

Latah County Planning Commission
Minutes, December 5 2006

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

Present/Absent: SJ, JH, JS, SH, LB present. Staff: MF

Packet: Agenda; minutes (10/3/06); copy of bylaws with one proposed change

Meeting: Minutes of 10/3/06 accepted.

Genesee ACI status: the details of an agreement are being drafted; a public hearing before the PC and eventually the CC will be required.

New bylaws are needed because of the new ordinances passed in September; the draft in the packet differed only from the old bylaws by stating that “except for the minutes, which are not signed” (Article. 4.A). The question of whether new members will be added was raised; MF: probably in January.

Bylaws discussion: should the chair vote only in a tie, to create a tie, or always?; although the chair’s not voting is not unusual, the vote of the chair seemed to the PC to be a good thing; it allows the public to know where everyone stands; since the CC do the actual decision making, this vote is not critical; voting after the other members have voted is more a response than an opinion (Murray Stanton); the chair’s “abstention” might look suspicious to the public; abstention could be viewed as indecision; the chair’s voting leaves everyone on a level playing field; non-voting is a bit of a buffer for a strongly opinionated chair. PC decisions are normally by consensus and formalized by actual votes; PC may be controversial, but we are not political, and thus our votes matter.

Article 5 (meetings): MF: state code requires a minimum number of meetings per year; they need to be noticed at the beginning of the year; PC: “the minimum number of regular meetings each year shall be one meeting each month for not less than nine months.” MF will work on language.

Article 6 (Amendments): is the full seven-member PC required for amendments? Chair would have to vote? MF will check with the prosecuting attorney to discover if the new ordinances have cancelled out the bylaws; JH moved that amendments to the bylaws be forwarded to MF for presentation at the 1/16/07 meeting and include: 1) that the chair should vote; 2) that regular meetings’ language approximate the above, and 3) that bylaws be reviewed once a year; SH seconded; passed unanimously.

MF reported that the CC has signed a HUD grant for a community center in Bovill that requires a fair housing plan (low income people to have an opportunity for housing; racial, etc., discrimination a part of the picture); MF is drafting a plan based on Shoshone County’s (not a document that Latah would necessarily use, but required by the federal government); a public hearing will be required.

JH proposed contacting Kristen Hunt and others for special techniques to draw out the public in a meaningful and non-contentious way to allow the PC to move forward on approaches to upcoming probable changes in the comprehensive plan.

Next meeting: 5:30pm, January 16, 2007, Room 2B, County Courthouse.

Submitted by Louise D. Barber, 8 January 2007