



MASON COUNTY

PLANNING ADVISORY COMMISSION

MASON COUNTY COMMUNITY SERVICES

615 W. ALDER STREET, SHELTON, WA 98584

Meetings held at: Commissioners' Chambers

411 N. 5th Street Shelton, WA 98584

REGULAR MEETING

May 21, 2018

MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

James Thomas, Planning Advisory Commission Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:01 p.m. The following commissioners were in attendance:

Aaron Cleveland

Marilyn Vogler

James Thomas

Jamie Bariekman (arrived late)

Deb Soper

Brian Smith

Jason Bailey (arrived at 7:30)

2. REGULAR BUSINESS

A. APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES AND AGENDA

Motion was made by Commissioner Vogler and Seconded by Commissioner Smith to approve the minutes of the April 16, 2018 Regular meeting as presented.

Vote:

6 in favor

0 opposed

0 abstentions

Motion passed

There was discussion about the meeting summary vs. detailed minutes and a motion was made by Commissioner Vogler to add this topic to next month's agenda. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Cleveland.

Vote:

6 in favor

0 opposed

This is a short summary of the action that took place during the meeting. The audio recording of the meeting can be found on the Planning Advisory Commission page of the Mason County website.

0 abstentions
Motion passed

B. CHANGES TO THE AGENDA

None

C. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

None

D. NEXT REGULAR MEETING(S)

June 18, 2018

E. COMMITTEE/STAFF UPDATES

Dave Windom introduced Kell Rowen as the new Planning Manager and Marissa Watson as a Planner and Shelly Bellisle as the temporary Clerk of the Board.

F. OTHER BUSINESS

3. PUBLIC COMMENT ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

- Kim Oliver- She asked if it will be discussed tonight about changing from open space to forest lands. Dave Windom stated that this will not be talked about and he will contact her after the meeting.

4. BRIEFING – Map Correction-Marissa Watson

Parcel #61908-23-00010 needs to change on the map from Long Term Commercial Forest (LTCF) to Inholding Lands (IH). This parcel was designated IH in 2000, however the map incorrectly shows it as LTCF. This is a briefing and Planning staff will be bringing other rezone requests for a public hearing at the July meeting.

Break–6:15pm-6:37pm

5. Continued Public Meeting–Public Benefit Rating System

Staff Presentation/Brief

Kell Rowen reviewed the draft briefly and had some comments for consideration for the buffers in critical areas. She stated that the Planning Department requires protections of these areas. The PBRS could be an opportunity to give a tax incentive to people to make sure that people are protecting those buffers.

There was discussion regarding giving a tax incentive to protect the buffers. A tax incentive could help with restoration and enforcement. There was discussion as to why

give a tax incentive for properties that are already required by regulations to protect buffers.

Public Comment -

- **Gary Schuyten**

I have eight parcels and four of them are in open space. I think that the article in the Journal was very helpful. Two parcels have Christmas trees and two have timber. Depending on the PBRS rating system, I am very concerned that this will make my taxes go up and that I would have to sell my property instead of passing it down to my kids. My conflict is the increase in taxes. I would love to keep as open space but if I must sell it, then it will probably end up with a house on it.

- **Curtis Cousins**

I have 49.7 acres of farm land. I don't like people on my property, it is fenced and gated. I received a letter stating that I have until June 8th to respond or they will close out my file. Will a decision be made by June 8th? Commissioner Thomas stated that ultimately the decision will be made by the BOCC. Property is currently in farm/agriculture designation.

- **Ken VanBuskirk**

Ken asked Commissioner Thomas to recuse himself from this vote because he hasn't been fair or impartial since the whole PBRS started. He stated that the statements that Commissioner Thomas made in the Journal are incorrect and very misleading. Commissioner Thomas stated in the article that the PBRS was enacted in 1970 even though it was never used. The open space was enacted in 1970. The first county to use PBRS was Spokane County in 1983. Only 16 counties out of 39 use a PBRS. Mason County attempted to adopt a PBRS in 2007 and was not adopted then. It was said that tax abatements average 95 percent. That is incorrect, the actual average is 80 percent. Open space priorities that he believes should receive consideration separating incompatible land uses. Glad to see the buffer changes. Protect agriculture resource lands, critical aquifer protection areas, scenic natural resources should get credit. Are comments received from May 13 going to be reviewed tonight?

