

Latah County Planning Commission
Minutes, 4 February 2003

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, JH, JDH, SJ, KW, JS, LB present. Staff: MF.

Packet Material: Latah County Ordinances with proposed changes; letter and material regarding lighting from Stu Goldstein.

Meeting: Nancy Becker (North Central Health Department [NCHD]) was introduced to discuss FEMA issues. MF asked if there were any rules for septic systems in floodplains, and what kind of coordination might exist between the Planning Department and the NCHD if the PC creates restrictions. Nancy: no systems above ground, traditional drain field, 100 foot setback from stream; the perc test involves a 6-foot deep, 3-foot wide hole and a ribbon test; lagoons not permitted; most systems allowable, but not in floodplain; it would be possible to have a pumped drain field, or a system that was self-contained with waste trucked out – but expensive. Noted that the water table is high around streams in Latah. NCHD defaults to local rules, and would therefore back the Planning Department. If there were a problem of sewage in the stream, the DEQ would be involved; NCHD permits and inspects, and acts as the intermediary between a complaint by an individual and the DEQ. MF asked if anchoring of tanks were required in high groundwater areas; Nancy: no. There are no requirements relating to wells; well registration is occurring more now, and can be a protection for a property owner.

Minutes of 1-21-03 handed out and accepted (with correction of Debby Key's name). Elections followed: SS nominated JDH as chairman; he accepted, and was elected; JH moved that the rest of the slate be retained; seconded, passed; SJ vice-chair; LB secretary.

Lighting: SJ spoke about the lighting discussion from the previous meeting. Talked with Joel Plaskon; the city began an ordinance last year, but it has not surfaced yet; the city has incorporated some lighting efficiency measures. PC could begin with new construction; if the power companies are on board, and the ordinance requires correct outdoor lighting, should be possible; SS will talk with Clearwater Power. SJ proposed the language: all new residential, single home outdoor lighting must make use of high-pressure sodium lighting (as opposed to mercury lights) with appropriate cut-off shading, be on timers, or be operated by photocells; ballparks would be exempted; zoning commission would have to consider this kind of lighting arrangement if any proposed building project went before their review. SS (?) will talk to Avista and Clearwater about potential rebates/educational promotion. MF will draft language.

JDH suggested that the minutes reflect the “outstanding leadership” of Skyler Schlueter as chairman of the PC for these past few years; sincere applause all around.

Article 3 (flood hazard): Debby Key suggested a change to 3.02.05 (elimination of last sentence); 3.02.06 language is directly from FEMA, except that PC added septic; language now states that “For the purposes of this ordinance, development is defined as new construction, a substantially improved structure, placement of a manufactured home or building, mining, dredging, filling,

grading, excavating, roads, bridges, culverts, altering or relocating of a stream channel, storage of materials, including gas or liquid storage tanks, stockpiling, septic systems, drainfields, and sewage lagoons. However, roads, bridges, culverts, and altering or relocating a stream channel are developments not subject to Section 3.02.05 of this ordinance [prohibition of new activities].” Question arose: does PC want mining, dredging, etc. taken out or make these permitted? JH: permit 404 required for dredging. Above language means that dredging cannot occur if in the floodplain. The county permits these activities with a development permit, but evidence must be shown that there is no effect downstream; the important issue is runoff and delivery of load to the stream.

Next meeting: February 18, 2003, 5:50 pm, Room 2B, County Courthouse.

Submitted by: _____ 11 February 2003
Louise D. Barber