



THURSTON COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

Minutes July 19th, 2023

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2 **1. 6:31 PM. CALL TO ORDER**

3 Chair Casino called the Thurston County Planning Commission meeting on July 19th, 2023, to
4 order at 6:31 PM Commissioners provided self-introductions.
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6 **Attendance:** Eric Casino (Chair), Derek Day (Vice Chair), Helen Wheatley, Jim Simmons,
7 Kevin Pestinger, Scott Nelson, Joel Hansen, Barry Halverson
8

9 **Thurston Staff:** Maya Teeple, Ashley Arai, Amelia Schwartz, Jeremy Davis
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12 **2. 6:33 PM. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

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14 **MOTION: Commissioner Day moved to approve the amended agenda. Commissioner**
15 **Nelson seconded. The motion was carried, as amended.**
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18 **3. 6:34 PM. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

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20 **MOTION: Commissioner Hansen moved to approve the July 5th, 2023 meeting minutes.**
21 **Commissioner Simmons seconded. Motion carried, with a vote of 6 yea and 1 abstain.**
22

23 **MOTION: Commissioner Pestinger moved to approve the July 10th, 2023 meeting**
24 **minutes. Commissioner Hansen seconded. Motion carried, with a vote of 6 yea and 1**
25 **abstain.**
26

27 **The audio recording is the official record of the above-dated meetings. The information**
28 **herein is provided as an overview of the meeting and a road map to the audio record-**
29 **ing. Audio is available online on the [Thurston County Planning Commission](https://www.thurstoncountypa.org/planning-commission) website.**
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32 **4. 6:35 PM PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS (Not associated with topics for which**
33 **public hearings have been held.)**
34

- 35 1. Phyllis Ferrel, Olympia
36 2. Lee Reiner, Olympia
37 2. Same Payne, Yelm
38 3. Marcie Cleaver, Lacey
39 4. Chris Hajduk, Olympia
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41
42 **New Business**

43 None
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1 **Continued Business**

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3 5. **6:52 P.M WORK SESSION # 4: CPA-21, POGUE SITE- SPECIFIC LAND USE PLAN**
4 **& REZONING AMENDMENT**

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6 Ms. Schwartz presented the draft Planning Commission's findings that will be
7 presented to the BoCC.

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9 Commissioner Wheatley and Commissioner Pestinger were concerned that part of
10 Commissioner Wheatley's findings were not added to the findings list. Ms.
11 Schwartz assured the commission that the findings in the staff report would be
12 sent to the BoCC. A further discussion arose surrounding the specific language to
13 include in the recommendation letter. The commissioners decided to add sections
14 for critical oaks and Land Use Goal 1 Policy B. 10 in the recommendation letter.
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16 6. **7:24 PM WORK SESSION # 4 LONG-TERM AGRICULTURE ZONING UPDATE**

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18 Ms. Arai and Ms. Teeple presented the summary of decisions from the July 5th
19 work session as well as current decision points needed from the Planning
20 Commission during this work session. The Planning Commission's first decision
21 point is whether to revise policy language to protect prime farmland soils while ac-
22 commodating mining accessory uses. Discussion ensued, and a majority ruled by
23 thumbs to change the policy language.
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25 The next decision for the Planning Commission is to include class 4w soils and
26 class 4s soils. Ms. Arai explained to the committee that the "w" stands for wetness
27 in the soil, and the "s" stands for soil limitations. The class 4w soils represent ap-
28 proximately 15% of the baseline acreage. Priority habitat for the Oregon Spotted
29 Frog, seasonally wet woodlands, or the area contains wetlands with limited ag use
30 allowed in the dry season. Class 4s represented 26% baseline acreage, stony soils,
31 and are prone to drought. These soils are habitats for the pocket gopher, check-
32 erspot butterfly, and vesper sparrow. Soil is conserved through the Habitat Con-
33 servation Plan (HCP), sentinel lands, and other state/federal prairie conservation
34 efforts. Commissioner Halverson asked if the county counted the state Capitol
35 Forest or land from JBLM in the figures. Ms. Arai states that soil within those ar-
36 eas is not included in the XYZ scenarios presented previously.
37

