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**HEARING EXAMINER** 

Creating Solutions for Our Future

# BEFORE THE HEARING EXAMINER FOR THURSTON COUNTY

In the Matter of the Application of	) NO. 2018102555
William and Betsy Taylor	Taylor Well and Boat House
For Approval of a Shoreline Substantial Development Permit	) ) FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, ) AND DECISION )

### SUMMARY OF DECISION

The requested shoreline substantial development permit for a previously constructed well house and boat house is **GRANTED** subject to conditions.

## **SUMMARY OF RECORD**

## **Request:**

William and Betsy Taylor (Applicants) requested a shoreline substantial development permit for a previously constructed well house/boat house on a parcel developed with existing single-family residence. The property is located at 3510 Gravelly Beach Loop NW, Olympia, Washington.

## **Hearing Date:**

The Thurston County Hearing Examiner held an open record hearing on the request on September 24, 2019.

## **Testimony:**

At the hearing the following individuals presented testimony under oath:

Scott McCormick, Associate Planner, Comm. Planning & Economic Dev. Dept. Dawn Peebles, Thurston County Environmental Health Division Kim Pawlawski, Cascadia Land Planning, Applicant Representative

## **Exhibits**:

At the hearing the following exhibits were admitted in the record:

EXHIBIT 1 Community Planning & Economic Department report, including the following attachments:

Attachment a	Notice of Public Hearing
Attachment b	Zoning map
Attachment c	Master Application, received May 8, 2018
Attachment d	JARPA Application, received May 8, 2018
Attachment e	Overall project description, received April 29, 2019
Attachment f	Vicinity map and overall site plans
Attachment g	Well pump house/boat house plans
Attachment h	Shoreline photos of boathouse and shoreline
Attachment i	Shoreline Permit Exemption and Final SEPA Determination, dated June 5, 2019
Attachment j	SEPA Determination, dated May 9, 2019
Attachment k	SEPA Environmental Checklist, revised dated March 2019
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Attachment 1	Notice of Application, dated July 19, 2018 with adjacent property owners list dated July 12, 2018
Attachment 1 Attachment m	Notice of Application, dated July 19, 2018 with adjacent property
	Notice of Application, dated July 19, 2018 with adjacent property owners list dated July 12, 2018  Memorandum from Dawn Peebles, Environmental Health, dated
Attachment m	Notice of Application, dated July 19, 2018 with adjacent property owners list dated July 12, 2018  Memorandum from Dawn Peebles, Environmental Health, dated August 10, 2018
Attachment m Attachment n	Notice of Application, dated July 19, 2018 with adjacent property owners list dated July 12, 2018  Memorandum from Dawn Peebles, Environmental Health, dated August 10, 2018  Letter from the Nisqually Tribe, dated June 6, 2019

## EXHIBIT 2 Photographs of hearing notice posting on site

EXHIBIT 3 Memorandum from Dawn Peebles, Thurston County Environmental Health Division, dated July 16, 2019

Based upon the record developed at the open record hearing, the Hearing Examiner enters the following findings and conclusions:

### **FINDINGS**

- 1. The Applicants requested a shoreline substantial development permit (SSDP) for a previously constructed well house/boat house on a waterfront parcel with an existing single-family residence. The subject property is located at 3510 Gravelly Beach Loop NW, Olympia, Washington. *Exhibits 1 and 1.C.*
- 2. The 0.95-acre subject parcel, which is legally nonconforming as to minimum lot size, is located on the western shore Eid Inlet on Flapjack Point and is developed with an existing single-family residence and accessory structures including the unpermitted boat house along the shoreline. Surrounding land uses consist primarily of single-family residential uses on shoreline lots. *Exhibits 1 and 1.C.*
- 3. Available historical information shows that the well for a community water system (the Gravelly Beach Water System, ID# 02981V) with six connections has been located on the subject property since the 1920s and that an approximately 10- by 10-foot well pump house was built on-site in approximately the 1940s. In or around 1974, stairs were installed from the upland to the shoreline of the subject property. The single-family residence was built in 1992, and an overwater deck/patio and bulkhead were installed sometime after 1992. According to aerial photos on record, sometime between 1996 and 2000 the well pump house structure was expanded to include a boat house, built without the benefit of building permit review. The existing size of the resulting well pump and boat house is approximately 260 square feet, with dimensions of 10 by 26 feet with the longer side running parallel to the shoreline. At some point, the exterior of the well house was modified to match the boat house addition. *Exhibits 1, 1.D, and 1.M*.
- 4. The instant application seeks after-the-fact approval for the already built well pump house/boat house. The unpermitted deck and bulkhead are proposed to be removed, and the bulkhead replaced; however, the replacement bulkhead be installed farther upland from the shoreline, creating an additional 650 square feet of beach habitat. While the two projects are related, the deck and bulkhead portion of the project is being administratively reviewed and decided. Only the expansion of the well pump house/boathouse is under review in the instant proceedings. The well pump house/boat house and stairs providing access to the structure would not be modified by the requested permit approvals; no

