THURSTON COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

Minutes January 20, 2010

1. **6:30 P.M. CALL TO ORDER**
   Chair Lane called the January 20, 2010 meeting of the Thurston County Planning Commission to order at 6:30 p.m. Commissioners provided self-introductions.

   **Attendance:** Vice Chair Scott Nelson, Commissioners Liz Kohlenberg, Kathleen O’Connor, Christopher Earle, Tom Cole, Edward Fleitcher, William Jackson, Christine Spaulding

   **Absent:** Commissioner Chris Lane

   **Staff:** Jeff Fancher, Olivia Terwilleger, Scott Clark, Jeremy Davis, Cynthia Wilson, Molly Levitt

2. **6:31 P.M. PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS (Not associated with topics for which public hearings have been held.)**

   **James Essig**
   As you all know I am James Essig, from Granite Construction Company. You guys are going to be working on Asphalt Task Force Workshop this evening to renew the ordinance. I’d like to go over the letter I had submitted earlier to Olivia and all of you guys got a copy.

   Asphalt plants may remain after depletion of the related mine if another gravel source is within one mile of the asphalt plant. The other one is that 50% of the gravel used by the plant and must come from the related mine within one mile. So I want to ask you guys what analysis and data is being used to specify the distance of one mile? Granite currently supplements the supply of asphalt aggregates from Quality Rock on Littlerock Road. There is approximately two air miles, or about four road miles. If the proposed specified distance is not either removed, or at a minimum, increased to a reasonable distance that’s based on some analysis of the actual road impacts of haul distance, Granite could be eventually required to develop a new location.

   Haul road distance mitigation fees are an issue to be addressed at the permitting stage and should be based on production and the actual impacts of the existing transportation infrastructure. This would allow an appropriate haul route to be designated along with the associated road-wear mitigation fees.

   The Asphalt Task Force developed a list of recommendations and they were voted on. Some of the recommendations received majority support and some did not. Asphalt plants remaining in their current locations after completion of a mine was a topic of discussion and many members agreed they should remain after the site had been depleted of their
aggregates.

There were a couple different scenarios I talked about – the 50%, the one-mile, the different haul distances – why they should be that, but no one really backed anything by the science or an analysis of any of the current asphalt plants or their locations here in Thurston County.

So this is a pretty important issue in front of the Planning Commission. Now that you guys are going to be developing a new Asphalt Plant ordinance and it will determine how plants will be located currently and into the future, and the current ones could have to move.

So I am asking you, what’s the logic for forcing Asphalt Plants to move around the County and disturb new sites, while disturbing neighbors and establishing new infrastructure to support the new plant? As you guys know, when permitting Asphalt Plants there is a lot of mitigation measures that go into it – storm water facilities, ground water program, road impact, haul road agreements and landscape plans.

In 1986, the current Martin site on 113th was permitted for a gravel site, and in 1995 was actually approved for an Asphalt Plant. They originally planted and built the berms around there and the trees are over 20-years old now, and actually provide visual screening and noise reduction. I have personally developed a relationship with the neighbors there in terms of complaints and how we can be better neighbors, and its taken some time and it would take that same amount of time to develop relationships with new neighbors.

The second thing in the ordinance is the 3.1Q, where Asphalt Plants should be fueled by natural gas, propane or alternative fuel. From an industry’s perspective it grants the support of the use of cleaner-burning fuels and reducing our overall carbon footprint for the production of asphalt products. We are currently known as an industry leader in the production of warm-mix and use of RAP in our mix designs. Using natural gas would allow us to not only reduce our carbon footprint, but also allow reduction of fuel cost, which are carried on to the consumer. Granite currently uses propane to heat and dry the mineral aggregates for asphalt production.

I have personally been involved with discussions with Puget Sound Energy regarding the potential to serve our current plant with natural gas. The main natural gas pipeline is located about three quarters of a mile from the plant. Granite is seriously considering infrastructure upgrade to provide service. To make this “green investment,” Granite needs a regulatory environment that will allow us to be comfortable to be able to continue operations as long as we do in a responsible manner.

The Planning Commission is working to make limited area available for designation of mineral lands, and under the latest draft ordinance, Asphalt Plants have to be associated with the mines. The goal of this requirement is to reduce the traffic impacts. This requirement may not reduce the overall impact of an asphalt plant. For example, to utilize the cleanest and most economical fuel – natural gas – it has to be available within a reasonable distance to meet our demands.

I just ask you to consider these questions. Thank you.

Mr. Essig was asked by the Commission why natural gas would reduce the carbon footprint more than propane. Mr. Essig stated that it is cleaner.
3. 6:38 P.M. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner O’Connor moved to approve the December 16, 2009 minutes and accept the audio as the official record. Commissioner Earle seconded. Motion carried.

Staff was asked if the information requested on page 5, lines 53-54 had been provided to the Planning Commission (Commission). Staff stated that it hadn’t been yet, but will be this evening if possible.

Commissioner O’Connor moved to approve the January 6, 2009 minutes and accept the audio as the official record. Commissioner Kohlenberg seconded.

It was noted that on page 4, line 2, that the statement which was said that Commissioner Jackson had been re-appointed at that time was incorrect.

