THURSTON COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

Minutes
December 15, 2004

Call to Order

Commissioner Lyman, followed by introductions of the Thurston County Planning Commission members, called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

a. Attendance

Members Present: Liz Lyman, Margaret Paradise, Joyce Roper, Bob Bower, Craig Ottavelli, Liz Kohlenberg George Darkenwald and Chris Lane.

Members Absent: Tom Cole

Staff Present: Jennifer Hayes and Gina Suomi

b. Approval of Agenda

Commissioner Paradise moved to approve the agenda. Commissioner Bower seconded and the agenda was approved.

Public Communication

Letter dated December 13, 2004 from Dean Smith, Division Manager of Lakeside Industries and Mineral Lands Task Force member was presented to all Commission members. Mr. Smith expressed an interest in continued participation if other committees or task forces are formed.

Briefing: Open Space Application

Staff presented an Open Space – Open Space application submitted by Sibyl Wendler. The property is located at 1228 93rd Ave SW in Olympia within the Tumwater UGA, Salmon Creek Basin. Total parcel acreage is 18.31. One (1) acre located at the south end of the property is excluded from the Open Space - Open Space classification for home site and outbuildings. The property meets the eligibility criteria. In the future, Ms. Wendler could meet the income requirements and go back into the Assessor’s program. She would receive a 50% reduction in property valuation if approved under the Open Space-Open Space program.
Commissioner Kohlenberg moved to set a Planning Commission public hearing on January 19, 2005. Commissioner Roper seconded and the motion passed to set the public hearing for January 19, 2005 at 7:00pm.

**Briefing: Mineral Lands**

*Staff: Jennifer Hayes*

This is the second briefing with the Thurston County Planning Commission to review Mineral Lands and recommendations made by the Task Force. The first briefing was held December 1st, 2004.

Some members of the Mineral Lands Task Force were present. Those members present included Dean Smith, Steve Palmer, Tom Cook, and Mark Segale. David Ward and David Lewis, interested industry members, were also present. Members of the public attending the briefing included Sue Danver.

Commissioner Lyman stated that:

- The Planning Commission is currently reviewing the draft Critical Areas Ordinance and has not seen all sections of the draft.
- As soon as the Planning Commission has completed its preliminary review of the CAO, drafts will be made available to the public for its input at a public hearing in 2005
- Therefore, at this juncture, the Planning Commission could not say what provisions will be included in the CAO document that gets forwarded to the BOCC.

Commission Lyman summarized the discussion from the previous briefing:

- The Planning Commission agrees with the ML Task Force that it is important to identify, inventory and map the county’s mineral resource deposits. The Planning Commission’s position is that mineral lands of long term commercial significance can be designated only after mapping is complete. The mineral resource map can then be overlayed with critical areas and other siting criteria. The overlay map will show areas of potential conflicts and help the county identify locations that are best suited for designation as mineral lands. Commissioner Lyman suggested that a possible recommendation to the Board might include a downzone to 1 unit per 20 acres on those parcels that are thus identified by the county. This will help minimize a potential future land-use conflict. Commissioner Lyman suggested that the Planning Commission consider providing the Board with an alternative approach in case the county opts not to inventory and map mineral resources.
- Still to be discussed is the Planning Commission’s position on the asphalt plant issue.

Jennifer Hayes provided the Planning Commission with a booklet titled *The Aggregates Industry in Washington: Economic Impact and Importance.*

Ms. Hayes reviewed the goal of the briefing to add Planning Commission alternatives to the list of task force recommendations for public hearing. The Task Force recommendations were forwarded to the Planning Commission by the Board for review and comment. But final debate on the alternatives is appropriate after the public hearing, planned for February. The final
recommendations from the Planning Commissioners will then be forwarded to the Board of Commissioners by April 2005.

Staff reviewed the agreements and information requests from the December 1st meeting: the Planning Commission had requested that Lester Olson, Director of Roads and Transportation Department, provide information to them concerning the wear and tear on county roadways and issues due to truck traffic from gravel mines. Ms. Hayes presented copies of an email from Lester Olson, Director of Roads and Transportation, responding to this request. His conclusion was that these issues were adequately handled in the permit process.

- After discussing the contents of the response, the Planning Commission felt the e-mail addressed the impacts to the physical condition of the roads but does not address the impacts to area county residents from increased truck traffic volume.
- Commissioner Bower suggested that smaller mines that have fewer than 10 trips would be treated differently than larger mines with more truck traffic.
- Planning Commission discussed adding a recommendation that deals with the impact to areas around the mines, including road safety.
- Planning Commission recommendation is that property subject to designation that has an access route through residential areas with one unit/5 acres be conditioned so that truck traffic is limited. The majority of the planning commission agreed to this recommendation and other members felt this would require additional discussion.

The Planning Commission expanded the discussion from the road safety issue to the general approach of the mineral lands designation process.