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The legal description of the subject property is a portion of Section 29, 19 N, Range 2 W, W.M.; .98A L 2 COM MC BET SEC 20& 29 S 77DEG E 752.26F S 63DEG; also known as Tax Parcel No. 12929131100. *Exhibit 1*.

- construction is proposed for the structure. *Exhibits 1, 1.D, and 1.F; Scott McCormick Testimony*.
- 5. The Shoreline Master Program for the Thurston Region (SMPTR) designates the subject shoreline as Rural shoreline environment. *Exhibit 1*. Boating facilities specifically including boathouses are allowed in the Rural shoreline environment subject to applicable policies and regulations. *Exhibit 1; SMPTR, Section 3, Part D (page 54)*. The project requires an SSDP because the fair market value of the improvements exceeds the permit threshold of \$7,047.00. Estimated cost of the overall project is \$50,000. *Exhibits 1 and 1.D.*
- 6. The in- and over-water portions of the overall project including bulkhead relocation and deck removal triggered mandatory compliance with the Thurston County critical areas ordinance (CAO) in addition to the SMPTR. Addressing the requirements of the CAO, a professionally prepared biological evaluation was submitted discussing impacts to the flood plain and FEMA requirements regarding habitat assessment. The biological evaluation was accepted and approved by County Staff. As the expansion of the well pump house/boat house would not have triggered such review, the findings of the biological evaluation are not detailed in these proceedings. *Exhibits 1 and 1.D.*
- 7. The subject property is zoned residential LAMIRD (RL 1/1). Accessory buildings and structures clearly incidental to the residential use of a lot, including those for storage of personal property, are permitted uses in the RL 1/1 zoning district without land use permits; however, neither the County Code nor the SMPTR recognize boathouses as a normal or customary appurtenance to single-family residential uses. The Thurston County Comprehensive Plan makes no reference to residential boathouses. *Thurston County Code (TCC) 21.11A.020 .030*; *Exhibit 1*.
- 8. The completed (already built) well pump house/boat house does not exceed 35 feet in height; in fact, it is not more than 10 feet tall. Because it is already built and no further construction is proposed, approval of the instant SSDP granting after the fact permission for its construction would have no impact on views. There is no evidence that the previously completed construction impacted views from any upland land uses. While the unpermitted construction creating the boathouse was conducted by the previous owners of the subject property, the size of the boathouse effectively accommodates the Applicants' boats. *Exhibits 1 and 1.D; Scott McCormick Testimony*.
- 9. The application was reviewed by the both the Thurston County Public Health and Social Services and Thurston County Public Works Departments. No issues of concern were by the Public Works Department, which agency did not submit written comments. A memorandum from Thurston County Environmental Health was submitted recommending project approval, with no conditions identified as necessary to ensure compliance with applicable provisions of the Thurston County Sanitary Code. *Exhibits 1 and 1.M; Dawn Peebles Testimony*.
- 10. Because the already built well pump house/boat house are not in or over water, Planning

Staff submitted that no review was required for compliance with the mandates of the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) for the SSDP. However, SEPA was required for the deck/bulkhead portion of the overall project. A SEPA mitigated determination of non-significance (MDNS) was issued for the relocation of the bulkhead and demolition of the overwater deck and wood retaining structure. *Exhibits 1 and 1.J.* 

