

Planning Commission
March 14, 2005

Chairperson Schneider called the regularly scheduled meeting to order at 7:06 PM.

The following members were present: Lisa Cramer, James Montgomery, Ken Smith, Sandy Ramsey and Cristi Boyle-Barrett. Cindy Maas was absent. Also in attendance were staff members Dan Staley, Gwen Rousseau and City Administrator Dave Schmidt.

Schneider stated regarding the article in the newspaper it has him quoted as stating the planning commission would need to look at the impacts more carefully. He doesn't feel that is what he said and if it actually was, he didn't mean for it to say that. He meant that we need to look at the impacts carefully and he knows the zoning committee already looked at the impacts carefully.

Cramer stated on the March 7th minutes page two, first paragraph the one sentence should read, "Cramer stated it sounds like the intent is that it is not a done deal and that we are listening". In that same paragraph several lines down the sentence should read, "Administrator Schmidt stated if Schneider wants to respond, he can just state that Cindy reconsidered her resignation.....". Schneider stated on that same page at the bottom of paragraph 2, the last sentence should state, "they are trying to show we can use this as an argument for having smaller buffers." Boyle-Barrett moved to approve the minutes of the March 7, 2005 and March 9, 2005 commission minutes as corrected. Cramer seconded the motion and the motion carried.

Deliberations regarding the zoning code:

Staley stated his question is how does everyone feel about the amount and quality of information received, and does that information we received consist of enough stuff for us to go forward and make changes and make wise land use decisions. Boyle-Barrett asked if we totaled the amount of people testified. Boyle stated the amount of people that testified is in the minutes and all the written comments have been provided to the commission as well. There were 153 people that signed in at the first hearing and 105 that signed in at the second hearing. Cramer stated this was a small percentage of the total of people living here, however they were very vocal and we need to take that into consideration. Montgomery stated there was even a small percentage of letters and if the people were intimidated to come and speak they could submit letters. Schneider stated he doesn't see any particular reason to assume that the people we heard from were not represented of the community. Boyle-Barrett stated she does, there are a lot of people that are fine with it and that is why they didn't step forward. Smith stated if you look at how many letters agreed versus how many disagreed, the numbers are way different. Boyle-Barrett stated people are going to write in to complain rather than compliment. Rousseau stated the information that was gathered at the public hearings, was that the kind of information that you needed or do you need more information. Staley stated for example, we know what everyone doesn't like but what do people like? Montgomery asked if there is another way to get more information and if there is what is it? Schneider stated he would be hesitant to assume that the 200 people that showed up did not

represent the community. There were probably several people who didn't come because they are already built out in their neighborhoods. Smith stated when people were speaking against the eight units per acre everyone in the audience clapped, which to him meant that everyone in the room felt the same way. Schneider stated at this point, his inclination is to discuss whether or not we should change that and if we do at the next discussion we can inform them what we changed it to and then if we get a huge amount of people to show up stating they really like the eight units, then it would give the planning commission an inclination that there were people who supported it.

Administrator Schmidt stated there were some small areas in town that were overlooked that need to be fixed, for instance, the Ladies and Loggers, the area off Ryan for the steep slopes and the area along Ryan Road where there is already a fabrication shop. Boyle-Barrett stated one of the other areas we really need to look at is Hinkleman Road. She would like to have at her fingertips, what the current RB zone allows and what the NMU and GC allows and have them side by side to compare. Administrator Schmidt stated based on the public comment, would the planning commission like to see the transitional zone that was discussed a few meetings ago, because staff can come up with recommendations for those transitional zones. Discussion ensued. Cramer stated in trying to prepare for this meeting, she was looking through all the letters and the notes from the hearing and she has identified certain areas that we need to have detailed deliberations on. Hinkleman Road was one, Ryan Road both towards Rainier School and River Ave. The other issues would be water, sewer, taxes and traffic. Ramsey asked for an explanation of the transitional zone. Administrator Schmidt stated a transitional zone is a place where you have an existing use and a future use. You have an area where you know what the future of the zone will be but you are not there yet. This allows transition as the area develops. For instance on the area between Highway #410 and Hinkleman you would have GC and RB-GC. Boyle-Barrett stated she would really like to get some answers from the County regarding the property taxes. Rousseau stated one thing she doesn't feel was expressed to the community was the fact with the upgrades of the WWTP Buckley will have the capacity to issue 1,400 to 1,600 new building permits. The selling price of those homes, whether they are on 1/4 acre lots or 1/8 acre lots are going to raise the property values in Buckley. Does the density affect the values additionally, which seems to be one of the big concerns at the public hearings. When looking at the difference between R-2 and R-5 they were there but were not significant. There was only a 5%-10% difference. Schneider stated if we allow no growth at all in Buckley, the value of existing homes in Buckley because of the short supply will go up substantially and if we allow growth they will also go up. We have no control over this issue, taxes are going to go up whatever we do. The only exception may be is the people on Hinkleman that are currently zoned residential.

