



# THURSTON COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

Minutes September 27, 2023

1  
2 **1. 6:45 P.M. CALL TO ORDER**

3 Chair Casino called the Thurston County Planning Commission meeting on September 27,  
4 2023, to order at 6:45 P.M. Commissioners provided self-introductions.  
5

6 **Attendance:** Eric Casino (Chair), Derek Day (Vice Chair), Helen Wheatley, Kevin  
7 Pestinger, Scott Nelson, Barry Halverson  
8

9 **City of Lacey PC:** David Wasson (Chair), Daphne Rezlaff, Kyrian MacMicheal, Eddie  
10 Bishop, Mark Mininger, K. Gail Madden  
11

12 **Absent:** Joel Hansen (excused), Jim Simmons (unexcused)  
13

14 **Thurston Staff:** Leah Davis, Ashley Arai,  
15 **City of Lacey Staff:** Hans Shepard, Ryan Andrews  
16

17 **2. 6:45 P.M. APPROVAL OF AGENDA**  
18

19 **MOTION: Commissioner Nelson moved to approve the agenda. Commissioner Hal-**  
20 **version seconded. The Motion passed unanimously.**  
21

22 The audio recording is the official record of the above-dated meeting. The infor-  
23 mation herein is provided as an overview of the meeting and a road map to the audio  
24 recording. Audio is available online on the [Thurston County Planning Commission](#)  
25 website.  
26

27 **3. 6:47 P.M. PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS (Not associated with topics for which**  
28 **public hearings have been held.)**  
29 None  
30

31 **New Business**

32 None  
33

34 **Other Business**  
35

36 **4. 6:48 P.M. STAFF UPDATES**

37 No staff updates  
38

39 **5. 6:49 P.M. CALENDAR UPDATES**

40 *October 4, 2023: Meeting canceled.*  
41

42 **6. 6:50 P.M. GOOD OF THE ORDER**

43 None  
44

1 **Continued Business**

2  
3 7. **7:00 P.M. PUBLIC HEARING**

- 4  
5 1. John Woodford  
6 2. Kym Lee  
7 3. Lynn Larsen  
8 4. John Pettit  
9 5. Craig McDaniel  
10 6. Steven Kern  
11 7. Larry Taylor  
12 8. Kurt Wilson  
13

14 8. **7:32 P.M. WORK SESSION #2: The City of Lacey & Thurston County Joint Plan**

15  
16 Ms. Davis and Mr. Shepard presented the updated Joint Plan between the City of Lacey  
17 and Thurston County. After the presentation, the Planning Commission addressed the  
18 public comments received.  
19

20 Commissioner Wheatley mentioned the public statement about the lack of family-friendly  
21 swimming locations and felt a community pool would alleviate the problem. Commis-  
22 sioner Wheatley had specific language to add to the Joint Plan. Ms. Davis replied that  
23 swimming pools are controlled in the municipality where the pool is located. Further dis-  
24 cussion took place surrounding the lakes located in the county that provide a family-  
25 friendly swimming environment. Mr. Shepard mentioned that the City of Lacey has a  
26 more robust parks and recreation plan within the UGA. None of the lakes mentioned are  
27 inside the UGA; therefore, the Joint Plan would not address those circumstances.  
28

29 The City of Lacey requests UGA expansion to add about 182 acres to Greg Cuoio Park.  
30 The City plans to annex the entire park into the city.  
31

32 Commissioner Wheatley mentioned a public comment about affordable housing and  
33 asked how the Comprehensive Plan works with the Joint Plan. Ms. Davis responded that  
34 once the next Comprehensive Plan is complete and approved in 2025, the new regulations  
35 on affordable housing would be implemented and can be added during the next joint plan  
36 update. As the meeting progressed, numerous comments, questions, and speculation came  
37 up regarding HB 1110 effects on the UGA's and unincorporated Thurston County. With-  
38 out the knowledge of the bill's specifics, predicting how it will affect the UGA is not pro-  
39 ductive.  
40

41 Commissioner Halverson asked about an undocketed rezone item that a public member  
42 brought to the meeting for consideration. It was explained by Ms. Davis that there is an  
43 application process for residents to pursue a zoning amendment, and that the subject re-  
44 zone is not before the planning commission for consideration.  
45

46 Commissioner Pestinger had a question regarding public comment on the impact on the  
47 parcel owners currently in the UGA, and the City they reside in is not annexed. Ms. Da-  
48 vis replied that she did not know what that impact would be.

