



**RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS OF THE
WHATCOM COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
May 23, 2024**

Regular Meeting and Work Session

1

1 **Call to Order**

2 The meeting was called to order by Whatcom County Planning Commission Chair,
3 Kelvin Barton at 6:33 p.m.

4 **Roll Call**

5 **Present:** Kelvin Barton, Stephen Jackson, Julie Jefferson, Dominic Mocerri, Scott Van
6 Dalen

7 Jim Hansen arrived at 7:00p.

8 **Absent:** Atul Deshmane, Frank James

9 **Staff Present:** Steve Roberge, Kelly Chamberlain, Becky Boxx, Cliff Strong

10 **Open Session Public Comment**

11 Dave Widner, Scott Jones, Lisa Adam, Brian Sarni, and Ryan Bowman provided public
12 comment

13 **Commissioner Comments**

14 There were no Commissioner comments

15 **Approval of Meeting Minutes**

16 There were no minutes prepared for approval

17 **Review of uses allowed in the Heavy Impact Industrial District within UGA**

18 **Timestamp: 6:53**

19 Cliff Strong, PDS Senior Planner, reviewed the Council's request to:

20 *Amend Whatcom County Code Chapter 20.68 and other relevant sections of*
21 *Title 20 to define appropriate industrial uses and conditions for industrial uses in*
22 *Heavy Impact Industrial (HII) Districts within a city's designated urban growth*
23 *area.*

24 Though the Council's directive would apply to any city's UGA containing HII zoning, Mr.
25 Strong pointed out the Alderwood Neighborhood is the only neighborhood affected as
26 there are no other HII districts within a city's UGA in the county. The neighborhood
27 contains properties zoned for High Industrial Impact (HII), Light Industrial Impact
28 (LII), residential and commercial zones, recreation and open space.

29 Pursuant to WCC 20.68.203, in the Bellingham UGA, the following uses are currently
30 prohibited: petroleum refinery; rubber plastics, chemicals paper asbestos processing;
31 primary metal industries.

32 Mr. Strong asked the Planning Commission to review uses that are currently allowed in
33 the HII district and suggest others that might be incompatible and inappropriate in the
34 Bellingham UGA so as to add them to 20.68.203. Though the Council is considering
35 other long-term solutions, PDS needs to address their current directive.

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1 **Heavy Industrial Impact in the UGA Work Session**

2 **Timestamp: 6:57**

3 Discussion ensued with the Commission, staff and audience members (when
4 recognized). The Commission asked questions about potential uses to prohibit, impacts
5 on existing uses, nonconforming use rules, performance standards, structure of our
6 code, etc.

7 Commissioner Van Dalen suggested that commissioners move to have another work
8 session or two regarding this topic instead of rushing into any decisions.

9 Mr. Strong asked for more direction/instruction so as to help the commissioners in a
10 future work session

11 Commissioner Van Dalen asked if the list of Conditions that were provided by Scott
12 Jones, Bellingham Planning Commissioner, could be considered and can the
13 Commission be advised by legal as to whether the Condition restrictions move the
14 Commission in the right direction.

15 Commissioner Chair Barton would like to know what legal would recommend.

16 Commissioner Mocerri requested that Staff reach out to the property and business
17 owners and in these HII areas and ask for their input

18 Staff will try to put together answers from Legal and comments from the HII owners
19 by the next meeting; but if not, will hold a work session the following meeting date.

20 **Department Update**

21 Steve Roberge, Assistant Director of Planning and Development Services (PDS),
22 presented the 2024 docket as approved by Council.

23 All the Comp Plan comments being received are being posted on the webpage. They
24 will be presented in groups but can always be found on the web. Mr. Roberge offered
25 to provide a presentation on Code Enforcement operations
26

27

28 **Adjournment**

29 **Timestamp:**

30 The meeting was adjourned at 7:52 p.m.

31 Minutes prepared by Aileen Kogut-Aguon.

32 WHATCOM COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION ATTEST:

33

Handwritten signature of Kelvin Barton in black ink.

34

Kelvin Barton, Chair

Handwritten signature of Aileen Kogut-Aguon in black ink.
Aileen Kogut-Aguon, Secretary