- 11. Upon receipt of notice of the proposal, the Department of Ecology submitted comments dated June 18, 2018 with recommendations for solid waste management, toxics cleanup, and water quality measures. *Exhibit 1.P.* Because the work was already completed, Staff did not condition its recommendation for approval on compliance with Ecology comments. *Exhibit 1.*
- 12. The Nisqually Indian Tribe submitted comment on June 9, 2019 stating the area is highly sensitive and requested that archaeological monitoring be provided during removal of the bulkhead until the ground be determined sterile of pre-contact and historic artifacts by a qualified archaeologist. The tribe also requested an inadvertent discovery plan be in place. *Exhibit 1.N.* However, as there is no construction or earthwork proposed in association with the requested after-the-fact approval for the expanded well pump house/boat house, no inadvertent discoveries are anticipated in association with this portion of the project. *Exhibits 1 and 1.D.*
- 13. Notice of the SSDP application was mailed to all property owners within 500 feet of the site on July 19, 2018. *Exhibit 1.L.* Notice of the public hearing was mailed to all owners of property within 500 feet of the site on September 9, 2019 and was posted on-site and published in <u>The Olympian</u> on September 13, 2019. *Exhibits 1 and 1.A.* Aside from the agency comments noted above, there was no general public comment on the application. *Exhibit 1; Scott McCormick Testimony*.
- 14. Planning Staff determined that the proposal could be conditioned to comply with all applicable regulations and shoreline policies, and recommended approval subject to conditions. *Exhibit 1; Scott McCormick Testimony*. The Applicant waived objection to the recommended conditions. *Kim Pawlawski Testimony*.

### **CONCLUSIONS**

### Jurisdiction

The Hearing Examiner is granted jurisdiction to hear and decide applications for shoreline substantial development permits pursuant to RCW Chapter 36.70, WAC 173-27, and Section One, Part V of the Shoreline Master Program for the Thurston Region.

### **Criteria for Review**

Shoreline Substantial Development Permit (WAC 173-27-150)

To be approved by the Hearing Examiner, the proposed shoreline substantial development permit must be consistent with:

A. The policies and procedures of the Shoreline Management Act;

- B. The provisions of applicable regulations; and
- C. The Shoreline Master Program for the Thurston Region.

## A. Shoreline Management Act

Chapter 90.58 RCW, the Washington State Shoreline Management Act (SMA) of 1971, establishes a cooperative program of shoreline management between the local and state governments with local government having the primary responsibility for initiating the planning required by the chapter and administering the regulatory program consistent with the Act. The Thurston County Shoreline Master Program (SMPTR) provides goals, policies and regulatory standards for ensuring that development within the shorelines of the state is consistent the policies and provisions of Chapter 90.58 RCW.

The intent of the policies of RCW 90.58.020 is to foster "all reasonable and appropriate uses" and to protect against adverse effects to the public health, the land, and its vegetation and wildlife. The SMA mandates that local governments adopt shoreline management programs that give preference to uses (in the following order of preference) that: recognize and protect the statewide interest over local interest; preserve the natural character of the shoreline; result in long term over short term benefit; protect the resources and ecology of the shoreline; increase public access to publicly owned areas of the shorelines; and increase recreational opportunities for the public in the shoreline. The public's opportunity to enjoy the physical and aesthetic qualities of natural shorelines of the state is to be preserved to the greatest extent feasible consistent with the overall best interest of the state and the people generally. To this end uses that are consistent with control of pollution and prevention of damage to the natural environment, or are unique to or dependent upon use of the state's shoreline, are to be given preference.

- B. Applicable regulations from the Washington Administrative Code WAC 173-27-140 Review criteria for all development.
  - (1) No authorization to undertake use or development on shorelines of the state shall be granted by the local government unless upon review the use or development is determined to be consistent with the policy and provisions of the Shoreline Management Act and the master program.
  - (2) No permit shall be issued for any new or expanded building or structure of more than thirty-five feet above average grade level on shorelines of the state that will obstruct the view of a substantial number of residences on areas adjoining such shorelines except where a master program does not prohibit the same and then only when overriding considerations of the public interest will be served.
  - WAC 173-27-190 Permits for substantial development, conditional use, or variance.
  - (1) Each permit for a substantial development, conditional use or variance issued by local government shall contain a provision that construction pursuant to the permit shall not begin and is not authorized until twenty-one days from the date of filing as defined in RCW 90.58.140(6) and WAC 173-27-130, or until all review proceedings initiated within twenty-one days from the date of such filing have been terminated; except as provided in RCW 90.58.140 (5)(a) and (b).

