

**City of Gig Harbor Planning Commission
Minutes of Work-Study Session
Thursday, November 4, 2004
Gig Harbor Civic Center**

PRESENT: Commissioners Carol Johnson, Dick Allen, Bruce Gair, Scott Wagner and Chairperson Paul Kadzik. Commissioners Theresa Malich and Kathy Franklin were absent. Staff present: Steve Osguthorpe, Diane Gagnon and Gus Garcia.

CALL TO ORDER: 6:05 p.m.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

MOTION: Move to approve the minutes of October 21, 2004 Johnson/Gair – unanimously approved.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Comprehensive Plan Update – Code and Policy Study Session #4

Planning Manager Steve Osguthorpe introduced Owen Dennison from AHBL and Teresa Vanderberg from Adolfson, Inc..

Ms. Vanderberg briefed the Planning Commission on the two summary tables and the figure of existing inventory of wetlands that she had provided as requested.

Commissioner Johnson asked if a problem could arise if they recommend a smaller buffer than what the State recommends. Ms. Vanderberg answered that best available science would need to be applied and shown.

A question was posed by Commissioner Wagner as to how buffer averaging can be applied and whether a reduction can be given for enhancing the buffer.

Ms. Vanderberg explained the reductions are currently allowed for buffer enhancements and that Adolfson was recommending that those reductions result in no less than 70% of the original buffer. She then explained buffer averaging, stating that the result is no net loss of buffer.

Commissioner Wagner stated that he had walked some low and high quality wetlands with a wetland biologist and proposed leaving the reduction at the currently allowed 50%.

Discussion followed on the ability of staff to reduce the buffer when the wetland is degraded and the possible mitigations. Concern was expressed by Planning Manager Steve Osguthorpe as to whether staff should be making judgment calls as to the value of a wetland and Ms. Vanderberg stated that a better definition of what a degraded wetland is would have to be developed and consistently applied.

Planning Manager Steve Osguthorpe asked if the buffers should be different for residential and commercial if it was found necessary in order to meet GMA density requirements for residential. Ms Vanderberg pointed out that a new wetland inventory with a GIS overlay was needed.

PUBLIC HEARING – 7:00 PM

Chairman Paul Kadzik opened the public hearing at 7:00 pm.

Planning Manager Steve Osguthorpe gave a brief explanation of the schedule of adoption of the 2004 Comprehensive Plan amendments followed by an introduction of Owen Dennison from AHBL.

Mr. Dennison explained the changes in each of the elements of the Comprehensive Plan along with their reasons for the recommended change.

Mike Desmarteau, 1216 Pilchuck Pl., Fox Island – Mr. Desmarteau spoke on the issue of wetland buffers. He stated that he felt people's property would be hurt if buffers were increased and this would force developers to charge more for homes. Mr. Desmarteau felt that these proposed changes were against the goals of the Growth Management Act. He then thanked the Planning Commission for considering the increased density and stated that he believed in controlled growth and responsible design.

Joe Kunkel, 1411 Fourth Avenue, Suite 1020, Seattle WA – Mr. Kunkel voiced his support of the staff recommendation to fund a transportation modeling study and stated that he had a concern for potential failure at certain city intersections.

Dave Folsom, 1235 Queets Dr., Fox Island WA – Mr. Folsom handed out a Water Resources Inventory Area 15 population growth projection and pointed out that in their study Gig Harbor came out number 2 in growth although they had included area outside of the Gig Harbor city limits. Mr. Folsom stated that our area is dependent on rainwater which is mostly going down the drain due to increased impervious surfaces and further pointed out that there are areas in Gig Harbor North that don't have good absorbability. He then said that we must preserve as much native vegetation as possible and that increased impervious surfaces could result in a need to pump storm water to aquifer recharge areas. Mr. Folsom stated that we can't continue to use single family homes to meet housing needs.

Marian Berejikian, Friends of Pierce County, P.O. Box 2084, Gig Harbor WA – Ms. Berejikian handed out a comment letter and requested that the city adopt low impact development standards as part of the 2004 Comprehensive Plan Update. She stated that low impact development standards can allow increased densities while not harming the aquifer and saving money. Ms. Berejikian referenced a project in Fife where 95% of the groundwater was captured. She then recommended that the city adopt the Department of Ecology alternative 3 wetland regulations. Ms. Berejikian noted that the city's wetland maps are incomplete and outdated and asked that those be updated. She then asked that the Planning Commission take a tour of Poulsbo Place and pointed

out that the largest house in Poulsbo Place would be the smallest house in the Gig Harbor North proposal put forth by Carl Halsan.

Mike Murphy, 11030 50th St NW, Gig Harbor WA – Mr. Murphy stated that he was a member of the Peninsula Advisory Committee but was not speaking on their behalf. He clarified that he was just trying to understand what is happening in the Urban Growth Area. Mr. Murphy stated that he agreed with Mr. Folsom and shared his concern for increased impervious surfaces and their affect on the aquifers.

Liz Lathrop – Ms. Lathrop stated that she had been involved in the water quality planning process and urged the Planning Commission to pay close attention to the recommendations of the WRIA 15 group. She voiced her support of low impact development and the need to protect our near shore habitat.

There being no further comments, Chairman Paul Kadzik closed the Public Hearing at 7:45. He then called for a 5-minute recess.

Chairman Kadzik opened the work-study session at 7:50.

Planning Manager Steve Osguthorpe suggested that the Planning Commission move down on the agenda to the Transportation Element since Gus Garcia was present from Operations and Engineering to answer any questions, pointing out that they did have another meeting scheduled to discuss any other items outstanding.

Owen Dennison from AHBL went over the proposed policy changes. Commission Gair asked why the language which referenced working with downtown property owners on a parking solution was being removed and suggested that it remain. It was agreed that the language should remain.

Commissioner Gair went over his proposed changes which were of a housekeeping nature.

The Planning Commission then discussed the input they had received from the public hearing regarding wetland buffers and low impact development standards. Planning Manager Steve Osguthorpe suggested that different buffer widths could be used for different land uses.

Theresa Vanderberg from Adolfson offered to work with AHBL on writing language and definition of low impact development.

The Planning Commission then discussed the Department of Ecology guidelines and how best to achieve recommended densities.

Commission Wagner asked if the wetland buffers we have currently were acceptable then why change them and Planning Manager Steve Osguthorpe pointed out that they were not based on best available science.

The Planning Commission went through the matrix of wetland buffer ranges and

discussed how Gig Harbor's current regulations compare. It was decided that everyone would look over the information provided and come back with suggestions at the next work-study session.

Commissioner Wagner asked for clarification of the changes to Title 17 and Owen Dennison went over the recommended changes.

Mr. Dennison then briefed the Planned Commission on the list of Essential Public Facilities they had requested. He stated that there is a list in Gig Harbor's Public Institutional zone and that no other lists exist although they are referenced. He recommended that we identify the lists for future reference. Mr. Dennison then pointed out that the sewer service area in the Capital Facilities Element had been modified to state that it would be the same as the Urban Growth Area boundary.

NEXT REGULAR MEETING:

November 18, 2004 at 6pm – Work-Study Session

ADJOURN:

MOTION: Move to adjourn at 9:10 p.m.
Johnson/Gair – unanimously approved

CD recorder utilized:
Disc #1 Tracks 1 and 2
Disc #2 Tracks 1 and 2