

**ISLAND COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
SUMMARY MINUTES
COMMISSIONER'S HEARING ROOM, COUPEVILLE, WA
July 13, 2010**

	<i>Members Present</i>	<i>Members Absent</i>
<i>District 1</i>		<i>Val Hillers</i>
	<i>Dean Enell</i>	
	<i>Mike Joselyn</i>	
<i>District 2</i>		<i>Terry Reynolds</i>
	<i>Mitchell Howard</i>	
	<i>Mahmoud Abdel-Monem</i>	
<i>District 3</i>	<i>Wayne Havens</i>	
	<i>William Lippens</i>	
		<i>Scott Yonkman</i>

Vice Chair Wayne Havens called the meeting to order and introduced the newest Commissioner Mitchell Howard, who is filling an un-expired term.

ROLL CALL

Mitchell Howard, Dean Enell, Wayne Havens, Mike Joselyn, Mahmoud Abdel-Monem, Bill Lippens

APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

March 9, 2010 minutes

Commissioner Joselyn moved to accept the minutes as written, Commissioner Abdel-Monem seconded the motion, motion carried unanimously.

March 23, 2010 minutes

Commissioner Joselyn moved to accept the minutes as written, Commissioner Abdel-Monem seconded the motion, motion carried unanimously.

ITEMS FROM THE PUBLIC

Rufus Rose, 6529 Four Sisters (Private) Rd., South Whidbey.

Discussed the economy and the function of the Planning Commission in recommending and advising the Board of County Commissioners regarding the economy. He referenced page 150 of the Island County Comprehensive Plan, Economic Development. GMA also has an element regarding the economy. He feels many counties are suffering due to a lack of foresight regarding what should be done about our local economy.

He provided the specific example of the changes to mini-storage, an action the Planning Commission recommended and the Board took action on. No economic considerations were made relating to the change in the code. He urged the Commission to read RCW

43.21H, a state policy to insure that economic values be given appropriate consideration in rule-making process.

He further encouraged the Commission to have independent ideas and call their own meetings. Economic considerations are vitally important, there are things that are not being done that could be considered that would benefit the citizens of Island County.

PLANNING DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Director Robert Pederson provided an update on several issues:

- 3 year process to update the Shoreline Master Program, which has been combined with the Fish & Wildlife Element of the Critical Areas Ordinance.
- Submitted a grant to the Department of Ecology. The grant itself was designed to assist counties in the update process. It is expected it will be awarded very soon.
- RFP for a consultant to work through the public participation element and the Best Available Science over the next three years. The Planning Commission will play a key role in this process.
- Selected three finalists for the Permit Tracking Software who will be demonstrating their software on July 27th & 28th. He invited the Planning Commission and the public to attend.
- Ebey's unified design manual and code update effort is in process. The current meetings are focusing on the design manual.
- This years docket update
 - Freeland Sub Area Plan – anticipating the draft documents will be ready soon and will be presented to the public at three public meetings in Freeland and then it will come to the Planning Commission in late fall.
 - Parks & Recreation Element, being worked on under contract with Public Works and their consultant and should also be coming to the Planning Commission in late fall.

NEW BUSINESS - Public Hearing & Deliberations

Public Works

Adoption of the Six-Year Transportation Improvement Program 2011 – 2016 and the Capital Improvement Program 2011 – 2016

Public Works director Bill Oakes introduced Donna Keller as the new Transportation Planner and the author of this program. He then provided a look at the budget realities.

- Statewide gas tax down 3%, which is directly tied to the number of gallons sold in the State.
- Local refund of gas tax collected on gallons sold in Island County is down 17%.
- Real Estate Excise Tax, which funds most of the non-transportation improvements are barely covering their debt service for the year.

TIP - Overview

In the transportation program Public Works is concentrating on very small safety projects, drainage outfall projects or heavily leveraged projects where State or Federal funds allow the maximum benefit for any local dollars used.