- Planning Commission recommendation is that two approaches to designating mineral lands be considered:
  1. Potential mineral resource areas are designated by the county based on a detailed inventory/mapping done with DNR and Geodata, and criteria recommended by the Planning Commission (which would incorporate Task Force recommendations) would be overlayed on that map to develop mineral resource areas or overlay zones. Depending on the inventory and criteria overlay, the County should prioritize mineral resource areas. And any overlay areas should be considered for downzoning to protect the resource from intervening development.
  2. If the county does not choose a detailed inventory and overlay district approach, the Planning Commission should still recommend criteria for site-specific mineral lands designation.

Ms. Hayes suggested that if designations are done by the County (as a mineral resource overlay) then the applicant avoids the designation application process but still is required to go through the Special Use Permit process. This process would make it easier for the industry to understand.

Discussion then turned to the issue of how to deal with critical areas in the designation process.
Commissioner Roper suggested that excluding all critical areas from designation would be difficult because some critical areas might allow mining (under the new critical areas ordinance) with management plans.

The Planning Commission discussed excluding from designation those areas that according to Best Available Science where mining should be prohibited. Commissioner Lyman proposed incorporating specific language from the CAO drafts into the designation criteria.

The Planning Commission discussed the following options:
- Include now what Best Available Science says should be excluded but include disclaimers.
- Postpone further action on Mineral Lands until after Critical Areas Ordinance has been adopted by the Board. This will require the Board to extend the interim ordinance.
- Condition designation on the fact that critical areas may be excluded from mineral extraction or will have conditions at time of permitting.

Commissioner Kohlenberg proposed that it would be easier to complete this project if the Planning Commission waited until the Critical Areas Ordinance revision was done. She suggested recommending to the Board of Commissioners that the Planning Commission should wait till the CAO is done.

Commissioner Ottavelli said he would prefer moving forward with the initial task force recommendations and Planning Commission alternatives to public hearing. But if this was delayed it would allow time to study asphalt plants. Commissioner Lyman agreed that the Planning Commission move forward with recommendations to the Board.

Ms Hayes reminded the Commission that this topic has been a high priority for the Board and that additional study of asphalt plants is a resource issue for the Board, including a formation of a new task force or commissioning of a technical study to address the questions the Task Force had about asphalt plant setbacks and environmental impacts of asphalt production and recycling—information not easily available and science that is somewhat conflicting.

Commissioner Bower asked that this topic be tabled and that Commissioner Lyman meet with the Board of Commissioners and get further guidance and direction based on the expressed concerns of the Planning Commission. The majority of the Planning Commission agreed that their preference is to wait until the Critical Areas Ordinance is adopted by the County and that Commissioner Lyman should meet with the Board.

Commissioner Bower requested that consideration be given to wells in the area of proposed mines. Study should be required.

Ms. Hayes stated that this is not part of the designation process but would be part of the permit process, since there is no way to know at the designation stage what the actual type or depth of the future mining operation would be.

Ms. Hayes asked the Commission to keep a couple of issues in mind that she wasn’t able to cover at
the last briefing as the review process moves forward.

- Task Force criteria included 1,000 ft buffer for public parks and preserves. Some Task Force members felt this number was arbitrary. County recently mapped these parks and preserves. There are a couple of small preserves close to existing mineral resources. She asked that Commission member keep this new information in mind for future action.
- Asphalt plants—the Task Force had limited time but did have some good information regarding impacts. The Task Force did reach some agreements about siting them. It is not known whether there are ideal setbacks from residential or sensitive areas based on environmental health issues—the science appears inconclusive. In order to do a detailed study, there is a lot of information available and a lot of study will have to be done.
- What we don’t know could hurt us but doing nothing could be worse. Developing siting criteria that makes sense is a safe alternative in the short term, while asking for more study of the issue.

Commission Kohlenberg ask that ground water/drinking water be considered with siting criteria.

The Commission thanked Ms. Hayes for her work on the project.

Approval of Minutes

a. Approval of Minutes and Acceptance of Tapes from December 1st, 2004

Commissioner Ottavelli moved to approve the minutes from December 1st, 2004 and accept the tapes as the official record. Commissioner Roper seconded. Motion carried.

Staff Updates

Jennifer Hayes

Ms. Hayes informed Planning Commission members that the new Thurston Regional Planning Commission Profile is available and staff will provide Planning Commissioner members with copies of the document.

Discussion Items

Commissioner Bower announced is resignation from the Planning Commission to be effective December 31st, 2004. He did agree to stay on until the end of January, 2005 until a new member is appointed.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Liz Lyman, Chair
Tom Cole, Vice Chair

Thurston County Planning Commission
December 15, 2004 Regular Meeting
**Thurston County Planning Commission**

### REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

**SUMMARY SHEET**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE OF REQUEST</th>
<th>ISSUE/REQUEST</th>
<th>AUTHOR</th>
<th>STAFF</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12/22/04</td>
<td>Commissioner Lyman will meet with the Board to discuss the concerns and recommendations to table this Mineral Lands discussion until the draft of the CAO</td>
<td>Planning Commission</td>
<td>Commissioner Lyman</td>
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