

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS OF THE
WHATCOM COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

1

February 11, 2010

Regular Meeting

1 **Call To Order:** The meeting was called to order, by Whatcom County Planning
2 Commission Chair, Jean Melious, in the Northwest Annex conference room at 6:34 p.m.

3
4 **Roll Call**

5 Present: Jean Melious, Gary Honcoop, Michelle Luke, Rod Erickson, John Lesow, Jeff
6 Rainey, Rabel Burdge

7 Absent: John Belisle

8
9 **Staff Present:** David Stalheim, Wain Harrison, Kate Blystone, Becky Boxx

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11 **Director's Dialog**

12

13 Director Stalheim gave an overview of the Planning Department work program for the
14 year.

15

16 **Open Session for Public Comment**

17

18 There was no public comment.

19

20 **Commissioner Comments**

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22 Burdge apologized for proposing a resolution via email to other Commissioners, rather
23 than at a meeting.

24

25 Rainey mentioned an article from the Bellingham Herald regarding agriculture and how
26 Whatcom County farming ranks among other counties in the State.

27

28 Melious congratulated Commissioner Honcoop who was voted Builder of the Year by the
29 Building Industry Association of Whatcom County.

30

31 Melious stated there will be an AICP credit program being presented at WWU regarding
32 law, including rural character and impact fees February 24, 2010, 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. at
33 WWU.

34

35 **Approval of Minutes** of January 28, 2010

36

37 Melious requested Page 1, Line 33 read: ...presented at WWU regarding law, ~~ethics,~~
38 including rural character and impact fees. Lesow moved to approve at amended. Erickson
39 seconded. The motion carried.

40

41 **Work Session**

42

43 CMP2008-00006 - Proposed language changes to the Birch Bay Community Plan and the
44 Whatcom County Comprehensive Plan regarding urban levels of service to fire protection
45 and emergency medical response in the Birch Bay Urban Growth Area.

46

47 Staff stated the levels of service for fire and emergency service in the Fire District #21
48 Capital Facilities Plan, which was adopted by reference as part of the Whatcom County

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1 Comprehensive Plan, and the Birch Bay Community Plan (BBCP) are different. The BBCP
2 states a "gold standard" for successful emergency medical services at a four to six minute
3 response time. They state a standard for fire response at five minutes. The fire district is
4 not capable of meeting these standards which are for urban levels. Staff feels this is a
5 minor change and this review has gone through the public process. The County wants to
6 establish a countywide level of service by December 2011.

7
8 **Burdge moved to adopt the staff recommendation (Exhibit A, which is the staff**
9 **report of February 4, 2010 and the revision to 15-5). Lesow seconded.**

10
11 Some members of the Commission felt there had not been enough public participation
12 regarding this issue while others felt there has been enough since the last hearing on the
13 issue in March 2009. There was also debate as to how the "gold standard" got adopted
14 into the BBCP. Kathy Berg, the steering committee representative, stated their consultant
15 recommended this response time, even though the committee thought they couldn't have
16 a different standard then the rest of the county. The fire district never gave them what
17 they felt was a true response time and what it would cost versus the "gold standard" time.

18
19 **Roll Call Vote: Ayes: Burdge, Lesow, Melious; Nays – Erickson, Honcoop, Luke,**
20 **Rainey; Abstain – 0; Absent – Belisle. The motion failed.**

21
22 Director Stalheim stated to the Commission that it was important to have a Planning
23 Commission recommendation forwarded to the Council. The Commission suggested PDS
24 staff draft a recommendation which they will review at their next meeting.

25
26 **Other Business**

27
28 Burdge proposed sending a resolution to the County Council requesting they direct PDS to
29 prepare recommendations on levels of service for all services and facilities required within
30 the County, for both urban and rural areas, which would include the costs of each service
31 to the community. Lesow seconded.

32
33 Director Stalheim stated there are level of service standards for all County facilities and
34 services, but they do not distinguish between urban and residential. The County does not
35 have level of service standards for other services not provided by the County such as
36 water, fire, sewer, etc. The Director did not feel the County could ascertain the costs of
37 each individual service.

38
39 The Planning Commission chair felt this issue needed to be reviewed by PDS staff and
40 noticed to the public before any further action was taken. The Commission agreed to have
41 this issue brought back at the next meeting.

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43 The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

44
45 Minutes prepared by B. Boxx.

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1 WHATCOM COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION ATTEST:

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Jean Melious, Chair

David Stalheim, Secretary

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