

Mason County Planning Advisory Commission

May 15, 2017

(This document is not meant to be a verbatim transcript)

Call to Order

Vicki Wilson called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m.

Roll Call

Present: Marilyn Vogler, Deb Soper, Vicki Wilson, Aaron Cleveland, and Jason Bailey

Absent: James Thomas

New member Jason Bailey introduces himself.

Regular Business

Adoption of Agenda- Vicki reiterated that the public hearing regarding the Shelton UGA expansion was cancelled. Marilyn wanted to add the meeting schedule and the work plan to the New Business section of the meeting. Marilyn made a motion to adopt the agenda as amended. Motion seconded by Aaron. All in favor, motion carried.

Conflict of Interest - None

Approval of minutes-

April 17, 2017- Deb pointed out a spelling error on page 4 first line of the April minutes “year” should be “years”. Marilyn made a motion to adopt the minutes as amended. Motion seconded by Deb. All in favor, motion carried.

Public Comment- Ken Van Buskirk talked about his last visit to this commission and his suggestion that they recommend some formal advisory commission be formed for the Belfair UGA. He mentioned the Allyn Belfair Collaboration Group that has formed and believed some of the projects they are proposing should be coming before the Planning Advisory Commission.

Work Session – Chapter 2 of the Comprehensive Plan - Countywide Planning Policies Update consistent with RCW 36.70A.210 and WAC 365-196-305.

Presenter: Paula Reeves, Department of Community Services

Paula introduced the staff from the Department of Commerce that showed up to give a foundational view of what was required in the Comprehensive Plan. She talked about how the Countywide Planning Policies and Population forecast are the backbone of the Comprehensive Plan and that revisiting these pieces has allowed for more concrete data establishment.

Gary Idleburg from the Department of Commerce in Olympia went through slides to elaborate on the basic elements that should comprise a Comprehensive Plan.

Topics under the slides were:

- Why Planning is important
- Public Expectations
- Why a Growth Management Act
- 14 GMA Goals
- Required Elements of the Comprehensive Plan
- Countywide Planning Policies
- Washington's Urban Growth Areas
- Allocating Population – Designating UGAs
- Adopting the Comprehensive Plan
- Implementing Your Comprehensive Plan

Lynn Longan from the Economic Development Council of Mason County asked if the Economic Element is a requirement of the Plan. Ike Nwankwo from the Department of Commerce replied that it wasn't required unless the County was provided money to complete the element one or two years beforehand.

Gary Idleburg returned to explaining the slides.

Ike Nwankwo explained that population allocation to rural areas should be much less in the comprehensive plan than to urban areas. The trend has been 20% rural to 80% urban, but there has been a shift to 5% rural and 95% urban, making infrastructure much less expensive to provide.

Gary Idleburg talked about a study he was involved with regarding sprawl and smog. He mentioned rural clusters and how service infrastructure can be quite expensive and the cost usually gets passed along from developer to owner.

Marilyn was interested in data regarding EMS, fire, and law enforcement services. Ike Nwankwo said they could look into that data and that Municipal Research Services could be contacted to pull that data.

Erica Marbet asked how counties in general have been successful in deterring ex-urban growth and keeping the UGAs growing. Gary Idleburg mentioned examples within Snohomish County, City of Sultan, and Spokane County.

Gary returned to the last few slides which talked about public outreach and review.

Paula thanked the staff from Commerce for their presentation.

Marilyn asked Commerce if any other counties had created chapters on homelessness, poverty, or income inequality, to which Gary Idleburg mentioned that King County may have done some related work.

Paula talked about the length of review that had already taken place with the Comprehensive Plan. The targeted completion date is Fall 2017, which was also adopted by the County

Commissioners. Process goals include incorporating new public input, updating population and employment forecasts, reflecting the changes in state law, and consolidating and refining the goals and policies.

Marilyn mentioned the Planning Advisory Commission opinion in early 2015 and their view on the comprehensive plan update. She wanted to build something into the work plan that created more time for review of chapters. Paula added that if extra attention is needed to certain chapters the commission and staff could formulate a plan of addressing that.

Paula laid out the process she had used in other meetings, brief on the requirements that they have to meet, have a dialog work session, and prior to the work session perform consolidation of comments.

Enhance economic opportunity, promote housing choices, value communities and neighborhoods, and protect water quality and quantity, these are a few of the topics from public comment that Paula picked up as important issues in the County.

Paula recapped, with a set of slides, data that is contained in the plan elements of land use, housing, transportation, and health and human services.

The slides included the following topics:

- Mason County Urban Growth Areas
- Population Projections
- Projections from OFM
- Shelton's Population Forecast
- Population Projection vs. Forecast
- Housing Demand Projection
- Household Size in Mason County and Shelton
- Housing Patterns and Trends
- Housing Patterns and the Homeless
- Poverty and Homeless in Schools
- Transportation System
- Capital Facilities Plan
- Maximizing Investments
- Next Steps

Jeff Carey mentioned the non-existent growth of Shelton in the last six years. Paula replied that the six year lack of growth was built into the population projections.

