

**Latah County Planning Commission**  
Minutes, 7 June 2005

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: Amanda Hess. Public present.

**Packet:** Agenda; 5/17/05 minutes; Groundwater Overlay Zone draft ordinance; letters from Joseph Singleton and Stu Goldstein

**Meeting:** Minutes of 5/17/05 accepted.

Groundwater Overlay Zone [GOZ]: JH explained the draft and background; taskforce will meet once again and incorporate any substantive comments/input from tonight's meeting. The purpose of the GOZ is to control land uses in a specific zone, which covers area along the ridgeline of Moscow Mountain to west of Robinson Lake Park, to Tomer Butte to the state line. It excludes the Potlatch drainage. In the definitions section, "animal unit" is taken directly from the Administrative Code/Idaho Code/Land Use. Technical assistance was obtained for the definitions of "groundwater recharge area." "Hazardous materials" definitions were created from committee's experience and model ordinances.

Mark Solomon, a member of the GOZ task force, explained that the word "encourage" was used throughout the document because this is a "consensus document," and would not have been possible if "shall" were used; to achieve "fiscal potential," "encourage" is the term which "captures the concept" and was thus employed; it is hoped that the performance review of every five years will catch problems with this initial document and correct them. SJ: "encourage" will mark the places for the review to become more or less restrictive. Joseph Singleton (audience) noted that the building code has "holes," and that contractors don't make "new" ["encouraged"] changes unless they are mandated. A new person in the planning department will probably not be added; the "groundwater protection coordinator" mentioned in the draft is intended to be the planning director.

5.02.06.3 (CUs) is a new section relating to golf courses; the two in our area do not pump; UI uses recycled water, Elks has a water right for the South Fork of Palouse (Paradise?); 5.02.06.7 (manufacture/storage of chemicals) exempts agricultural products; 5.02.07 lists prohibited uses; 5.02.06.8 (full plats) and 5.02.08.2 (runoff) will be taken up in more detail when PC gets to deliberations on Article 9 (design standards). 5.02.08.A3 (Performance Standards/all new residential development) is worded as requiring xeriscape landscaping, watering all landscaping by surface water or precipitation runoff, with the exception of vegetable gardening (which could use groundwater sources, but with highly suggested restraint; and the use of water-saving plumbing fixtures and appliances; Mark Solomon noted that the issue here is fire protection/management. 5.02.06.5B was lifted from advisory documents/EPA recommendations. 5.02.09 (Notification of Well Drilling) was added for increased hydrologic and geologic knowledge about the Sub-Basin. Mark Solomon added that the draft is not intended as a document of water restriction but as land use.

JDH suggested that a special effort be made to inform the public about the hearing (6/21) for input on this draft emergency ordinance. JS asked about no specific prohibition against clay pit mining; which is actually covered in 4.03.01 (Mineral Resource Development, definition and purpose). Mark Solomon noted that the task force was concerned with anything that interrupted any lens of gravel, sand, etc., thus potentially affecting the groundwater recharge; the five-year review would be especially important in these cases, because more and more data will be forthcoming.

Jeff Harkins noted that we don't know much at all about the geology or hydrology, and this emergency ordinance is unnecessary; the Idaho Department of Water Resources [IDWR] is allocating \$500,000 in grants to study water, and we should all wait to see what comes of these studies; he said that when he built his home, the PD would not permit gray water system because it might pollute the ground water, but now the task force is recommending gray water system use (proposed GOZ 5.02.08.A4) in the face of no further data about this issue. Harkins feels that this document does not, but should, encourage responsible businesses. JDH stated that most probably the PC will proceed with a positive recommendation to the CC, but encouraged Harkins to make his views well known before and at the public hearings. Mark Solomon said that the research is way up and synthesis of data has increased, and referred to the Palouse Conservation website. Discussion turned to why Moscow was developing at such an enormous rate with hugely increased water consumption vis-à-vis greater restrictions for rural residents, and several people felt that there should be more parity; there is to be a "water summit" in October. The three IDWR grant proposals will be decided upon in June, but there is one proposal from Latah County.

Agenda Item 4: Discussion re. dogs has been completed; airports, etc., completed. Joseph Singleton (who professionally constructs/consults on wind turbines) suggested that the term "windmills" (to produce water) be replaced by "wind turbines" (to produce electricity, which seems to be the intent of the language); that there is not enough wind in any location in Latah County for a commercial wind farm; that section 3.01.02.15 is unnecessary; decision by the PC at the next meeting on "wind turbines."

Item 3: 3.01.02.2: KW moved to remove "excluding winter containment of grazing animals"; seconded; passed with 4 yes, 1 abstention. 3.01.04 (signs): discussion tabled until future meeting.

**Next Meeting:** A public hearing on the GOZ draft ordinance, 21 June 2005 at 5:30pm in the Latah County Courthouse, Room 2B.

Submitted by Louise D. Barber, 14 June 2005