He provided information on a revision to the Island County 6-Year Transportation Improvement Program; under item # 7 at the direction of the DOT and the Regional Transportation Planning Commission has increased these numbers by \$15,000 in 2011 and \$10,000 in the following years to support the regional transportation efforts. The project specific change was to project 21 the Freeland Trail; the limits of that trail were changed and the dollars reduced slightly because a right of way will not need to be acquired.

With those changes he recommended approval.

Camano has no new projects, over the past few years the majority of the construction has been on Camano. All the Camano projects are existing projects. Highlights of the Camano Projects are:

- Arrowhead Road – a safety improvement (improving the narrow shoulders and improving the vertical and horizontal alignment) heavily leveraged with State funds.
- Terry's Corner, Phase 4 – ongoing improvement to support Park & Ride and an intersection improvement. Phase 4 will address the off ramp function. (Federally leveraged)
- East Camano & McElroy – intersection improvement (Federally funded)
- Simonson Place Retaining Wall & Outfall – a combined project for drainage and road improvements down to the boat launch.

On Whidbey he discussed some of the safety improvement projects:

- Troxell Road & Highway 20 signalization – to further conversation with DOT
- Banta Road & Highway 20 signalization – to further conversation with DOT
- Frostad Road – safety improvement to add shoulders and improve the intersection (heavily leveraged with State funds)
- Clover Valley intersection improvement (heavily leveraged with Federal funding)
- Reservation Road, south of Crescent Harbor Road – safety improvements (leveraged with State funding)
- West Beach shoulder widening and guardrail to improve safety
- Boon Road, adding shoulders and correcting alignment (leveraged with State funds)
- Hastie Lake & Zylstra Road – safety improvements to improve sight distance for the stopped vehicles. (Federally funded)
- Race to Houston connector – Federally funded feasibility study.
- Myrtle Road Pathway – at the request of the Friends of Freeland

- East Harbor & Stewart Ave. intersection alignment – to realign Stewart and correct the extreme intersection angle (locally funded, but fairly small project)
- Freeland Trail – from Bush Point to Main Street in Freeland. (Will coincide with a future Park & Ride location) It will be similar to the Kettles (requesting significant Federal funding).
- Scurlock Road & Smugglers Cove Road intersection improvements – safety improvement (requesting significant Federal funds)
- Honeymoon Bay Road intersection improvements to add a right hand turn lane – to keep the intersection from failing
- Woodard Road Section 1 – longstanding project agreed to with DOT to provide a left turn route for the Park and Ride.
- Harbor Ave. & SR 525 – signalization proposal with the State – hope to get DOT to discuss long term fixes at Harbor Ave. The County limb of Harbor Avenue is failing.
- Maxwellton Road Outfall – drainage project to help eliminate flooding
- Swede Hill Road & Burley Road intersection – small project funded locally for safety improvement.
- Anderson Road Culvert – the culvert is a deep culvert that is failing and needs replaced.

CIP - Overview

The first 4 items are debt service payments.

Public Works funding is to support staff effort in supporting surface water and other capital improvements.

In the individual project lines:

1. Fairgrounds restroom materials – existing project to support the restroom facility, public works to provide materials and the fairgrounds to enlist volunteer and build the facility.
2. GMA infrastructure – supports GMA infrastructure planning – to date it has been used for is to support the planning of the Freeland Sewer.
3. Jail control replacement project going to bid shortly. The need is a safety improvement. The jail controls are very old and consist of lock controls, intercom controls, fire and air handling controls and are all in need of replacement.
4. Jail HVAC renovation, the heating & air conditioning is showing its age and in need of replacement, hoping for some leverage funds, Federal energy efficiency funds.
5. Libbey/Kettles Trailhead. Trails Council has requested several projects, the Libbey/Kettles trailhead was the most feasible. It is an existing trailhead but it has never been sanctioned – by owning the land, and making access improvements.
6. Solid Waste turn lane improvements – partnering with all of the businesses and agencies that use the area of the Coupeville landfill to work on a plan to add a left hand turn lane.
7. Swan Lake Feasibility Study – a request by the Swan Lake Preservation Group for REET funds to support their feasibility study.