Ken stated that Commissioner Vogler asked if Mason County has been giving open space taxation credits since the 70's and the answer is yes. The average works out to be 70-75% reduction.

He also noted that it was the first time he has ever seen a planning commissioner do a guest column in the paper.

- **Kim Oliver**

The big picture is what is important. Now that I have read more, it makes more sense to me now. When considering this I like the fact that you are trying to make this fair. It is hard to define the value of actual open space, please be careful to not generalize to just make open space a tax break.

- **Scott Grout**

Has concerns about last month's meeting and he along with several other concerned citizens has met with each Mason County Commissioner. He read the by-laws from the Planning Commission. Commission Thomas doesn't fit the standard on what a chair should be, and he should recuse himself and Scott is filing a formal petition to have Commissioner Thomas removed from being the chair. Scott stated that he was very glad to see so many people here since he stated that Commissioner Thomas didn't want any one there. He read the enforcement action of the by-laws, this is section 8, page 4. He believes that the article in the Journal violates this by-law. He doesn't want intimidation tactics used in a public meeting. If the board won't remove Commission Thomas, then Scott will go the BOCC and request removal at a BOCC hearing per RCW 36.70.110. He asked each Commissioner to vote to remove Commissioner Thomas from the board.

- **Bob Allen**

Spent 20 years as a court commissioner in this county. The interesting thing going on right now is that currently some of our property is in open space some in full taxation. Put property in open space, so property would be seen. Contacted the building department about an agriculture building and a home

Bob grows several varieties of grapes and Christmas trees on the property. There is timber on the property as well. If open space required public access, his insurance rates would go up and he would have to get rid of the timber due to it being a possible hazard to the public. The other side of that same argument is his easement. People think that it is open space and that it is open to the public and this is a concern. People already think his blackberries are fair game to the public. Also has the same problem with his shellfish.

- **Michael Draper**

Questioned if everything under 5 acres is not allowed in the program and he has 5.6 acres and 4.6 currently designated as open space, will he be required to have to pay back taxes as stated earlier? Would we get any benefit by our property that is protected by the Tahuya river since we can't develop it?

- **Marilyn Laubach**

Do we have to have our land reevaluated every year if you go into PBRs? Do you have to start from square one if we are already in open space and got through

PBRS? Can you ignore the BOCC recommendations? She is tired of hearing the comment, "If you can't afford it, then sell it". We bought our property to live out our final years.

- **Ken VanBuskirk**

Researching other counties on PBRS, both King county and Kitsap county. Kitsap county starts at 50% reduction in taxes. Mason County is proposing very restrictive rating and only starting at 10% reduction. Please take a close look at the scale. Relook at the 5-acre minimum and do away with it.

- **Curt Cousins**

Question about open tax act, no later than July 1, 2006? What happened? The BOCC can answer that one.

- **Scott Gellatly**

If you increase taxation that forces people to sell, then you lose that open space anyway. I don't see a goal here except for more taxation. Use to tax timberland so they would cut the trees down and it would just go back to the county. This happened with some of the Olympic Forest. When you start messing around with taxation it won't change for the better. The wildlife will be gone. Pierce County has open space on golf courses, Thurston County also does this. I don't see how a PBRS will gain anything but losing open space.

Public Comment period was closed at 7:40 pm

Commissioner Deliberation

There was a conversation about what needs to be changed within the PBRS documents. There was also a reminder that just because we propose it doesn't mean that it will be accepted by the BOCC.

Break 8:01 pm-8:13

The BOCC states that there needs to be a minimum, however it needs to be lower than five acres. Five acres will cut out too many parcels.

Change page 11 to show a 1 acre minimum.

Page 4 exceptions language for item E- Will be considered on a case by case basis only. All other language should be deleted.

The point values need to be increased. Some suggestions are as follows:

0-5 points= 0%

6-9 points=20%

10-19 points=40%

20-29 points=60%

30-up=80%

Public access and/or restoration would add another 10%.

Kell Rowen will do another review and rewrite of the PBRs and will try to make it as simple as possible.

A motion was made by Commissioner Smith to continue this meeting to the next regular meeting that will be held on June 18, 2018, the motion was seconded by Commissioner Bariekman.

Vote:

6 in favor

0 opposed

0 abstentions

Motion passed

6. ADJOURN

Commissioner Thomas called meeting adjourned at 9:58 pm.