1. **6:38 PM CALL TO ORDER**
Commissioner Cole called the January 9, 2008 special meeting of the Thurston County Planning Commission to order at 6:38 p.m. Commissioners provided self-introductions.

**Attendance:** Commissioners Tom Cole, Liz Kohlenberg, Chris Lane, Liz Myers, Scott Nelson, and Kathleen O’Connor

**Absent:** Commissioner Joyce Roper

**Staff:** Mike Kain, Aimee Swenson-Farrow, Celdina Adair, Jeff Fancher, and Recording Secretary Cheri Lindgren

**6:38 PM APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**MOTION:** Commissioner Lane moved to approve the agenda as presented. Commissioner Nelson seconded. Motion carried.

2. **6:38 PM PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS (Not associated with topics for which public hearings have been held.)**
There were no public communications

3. **6:38 PM APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

(Activity and acceptance of the audio from January 2, 2008 will be available for review and approval at the January 16, 2008 regular session.)

4. **6:39 PM STAFF UPDATES**
Ms. Swenson-Farrow reported separate links have been created for meeting agendas, which will be posted on the website a week in advance. Minutes will be posted after approval by the Commission.

Mr. Kain reported staff is scheduled to brief the Board of County Commissioners (BoCC) on January 15, 2008 at 4:00 p.m. on the Planning Commission’s 2008 work program. Staff will provide a report at the Commission’s January 16, 2008 meeting.

**6:42 PM** Mr. Fancher reported an updated guideline concerning conflict of interest, ethics, and appearance of fairness titled, “Knowing the Territory” can be found on the Municipal Research and Service Center (MRSC) website at www.mrsc.org.

5. **6:46 PM FINALIZATION OF 2008 RULES OF PROCEDURE**

(Staff: Aimee Swenson-Farrow)

Ms. Swenson-Farrow distributed copies of an updated “Rules of Procedure, Planning
Commission of Thurston County, Including Amendments through January 2008”
document. She reviewed changes reflected on pages 1, 4, 6, 7, and 8. Commissioners
requested the following additional modifications:

- Within item A under section VII on page 4, the first sentence should read in part,
  “Quorum: A simple majority (five members) of the nine member commission…”
- Within item B under section VII on page 4, the first sentence should read, “Voting:
  No action of the Commission may be taken without the affirmative vote of a simple
  majority (five members) of the nine member commission.”
- Replace “potential” with “a” within the second line of item C under section VII on
  page 4.
- Strike “possible” within the fifth line of item C under section VII on page 4.
- Within the fourth line of item A under section XI on page 6, replace “e” with “be.”

Commissioner Kohlenberg arrived at 6:54 p.m.

Ms. Swenson-Farrow advised that she will provide members with a final copy of the
Rules of Procedure document at the January 16, 2008 meeting.

MOTION: Commissioner Kohlenberg moved to approve the Rules of Procedure as

7:03 PM Commissioner Cole recessed the meeting from 7:03 p.m. to 7:11 p.m.

6. 7:11 PM CALENDAR (Tentative) AND ATTENDANCE
- January 16, 2008: Critical Areas Ordinance (Wetlands)
- February 6, 2008: No meeting
- February 13, 2008: Special Session – Public Hearing Long Term Ag Designations
- February 20, 2008: Critical Areas Ordinance

Ms. Swenson-Farrow reported the public hearing scheduled for February 13, 2008 will
begin at 6:30 p.m. with an open house scheduled at 6:00 p.m. Staff is securing an off-site
location for the hearing. In the future, all public hearings will be start at 7:00 p.m.

7. 7:13 PM ELECTION OF OFFICERS FOR 2008
Commissioners Kohlenberg reported the nominating committee spoke with most of the
Commissioners. Commissioner Roper indicated she is willing to continue to serve as
Chair, but is not anxious to do so. The nominating committee recommends
Commissioner Lane as Chair and Commissioner Nelson as Vice Chair in 2008. There
were no other nominations offered.

MOTION: Commissioner Kohlenberg moved to adopt the nominating committee’s
recommendation. Commissioner Nelson seconded. Motion carried. Commissioners
Lane and Nelson were appointed as Chair and Vice Chair, respectively for 2008.
8. **7:15 PM** (B) LONG TERM AGRICULTURE  
*Staff: Celinda Adair*

Ms. Adair reported the purpose of the briefing is to identify a Long-Term Agricultural Lands of Commercial Significance Designation proposal for the upcoming public hearing.

**7:20 PM** Commissioner Cole asked if the term “allow” found within text at the top of page 2 of the staff report has been changed to “must.” Ms. Adair explained the initial court order directed the County to look at lands capable of use for agricultural purposes. The Western Washington Growth Management Hearings Board (WWGMHB) decision directed the County to apply all criteria to designate parcels, which previously did not qualify, as long-term agricultural lands of commercial significance.

In response to a prior research request about whether there is language in the comprehensive plan preventing an urban growth area (UGA) from expanding into long-term agriculture, Ms. Adair reported excerpts from the comprehensive plan are attached to the staff report. There are lands within UGAs meeting the designation criteria. However, criterion #2 and #4 state lands of long-term commercial significance should be located outside UGA boundaries.

