1. **6:30 P.M. CALL TO ORDER**

Chair Nelson called the March 18 meeting of the Thurston County Planning Commission to order at 6:30 p.m. Commissioners provided self-introductions.

**Attendance:** Chair Scott Nelson, Commissioners Jennifer Davis, Christine Spaulding, Tim Kramer, Donna Nickerson, Chris Lane, Edward Fleisher, Christopher Earle & Bill Jackson

**Absent:** None

**Staff:** Scott Clark, Andrew Deffobis, Katie Pruitt, Jeremy Davis, Rick Peters, and Brad Murphy

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

**MOTION:** Commissioner Davis moved to approve the agenda. Commissioner Jackson seconded. Motion carried.

3. **6:31 P.M. PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS** (Not associated with topics for which public hearings have been held.)

*Public Testimony was given by the following:*

1. Glen Morgan, of 17544 Old Hwy 99, Tenino, WA spoke regarding Title 26.

The official audio is available on line at:

http://www.co.thurston.wa.us/planning/planning_commission/planning_comm_minutes.html

4. **6:33 P.M. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Commissioner Fleisher moved to approve the March 4, 2015 minutes and accept the audio as the official record. Commissioner Spaulding seconded. Motion carried.

5. **6:33 P.M. STAFF UPDATES**

Mr. Clark, Director of Resource Stewardship, provided an update to follow up on the public comment just received regarding Title 26. The public board briefing meeting this week was well attended. There was significant public comment received by the BoCC. County staff will be adding amendments to the ordinance based on the public comment.
recommendations. An additional work session will be scheduled to review the updated ordinance. 17 of the 19 western Washington counties have already adopted civil penalties so this is a common practice but anytime you add something new regarding code enforcement it generates interest with the public.

6. **6:35 P.M. WORK SESSION: Open Space Application Follow up**  
(Staff: Andrew Deffobis, Jeff Gadman & Doreena Baird (Assessor’s office))

Mr. Deffobis invited the assessor’s office staff to answer questions that were raised at the last work session in regards to their Open Space Tax Program and why some properties and/or applications are no longer eligible for that program.

Ms. Baird addressed the question of current income requirements for commercial farming to stay in the Assessor’s program is:

- Under 5 acres, $1500 per year for 3 out of 5 years
- 5 acres to under 20 acres, $200 per acre, per enrolled, for 3 out of the 5 years
- Over 20 acres, you must show proof of commercial farm income but does not have a minimum dollar amount

Mr. Gadman addressed the question of why there seems to be an increase in applications for reclassification into Open Space Open Space Program from the Assessor’s Farm and Agriculture Program. Their office began to do more frequent income audits (every 6 years versus 8-10 years) which has resulted in finding properties that no longer qualify for the program due to not meeting the income requirement. The audit includes sending a letter asking how the land is being utilized (farm management plan) and for proof of income, and working with them if they respond saying they are no longer farming. The Assessor’s office encourages the property owner to move to Resource Stewardship’s Farm and Agriculture Conservation Land classification so they could switch back to the Assessor’s Farm and Agriculture classification (without penalty) if they begin farming again in the future.

The Commissioners asked questions to which staff addressed. A discussion ensued.

7. **6:53 P.M. CALENDAR**

April 1, 2015 – All plan on attending
April 15, 2015 – All plan on attending

*A short recess was taken at 6:53 p.m. for seven minutes to start back at 7:00 for the Public Hearing.*

8. **7:00 P.M. PUBLIC HEARING: Development Code Docket Amendment A-1: Amend Land Use Permitting and Appeal Procedures and A-4: Amendment to Wetlands (Chapter 24.30 TCC) for Wetlands Rating System.**  
Staff: Katie Pruitt

Chair Nelson explained that two separate topics will be taking place this evening and
gave instructions to the public to testify. First heard will be A-1: Amend Land Use Permitting and Appeal Procedures then A-4: Amendment to Wetlands (Chapter 24.30 TCC) for Wetlands Rating System.