38 Chair Casino asked to split the decision as a few commissioners agreed they don't
39 feel it is appropriate to tell a citizen what to do with their land if they are in an
40 area containing 4s soils. Commissioner Nelson mentioned the 4s soils you can at
41 least winter cattle on, but the 4w soils would be too wet. Commissioner Simmons
42 asked if the 4w soils were not included if Commissioner Nelson would feel okay
43 about that. Commissioner Nelson stated he would be fine. Chair Casino asked the
44 rest of the group how they felt. A thumb vote was taken, and the majority agreed
45 to remove the 4w soils. Commissioner Wheatley stated she had no opinion on the
46 matter due to wanting further public feedback first. Commissioner Pestinger
47 agreed with Commissioner Wheatley.
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1 Commissioner Halverson asked about the 4s soils and what types of agriculture
2 are happening on those soils currently. Ms. Arai stated it is too difficult to map
3 those without having a particular category. Commissioner Halverson asked if it is
4 known what categories of 4s soils are more prone to agriculture than others. Ms.
5 Arai said there were five soil types, one of which hardly has acreage. The other
6 four are the Indianola's five to fifteen, Indianola zero to five, Spanaway gravelly
7 standalone zero to three if irrigated, and Spanaway Nisqually complex two to ten
8 percent if irrigated. Her understanding is the prairies are more in the Spanaway
9 Nisqually and Spanaway Gravelly areas. Commissioner Halverson asked what per-
10 centage that. Ms. Arai stated 4800 acres in the baseline. He asked about the per-
11 centage of the 4800 acres that are currently being farmed. Ms. Arai stated she was
12 not sure, and it would be hard to map due to having to use a specific scenario that
13 is in an open space ag.
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15 Commissioner Wheatley stated she was asked to call out the Spanaway Nisqually
16 complex and Spanaway Gravelly Sandy Loam as being the ones to include. Ms.
17 Arai states another hole to what is currently being farmed is if those lands have
18 access to irrigation.
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20 The Planning Commissioners were unable to reach a decision about the 4s soil
21 types. Chair Casino asked if there was further information the group would like to
22 see from staff to help decide. Commissioner Day asked if staff could bring back
23 the current ag use on the 4s soil types. That would help him.
24

25 The third decision for the Planning Commission is the Agricultural Designation
26 Criteria. How much percentage of the parcel must be prime soils? Seventy-five
27 percent, fifty percent, or something that has not been considered by the stakehold-
28 ers' workgroup. Commissioner Nelson asked if somebody has less than 75 per-
29 cent, will their parcel be pulled out of long-term ag? Ms. Teeple states the current
30 land that is already designated will not be adjusted. The reason for that is the
31 number of currently enrolled parcels is seventy-five to ninety percent, as actively
32 working lands and soils are considered a non-exclusive criterion for designation.
33 The majority of the Planning Commission voted for the percentage of a parcel
34 must be 75% or greater prime farm soil. The majority of the Planning Commis-
35 sion wanted to keep the predominant parcel size at 20 acres. The next designation
36 criteria decision was what should the block size be. The majority of the Planning
37 Commission agreed to 40+ acres. Planning Commission was not ready to decide
38 on code updates for LTA.
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40 **Other Business**

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42 **7. 9:14 PM: STAFF UPDATES**

43 Mr. Davis Reminded commissioners to fill out the Doodle poll for the City of
44 Lacey and Thurston County Joint Plan meetings. On July 26th at 9 AM, there is a
45 Shoreline Master Plan update with the BoCC. On August 3rd, there is a wireless
46 code briefing and ground mound sub-area briefing.
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2 **8. 9:15 PM: CALENDAR**

3 *August 2nd, 2023: Work Session # 6 Long-Term Agriculture Zoning Update*

4 *August 16th, 2023: Public Hearing Forest Conversion Ordinance*


5 *Work Session #1 Capital Improvement Program*

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7 **9. 9:16 PM: GOOD OF THE ORDER**

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9 **10. 9:17 PM: ADJOURN**

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11 With no further business, Chair Casino adjourned the meeting at 9:17 PM.

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Eric Casino, Chair

Prepared by Tosha Knight