

Latah County Planning Commission
Minutes, 2 October 24, 2001

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

Present/Absent: SJ, KW, JDH, JanH, LB present; SS, JH absent. Staff: MF. County Commissioners Paul Kimmel and Jack Nelson.

Packet materials: agenda; minutes from 7/17/01.

Meeting:

Minutes from 7/17/01 accepted.

The two commissioners were present simply for increased familiarity with how the PC works. MF began by reviewing the process of the draft ordinance before the PC, possible input following the three town meetings, and where the PC is currently. Beginning with junk (Section 2.06), MF suggested that the current language is too restrictive, and after a review of much previous discussion, including the fact that what “junk” exists now would not be altered by this ordinance and how the ordinance would be implemented (photo documentation, complaint basis, etc.), a vote was taken on whether to include this section: 4 to include this section, 1 against. The discussion continued. MF cautioned that enforcement would be difficult, and it might be a “takings” issue. Other ordinances include definitions (i.e., a vehicle has to be a parts vehicle in order to be considered junk). Noted that farm vehicles/equipment are not being targeted, and that what is junk is “perfectly clear” (a visual nuisance). The city of Moscow has a new ordinance, based clearly on beautification. Cars seem to be the focus of the town meeting input; toxic waste problem (discussed at Genesee town meeting) rehashed; problem of property rights again surfaced. How to formulate process based on neighbor’s complaint: 1) two or more complaints; 2) junk “board”; 3) if junk accumulates so as to be intrusive. Solutions: screening (including a “good attempt” with the growing of plants), not “enclosing”; later decided that one month is too short a time period for response -- six months more realistic. PC definite that the CC should be the appeals board for disputes, not a new “board.” Regarding all the problems with implementation, Janet suggested that “the PD would know what to do when they got there, and the CC would know how to make the case defensible.” MF will investigate other ordinances for better language and speak with county prosecutor to discover what the office wants to deal with (what level of specificity) in order to enable PC to finish this section.

Land division/the proposed new rural zone (Article 4) discussion followed; is the intention of the ordinances and comprehensive plan to protect farmland or farms. MF: CP intention is to protect farmland for farming. Noted that certain areas of the county will simply not return to farming or timber production (e.g., Wallen Rd.; noted that any ten-acre lot is necessarily “less productive”); should more residences be allowed than PC was envisioning in proposed rural zone? PK suggested that density and a point criteria (slope, access, etc.) might be basis for decision; the language prohibits some increased building that would simply make sense. Need exists to understand what community believes should be rural. Rural zone discussion tabled for next meeting.

Next meeting 6 November 2001 at 5:30pm, County Courthouse, 2-B.

Submitted by: _____ 24 October 2001
Louise D. Barber