The on-going project lines:

8. Fairgrounds improvement is a dollar amount that is given to the fairgrounds every year to support their capital improvements
9. Flood Control /Diking Facilities is a dollar amount set aside for assisting flood control and diking facilities in their work
10. Parks & Open Space acquisitions are Conservation Futures Funds
11. Parks development & Improvements are the Parks request for improvements over the year, from REET 2 funds.
12. Parks maintenance & operations funding goes to support Conservation Futures Funding
13. Repairs, Maintenance & Emergency Repairs are all in facilities work for buildings on and off campus.
14. 6 year Road Program including trails (TIP)
15. 6 year Capital Drainage Program.
16. Solid Waste facility improvements - an ongoing program to support their capital improvements.
17. Miscellaneous unforeseen capital projects - for capital projects that are REET eligible that come up through the years.

Commissioner Lippens asked for the definitions of several acronyms and was provided the following answers: PE – engineering, includes design, right of way acquisition, and construction; RW – right of way, land that needs to be purchased; CN – is shorthand for construction dollars.

Commissioner Enell stated he had submitted a proposal for what he sees as a large impending traffic problem in the future for the Freeland area, and wanted feedback on the request.

Mr. Oakes stated they had looked at the issue and it was primarily the lack of funding. State or Federal dollars will not help fund a new road. Long term for that to be a possibility it will require working with the Federal legislatures to determine whether there can be a project designation to fund that project. It is also the only funding that will build the Race to Houston collector. It is in essence a Congressional line item that gave Island County the feasibility money; it would be the same thing that would provide the construction money. New roads are difficult to fund from a local or State perspective. The County is in a financial position at this point that large projects just cannot be funded.

Commissioner Joselyn asked about # 17 in the TIP, the Honeymoon Bay Road improvement, asked about concurrency money and where those dollars comes from.

Director Oakes replied that it is SEPA: projects that effect concurrency, such as impacts from subdivisions larger than 10 lots that effect this intersection.

Commissioner Joselyn also asked about Harbor Ave and Hwy 20 – signal vs. roundabout.

Mr. Oakes replied that a signal is much cheaper than a roundabout; the State prefers the roundabout as they do not want traffic to stop and start on the incline there and a roundabout keeps traffic moving.

Commissioner Howard asked why the State prefers roundabouts.

Mr. Oakes stated that it is more accurate that the northwest region of the DOT prefers roundabouts. The roundabout like any traffic control tool has its place, it is a tool that allows equal access and maintains flow. A signal is like a valve, it does not provide equal access, but rather opens like a valve as needed with the main flow being given the priority.

Commissioner Enell asked what impact the county budget shortfall is having on Public Works.

Mr. Oakes replied that the down turn started in the middle of '08 and there has been a 12 ½ percent reduction in staff. There have been Solid Waste impacts. Solid Waste is a trailing economic indicator, people are not buying as much, and they are not throwing as much away. The Solid Waste fund is an enterprise fund, set up to charge fees to support itself; it gets very little grant money. It depends on the volume and fees collected. Those fees are flat so staff has also been reduced there.

Public Works also includes Parks, which have been devastated, it took a 37% cut and then another 20% cut of what was left and if the levy lid lift does pass it would result in another 30% cut. As a result maintenance is simply deferred. There will be one part-time person per island to maintain 50 parks.

It will result in no port-a-potty's being put out and no trash receptacles. There will be vandalism patrols and doing vegetation maintenance only.

