Meeting was reconvened from the September 10, 2013 meeting and called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Chair Havens.

**ROLL CALL**

Leal Dickson, Val Hillers, Wayne Havens, Mike Joselyn, Jim Hall

Planning staff present: David Wechner – Planning Director, Kira Swanson – Critical Area Planner, Brad Johnson – Long Range Planner.

**ITEMS FROM THE PUBLIC**

None

**DIRECTOR’S REPORT**

David Wechner provided an update regarding the department.

- Advised of two new job hires, one replacement and one new.
- Introduced the new current use planner with seven years of experience, Michelle Pezley, who will be staffing the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC).
- Provided information regarding improvements in procedure and protocol in the office, such as examining permit delays, looking at routing and communication with State agencies, particularly SEPA Determinations. Improving the office configuration to improve service to customers, including identifying a conference room to conduct Pre-Applications and other face to face meetings that need to occur.
- New procedures for accessing and reviewing public records.

**OLD BUSINESS – Continued from September 10, 2013 Planning Commission meeting:**

Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Area (FWHCA): Public Participation Plan
Review and consideration of a public participation plan for the update to the FWHCA regulations. This plan identifies a preliminary schedule for the FWHCA update and ensures Island County complies with RCW 36.70A.

Kira Swanson provided background on the topic, discussing the fact that the 2005 update failed to address the Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Update, to support species and maintain species populations and species diversity in the County. Under the State Growth Management Act the Department is required to ensure continuous and early public participation in the update process. The purpose of the Public Participation Plan is to outline a schedule for that update and to outline how the public can be engaged throughout the update in order to provide meaningful input into the process.

Through a grant from the Department of Commerce in the amount of $250,000 the Department has hired the Watershed Company as consultants to assist in this update.

The first phase is to:

- Establish a preliminary Scope of Work and Public Participation Plan.
- Assemble a Technical Advisory Group (TAG).
- Assess Habitat Conditions.
- Best Available Science Report and Recommendations.
- Revising the Code based on the recommendations and the Science.
- SEPA analysis and public review.
- Final Adoption by July of 2014.

Ms. Swanson explained the different methods of how the public will involved throughout this process:

- Conduction public meetings, hearings, and workshops.
- Assembled the TAG to help provide input and ensure Best Available Science is incorporated.
- New Department website devoted to hosting important documents so everyone in the public has the opportunity to review that information.
- Maintaining an email distribution list for notifications of public meetings, hearings, and workshops, as well as advising when new information will be available on the website.

Each phase of the process identifies how public input will be incorporated.

Commissioner Dickson asked how the schedule and deadline dates were created and whether they were reasonable.

Kira Swanson replied the dates were determined in conjunction with the consultants to develop a schedule that would be feasible and would accommodate the work required. She stated she believed it was a good schedule that would allow us to complete the update on time. There are a lot of opportunities that have been incorporated for public review and public feedback to establish meaningful public engagement during the process.
Commissioner Dickson inquired about the requirements of the State to produce a Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Areas Update. What changes does the Department anticipate will be made to the existing Code.

Ms. Swanson replied that until the state of the science is reviewed and then compared to the current Code the needed changes will not be known.

Commissioner Hall asked how the TAG had been created.

Ms. Swanson replied that the grant application identified a core group of groups or individuals with technical expertise and that formed the backbone of the TAG. There were other groups then identified by the Department, there is a tool called the Watershed Characterization which is prepared by the Department of Ecology which will be used in the analysis; so as an example there is a member on the TAG who is one of the experts on the panel that developed that tool.

The groups were asked to nominate one person with very strong technical knowledge of habitats in Island County to be part of that group.

Commissioner Hillers moved to make the presentations and testimony received at the September 10, 2013 meeting part of this official record. Commissioner Dickson seconded, motion carried unanimously.

Participation Plan & Preliminary Scope of Work as outlined below:

**Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Areas Update**
**Public Participation Plan & Preliminary Scope of Work**

1. **Public Participation**

   1.1 **Purpose**

   The purpose of this plan is to ensure early and continuous public participation during the update of the Island County Critical Areas Ordinance (CAO), as required by RCW 36.70A. The preliminary schedule and scope of work outlined in this plan is based on a deadline mandated by the Growth Management Hearings Board.

   1.2 **Goals**

   1. Allocate resources and coordinate outreach efforts to ensure Island County complies with the dates and deadlines mandated by the Growth Management Hearings Board.

   2. Notify the public of all meetings, hearings, and legislative actions.

   3. Create a Technical Advisory Group (TAG) that includes habitat experts and other members who have technical expertise to provide peer review of the Best Available Science (BAS).

   4. Ensure the Island County CAO is based on Best Available Science.

   5. Accommodate budgetary and staffing constraints by supplementing local resources with any available grant funding.
6. Make use of communication technologies to efficiently distribute information, post notices, and conserve limited resources.

1.3 Program Structure

In order to comply with the deadline mandated by the Growth Management Hearings Board, this plan identifies essential public participation strategies that will be employed at designated stages in the planning process. The constrained timeframe limits the opportunity for extensive public outreach; however, Island County is committed to ensuring that any group or member of the public interested in the CAO update is able to stay informed.

The deliverables noted in the timeline are based on deadlines associated with grant funding from the Washington State Department of Commerce. Meetings associated with deliverables will likely occur before the date identified in each step in section 2.1. In some cases, the final action may occur before or after the target date due to constrained resources, the need for additional collaboration with key stakeholders, the need for additional collaboration with a consultant, or other unforeseen circumstances.

