

Latah County Planning Commission
Minutes, 7 February 2006

Planning Commission [PC] Members: John Hunt [JDH], Suvia Judd [SJ], Kathleen Warnick [KW],
James Smith [JS], Janet Hohle [JH], Louise Barber [LB], Steve Heick [SH].
Planning Director, Michelle Fuson [MF]

Present/Absent: JDH, KW, JH, JS, SH, LB present; SJ absent. Staff: MF.

Packet: Agenda, 1-17-06 minutes, tentative schedule; written testimony re. junk, lighting, B. Chestnut letter on 9.01.01.3, Murrery Stanton letter to CC demanding dismissal of all members of the PC; definitions section of draft ordinance

Handouts: JH draft of lighting section; dark sky information sheet, additional letters re. lighting

Meeting: Minutes of 1/17/06 accepted. 9.03 (Design Standards for All Outdoor Lighting): An electrical engineer from the public said that power companies are currently recommending fewer luminaries, but with higher power, for greater economy; the draft ordinance is in contrast to this advice; MF noted that the draft mentions nothing about wattage, that cut-offs light acceptably, are economically feasible, and that industries are moving in this direction for savings; B. Chestnut and others in attendance suggested that health and safety should be the only considerations re. lighting, and that powerful lighting is necessary for those reasons; others in attendance want to see restrictions on bright lighting, and that compliance should be changed from ten to five years; lighting another's property is trespass; Harkins said he would be forced to comply and his lighting system affects no one, but at the least, any ordinance should be based on close proximity so it doesn't blanket everyone unnecessarily; he also suggested that lighting and dark sky notions are not currently a part of the Comprehensive Plan and that all ordinances must be based on the plan; MF noted that a review in light of the plan is necessary; Stanton: this action by the PC is inappropriate because the material is not neutral; Harkins: PC needs scientific evidence; that this attempt is regulating many who want lighting; noted that industrial operations, such as Bennett Lumber, could not safely operate without powerful lighting; Stanton: industrial lighting standards are "consensus" standards, according to OSHA, and the county could be liable to suits if any problems; S. Goldstein: if there are no limits to number of lights, no lumens restricted, no wattage limits, on limitation on where lights must be placed, what is the matter with this draft?; others in attendance responded that OSHA could pose a problem; that cost was an extenuating factor; base any ordinance for lighting on density; Stanton: legally, there is no one existing as "standing," this is unreasonably broad, and there is no definition of "night sky"; this should be between neighbors; finally, that a reflector above a light will direct light where you want it to go and it's needed. Clearly, there are numerous individuals who are both pro and con on this issue; therefore, JH moved to accept the draft of 9.03 to move forward to the public hearing; seconded; passed unanimously.

MF: the definitions have not been run through since the beginning of this process; a separate meeting is needed to go through and figure out where we are; LB will search through minutes and find out where we last stood; Stanton noted that "public right of way" needs work since utilities have different standards.

Next Meeting: 21 February meeting cancelled; 7 March 2006 (Definitions) at 5:30pm in the Latah County Courthouse, Room 2B

Submitted by Louise D. Barber, 22 January 2006

