

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS OF THE  
**WHATCOM COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION**

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July 23, 2009

Regular Meeting

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1 **Call To Order:** The meeting was called to order, by Whatcom County Planning  
2 Commission Chair, Jean Melious, in the County Council Chambers at 6:36 p.m.

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4 **Roll Call:**  
5 Present: Jean Melious, David Hunter, Geoff Menzies, John Belisle, Sean Wilson, Ken Mann  
6 and John Steensma.  
7 Absent: Rabel Burdge, John Lesow.

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9 **Staff Present:** David Stalheim, Wain Harrison, Gary Davis, Michelle Stiles, Samya Lutz,  
10 Becky Boxx

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12 **Director's Dialog**

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14 Director Stalheim reviewed the work program for the end of 2009 and first quarter of  
15 2010.

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17 **Open Session for Public Comment**

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19 Wendy Harris, Whatcom County: The City of Bellingham says it may place restrictions on  
20 water use due to algae growth that are plugging the filters. This is relevant because an  
21 adequate water supply is required to construct a building.

22  
23 Jack Petree, Whatcom County: Wants to see the rural process kept civil.

24  
25 Doug Pullar, Whatcom County: Spoke of the aquifer in the Axton Road area.

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27 **Commissioner Comments**

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29 There were no Commissioner Comments.

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31 **Approval of Minutes** of June 16, 2009.

32  
33 Hunter was listed at absent when in fact he was at the meeting. Mann moved to approve  
34 as corrected. Wilson seconded. The motion carried.

35  
36 **Work Session**

37  
38 **File #PLN2009-00011:** To consider changes to the Rural Element of the Whatcom  
39 County Comprehensive Plan and to Whatcom County's development regulations pertaining  
40 to land uses and densities in rural areas of the County.

41  
42 The Commission discussed the options they have with the staff proposals. They can adopt  
43 the proposals, reject the proposals, alter the proposals or put the project on hold until the  
44 Washington State Supreme Court hears the case. Commissioner Hunter was satisfied with  
45 the proposals. The rest of the Commission chose to make alternations to the proposals.

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1 **Nonconforming status**

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3 The Commission discussed their concerns with businesses that will become nonconforming  
4 with the proposal. They may be subject to more stringent financing restrictions and may  
5 not be allowed to expand their business or allow a different type of business to exist  
6 without a conditional use permit.

7  
8 The Commission, with the exception of Commissioner Hunter, requested staff look at ways  
9 to have zoning regulations reflect the commercial and industrial uses established as of  
10 1990 and perhaps allow more uses in the RIM zone.

11  
12 **Spacing of LAMIRDs**

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14 The Commission discussed changing their current recommendation of ½ mile spacing  
15 between LAMIRDs. The ½ mile spacing eliminates some businesses, existing prior to  
16 1990, from being in LAMIRDs. If the spacing is too close the County may be in compliance  
17 with GMA. The Commission examined making a stretch of the Guide Meridian, from Smith  
18 Road to Hemmi Road all LAMIRD, however as of 1990 there was considerable area that  
19 was not developed at that time. The Commission chose to stay with the ½ mile spacing  
20 recommendation.

21  
22 **Water Service as Criteria for boundaries**

23  
24 This issue primarily applies to the Glacier area, however there may be other areas. More  
25 properties could potentially be included in the LAMIRDs if water service was in place in  
26 1990 but were not developed. This can't be the only factor to determine the boundary.  
27 The Commission directed staff to review the proposed boundaries where water service  
28 existed in 1990.

29  
30 **Minimum lot size outside of LAMIRDs**

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32 Initially the Commission recommended a 10 acre minimum for residential zoning, in the  
33 affected areas, outside LAMIRDs. A majority of the surrounding lots, outside the affected  
34 areas are zoned 5 acres. The Commission discussed changing their recommendation. It  
35 was suggested each area be revisited and looked at on a case by case basis. The  
36 Commission voted 4-3 to leave the proposed minimum lot size at 10 acres.

37  
38 **Residential LAMIRDs**

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40 The Commission had directed staff that Type I LAMIRDs should be designated in areas  
41 that had both commercial and residential uses in 1990, with no residential only LAMIRDs.  
42 The Commission discussed changing this. Areas that would be included in residential only  
43 LAMIRDs would include Sandy Point, Cain Lake and Emerald Lake. The Commission  
44 directed staff to look into the issue of having residential only LAMIRDs and what affect  
45 that would have.

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1 The meeting was adjourned at 10:35 p.m.

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3 Minutes prepared by B. Boxx.

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6 WHATCOM COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION ATTEST:

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Jean Melious, Chair

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David Stalheim, Secretary