Question regarding the extension of time for resurfacing roads. Answer - very conscious of revisiting roads, it has gone from 7 to 15 years on average. The data shows the 15 year timeframe is not currently causing a problem with the island's low volume roads; however you cannot go much further than that without having the roads fail, which will then require rebuilding the road. Public Works is very conscious about the correct revisit time.

Commissioner Abdel-Monem asked about the funding on the listed projects. Some are listed as secured funding and some have no indication.

Mr. Oakes replied that Federal or State funding cannot be requested prior to the project being in the plan. If it is in the plan, funds can be requested and then if the funds are secured then the project becomes fully funded and moves forward. In essence some projects are speculative.

Vice Chair Havens called for a motion to begin discussion on these two items.

Commissioner Howard so moved, Commissioner Abdel-Monem seconded

Vice Chair Havens then opened the floor for public comment

Rufus Rose, 6529 Four Sisters Rd.

Complimented the Public Works Director and his staff for their hard work. He then asked about a specific problem with a seawall on Swan Lake that has deteriorated and how the public interest is protected as well as the County's interest with the potential threat to the road and the house of a friend.

Planning Director, Robert Pederson replied that in this particular instance an emergency permit was issued to Public Works to place six man rocks to protect the roadway and the gentleman is undergoing permitting to replace the seawall. The seawall had deteriorated to the extent that a new high tide line had been established so it could not be replaced as an exemption and required a shoreline permit that had to be approved by the Department of Ecology as required by the WACs due to the fact the seawall was allowed to deteriorate to the extent it had.

Mr. Rose stated he was concerned that process would get in the way of protecting roads.

Director Oakes stated that an emergency action was taken to place a rock revetment at the right of way line to stop the beach erosion. It was also thought it would be a drift wood barrier, the real issue at West Beach is that a high tide and a west wind lifts debris over the spit and deposits it on the road. There was an obvious threat to a public facility and emergency action was taken very quickly.

Mr. Rose stated he also had an issue with the speed limit at Bayview it is not safe, especially if the road is wet.

Mr. Oakes stated it was a State Highway and under their control.

Mr. Rose then stated he is concerned about the amount of work load that is being put upon the Public Works Department. There is only so much a department can carry and do a credible job. There is a lot of desire to do a lot of things we can't afford and he asked the Planning Commission to keep this in mind and voice their concerns to the County Commissioners.

He also mentioned the Trillium property – Mr. Oakes, Mr. Pederson and the Sheriff will be required to care for that property. Having it become a park is a wonderful thing, but the far reaching impacts that become the problem of the county should be considered early on in the decision making process.

Liz Williams, 5017 Bayview Road, Langley

Stated a concern regarding people doing whatever they want to do without following the land use rules and her concern is that it results in being a budget concern for the County down the road. She thinks enforcement or incentive to get people to follow the rules

should be considered. If there was a consequence to their actions they may rethink what they are doing.

She further stated she feels trapped owning part of Crawford Road from the State Highway to Bayview Road. Over the years they fix the potholes on this road as money and time allows. It was once part of the Transportation Plan, but it fell off the plan. She stated she didn't understand how a Transportation Concurrency Permit can be issued for new development on a private road that is not up to standards.

Commissioner Enell stated he too feels something needs to be done about that area.

Mr. Oakes stated it was on the 6-year plan as part of a RID (Road Improvement District), which is a taxing mechanism that sets up a district along the road that would maintain and improve the road. There was a study and several public meetings to no successful end. It requires all owners to agree to be part of that taxing district. It is a tough partnership to build.

Vice Chair Havens called for a motion to approve the 6-year Transportation Improvement Program.

Commissioner Abdel-Monem so moved, Commissioner Joselyn seconded the motion, motion carried unanimously.

Vice Chair Havens called for a motion to approve the 6-year Capital Improvement Program

Commissioner Joselyn so moved, Commissioner Howard seconded, motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Joselyn moved to adjourn, Commissioner Lippens seconded, motion carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 10:47 a.m.

Respectfully submitted

Paula Bradshaw