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

Chair Nelson called the April 17, 2013 meeting of the Thurston County Planning Commission to order at 6:30 p.m. Commissioners provided self-introductions.

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

**Absent:** None

**Staff:** Scott Clark & Jeremy Davis

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

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

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

**Commissioner O’Connor moved to approve the July 18, 2012 correction of minutes and accept the audio as the official record. Commissioner Fleisher seconded. Motion carried.**

**Commissioner Davis moved to approve the February 20, 2013 correction of minutes and accept the audio as the official record. Commissioner Fleisher seconded.**

**Note:** The meeting minutes for this date are not verbatim but are detailed to contain action items and discussion along with research of explanation.

4. **6:31 P.M. STAFF UPDATES**

Mr. Clark provided the following staff updates:

- Staff has scheduled the recognition dinner with the PC and BOCC. Mostly everyone will be attending. Mr. Clark will be researching some issues that have been worked on throughout the year to discuss with the BOCC at the meeting. The dinner is scheduled on May 16, 2013, 6:00 p.m. at the Waterstreet Café in downtown Olympia. Commissioner Jackson brought up what will the dress code be for the recognition dinner and suggested that everyone come dressed business casual. Chair Lane noted the request.
• At a recent meeting staff updates was moved to the end of the agenda to provide the public time to speak after hearing the PC discuss what was on the agenda and provide adequate time for them to attend. After further discussion it was noted that the public is provided advance notice of the published agenda and the time should be moved back to the beginning of the agenda so that the PC has plenty of time to finish business during the meeting.

Commissioner Spaulding moved to have public communications put back at the beginning of the agenda at the new time of 6:35 p.m. Commissioner O’Connor seconded.

5. 6:39 P.M. Planning Commission Re-Election

Commissioner O’Connor provided the options that were given at the March 6, 2013 PC meeting for the election of officers. They were the following:

Options:

A. Jennifer and Christine
B. Jennifer and Ed
C. Jennifer and Scott
D. Scott and Christine
E. Scott and Jennifer

Mr. Clark tallied the votes. The results were 7 for letter E and two for letter A. The new chair will now be Chair Nelson and the Vice-Chair will be Commissioner Davis.

As a result of the re-election current Chair Lane switched seats with Commissioner Nelson so that he can run the rest of the meeting as Chair.

It was decided to switch the work session for Ken Lake and have Habitat Conservation Interim Permitting Strategy go before it.

6. 6:45 P.M. Habitat Conservation Interim Permitting Strategy

Staff: Scott Clark

Mr. Clark gave a brief background on the Habitat Conservation Plan. The background was the same presentation that he gave at the NEPA Scoping meeting on April 6, 2013. The County has received two years funding for this from the United States Fish and Wildlife Department and we have applied for a third year.

Habitat Conservations plans are developed to identify species that are on the endangered species list. The idea is to reduce the conflict between the species, economic development and land use activity. The County has opted to do a multi species regional approach.

The purpose of a habitat management plan is once you have the plan done and it’s been accepted you receive what is known as an incident take permit. This provides coverage
under a permit for a long period of time which is usually between 30-50 years. As long as this is covered you can submit under the covered activities. The County has submitted what they would like there covered activities to be which are; typical roads maintenance operation, stormwater operations, residential permitting and commercial permitting. Ideally once the rules are set they are set for a very long time. The other reason why the County is taking the multi species approach is there are only 3% of the prairies left. There is 18 species within that 3%. As the prairie is degraded you lose more species. Examples of the species were then given.

A grant is in process with the Department of Defense for another 2.4 million dollars to acquire agricultural easements that will also require conservation.

Most of the prairies are found in Thurston County and JBLM (Joint Base Lewis McCord). The biggest population of butterflies is found in the impact area and drop zones on Fort Lewis. They are starting to relocate Taylor Checkerspot Butterflies in to South Thurston County to try and reestablish populations.

Commissioner Jackson asked how much of the prairie that is left is privately owned and how much is publicly owned. Mr. Clark will be looking into the answer. The majority of the land designated as critical habitat is publicly owned as Base, State or County land. If you harm a listed species and it is not on the habitat you are still liable. If the County issues you a permit and you harm a listed species then the County is liable. As of now if a site plan is turned in that lists prairie soils or is identified to have prairie soils on it a staff members is sent out for a site visit to confirm with a preliminary survey. If no signs of the species are seen then they are alright to continue. A habitat management plan can take a long time to complete so a parallel approach is being taken to the permitting process for these types of processes do not take sometimes up to ten years to complete.