Chair Nelson opened the public hearing on A-1: Amend Land use Permitting and Appeal Procedures at 7:00 p.m.

Ms. Pruitt gave a brief background of information on the proposed amendment, written comments submitted for the public hearing and additional information.

Public Testimony was given by the following:

1. Glen Morgan, of 17544 Old Hwy 99, Tenino
2. Sue Danver, of 7106 Foothill Loop SW,
3. Sam Merrill, of 3024 43rd CT. NW, Olympia
4. Wally Brown, 16717 Vail Loop SE
5. Robin Love, 15320 Ursula Lane, Yelm
6. Howard Glastetter, 11110 Kuhlwan Road, Olympia
7. Doctor Cornell O’Leary

Chair Nelson closed the public hearing at 7:32 p.m.

Chair Nelson opened the public hearing on A-4 Amendment to Wetlands (Chapter 24.30 TCC) for Wetlands Rating System

Ms. Pruitt gave a brief background of information on the proposed amendment, written comments submitted for the public hearing and additional information.

Public Testimony was given by the following:

1. Glen Morgan, of 17544 Old Hwy 99, Tenino
2. Wally Brown, 16717 Vail Loop SE
3. Dave Reynolds
4. Robin Love, 15320 Ursula Lane, Yelm

Chair Nelson closed the public hearing at 7:49 p.m.

9. 7:49 P.M. WORK SESSION: A-1: Amend Land Use Permitting and Appeal Procedures
   Staff: Katie Pruitt, Rick Peters, PAO

The Commissioners considered this amendment and some thought an emphasis on more legal counsel for the BoCC in the future to mitigate the risk of litigation against one of their decisions would be better than changing the entire process. Also, the fact that other large counties like Thurston do have their Commissioners hear these appeals favored keeping the same system. And yet, this request to remove the BoCC is coming from their own department and Risk Management so some felt the vote to change should be approved. Also the BoCC, being an elected body, might allow their decisions to be
swayed based on political issues or viewpoints rather than the legal aspect as the Superior Court would provide. A discussion ensued.

**Commissioner Earle moved to reject item A-1: Amend Land use Permitting and Appeal Procedures and maintain the current system for appeals of land use decisions. Commissioner Kramer seconded. Three Commissioners opposed. Six Commissioners were in favor. Motion carried.**

**10. 8:09 PM WORK SESSION: A-4: Amendment to Wetlands (Chapter 24.30 TCC) for Wetlands Rating System**  
*Staff: Katie Pruitt, Brad Murphy, Alex Callendar (DOE)*

The Commissioners felt that this was actually a housekeeping/process type request, rather than opening the bigger issue of changing wetland buffers or the science behind it. Our policy already says we will follow the Ecology’s rating system. A short discussion ensued.

**Commissioner Fleischer moved to approve item A-4: Amendment to Wetlands (Chapter 24.30 TCC) for Wetlands Rating System at staff’s recommendation.**  
**Commissioner Davis seconded. Motion carried.**

**11. 8:15 PM WORK SESSION: Amend CAO to Add Conservation Banking / In Lieu Fee for Mitigation to Fish & Wildlife Habitat Conservation Areas (Chapter 24.25 TCC)**  
*Staff: Jeremy Davis*

Mr. Davis is here to discuss amend the critical areas ordinance to enable habitat conservation banks and other alternative mitigation measures for fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas. After reviewing the amendment, the Commissioners would like this document to be more specific in regards to the species and techniques used using best available science. Also it was requested to use more specific language surrounding the mitigation ratios that would be applied since they are not specified in this version. The Commissioners asked questions of Mr. Davis to which he responded. A discussion ensued.

The Commissioners requested the need to be walked through more detailed information and in turn, that information be included in the ordinance before setting a public meeting on this topic.

**12. 8:25 PM ADJOURN**

With there being no further business, Chair Nelson adjourned the meeting at 8:25 p.m.

Scott Nelson, Chair
Prepared by Polly Stoker, Recording Secretary