

**Latah County Planning Commission**  
Minutes, 5 November 2002

Planning Commission [PC] Members: Skyler Schlueter [SS], John Hunt [JDH], Suvia Judd [SJ],  
Kathleen Warnick [KW], James Smith [JS], Janet Hohle [JH], Louise Barber [LB];  
Planning Director, Michelle Fuson [MF]

**Present/Absent:** SS, SJ, JS, KW, JDH, JH, LB present. Staff: MF.

**Handouts:** 8/20/02 and 10/15/02 minutes; draft of complete ordinances.

**Meeting:**

8/20/02 and 10/15/02 minutes accepted. Troy Ott was introduced by SJ; he was invited to discuss animal containment and year-round feeding (Art. 4). MF explained that the PC's purpose with the proposed language was to deter huge dairy and/or feedlots from occurring in the county, while at the same time, permitting traditional agricultural uses. (The only current animal containment/year-round feeding that Ott is aware of is the Tweedy sheep operation, which is a model of contemporary, scientifically appropriate agricultural use.)

Ott: the current draft language would not be in compliance with the Comprehensive Plan. Huge operations would have problems; they must follow EPA regulations (required water permits, nutrient management plans, 25-year-storm runoff plans, odor management, etc.; point-source pollution a problem). Smaller operations have problems, too; they must comply with some of the above, and PC proposed regulations might make it more difficult. Large dairies cannot go in industrial or commercial zone since they require huge tracts of land for the waste to be spread out upon. Problem arises when residential use is permitted to dot the agricultural zone; agricultural uses will be forced out eventually; PCs like Latah County's are aiding this process; the "Right to Farm[ers]" eventually become "outnumbered." The UI/WSU dairy plan is moving ahead; the site is a problem; has to be at least ½ mile from any residence; if universities purchased land, the exemption for regulations that now exists for their respective dairies might not apply; they would want a minimum of 1000 head (currently both have ca. 100 cows each in milking lines). (Milk is largest agricultural product in Idaho; followed by beef, then potatoes.) The trend is toward large-scale agriculture due to demand; the regulations are forcing the intensifying of agriculture. Agricultural technology has made the U.S. exporters, but regulations and the cost of labor are catching up. We should be promoting local, sustainable agriculture so that the processes, conditions, chemicals, etc., are known quantities/qualities. (Organic gardening requires more land than traditional.)

What to do if arbitrary numbers, density for animals, etc., do not take care of the problem? JH: small recreational agricultural users (a few horses, for instance) now fall between the cracks of current regulations; compliance is often on paper, not in reality; the DEQ is supposed to enforce, but it just doesn't happen. SJ: small operations should be encouraged to continue; year-round animal containment should be a CU; water a primary condition. Proposed that up to 250 animal units (not to exceed 1000 animals) should go into CUs, along with compliance with federal and state regulations. MF will draft conditions; standards will follow.

Next meeting (renegotiation of Area of City Impact; MF will discuss how different options before City and County would work): 19 November, Room 2B, Latah County Courthouse.

Submitted by: \_\_\_\_\_ 14 November 2002  
Louise D. Barber