# C. Shoreline Master Program for the Thurston Region SMPTR Section Two, Chapter V, Regional Criteria

The Shoreline Master Program for the Thurston Region contains regional criteria that apply to the proposal. All development within the jurisdiction of this Master Program shall demonstrate compliance with the following criteria:

- A. Public access to shorelines shall be permitted only in a manner which preserves or enhances the characteristics of the shoreline which existed prior to establishment of public access.
- B. Protection of water quality and aquatic habitat is recognized as a primary goal. All applications for development of shorelines and use of public waters shall be closely analyzed for their effect on the aquatic environment. Of particular concern will be the preservation of the larger ecological system when a change is proposed to a lesser part of the system, like a marshland or tideland.
- C. Future water-dependent or water-related industrial uses shall be channeled into shoreline areas already so utilized or into those shoreline areas which lend themselves to suitable industrial development. Where industry is now located in shoreline areas that are more suited to other uses, it is the policy of this Master Program to minimize expansion of such industry.
- D. Residential development shall be undertaken in a manner that will maintain existing public access to the publicly-owned shorelines and not interfere with the public use of water areas fronting such shorelines, nor shall it adversely affect aquatic habitat.
- E. Governmental units shall be bound by the same requirements as private interests.
- F. Applicants for permits shall have the burden of proving that a proposed substantial development is consistent with the criteria which must be met before a Permit is granted. In any review of the granting or denial of an application for a permit as provided in RCW 90.58.18.180 (1), the person requesting the review shall have the burden of proof.
- G. Shorelines of this Region which are notable for their aesthetic, scenic, historic or ecological qualities shall be preserved. Any private or public development which would degrade such shoreline qualities shall be discouraged. Inappropriate shoreline uses and poor quality shoreline conditions shall be eliminated when a new shoreline development or activity is authorized.
- H. Protection of public health is recognized as a primary goal. All applications for development or use of shorelines shall be closely analyzed for their effect on the public health.

Section Three -- Policies And Regulations For Use Activities Chapter IV. Boating Facilities

A. Scope and Definition

Boating facilities include marinas, boat ramps, piers, docks, <u>boathouses</u>, mooring buoys, recreational floats.... "Covered moorage" is a roofed structure for the wet or dry storage of one or more boats. "Boathouses" are a type of covered moorage which have walls and are usually for the storage of one (1) boat.

### B. Policies

• • •

## **Covered Moorage:**

- 18. The size of the covered moorage should be the minimum necessary for the use proposed.
- 19. Covered moorage over the water should be discouraged in tidal waters and prohibited in fresh water.
- 20. Covered moorage should be designed and located to maintain view corridors and blend with the surrounding development.

C. General Regulations

. . .

## Covered Moorage:

- 30. A boathouse for residential property is permitted landward of the ordinary high-water mark. It shall not exceed one hundred (100) square feet unless the size of the applicant's boat demands a larger structure. The structure shall not exceed ten (10) feet in height.
- 31. Covered moorage is prohibited over fresh water.

## SMPTR Section Three, Part D. Environmental Designations and Regulations

...

2. Suburban and Rural Environments. Marinas, boat ramps, piers, docks, <u>boathouses</u>, mooring buoys, recreational floats and marine railways are permitted subject to the Policies and General Regulations. (<u>emphasis</u> added)

## **Conclusions Based on Findings**

- 1. As conditioned, the proposal is consistent with the policies and procedures of the Shoreline Management Act. Boating facilities associated with a single-family residence, including boathouses, are permitted uses in the Rural shoreline environment. Official acknowledgement and retention of a boat storage facility that has been in place without a history of adverse impacts would be a reasonable and appropriate use of the shoreline consistent with the guidance in the SMA. The record contains no evidence suggesting that keeping the structure, which has been in use for at least 19 years, in active use would harm the shoreline environment or the public health. Doing so would promote and facilitate an existing recreational use. *Findings 3, 4, 5, 8, and 9*.
- 2. As conditioned, the proposal complies with applicable regulations in the Washington Administrative Code. The existing boathouse is not taller than 10 feet in height. No

construction or alteration to the existing boathouse is proposed, and as it has been in place for at least 19 years with no history of complaints to the County about view impacts, it is safe to conclude that retention of the existing boathouse would not have a significant adverse impact on upland views. A condition of approval would ensure compliance with the requirements of WAC 173-27-190. *Findings 2 and 8*.

