

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS OF THE
WHATCOM COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

1

October 1, 2009

Special Meeting

1 **Call To Order:** The meeting was called to order, by Whatcom County Planning
2 Commission Chair, Jean Melious, in Room 513 of the Whatcom County Courthouse at 6:42
3 p.m.

4
5 **Roll Call**

6 Present: Jean Melious, Geoff Menzies, Ken Mann, Sean Wilson, John Lesow, John Belisle,
7 Rabel Burdge

8 David Hunter in attendance at 6:47 p.m.

9 Absent: John Steensma

10
11 **Staff Present:** David Stalheim, Wain Harrison, Matt Aamot, Sarah Watts, Kate Blystone,
12 Rebecca Craven – Council Office, Becky Boxx

13

14 **Work Session**

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16 Whatcom County Urban Growth Area (UGA) Review

17

18 Blaine

19

20 The Commission discussed the Fire District being able to provide service to the (UGA).
21 Fire District #21 states it does not have the capacity to provide urban levels of service.

22

23 The issue of septic systems was discussed. There was debate regarding the failure rate
24 and how they are affecting Drayton Harbor.

25

26 Menzies moved to accept Option #1 (The Executive's proposal). Lesow seconded. The
27 motion carried.

28

29 The Commission discussed the use of Transfer of Development Rights (TDRs) in the
30 Drayton Harbor watershed. Staff wanted direction on policy issues. The receiving areas
31 would be within the UGAs, however the cities are not currently extending services outside
32 of their city limits which is one of the reasons the TDR program is not working.

33

34 Wilson moved to accept staff's proposed Option #2 to draft a policy establishing a TDR
35 sending area based on establishing buffers between UGAs. Hunter seconded. The motion
36 failed.

37

38 Mann moved to accept staff's proposed Option #1 to draft a policy establishing a TDR
39 sending area based on the Drayton Harbor watershed. Lesow seconded. The motion
40 carried.

41

42 The staff will come back with suggested policies.

43

44 Birch Bay

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46 The fire service issues that apply to Blaine also pertain to Birch Bay. Providing an urban
47 level of fire service to Birch Bay is not possible according to the district.

48

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1 Population was discussed and whether or not the UGA is oversized for that projected
2 population. The size of the UGA needs to be defensible in front of the Growth
3 Management Hearings Board and there needs to be consistency with all of the UGAs.

4
5 Burdge moved to accept Option #2 (Adopt the UGA to the land needed to accommodate
6 the projected population). Lesow seconded. The motion carried. With this proposal land
7 will need to be removed from the UGA so staff will come back, on October 15th, with
8 proposals of what land to take out.

9
10 Columbia Valley

11
12 Burdge moved to accept the Executive's proposal Option #2 (with amendments modifying
13 the UGA boundaries to include the parcel to the west (80 acres) side of the existing UGA
14 and includes the Urban Reserve area to the north. Wilson seconded.

15
16 The planned town center was discussed and whether or not keeping the 80 acres, to the
17 west, in or out of the UGA would affect it and if a town center was even necessary.

18
19 The vote on the motion failed.

20
21 Wilson moved to accept the Executives proposal Option #2 (with amendments modifying
22 the UGA boundary and to include the parcel to the west (80 acres) side of the existing
23 UGA and delete the Urban Reserve area to the north. Burdge seconded. The motion
24 carried.

25
26 **Work Session**

27
28 Changes to the Rural Element – Setbacks and buffers in Commercial zones.

29
30 At their meeting on September 22, 2009 the Planning Commission moved to change the
31 buffers from 50 to 100 feet. The Commission felt this issue needed further review because
32 it may render some parcels useless. Staff issued four options for the Commission to
33 consider. Belisle moved to accept Option #4 (keeps the buffer at 50 feet except for newly
34 created parcels which will have a 100 foot buffer). Lesow seconded. The motion carried.

35
36 The meeting was adjourned at 10:15 p.m.

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38 Minutes prepared by B. Boxx.

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40
41 WHATCOM COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION ATTEST:

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43
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46 _____
47 Jean Melious, Chair

David Stalheim, Secretary