4. 6:40 P.M. WORKSESSION: CLUSTER SUBDIVISION

Staff: Jeff Fancher

Mr. Fancher stated that this work session is a follow up to the public hearing which was held before the Commission on January 13, 2010, to make the current interim regulations for Cluster Subdivision permanent. One public comment had been received at the public hearing, and the testimony was in favor of this proposal. Mr. Fancher stated that if the Commission is in agreement with this proposal it will make a recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC). Staff will then forward that recommendation to the BOCC.

Commissioner Kohlenberg moved to recommend to the Board of County Commissioners approval of the Cluster Subdivision interim regulation amendments as proposed by staff. Commissioner O’Connor seconded. Motion carried.

The Commission discussed the work of the Cluster Subdivision task force and asked questions of staff concerning this ordinance. A discussion ensued.

5. 6:55 P.M. WORKSESSION: HOUSING

Staff: Olivia Terwilleger

Mr. Fancher stated that he would like to answer the question that was asked concerning whether or not the County is required by the law to include the list of groups in the Consolidated Plan that may need housing assistance in the Comprehensive Plan (Comp Plan). Mr. Fancher stated that this is not necessary and the Consolidated Plan can be referred to in the Comp Plan.

Ms. Terwilleger stated that this is a follow-up work session from the January 6, 2010 work session. Ms. Terwilleger provided a Power Point presentation highlighting the background and questions that had arisen at that session. The Commission asked question of Ms. Terwilleger.
The public hearing on Housing is scheduled for February 17, 2010 and a follow-up work session with the Commission is scheduled for March 3, 2010.

After discussion, the Commission agreed that they may consider allowing more than one encampment in rural Thurston County. The Commission asked how this would affect the public hearing if the public is looking at the draft ordinance that only allows for one encampment. Mr. Clark stated that the Planning website could be updated reflecting this additional consideration and an email to interested parties can be sent out. Staff would also explain this additional option at the opening of the public hearing. Mr. Clark explained that the public hearing could be left open to allow for additional public comment before the Commission’s following work session. This would allow the public additional time to respond to this addition to the proposed ordinance. A discussion ensued.

6. **7:16 P.M. WORKSESSION: ASPHALT PLANTS**
   **Staff: Olivia Terwilleger**

Ms. Terwilleger explained that there is another work session with the Commission on February 10, 2010 and the public hearing will be held on February 17, 2010. Two additional work sessions will be held after the public hearing.

Ms. Terwilleger provided the Commission with a Power Point presentation. Ms. Terwilleger was asked to please provide a slide at the begging of these types of presentations showing the timelines for the topic being discussed. Staff made a note of that request. The Commission discussed the proposed draft ordinance sent out for public hearing for Chapter 20.54 and a concern was expressed that this was sent out before the Commission was able to discuss the final draft.

*Commissioner Kohlenberg moved to change the public hearing date so the Commission will have an additional work session prior to public hearing to review the changes made at this meeting. Commissioner Fleitcher seconded.*

A discussion ensued. The motion was withdrawn until a discussion could ensue.

Mr. Clark explained to the Commission that the Planning Department has a new web site at [www.thurstonplanning.org](http://www.thurstonplanning.org). The site will better display all of the topics the Commission is working on.

Ms. Terwilleger provided the Commission with a Power Point presentation and the Commission reviewed the draft ordinance provided this evening for discussion. The Commission asked questions and made changes to the draft ordinance.

Mr. Clark noted that the Commission has agreed to change the public hearing on Asphalt Plans to March 3, 2010.

7. **8:06 P.M. WORKSESSION: TUMWATER JOINT PLANS PUBLIC HEARING FOLLOWUP**
   **Staff: Jeremy Davis**

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Mr. Davis provided the Commission with copies of public comment received prior to and during the public hearing process and provided a Power Point presentation. The Commission reviewed and discussed the public comments.

8. **8:52 P.M. WORKSESSION: SHORELINE MASTER PROGRAM**

   *Staff: Cynthia Wilson, Molly Levitt*

   Ms. Wilson provided the Commission with a hard-copy of the current draft of the Shoreline Master Program (SMP) and stated that the draft information is also located on the website. Ms. Wilson provided the Commission with the status of the current update she is working on. Ms. Wilson explained that she would like to address the Commission once a month to ask for any feedback or answer any questions on the updates she is working on. Ms. Wilson introduced Molly Levitt, who is assisting with the SMP update. Ms. Levitt provided the Commission with information concerning the maps that are being generated and are on the web site. The Commission asked questions of staff.

9. **9:02 P.M. STAFF UPDATES**

   Mr. Clark provided the following staff updates:
   - A new planner focused on Climate Change has been hired and started last week. The Commission may meet him during a February meeting.
   - The Planning Department has received a $94K grant from the Department of Fish and Wildlife to integrate the Prairie Ordinance into the Critical Areas Ordinance. A part-time Planner will be hired to do this update which is to be completed by July 2010.
   - A Watershed Characterization Grant will be applied for to assist in updating Shorelines and Critical Areas. This will be a major project. This could be received by July 2010.
   - An interim admin staff is assisting with supporting the Planning Department.

10. **9:05 P.M. CALENDAR**

    February meetings – some Commission members were unsure of the attendance of all meetings. The majority present will be available.

11. **9:07 PM ADJOURN**

    With there being no further business, Chair Lane adjourned the meeting at 9:07 p.m.

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Scott Nelson, Vice Chair

Prepared by Cami Petersen, Recording Secretary