1 Chair Casino questioned the amount of public outreach done to promote the public hear-  
2 ing. He stated there had been much more outreach done in previous Joint Plans when the  
3 county had complete control over public outreach. The Chair wants to know why the City  
4 of Lacey's Plan seemed to lack similar effort. Commissioner Halverson mentioned that  
5 there was more in-person attendance than at other public hearings. Ms. Davis replied that  
6 she sent the required public notification to the neighbors of the proposed rezones. Mr.  
7 Andrews said that extensive outreach was done in 2013 for the 2016 comprehensive plan  
8 update. The City did not feel it needed to reengage the public as it took the County years  
9 to get the Lacey Joint Plan on the docket.

10  
11 The draft development regulations that the City of Lacey adopted in the 2016 Compre-  
12 hensive Plan will go through the county later and is a separate docket item. That will not  
13 only be a consideration of the low density 0-4 or 3-6; the County will also look at zoning  
14 in both moderate and high-density areas. The City takes the lead in adopting the zoning  
15 and regulations in the city and then works with the county to bring the UGA into align-  
16 ment. He referred to the UGA MOU from 1995 that states the county will adopt the zon-  
17 ing to be consistent with the city.

18  
19 Commissioner Wheatley asked if the Lacey Planning Commissioners had any input on  
20 the joint plan. Commissioner Retzlaff stated she was initially opposed to the combined  
21 zoning. She explained that housing is a delicate situation and small incremental steps to-  
22 ward affordable housing are better than doing nothing. She stated that having six houses  
23 on one parcel versus four could mean the houses are more affordable and you can build  
24 generational wealth. Commissioner Halverson replied that just having houses on the  
25 ground is not enough, and there needs to be consideration for urban sprawl.

26  
27 **MOTION: Commissioner Nelson Moved to Recommend the Adoption of The Lacey**  
28 **Joint Plan, An Element of The Thurston County Comprehensive Plan And the**  
29 **Lacey Comprehensive Plan. Commissioner Halverson Seconded the Motion. With A**  
30 **Vote Of 4 in favor and 2 against, the motion Failed.**

31  
32 **MOTION: Commissioner Nelson moved to recommend approval of The Low-Den-**  
33 **sity Zoning Consolidation- Low Density 0-4 And Low Density 3-6 into low Density**  
34 **0-6. This change would require repealing and replacing Thurston County Code,**  
35 **Chapter 21.12, repealing 21.13, and making associated updates to The Future Land**  
36 **Use and zoning Maps. There was not a second on this motion. Motion failed.**

37  
38 **MOTION: Commissioner Nelson moved to recommend approval of Bressi zoning**  
39 **and land use amendment of 3 parcels, 6.77 acres in size, at 9041 Pacific Avenue, from**  
40 **Neighborhood Commercial (NC) To Moderate Density Residential (MD). With a**  
41 **vote of 6-0, the motion passed.**

42  
43 **MOTION: Commissioner Halverson moved to recommend approval of MC Con-**  
44 **struction zoning and land use amendment of 1 parcel, 14.94 acres at 9520 Stei-**  
45 **lacoomb Road, from Mineral Extraction (ME) To Low Density Residential (LD-04).**  
46 **Vice Chair Day seconded motion. With a vote of 3-3, the motion failed.**  
47

1 **MOTION:** Commissioner Halverson moved to recommend approval of the For-  
2 ester/McDaniel zoning and land use amendment of a 3.14-acre portion of 12.12-acre  
3 parcel at 2427 Carpenter Road from Moderate-Density Residential (MD) To Low-  
4 Density Residential (LD 0-4). Commissioner Nelson seconded motion. With a vote of  
5 6-0 the motion passed.  
6

7 **MOTION:** Commissioner Halverson moved to recommend the expansion of the  
8 Lacey Urban Growth Area by 182 acres to create Greg Cuoio Park. The expansion  
9 also includes 7 privately held parcels that will be zoned Low-Density Residential  
10 (LD 0-4). Commissioner Nelson seconded motion. With a vote of 6-0, the motion  
11 passed.  
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13