Rousseau stated she would like to go back to what Staley was talking about earlier regarding the process from now on. She thinks it would be good to have some sort of structure and outline. Schneider stated he feels we need to discuss the MDR8, Hinkleman Road and Neighborhood Mixed Use. Administrator Schmidt stated so there is no mis-information, variances are not allowed for zoning changes. You would actually have to do a rezone to change things. Montgomery stated he wants to make sure that everyone is heard but how long do we give people, what else can we do and what is our

timeline? Administrator Schmidt stated one thing the planning commission needs to do is not start from scratch again. Come up with a new plan from the public hearings and then have a public meeting, not necessarily a public hearing, and ask everyone what their thoughts were and have a two way flow of information which may also clear up questions that the planning commission has. Schneider stated the one thing he is concerned about is starting from ground zero again. Staley stated one of the objectives that the planning commission needs to think about is this has to be approved through Council. How you get this approved through Council is trying to make everyone happy with the plan. You need to get everyone's head nodding yes. The two way flow of information with people knowing that the planning commission has listened to people could be the answer to this. Montgomery stated that is the reason he would like to have the public visioning meeting. Rousseau stated there are several forms of public input and unfortunately the public hearing is the worst form of this because you can't have the back and forth dialog.

Marvin Sundstrom, 881 Sheets Road. Talking about growth being inevitable, you have to recognize if you don't do it within the urban growth boundary and do it under some sort of control it will happen outside the urban growth boundary, those people will be coming back to the City and saying they want sewer and water because Buckley has them. Growth is going to happen and how it happens is the planning commission's responsibility. He has heard the commission talk about Hinkleman, but he has not heard anything about the steep slopes on Sheets, Spiketon and Ryan. Administrator Schmidt stated we do have notes on this. Mr. Sundstrom stated he does support an area for high density zoning, but you have to remember you have to have the infrastructure in place, roads, parks, etc.

Sean Martin, 1302 Puyallup St., Sumner WA 98390. From a developer, Dave is 100% right. Mr. Martin stated he is going to make the planning commission let him build to urban densities. But he is not going to have to because there are a lot of organizations out there that will. He gave the commission a large amount of information. The information that the commission is considering right now is what he bases his livelihood on. To him the bottom line is, he agrees with the proposal. There are areas of question and areas of transition. When you go to the community you can't pose the question to them "what do you want", you have to tell them this is what the city needs to do. Growth is not inevitable, but some of the things that this comprehensive plan and the community talks about, none of these things will happen unless the city is willing to accept the growth. If you have no new houses, the prices are going to escalate. The growth is going to come. You need to do what is right for the city and you need to do what is best for the city.

Rex Peckham, 12019 298th Ave. E. Mr. Peckham stated Cindy Maas is probably the only planning commission member that has been involved since the growth management first started. They went to the County Council when this first started. They had raw land so they are complaining that they will be impacted by the wetlands, critical areas, shore lands, etc. Everything will be coming off of them where as the people in town already have everything, what will they be giving up. One of the County Council members stated

they will have to give up density. They will be living in higher density areas. As far as any other hearings, he wished the applause could be held for each person that speaks.

Boyle-Barrett stated one thing that was a concern was the storm water issues and she feels this needs to be discussed with the zoning changes. She would like to know if the capital facilities plan is finished and when will these issues be addressed. Administrator Schmidt stated it doesn't matter what the zone is there are going to be storm water problems. It would cost the City several million dollars to fix the problem for the entire city. The City is in the process of writing the storm water comprehensive plan. Boyle-Barrett just wants to make sure the issues have been addressed. The other issue she has is people at these meetings have been asking for information, she wants to make sure this information is getting to the library and she sees there is still no reporter from the Courier Herald, have we reached out to the paper to get them to come. Administrator Schmidt stated we can't make them come and yes they do know about it. Rousseau stated another way we can get this information out to the public is by doing a newsletter. Boyle-Barrett stated she wanted to remind everyone on the commission that we were looking at redoing the entire comprehensive plan and that it is a twenty year plan. When we re did the zoning it was an attempt to get rid of the piece meal zoning and to stop the variances. When we were looking at the plan we were trying to develop it for the future, she knows it hurts some people on the short term, but keep in mind that is what we were looking for.

Rousseau asked if anyone on the zoning committee would like to give the reasons for the MDR8 zoning. Ramsey stated their thought was that because of the twenty year plan. If you make it MDR8, that doesn't mean it has to be 8, but you can. However, as we have heard from Shawn, we now know they will build to the maximum. Cramer stated one other thing was to keep the higher density closer to the businesses and then spread out from there. Schneider stated because the community did not support this does not mean it was not a good idea. Staley stated we need to break down the reasons for it not being supported. Montgomery stated it was lack of information. Administrator Schmidt asked if the information would have really changed their minds. Ramsey stated being in her position of working in the public, she has received a lot of comments. It is not that they don't want growth at all, they don't want the 8 units per acre, they would rather have 4. Her feelings are doing more of a transition going from town to the east. Boyle-Barrett stated she stills supports the area we zone MDR8. She stated she had a lot of comments from the people who are already built out and why they were changed from R-5 to MDR8. She feels these areas that are already built out should stay at lower density and have the vacant land at the higher density. Rousseau stated she is confused because the area downtown is basically already zoned at 8-10 units per acre and it should be less of a concern because it is already built out. Schneider stated his consensus is the planning commission in general is not supporting the areas that could be zoned up to 8 units per acre. Cramer stated she feels it is appropriate in some areas, maybe not just as much as we have listed.