The County has been talking with other jurisdictions about this process. They have completed a request for proposals and selected a contractor. Now they are beginning to explore the offsets and mitigation on it. This has become a public process now. A TCTV program ran twenty times in March in regards to the background and process now taking place including the goal, the Conservation District has been briefed, Thurston Regional Planning and NEPA Scoping on April 6, 2013. Hopefully at the end of August Stakeholder committee’s will be formed.

On the interim permitting strategy the hope is to develop a credit and debit methodology. This would be science based and would allow staff to come up and identify where the best prairie lands are and what debits go in when the developer looks to start developing compromised prairie. A short discussion on the consequences of the environment, species and permitting was had.

Reducing the debit and achieving credit was then discussed. An example was then given. Based on the fact of where the endangered species occurred and that certain ones go through life cycles that have critical times, then in looking if there are practices you can change that don’t impact the species. Another would be acquiring easements on land or the land out right. The intent is to develop a model that identifies the best possible prairie for the long term including as many species as possible.
US Fish and Wildlife has a hearing tomorrow evening on the Capital Campus in regards to these issues. Mr. Clark asked that if there were any further questions after tonight’s presentation that the PC e-mails him.

7:16 P.M. PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS (Not associated with topics for which public hearings have been held.)

No public was at the meeting to speak at this time.

The official audio is available online at:

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

8.  7:28 P.M. WORK SESSION: Ken Lake
Staff: Jeremy Davis

Mr. Davis handed out the staff reports to the PC. A map was then discussed of the purported affected area. Ken Lake and the surrounding area in Southwest Olympia are within the Percival Creek Drainage Basin, which outlets into Capital Lake near Marathon Park. The Percival Creek Basin is a portion of the much larger Water Resource Inventory Area #13, which includes the Deschutes River and other drainage basins west of the Nisqually River. The area is generally bounded by Highway 101 to the north, the Olympia UGA boundary to the west, and the Olympia City limits to the south and east. The only access to this area is from Kaiser Road over Highway 101.

Mr. Davis then gave a brief overview of the timeline. In October 2010 the City requested the County to reconsider zoning for the study area. Then in December 2010 the Board approved interim Ordinance No. 14443 changing the zoning to RLI 2-4 from R-4. In December 2011 the City adopted Ordinance No. 6773 that permanently established the RLI 2-4 land use designation.

To resolve the ongoing moratorium in the Ken Lake area, the BOCC instructed staff to review the land use and zoning for the area and recommend an appropriate designation. The issue is that properties in the unincorporated area of the City of Olympia Urban Growth Area (UGA) are zoned for urban development. Portions of the unincorporated UGA in the subject area located northwest of Ken Lake have potential environmental constraints such as flooding and stormwater that limit the level of development densities.

Mr. Davis stated that given the site conditions present in the area, it is reasonable to assume that a zoning designation that reduces residential density and the allowed impervious areas should reduce the adverse effects of runoff from the built conditions. No model or analysis can conclusively predict the combination of weather variables that may be present during a storm event. If the proposed RLI 2-4 with additional limitation on impervious areas is adopted, it is reasonable to conclude that the adverse effects of runoff from this kind of development could be effectively minimized.
In November 2011, the City of Olympia adopted Ordinance 6775 which established the RLI zoning adjacent to and south of the subject site. The City also amended their Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map to change the future land use for the County’s Ken Lake Study Area to RLI 2-4. The City of Olympia has encouraged and recommended the review and assessment of the subject property contained in the review and the staff report.

Mr. Davis listed the draft options developed by staff. Specific boundaries of proposed land use and zoning changes are subject to change at the direction of the PC. All land use and zoning options should be considered for public comment at a public hearing.

Option 1: Leave the current R-4 land use and zoning in place.
Option 2: Redesignate and rezone to RLI 2-4 and amend impervious surface limits to be consistent with City standards, or with the Residential 1/5 zone.
Option 3: Redesignate area to Residential 1/5 and leave in the UGA.
Option 4: Remove study area from the UGA and redesignate to a rural zone.

Staff is currently reviewing the Buildable Lands Analysis and it helps to determine impacts to the City of Olympia Urban Growth Area. The key question the analysis provides an answer to is whether there will be enough land supply in Thurston County Urban Growth Areas to accommodate future population and employment growth.

A discussion ensued in regards to the surrounding properties and stormwater. Commissioner O’Connor asked that staff provide what is defined as open space in each option. Mr. Davis did respond that the 60% open space usually can include critical areas and could possibly include stormwater facilities. The PC would like to know that information for each option at the next work session.

9. 7:44 P.M. CALENDAR

May 1, 2012 – Commissioner Lane will not be in attendance.

10. 7:45 PM ADJOURN

With there being no further business, Chair Nelson adjourned the meeting at 7:45 p.m.

Scott Nelson, Chair

Prepared by Carrie Toebbe, Recording Secretary