3. As conditioned, the request for after-the-fact authorization for the existing boathouse would be consistent with the applicable policies and regulations of the Shoreline Master Program for the Thurston Region. Boating facilities are allowed in the Rural shoreline environment. Retention of the existing well pump house/boathouse would not affect public access to regulated shorelines. There is no evidence in the record suggesting any history of adverse effects on the shoreline ecological functions and values. No industrial shoreline use is implicated. The proposal includes no construction in- or over-water nor within the 200 feet of shoreline jurisdiction. Nothing in the record suggests that construction of the structure negatively impacted a shoreline of exceptional aesthetic, scenic, historic or ecological qualities. While the overall structure is greater than 100 square feet in area, as currently sized, it accommodates both a community well pump and the Applicants' boats. The structure does not exceed ten feet in height. The Thurston County Public Health Environmental Health Division recommended unconditional approval. The boathouse is not located over fresh water. *Findings 2, 3, 4, 5, 8, and 9*.

## **DECISION**

Based upon the preceding findings and conclusions, the requested after-the-fact shoreline substantial development permit for the previously constructed well pump house/boat house is **GRANTED** subject to the following conditions:

- 1. All development shall be in substantial compliance with drawings and site plans submitted and made part of this staff report.
- 2. The proposed project must be consistent with all applicable policies and other provisions of the Shoreline Management Act, its rules, and the Shoreline Master Program for the Thurston Region.
- 3. Construction pursuant to the permit shall not begin and is not authorized until twenty-one days from the date of filing as defined in RCW 90.58.140(6) and WAC 173-27-130, or until all review proceedings initiated within twenty-one days from the date of such filing have been terminated; except as provided in RCW 90.58.140 (5)(a) and (b).

Decided October 8, 2019.

Sharon A. Rice
Thurston County Hearing Examiner

### THURSTON COUNTY

## PROCEDURE FOR RECONSIDERATION AND APPEAL OF HEARING EXAMINER DECISION TO THE BOARD

**NOTE**: THERE MAY BE NO EX PARTE (ONE-SIDED) CONTACT OUTSIDE A PUBLIC HEARING WITH EITHER THE HEARING EXAMINER OR WITH THE BOARD OF THURSTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS ON APPEALS (Thurston County Code, Section 2.06.030).

If you do not agree with the decision of the Hearing Examiner, there are two (2) ways to seek review of the decision. They are described in A and B below. Unless reconsidered or appealed, decisions of the Hearing Examiner become final on the 15th day after the date of the decision.\* The Hearing Examiner renders decisions within five (5) working days following a Request for Reconsideration unless a longer period is mutually agreed to by the Hearing Examiner, applicant, and requester.

The decision of the Hearing Examiner on an appeal of a SEPA threshold determination for a project action is final. The Hearing Examiner shall not entertain motions for reconsideration for such decisions. The decision of the Hearing Examiner regarding a SEPA threshold determination may only be appealed to Superior Court in conjunction with an appeal of the underlying action in accordance with RCW 43.21C.075 and TCC 17.09.160. TCC 17.09.160(K).

## A. RECONSIDERATION BY THE HEARING EXAMINER (Not permitted for a decision on a SEPA threshold determination)

- 1. Any aggrieved person or agency that disagrees with the decision of the Examiner may request Reconsideration. All Reconsideration requests must include a legal citation and reason for the request. The Examiner shall have the discretion to either deny the motion without comment or to provide additional Findings and Conclusions based on the record.
- 2. Written Request for Reconsideration and the appropriate fee must be filed with the Resource Stewardship Department within ten (10) days of the written decision. The form is provided for this purpose on the opposite side of this notification.