Marvin Sundstrom, 881 Sheets Rd, stated when giving the letters and numbers that no one understands, why don't you just give them R-5000, R8000, R10000 and then it would be more understandable to people. The commission was in agreement that we

should change the terminology. Schneider stated what he heard from a lot of people is that they did not want the higher density of 5,000 square foot lots. Staley asked why. Schneider stated they didn't want the houses that close together, they didn't want that many people in a small area, they didn't want Buckley to look that way. Ramsey stated one other thing that was brought up is the infrastructure. You would only have two arterials going to this high density housing. Staley stated when the sewer plant gets upgraded, there will be 1,200 sewer connections for people to build homes with, so you are going to have the traffic issues to deal with, which is why we are encouraging homes closer to the services so people can ride bikes or walk.

Larry Warford, 1345 Ryan Road, stated the way the traffic comes out to the road is a nightmare. One thing you don't want is clear straight a ways. This allows the traffic to go much faster. Administrator Schmidt stated Mr. Warford is the property owner of the industrial property on Ryan Road. Administrator Schmidt asked Mr. Warford to tell the planning commission his proposal and how it would impact him financially if the zoning was changed. Mr. Warford stated he would be bankrupt if they are not allowed to expand. They bought this property being told that there would not be any zoning changes on it. Schneider asked if this was the property was overlooked. Boyle-Barrett stated it wasn't overlooked, when they were looking at the twenty year plan it was an attempt to keep residential in one area and commercial in the other, but that doesn't mean it can't be changed.

Shawn Martin, 1302 Puyallup Street, Sumner, he thinks everyone knows what property his company is looking at and he doesn't feel he has tried to pull the wool over anyone's eyes, he has been upfront from the start to what his intentions are. He has also suggested doing away with the number on the zones and use the lot sizes. Mr. Martin stated 8 units per acre is the actual cap for single family. He doesn't think the city's vision for moderate density is 8 units per acre. He feels you can describe the vision in words rather than numbers.

Administrator Schmidt stated although he agrees with changing the zoning from for example MDR8 to R-5000, will the public perceive that change at this point a way of trying to disguise what the planning commission was trying to do before. Schneider stated if we make the minimum lot size 5,000 square feet, yes they will. Administrator Schmidt stated that was his concern, if you bring this brand new plan and brand new map and call it something different are you going to cause more problems by losing credibility and trust at that point. Staley stated that is part of the public process, and we can explain to them we are not trying to hide anything, we are trying to clear up to the community the actual lot size. Rousseau stated the reason there are density figures so you can have flexibility in the lot sizes. You can have a maximum density that is lower than what the minimum lot size would allow. Schneider suggested we could have a minimum lot size of 5,000 square feet with a maximum of 5 units per acre which would allow for more flexibility. Discussion ensued. Cramer stated she feels there are a lot of people that are set in what they want it to be and we can try to present all these wonderful things but they just don't care. Schneider stated he agrees, he doesn't think anything we can say will sell most of the people we heard from on the idea of higher density and he personally doesn't

look forward to presenting them the same plan in another name. Smith asked why don't we ask the five civilians that are in the audience tonight. Chief Arsanto stated sitting in the audience and listening, it sounds like you the commission are trying to talk yourselves into the why you believe what you did was right the first time. The issue you should be addressing right now is are we going to change the lot size or aren't we and how are we going to go about this. Rousseau stated it is not that changes would be made, they believe the process we went through was right, but exactly where things go may change. Schneider asked the commission one by one if they are comfortable with the way the plan is right now. Boyle-Barrett stated she needs more information to make a decision as to whether or not the plan is okay the way it is. Staley stated the commission needs to think about what the issues are and what the objections were and how to address them. Administrator Schmidt stated maybe what we need to do is come up with a list of the issues that need to be addressed and have an outline to follow. Administrator Schmidt wanted to remind the commission that even though we may have a reprieve time wise, we still are on a deadline and need to move forward with this.

Schneider asked the commission if they want to have a workshop with the community. There was a majority of interest for this. Administrator Schmidt stated at what point do we want to hold this workshop. Rousseau stated there are several options for the workshop. Administrator Schmidt stated one thing we cannot do is start over from scratch. Mr. Sundstrom stated from the public standpoint, you need to move the people around the room and have pictures and someone at each station to talk about what is going on and answer questions. Administrator Schmidt stated prior to the next meeting, Staley and he will have a list of issues. Boyle-Barrett asked if they could compile the issues out of the letters so we are not missing anybody. Staley stated he will do that. Schneider asked if they could get the information via e-mail so they can have more time to go through the information.

With nothing further the meeting was adjourned at 9:10 PM.

Wolfe Schneider, Chairperson