Discussion followed on criteria #8, Agriculture Diversity, where no single designated agricultural area should be smaller than 320 acres or 200 acres if near another designated area. Ms. Adair noted there are no patches within the UGA boundaries or Limited Areas of More Intense Rural Development (LAMIRDS) that are 320 acres or larger. The Commission needs to determine if the only two, 200-acre patches are near existing long-term agriculture. The designation analysis does not reflect what’s on the ground, as the County is required to look and preserve lands capable of use for agricultural purposes. Staff doesn’t support designating lands within the UGAs as long-term agriculture because doing so directly conflicts with the purpose of the UGAs.

Commissioners reviewed the analysis map for lands that are 20 acres or less in size. The research request is to identify lands adjacent to current long-term agriculture, or Nisqually agriculture (orange), or the study area (parcels that meet all nine criteria). Ms. Adair noted vested subdivisions have not been pulled from the map. The question is whether the Commission wants to include the areas adjacent to long-term agriculture or Nisqually agriculture in the proposal that goes to the public hearing.

**7:39 PM** An analysis map reflecting lands with insufficient prime farmland soils (less than 50%) was reviewed. Ms. Adair said the parcels are greater than 20 acres in size and meet all other criteria. The areas could be designated as capable.

**7:41 PM** Parcels shown in dark turquoise on the Lands with Class 1 Wetlands Presence analysis map reflect parcels that contain Class 1 wetlands. The map visually displays parcels lost when removing Class 1 wetlands from the analysis.
Mr. Fancher said an option is to look at wetlands and exclude them and their associated buffers from the calculation of parcel size.

Ms. Adair said a consideration is to propose rezoning some lands adjacent to existing long-term agriculture that do not meet the soils criteria to long-term agriculture and explore setting a lower or higher range for soil coverage.

Mr. Fancher encouraged the Commission to recommend at least a 51% threshold because setting a range below “predominant” as stipulated in the criteria, would open the door to challenges. A 51% threshold meets the predominant test.

Ms. Adair said if Commissioners want to recommend designating lands that meet the criteria, the initial map presented at the December 19, 2007 meeting reflects that recommendation. The decision is whether to designate parcel patches reflected in purple, yellow and green. A display map showing vested subdivisions was made available.

Discussion followed about allowing property owners to volunteer lands for agriculture designation.

_The Commission directed staff to include parcels that are predominantly 51% covered by prime farmland soils for the draft proposal that goes to the public hearing._

Discussion ensued about an option and the review process (comprehensive plan amendment) in place that would allow property owners to volunteer parcels for designation that meet all other criteria with less than 51% coverage by prime farmland soils.

8:00 PM Commissioner Kohlenberg said it appears reasonable to include smaller parcel patches in the Rochester area. Ms. Adair referred members to criteria #8 that states in part, “Boundaries should follow landmarks visible on the ground when possible, to provide visual distinction of land use areas,” which would support infill to create a logical boundary for the zoning district. She added that lands shown in green represent parcels less than 200 acres, but the parcels meet the designation criteria.

Commissioner Lane said he doesn’t support including parcel patches shown in green.

_The Commission directed staff to include potential parcel patches greater than 320 acres (shown in purple) that meet all nine criteria for designation for purposes of the public hearing._

8:10 PM Commissioners agreed not to include parcels less than 20 acres adjacent to current long-term agriculture and/or Nisqually agriculture in the proposal. An option is property owners could volunteer and apply for designation.

8:16 PM Commissioners agreed to eliminate lands with Class 1 wetlands presence from the public hearing proposal.
Mr. Fancher said parcels greater than 20 acres but less than 200 acres that meet all the criteria in the vicinity of Lawrence Lake could be included because they are already part of the 320-acre patch. He referred to criteria #8, Agricultural Diversity.

_The Commission agreed to include the green patches adjacent to areas currently designated long-term agriculture and/or Nisqually agriculture for purposes of the public hearing._

_In summary, the proposal going to public hearing should include parcels that meet all nine criteria (purple), and parcels adjacent to current long-term agriculture or Nisqually agriculture._

**8:21 PM** Commissioners discussed options to create a more logical boundary for parcel patches located in the southwest corner. Ms. Adair said the Commission could make that determination after the public hearing.

Mr. Fancher thanked the Planning Commission for its work on the issue, as the County has a tight timeline for compliance.

Commissioners thanked Mr. Fancher for attending the meeting.

Commissioner Nelson asked if a location has been identified for the public hearing. Ms. Adair said staff is working to secure the Swede Hall Grange in Rochester.

**8:27 PM** Ms. Adair said final maps and hearing materials will be distributed to Commissioners. Information will be posted on TCTV. A direct mailing will be provided to affected property owners. The February 13, 2008 public hearing provides for the Commission to take an action and forward a recommendation to the BoCC.

**9. 8:28 PM ADJOURNMENT**

With there being no further business, Commissioner Cole adjourned the meeting at 8:28 p.m.

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Tom Cole, Commissioner

Prepared by Cheri Lindgren, Recording Secretary
Puget Sound Meeting Services