



**RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS OF THE
WHATCOM COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
July 25, 2024**

Work Session

1

1 **Call to Order**

2 The meeting was called to order by Whatcom County Planning Commission Vice Chair,
3 Dominic Mocerri at 6:35 p.m.

4 **Roll Call**

5 **Present:** Atul Deshmane, Jim Hansen, Frank James, Suneeta Eisenburg, Dominic
6 Mocerri

7 **Staff Present:** Steve Roberge, Cliff Strong, Lucas Clark, Kelly Chamberlain, and Becky
8 Boxx

9 **Department Update**

10 Steve Roberge, Assistant Director of Planning and Development Services (PDS)
11 explained Whatcom County Council is sending HII in the UGA discussion back to the
12 Planning Commission with some more instruction; that subject will be on the agenda
13 for August 8th along with the Public Hearings for code scrub. Also coming to the
14 Commission soon, State Bill 5290 which requires Planning and Development to shorten
15 its review timelines.

16 Planning Department Senior Planner Cliff Strong added that the Department of Ecology
17 has provided conditional approval on the Shoreline Management Program, so PDS is
18 hoping to take that to County Council in September; the Plan then goes back to
19 Ecology for final approval and Staff intends for the Comprehensive Plan amendments
20 to go into effect upon final approval from Ecology, then Code Amendments in January
21 or upon Ecology approval, whichever is later.

22 Commissioner Hansen asked Staff about the timeline on the Commissioners receiving
23 Comp Plan Chapters for review, Mr. Roberge responded they are likely to be available
24 in fall or winter.

25 **Open Session Public Comment**

26 There was no public comment.

27 **Commissioner Comments**

28 Commissioner Hansen reported the Forest Resiliency Task Force will be meeting the
29 second Wednesday of each month and is currently forming goals, processes, and
30 objectives.

31 Commissioner Deshmane asked Commissioner Hansen about his role in the Task Force
32 and what he needs from the Planning Commission; the Commissioners agreed that
33 Commissioner Hansen would feel like a more active representative with input and
34 feedback from the other Commissioners

35 **Approval of Meeting Minutes**

36 **Timestamp: 9:45**

37 **1 Commissioner Atul Deshmane moved to approve the meeting minutes from June**
38 **13.**



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1 **Commissioner Dominic Mocerì seconded.**

2 **Roll Call Vote: Ayes- Dushmanè, Mocerì**

3 **Nays-**

4 **Abstain- James, Hansen, Eisenburg (Ayes-2; Nays-0; Abstain-3). The motion**
5 **fails.**

6 **Code Scrub**

7 **Timestamp: 12:04**

8 Lucas Clark presented information on code scrub proposals for: Personal Wireless
9 Facilities related to FAA approval and setbacks, Remaining instances of the term
10 "significant" regarding tree removals, zero-foot setbacks for Single Family attached,
11 Cannabis in the Urban Growth Area, and issuing permits during the seasonal
12 Watershed closure.

13 **Code Scrub Work Session**

14 **Timestamp: 17:13**

15 Commissioner Hansen asked for clarification on which proposed amendments are
16 actual policy changes.

17 Mr. Clark confirmed only the Cannabis in LII is a policy change.

18 Commissioner Mocerì asked if the code scrub for watershed closure applies only to
19 work disturbing 500 ft of soil.

20 Mr. Strong confirmed the watershed protection is the purpose of the issuance
21 moratorium, however, the timelines related to State Bill 5290 will not allow Planning
22 and Development Staff to withhold permits during the seasonal closure. Only outdoor
23 construction is affected; outside work not affecting 500 sq. ft of soil, or interior
24 remodels, etc. do not fall into this category.

25 **Adjournment**

26 **Timestamp: 22:07**

27 The meeting was adjourned at 6:58 p.m.

28 Minutes prepared by Kelly Chamberlain.

29 WHATCOM COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION ATTEST:

30 

31 Kelvin Barton, Chair



Aileen Kogut-Aguon, Secretary