1.4 Methods

The public participation methods that will be employed by Island County may include, but are not necessarily limited to, the following techniques and strategies.

1. Public Hearings – Public Hearings are a formal public process conducted and held before the Board of Island County Commissioners or the Island County Planning Commission.

2. Public Meetings - Planning and Community Development will utilize work sessions with the Board of County Commissioners to ensure elected officials and the public are informed of developments in the update process.

3. Island County Planning and Community Development Website – Planning and Community Development will periodically update its website. Relevant documents and research will be posted on the website along with announcements and notices concerning upcoming meetings, hearings, and public involvement opportunities.

4. Technical Advisory Group (TAG) – In order to solicit guidance on complex technical issues, Planning and Community Development will utilize a Technical Advisory Group. This group will include members who have specific knowledge in relevant topics such as local habitat, wildlife corridors, geospatial analysis, watersheds, and water quality. Island County will invite representatives from state agencies, affected tribes, and NGOs with technical expertise in Island County habitat issues to form the TAG.

5. E-mail List – Planning and Community Development will maintain a list of individuals or groups who have expressed an interest in the CAO update process. The e-mail list will be used to disseminate announcements and notices. Any member of the public can ask to be added to or removed from the list at any time during the update.

6. Public Workshops – Public workshops are informal gatherings used to provide information regarding the CAO update and answer questions from the public. Public workshops may involve presentations by Island County staff or consultants if resources are available.

1.5 Essential Public Participation Strategies

Essential public participation strategies have been outlined in section 2.1. In addition to these strategies, Island County will ensure that any other meeting, hearing, notification, or procedure required by State law or Island County Code is adequately addressed.
1.6 Availability of Documents

Island County will make every effort to post all relevant documents on the Planning and Community Development website. When new materials associated with the update are posted on the website, County staff will use the CAO update email list to notify the public. The webpage designed specifically for the update of the Comprehensive Plan and development regulations for Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Areas is:

http://www.islandcounty.net/planning/FishandWildlifeHabitatConservationAreaUpdate.html

2. Preliminary Schedule

Island County Planning and Community Development has identified the following specific steps which must be completed as part of the CAO update for Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Areas. This schedule is based on deadlines mandated by the Growth Management Hearings Board and grant funding provided by the Washington State Department of Commerce.

2.1 Phase I

1. Establish Preliminary Scope of Work and Public Participation Plan
   
   • Estimated Completion Date: September 30, 2013
   
   • Essential Public Participation: Update website, Planning Commission hearing, Board of County Commissioners hearing
   
   • Deliverable: Resolution adopting the Public Participation Plan and Preliminary Scope of Work

2. Technical Advisory Group formation
   
   • Estimated Completion Date: September 16, 2013
   
   • Essential Public Participation: Invite state agencies, tribes, and NGO’s to participate in the TAG; update website, Board of County Commissioners work session
   
   • Deliverable: Formation of a Technical Advisory Group to provide technical assistance during the CAO update process

3. Review of Best Available Science
   
   • Estimated Completion Date: November 18, 2013
   
   • Essential Public Participation: TAG review and feedback, website update, Island County Planning Commission meeting, Board of County Commissioners work session
   
   • Deliverable: Presentation of BAS bibliography and findings to the Island County Planning Commission and the Board of County Commissioners.

4. Assessment of habitat conditions
• *Estimated Completion Date:* December 16, 2013

• *Essential Public Participation:* TAG review and feedback, website update, Island County Planning Commission meeting, Board of County Commissioners work session

• *Deliverable:* Presentation of habitat analysis and maps to the Island County Planning Commission and the Board of County Commissioners.

5. **Best Available Science report and recommendations**

• *Estimated Completion Date:* January 15, 2014

• *Essential Public Participation:* TAG review and feedback, website update, Board of County Commissioners work session, Island County Planning Commission meeting

• *Deliverable:* Presentation of findings and recommendations to the Island County Planning Commission and the Board of County Commissioners

6. **Critical Areas Ordinance policy and regulation revisions**

• *Estimated Completion Date:* April 7, 2014

• *Essential Public Participation:* TAG review and feedback, website update, Island County Planning Commission hearing, Board of County Commissioners hearing

• *Deliverable:* Presentation of staff report and draft regulations to the Island County Planning Commission and the Board of County Commissioners

7. **SEPA analysis and Public Review Period**

• *Estimated Completion Date:* April 4, 2014 (*Notice of intent to adopt and 60-day public comment period will likely occur shortly after April 4th*).

• *Essential Public Participation:* Update website, send notice to adopt to State agencies, email notification

• *Deliverable:* SEPA checklist and threshold determination

8. **Final Adoption**

• *Estimated Completion Date:* July 21, 2014

• *Essential Public Participation:* Update website, Planning Commission Hearing, Board of County Commissioners Hearing

• *Final Action:* Formal adoption of updated FWHCA policies and regulations

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*A brief recess was called for the Planning Commission to review the proposed Findings of Fact.*

The meeting was reconvened.
Ms. Swanson confirmed to the Commission that the Findings of Fact were the same as the original proposed Findings in the packet provided, with the exception of the date being changed from September 10th to today’s date.

Commissioner Dickson moved to adopt the Findings of Fact as stated, Commissioner Joselyn seconded, motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Havens moved to adjourn, Commissioner Hall seconded, motion carried unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 9:25 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Paula Bradshaw