## B. <u>APPEAL TO THE BOARD OF THURSTON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS (Not permitted for a decision on a SEPA threshold determination for a project action)</u>

- 1. Appeals may be filed by any aggrieved person or agency directly affected by the Examiner's decision. The form is provided for this purpose on the opposite side of this notification.
- 2. Written notice of Appeal and the appropriate fee must be filed with the Community Planning & Economic Development Department within fourteen (14) days of the date of the Examiner's written decision. The form is provided for this purpose on the opposite side of this notification.
- 3. An Appeal filed within the specified time period will stay the effective date of the Examiner's decision until it is adjudicated by the Board of Thurston County Commissioners or is withdrawn.
- 4. The notice of Appeal shall concisely specify the error or issue which the Board is asked to consider on Appeal, and shall cite by reference to section, paragraph and page, the provisions of law which are alleged to have been violated. The Board need not consider issues, which are not so identified. A written memorandum that the appellant may wish considered by the Board may accompany the notice. The memorandum shall not include the presentation of new evidence and shall be based only upon facts presented to the Examiner.
- 5. Notices of the Appeal hearing will be mailed to all parties of record who legibly provided a mailing address. This would include all persons who (a) gave oral or written comments to the Examiner or (b) listed their name as a person wishing to receive a copy of the decision on a sign-up sheet made available during the Examiner's hearing.
- 6. Unless all parties of record are given notice of a trip by the Board of Thurston County Commissioners to view the subject site, no one other than County staff may accompany the Board members during the site visit.
- **C. STANDING** All Reconsideration and Appeal requests must clearly state why the appellant is an "aggrieved" party and demonstrate that standing in the Reconsideration or Appeal should be granted.
- D. <u>FILING FEES AND DEADLINE</u> If you wish to file a Request for Reconsideration or Appeal of this determination, please do so in writing on the back of this form, accompanied by a nonrefundable fee of \$750.00 for a Request for Reconsideration or \$1,020.00 an Appeal. Any Request for Reconsideration or Appeal must be received in the Building Development Center on the second floor of Building #1 in the Thurston County Courthouse complex no later than 4:00 p.m. per the requirements specified in A2 and B2 above. <u>Postmarks are not acceptable.</u> If your application fee and completed application form is not timely filed, you will be unable to request Reconsideration or Appeal this determination. The deadline will <u>not</u> be extended.
  - \* Shoreline Permit decisions are not final until a 21-day appeal period to the state has elapsed following the date the County decision becomes final.



Project No.	
<b>Appeal Sequence No.:</b>	

	Check here for: RECONSIDERATION OF HEARING EXAMINER DECISION				
THE APPELLANT, after review of the terms and conditions of the Hearing Examiner's decision hereby requests that the Hearing Examinatake the following information into consideration and further review under the provisions of Chapter 2.06.060 of the Thurston County Code:					
		(If more space is re	equired, please attach additio	nal sheet.)	
	Check here for:	APPEAL OF HEARI	NG EXAMINER DECISION		
TO	THE BOARD OF THUI	RSTON COUNTY COM	MISSIONERS COMES NOV	N	
on th	nis day of	20	, as an APPELLANT in	the matter of a Hearing Examiner's decision	
rend	ered on		_, 20, by	relating to	
provi	sions of Chapter 2.06.070		e, give written notice of APPEA	Examiner for his decision, does now, under the L to the Board of Thurston County Commissioners	
Spec	ific section, paragraph and	page of regulation allegedly	interpreted erroneously by Hea	aring Examiner:	
1.	Zoning Ordinance				
2.	Platting and Subdivisi	on Ordinance			
3.	Comprehensive Plan				
4.	Critical Areas Ordinar	ce			
5.	Shoreline Master Prog	gram			
6.	Other:				
		(If more space is re	equired, please attach additio	nal sheet.)	
will u				ng responsibility for final review of such decisions and in favor of the appellant and reverse the Hearing	
On a	separate sheet, explain	why the appellant should be	STANDING be considered an aggrieved page	arty and why standing should be granted to the	
• • •	·	oth Reconsiderations and A	ppeals.		
Signat	ture required for both Reconside	ration and Appeal Requests			
			APPELLANT NAME PRII	NTED	
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Fee of		ation or \$1,020.00 for Appeal. R	Received (check box): Initial nent this day of		