briefings at a regularly scheduled meeting when at least four members are present. Staff was asked about the decision by Development Services to provide staff support only when a quorum is present. The Planning Commission discussed the importance of being able to be briefed by staff when a quorum did not materialize due to an emergency but that this would only work if staff were willing to provide the resources for the briefing, including the taping of the meeting. The Planning Commission agreed to pursue this matter further and asked that Commissioner Lyman contact the Board of Commissioners about this request.

   b. The Planning Commission discussed the number of additional meetings being scheduled and the workload for the remainder of this year. Commissioner Bower stated that he is not willing to schedule additional meetings in September because of the number of subcommittee meetings already scheduled. The Planning Commissioners discussed the importance of attendance. Commissioner Lyman asked that the Planning Commissioners prioritize the meetings to which they have committed. She recommended that priority be given to the regular and special Planning Commission meetings over any Critical Area subcommittee meetings. Commissioner Lyman again requested that members let both her and staff know as soon as possible when they will be unable to attend any of the scheduled meetings to facilitate rescheduling if a quorum is not present.

7. **Adjourn**

   The meeting adjourned at 9:40 p.m.

   Liz Lyman, Chair  
   Tom Cole, Vice Chair
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Thurston County Planning Commission

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July 28, 2004 Public Hearing