THURSTON COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

Minutes February 1, 2012

1. **6:30 P.M. CALL TO ORDER**
   Chair Lane called the February 1, 2012 meeting of the Thurston County Planning Commission to order at 6:30 p.m. Commissioners provided self-introductions.

   **Attendance:** Chair Chris Lane, Commissioners Kathleen O’Connor, Bill Jackson, Scott Nelson, Christine Spaulding, Christopher Earle, Edward Fleisher, Jennifer Davis & Liz Kohlenberg

   **Absent:** None

   **Staff:** Andrew Deffobis, Cindy Wilson, Scott Clark, Jeremy Davis

2. **6:30 P.M. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

   **MOTION:** Commissioner O’Connor moved to approve the agenda. Commissioner Nelson seconded. Motion carried.

3. **6:30 P.M. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

   **Commissioner O’Connor moved to approve the October 5, 2011 minutes and accept the audio as the official record. Commissioner Nelson seconded. Motion carried as amended.**

   Christine Spaulding wanted to clarify that she did not object to the minutes that just some of the language be corrected to remove the Oh’s and Um’s from the verbatim section.

   Page 10, line 30; the word pool will be changed to pull.

4. **6:39 P.M. PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS (Not associated with topics for which public hearings have been held.)**

   No members of the audience chose to speak.

   The official audio is available on line at:

   [http://www.co.thurston.wa.us/planning/planning_commission/planning_comm_minutes.html](http://www.co.thurston.wa.us/planning/planning_commission/planning_comm_minutes.html)

5. **6:39 P.M. ELECTION OF OFFICERS**

   Commissioners Jennifer Davis and Kathleen O’Connor gave an overview of the research that they had done with all of the other members on the Planning Commission (PC) in regards to the election of officers for the 2012 year. Both sub-committee members called...
half of the PC members to see if they were interested in being an officer and also asked for feedback on the current Chair and Vice-Chair of the PC. Commissioner O’Connor put together a summary that was then introduced so that the PC could vote on the different options. The constructive criticism that was given combined with different ideas was that the members would like to see a more active management role of both the Chair and Vic-Chair when leading the meetings. Another point brought up by Commissioner Davis was the not only the Chair and Vice-Chair need to be practicing self-control so that the meetings run smoothly without members talking over each other.

Based on all of the options that the members suggested a list was created to vote upon:

**Options**

A. Current Chair & Vice-Chair re-elected.
B. Elect Christine Spaulding as Chair & Scott Nelson continuing as Vice-Chair.
C. Current Chair & elect Christine Spaulding as Vice-Chair.
D. Elect Scott Nelson Chair & Christine Spaulding as Vice-Chair.
E. Elect Christine Spaulding as Chair & Kathleen O’Connor Vice-Chair.

Private ballots were then passed out for each member to vote.

*The PC went into a brief recess while the votes were tallied.*

After the votes were tallied the results were that option A was chosen where Chris Lane will remain chair and Scott Nelson will remain Vice-Chair.

6. 6:44 P.M. **WORK SESSION: Two Open Space Applications**

Ms. Story explained to the PC that she had sent them two open space tax program applications to consider. The purpose of the open space tax program is to preserve open space land for the benefit of the county residents and in return give the land owner a tax benefit. Staff completed its review of the two Open Space tax program applications, considered the merits of the proposals, and found them to be appropriate for the Open Space tax classification, and an asset to the County. The first property is the Provost property. It is 19 acres, Farm and agricultural conservation land (FACL) and the estimated tax shift would be $483 (50% reduction). The second property is the Bentley property. It is 15 acres (16 total but one acre being held for the home) with significant wildlife habitat areas, resource restoration and a conservation easement. The estimated tax shift would be $1,837 (90% reduction). Both applications were attached to the PC packet that was mailed to the members last week and also posted online.

The PC has a couple of options. The first option is to approve both applications. If approved it would save both land owners taxes, preserve the acreage from development and it would also fulfill the counties requirement for the varieties of rural densities. The second option is to deny the requests which would do the opposite of the facts listed above. Ms. Story then asked the PC to set a public hearing for both of the applications.
Commissioner O’Connor moved to set a public hearing for both open space applications that were submitted on March 7, 2012. Commissioner Spaulding seconded. Motion carried.

7. 6:47 P.M. WORK SESSION: CAO Assessment & Timeline

Staff has spent considerable time going through the individual comments creating a summary table of the key points of the comment. In addition to the time spent on the table Mr. Clark also brought up the need for the PC to meet on a weekly basis again to finish the CAO process. This would be till the end of February and probably the first week in March.

