

Skagit County Planning Commission Retreat

Meeting Summary – January 7, 2020

Commissioners Building Crane Room-Mount Vernon

Members in Attendance

Tim Rashko Amy Hughes Kathy Mitchell
Mark Lundsten Joe Woodmansee Tammy Candler

Members Absent

Annie Lohman
Martha Rose

Others in Attendance

Julie Nicoll, Deputy Prosecutor, Skagit County Prosecuting Attorney
Hal Hart, Director, Skagit County Planning Department
Michael Cerbone, Assistant Director, Skagit County Planning Department
Peter Gill, Long Range Planning Manager, Skagit County Planning Department
Kim Adams, Administrative Coordinator, Skagit County Planning Department
Darcie Nielsen, Neilsen Brothers Inc.

Call to Order, Introductions

Tim Rashko called the meeting to order at 6:02 pm

Discussions:

Tim Rashko began the meeting with the Officer Elections for the 2020 year. Kathy Mitchell nominated Tim Rashko for Chair, Tammy Candler seconded, six in favor, motion passed. Tammy Candler nominated Kathy Mitchell for Vice-Chair, Joe Woodmansee seconded, six in favor, motion passed. Voting was closed.

Tim began the meeting with the intent of continuing with the previous retreat structure and having an informal meeting with no chair recognition to get everyone on the same page to have better support and understanding of what the mission is for the Planning Commission.

Handouts regarding the Docket were passed out. Peter Gill and Michael Cerbone discussed what the docket was and the Planning Commissions role with the Docket Process.

- Step 1: Staff Recommendation to the Board
- Step 2: Board has hearing and votes to include, exclude, or defer on petitions for Docket
- Step 3: Docket is introduced to the PC in a worksession(s)
 - Petition hearing with Planning Commission
 - Petition deliberation with Planning Commission
 - PC recommendation to the Board
- Step 4: Board takes final action
- Commissioner Statements & Questions regarding the Docket:
 - Would like to keep simple and keep a strong foundation for everyone to understand
 - What is considered for Docket Items?

- Public Submitted and Staff recommended Amendments to the Comprehensive Plan or the zoning map requires a petition, docketing by the Board of County Commissioners; public hearing, review, and recommendation by the Planning Commission to be approved by the Board of County Commissioners
 - Would the Planning Commission still see what is proposed even if staff doesn't recommend it?
 - Yes, PC will still see recommendations even if not recommended by staff
 - What is the last day to submit Docket items?
 - July 31st by midnight. County just picked a date there is no state requirement.
 - What happens when someone misses the deadline even by 1 minute?
 - Would be added to the next years docket?
 - Could possibly still be pushed through as a staff recommendation, staff has discretion to advance seperately or as part of the docket.
 - Un-used fees are refunded if it doesn't get docketed.
 - When Planning Commission Deliberates, do they need to discuss every list item out to get it on camera?
 - No, as long as it is in the written document it is fine
- What are some trainings Planning Department Staff can present to the Planning Commission:
 - Online Mapping System
 - Possibly having this on camera as it can help the Public gain knowledge as well
 - Lidar Maps & iMap use
 - Website Navigation
 - Ethics Training
 - Present trainings in ways that are visual, verbal, with handouts to better reach all audiences that learn differently
 - Have trainings available to present in the instance of a short meeting
 - Overview of how to look up resolutions, ordinances, and "property one-stop."
- Consider updating the By Laws of the Planning Commission. Last update was in 2009. Should be updated as needed-need to add or change things that may not be working. Section dealing with quasi-judicial matters should be removed since the PC does not review permits. Update section on ethics and acceptable behavior for Commissioners. Some general guidelines on when a Commissioner should recuse themselves.
- Planning Commission would like a more standardized onboarding process for new members- there is no formal training, just some short courses on YouTube.
- Planning Commission really feel the Directors Update at the end of the meeting are very useful and keeps them and the public informed about things happening in the public.
 - Need to keep the updates short- no more than 10-15 minutes (2 slides)
 - Add links in an email if there is more information for the Planning Commission to research prior to the meeting.
 - Add into the Directors update any code adoptions or Board of County Commissioners timelines, public hearings, etc.

- Changes to how Staff presents information to the Planning Commission:
 - Remember people learn in different ways-provide handouts as well as verbal information
 - Keep subject items together, not having exhibits at the end, keep it flowing
 - Work sessions could have 1-2 on the same items
 - Meet with the chair about the Agenda
 - Have a calendar of decision making timelines or have shorter timelines, assign topics for future meetings
 - Deliberate as close to the Public Hearing as possible so information isn't forgotten
 - Get meetings done on time- 2 hours is a good target length when meeting twice per month
 - Information being shared with the public:
 - Best practice that everyone is getting the information at the same time-no leaks or special treatment, keep it fair
 - Public Comment at each meeting- Yes, but possibly not having it at the Public Hearing Meetings- depends on meeting
 - Staff will email & call if there is a cancellation of a Planning Commission meeting, it will also be posted online
 - Staff and Planning commission can call or email if there is any clarification needed
 - Handouts at meeting should be posted to the website
- Julie will come and do a short presentation for the Planning Commission after the memo goes out regarding 14.24.380 Rainwater Catchment.

Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 8:21 pm