Ken Van Buskirk mentioned the high forecast numbers for the Belfair UGA. Paula clarified that the 426% forecast for Belfair UGA growth is a statistic that they called into question, the County is looking more toward the projection statistic which is 37%.

Jeff Carey talked about having something mentioned in the code on how to deal with the failure of population growth to meet certain projection points by certain times.

Ike Nwankwo talked about the population numbers that OFM sends out to the County and that there is an appeal process for the County to take within a certain time after receiving those numbers, of course the County is past that appeal time for this cycle.

Paula mentioned that taking the low projection population numbers posed the risk of having to amend the Comprehensive Plan if the County had a few years of high growth and development.

Jeff Carey mentioned that for every 3 houses that are built in the County 1 house stays empty. Dave mentioned that seasonal housing should be figured into the population projections. Marilyn asked Dave if he had adjusted how many houses we need to build after the discussion on the Housing chapter of the Comprehensive Plan. Dave answered that the number was raised and that they were also taking into account that different housing types would be needed.

Paula returned to the slides to discuss income spent on housing and homelessness.

Paula addressed Marilyn's concern about needing extra meetings, next meeting is June 19th with a briefing on Economic Development and a work session on Utilities. She mentioned a handout she provided at the meeting, the Skagit Countywide Planning Policies Preface as a good example of what planning policies do for Skagit County.

Jeff Carey commented on the Mason County Countywide Planning Policies as not matching the RCWs listed in the document, believes the County's policies are more complicated.

Vicki reviewed a history of the CWPP (Countywide Planning Policies) Chapter from its revisions starting in July 2015. She had concerns about going back when they have already gone through that chapter. Reflecting on her written comments to staff prior to the meeting, Vicki mentioned contemplating if the intentions of staff were that they go back and change elements of the CWPP due to changes made in other chapters.

Ike Nwankwo explained the GMA review process and mandated revisions, explained the importance of revising with the reality of time and resources in mind. Even when the draft is finalized there is a comment period in which the public can dispute something in the Comprehensive Plan, then the County can change or discuss why they didn't change it.

Ken Van Buskirk pointed out that there was no local governance in Belfair or Allyn that the County was coordinating with. There were specific points in the CWPP chapter that he believed the commission should really concentrate on in regards to the UGAs of Allyn and Belfair, point 1.1, 5.2, 5.3b, and 8.2.

Jason Bailey mentioned that if they didn't move forward with a 2016 plan while they were in 2017 timeline, he was afraid they would continue to spin the wheels in mud; need to move forward with items that needed to get done and then pick out what is important to them.

Lynn Longan from EDC mentioned they were bringing the EDC element for briefing on June 19th.

Gary Idleburg mentioned that jurisdictions are allowed to update their plan one time per year, after the mandated requirements have been submitted.

Jason Bailey asked how many chapters were in the Comp Plan and was worried about staff time.

Gary Idleburg mentioned that the CWPP chapter was required and that a good practice would be to sit down with representatives of Allyn, Belfair, and the County Commissioners to agree on the focus of this document.

Paula replied that they have two meetings with the Commissioners scheduled. Vicki would like staff to make recommendations of what should stay or change in the chapters. The PAC reviewed the elements of the timeline again.

Marilyn made a motion to pursue a complete review of the Comp Plan without sorting out what is mandated and what is not. Motion died for lack of second.

Paula explained the joint meeting process to Deb, usually consists of workshop format, preceded by an open house.

Marilyn mentioned that staff could evaluate the comments they get from the PAC that are due prior to the meeting, put them in the chapter, make changes as necessary, or if it needs more discussion bring it to the meeting

Aaron made a motion that they adopt the work plan as presented by staff and proceed forward, insuring that in adopting the plan, time is made for addressing the glossary, planning goals, and planning policies. Motion seconded by Marilyn, all in favor motion carried.

Dave mentioned he might have a few code issues to bring before the PAC while they are trying to address the Comp Plan, but he will lay out the options very clearly in order to speed along the discussion.

Jason would like to hear staff recommendations at the beginning of the topic discussions and he would like the agenda to be very clear on how much time they are allotted for discussion on particular items. Paula will amend the agenda to include time allotment.

New Business

Paula clarified that the land use and housing element portions that were on the schedule for this meeting were contained in the slides and were just a review of the County's current situation. The CWPP chapter was supposed to be discussed at this meeting but more review is apparently needed. Paula will take the PAC comments and make the adjustments to this document.

The PAC discussed additional meetings and being open to having them in case they were absolutely needed.

Adjournment

Jason made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:07 p.m.