14 **MOTION:** Commissioner Halverson Moved *Not to Approve* the Low-Density Zoning  
15 Consolidation- Low Density 0-4 And Low Density 3-6 Into Low Density 0-6, repeal-  
16 ing and replacing Thurston County Code, Chapter 21.12 and repealing 21.13. Com-  
17 missioner Nelson seconded motion. With a vote of 6-0, the motion passed.  
18

19 **MOTION:** Commissioner Halverson motioned to approve the UGA reduction "Be-  
20 cause McAllister Geologically Sensitive Area (MGSA) zoning designation was cre-  
21 ated to protect an important aquifer and is zoned at a maximum density of one  
22 dwelling per five acres, Thurston County Planning Commission recommends that  
23 this area be considered for removal from the Lacey Urban Growth Area during a  
24 future Joint Plan update. Also, the Planning Commission recognizes that the Pleas-  
25 ant Glade planning area is made up of an important wetland system and is therefore  
26 difficult to sewer and develop to higher density, recommends that this area should  
27 be considered for removal from the Lacey Urban Growth Area during a future  
28 Joint Plan Update. The Planning Commission recommends that the Board of  
29 County Commissioners prioritize staff time to research and review the implications  
30 and possibility of these urban growth boundary reductions. Vice Chair Day se-  
31 conded motion. With a 5-1 vote, this motion passes.  
32

33 Since the Thurston County Planning Commission voted not to approve the Joint Plan or  
34 the Low-Density items, Chair Casino asked for recommendations to the BoCC on why  
35 the motions failed. Commissioner Pestinger commented on having a detailed housing  
36 plan to densify a central core area instead of urban sprawl. Ms. Davis replied that goals in  
37 the city are outside of the joint plan. Commissioner Day stated the written recommenda-  
38 tion needs to express the concern about middle residential densities in the UGA to the  
39 board. Chair Casino added that the Planning Commission supports keeping UGA densi-  
40 ties low to encourage development within the city limits. Ms. Arai mentioned that she  
41 heard concerns that developing at a lower density could preclude higher-density develop-  
42 ment if not annexed. Chair Casino also included that Commissioner Nelson stated one  
43 problem is having big blocks of land.  
44

45 Mr. Andrews rebutted that the City is utilizing the last pieces of property to develop  
46 multi-family housing. He further added that around 1800 multi-family units are in devel-  
47 opment now. Commissioner Nelson stated he would rather see low-density zoning 0-4 in

1 the UGA than when the city annexes portions of the UGA. Then, if the city wants to re-  
2 zone to 0-6, it can do so. According to the Growth Management Act, Mr. Andrews stated  
3 that the UGA intent is to develop similar to the city. The same standard would apply, in-  
4 cluding the zoning and the development standards, the roadways, the water, and the  
5 sewer. They're going to develop it, and then the City, when ready to annex them, would  
6 annex already developed property. Mr. Andrews stated that he believed the Planning  
7 Commission was thinking about the UGA as an urban holding area concept. This concept  
8 holds the UGA at a standstill development-wise until the City is ready to annex and inject  
9 additional development potential into the property by rezoning. Ms. Arai agreed that the  
10 common theme was that if the city-level infrastructure is not available to the parts of the  
11 UGA, what is the appropriate amount of development until the water and sewer are ac-  
12 cessible? Mr. Andrews agreed and replied that the City of Lacey is no closer today than  
13 20 years ago in getting sewer and water to parts of the UGA. He also mentioned lower  
14 density on individual wells or septic systems is optimal. The idea is that the city should  
15 not be doing higher zoning in the UGA until the full suite of city services is available.  
16 that we should be developing at a higher density, with a full suite of city services so that  
17 we're not encouraging that type of development in an urban growth area. Commissioner  
18 Day replied he liked the idea of an urban holding area. Which in turn makes zoning much  
19 more deliberate. Chair Casino did a recap on the recommendation letter.  
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22 **9:42 ADJOURN**  
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24 With no further business, Chair Casino adjourned the meeting at 9:42 P.M.  
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Eric Casino, Chair

Prepared by Tosha Knight