Mr. Deffobis then came forward to talk about the summary table and comments that were created. The written testimony has since been summarized and all the responses have been sent to each property owner that requested feedback or had questions. Some comments were sent directly to the PC if staff didn’t have anything to add or no questions were needing to be addressed at the time. A re-review of certain sections will also take place after hearing some of the comments and suggestions including forwarding said comments to other departments for direction. The PC was told that if they wanted a hard copy of the comments staff would supply them but currently they are all summarized.

Commissioner Davis asked how staff captured the three petitions that were submitted to staff as a written comment. These were comments 38 and 98d and e. Staff displayed how many signatures there were, they were scanned for duplicates and then it showed the reason for each petition. A tally has not been done currently of pro versus con due to the CAO being such a complex subject with multiple different issues. The summary table will be on line tomorrow for the public to view. The comments have been online since early January.

Reclaimed water and the CARAs Chapter in general had the most comments. A lot of the questions/comments were sent to Nadine Romero, the County’s Hydro geologist and Environmental Health to answer or respond to. Many people also asked that the Planning Commission take a look at the Mount Vernon approach to calculating wetland and stream buffers. There were comments on the 5,000 square foot acceptance, with recommendations of 3,500 instead and also to take another look at the Marine riparian buffers and extend them to 250 feet in areas that are not disturbed by development. Residential densities in a rural area due to the critical areas inventive technique were also mentioned. On these particular issues the PC and staff plan to hold separate work sessions to discuss them further.

Reclaimed water has become an issue on its own like staff expected and also has become a community issue for which LOTT and the BOCC are talking about is this a topic that deserves its own form? The reasoning is that staff has a concern that all of the issues with reclaimed water may not be addressed before the regulation has to be written. Michael Strub who is the director of LOTT will be coming back before the PC next week to give another presentation on reclaimed water. Therefore there currently is a substantial amount of discussion about reclaimed water, ground water study and also weighing in on how the ground water study would be conducted. It was also mentioned by Mr. Davis
that if a specific use is not listed in the table of the CAO then it is prohibited unless there
is another like use that could be construed to be like or for instance reclaimed water could
be listed in the table still and be marked prohibited until the issue is figured out. Michael
Strub with LOTT will be answering the many questions the PC has in regards to
reclaimed water and then the PC will be making a decision based on best available
science and public input so that the BOCC can make a very informed decision on the
matter.

Commissioner Kohlenberg reminded staff that she would like updated maps for the
CARA section. Planning staff has created the draft but are waiting on Nadine Romero
the County’s Hydro geologist to take another look at them and make sure they are correct
before they are published. The maps will be completed and given to the PC at the first
meeting in March.

The next written comments that were turned in were in regards to 250 feet buffers on
undisturbed marine shorelines and taking another look at language for shorelines
protective structures. A lot of comments touched on staff relooking at their emphasis on
these two subjects. Clearing and grading in these areas was also mentioned and staff and
the PC will be discussing that issue as well.

A biosolids work session is scheduled with the Department of Ecology for March 7th.
Staff and the Department of Ecology are currently in disagreement over Ecology’s
interpretation. A letter was submitted (76c & 76d) that strongly disagreed with the
County’s opinion.

Commissioner Davis requested an update on where the County and Washington
Department of Fish and Wildlife are with the application of their management
recommendations which have gone through some changes. This request would include
discussion in regards to releasing property owners from the 5,000 square feet buffer when
gophers are found on their property and also creative thinking about tying in special
incentives. Staff has been looking into going back over the highly strict criteria for open
space applications in relation to critical areas. All of the comments that were received in
regards to this issue were forwarded to the Resource Stewardship Department and
WDFW for further comment.

The next discussion between the PC and staff was if weekly meetings were still going to
be needed. Many suggestions were discussed including having a Saturday meeting
instead. Staff was encouraged to try to have all materials ready at the regularly scheduled
meetings but if was unable to them maybe one other meeting during the month if voted
on. The PC would like the time to review the material that they are going to be
discussing prior to the meeting so that the discussions are more productive. Next week at
the special meeting, Mr. Clark will bring a work plan to discuss how many meetings will
be necessary to accommodate these larger issues and the schedules.

8. 7:27 P.M. CALENDAR

February 8, 2012 (special meeting) – Chris Earle will not be in attendance.
9. **7:28 P.M. CALENDAR**

Mr. Clark provided the following staff updates:

- LOTT will be coming to the PC meeting on February 15, 2012 to discuss parts of the CAO revision.
- The BOCC has authorized the Planning Department to hire another Associate Planner.

10. **8:03 PM ADJOURN**

With there being no further business, Chair Lane adjourned the meeting at 8:03 p.m.

Prepared by Carrie Toebbe, Recording Secretary

Chris Lane, Chair