

**Latah County Planning Commission**  
Minutes, 6 April 2004

Planning Commission [PC] Members: 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:** JDH, SJ, KW, JH, JS, LB present.. Staff: Michelle Fuson.

**Packet:** Agenda; minutes for 3/16/04; North Latah County Highway District specifications for roads; cluster residential districts (residential/farming interface).

**Meeting.** Minutes for 3/16/04 accepted. 2.09 (Lighting): Bill Kochman's answers to PC's questions discussed; need to know how available the alternatives to incandescent bulbs are, and their equivalencies. LB and JDH will research equivalency, etc.

6.03: MF noted that the NLC Highway District will not adopt any new roads, so we might need to rethink 6.03.02.C. 6.03.03: switch 3 and 4. Article 8 changes now made. Article 9 (Manufactured Housing and Buildings): MF noted that some structures may need a building rather than an installation permit.

Sensitive Lands: JH looked into Whitman County, where there is an environmental checklist that is the responsibility of the applicant. Possibilities for Latah include either the county or the applicant hiring someone (many experts around this area) to check off (a list of species of vegetation) on any development in the county on land that is not converted, or using soil maps that roughly show certain soil types where one could expect to find sensitive plants (e.g., if someone owned land in a certain soil type, and it was proven to be unconverted, then building would have to occur elsewhere). The tools that exist to deal with this are not very accurate; there will always be exceptions when using maps. SJ: use soil type as a screen for an alert. MF: noted that Washington's environmental checklist means nothing at the county planning level. Noted that anything that is farmable is being farmed. JH: aerial photos will be available this year. The problem with our ordinance is that unproductive soil directs building toward itself. MF: you cannot just say that a property owner cannot use a property. The uses on sensitive land need to be clarified. Apply to every applicant? Or those with certain soil types only? It cannot be arbitrary. PC needs to come up with an initial screening process and then devise a way to make an ordinance feasible. Maps might be used to pre-sort places. SJ: our job: 1) presort so we don't have to apply this to everyone; 2) create something that is not too difficult to swallow. Janet will work on a draft; noted that the Potlatch system, part of the Clearwater system, is critical for the ecosystem.

Lengthy discussion followed on JS's concern about ridge-top building (legislated aesthetics); JS moved to create language to prevent this; seconded by SJ.

**Next Meeting:** 20 April 2004 at 5:30pm in the Latah County Courthouse, Room 2B.

Submitted by: \_\_\_\_\_ 14 April 2004  
Louise D. Barber