

League of Women Voters of Pullman Observer Report

Name of Agency: Whitman County Planning Commission Date: June 1, 2022

Observer Reporting: Shelley Chambers Fox Length of Meeting: 1 hr 5 minutes

Members Present: Chad Whetzel, Brian Davies, Weston Kane, David Tysz (new commissioner from Tekoa), Fred Wexler, Keith Paulson.

Absent: Matt Webb, Dave Gibney, Russ Jamison

Others Present (i.e., media, public): Staff: Alan Thomson, Whitman County Planner; Grace Di Biase, Whitman County Assistant Planner; Brandon Johnson, Public Works; Elinor Huber, Notetaker; Art Swannack, Tom Handy, County Commissioners; SMJ consultants: Rachel Granrath, Justen Scholle, Lauren Bromley (lead for Whitman County); RJ Lott, Pullman Planning Director

Public: Nancy Belsby, Richard Wesson, Chris Mathis, Ken Duft, Melissa Mackelvie.

Content (What is being discussed):

Reports

1. Update on previous conditional use permits and variances – Kirk and Mellissa Dugger expansion of existing RV park on Palouse Albion Rd was approved on April 14, 2022.
2. Board of County Commissioners' action – Public hearing on the Comprehensive Plan set for June 21, 2022.

New Business

1. The Shoreline Management Plan (SMP) is reviewed by counties in Washington state every 8 years. The plan addresses environmental protection and public access to shorelines.
2. Deadline for the review of Whitman County's SMP is June 30, 2023. Must be reviewed and approved by the local community with final approval through Dept of Ecology.
3. There are some changes that have been made in the RCW relevant to SMPs that will be required. These are on a checklist by date and will have to be incorporated. Other changes are determined by the local participants.
4. The review and public hearing will be done jointly by the Whitman County community and the State Department of Ecology. Steps include
 - a. Request public comments
 - b. Respond to comments and
 - c. Submit to ecology for their review
 - d. Preliminary approval by Ecology
 - e. Whitman County finalizes
 - f. Sent back to Ecology for formal approval
 - g. Effective in 14 days
5. Purpose is to prevent piecemeal development on shorelines. Brings us into conformance with new regulations that pertain to shorelines.
6. Mark Storey points out that Whitman County already has a shoreline management plan so this process will mean only minor tweaks in the plan.
7. The local consortium that will work on SMPs includes Whitman County, Albion, Colfax, Palouse, Pullman, Rosalia, Tekoa. Malden has asked to be deferred.
8. Public outreach will occur in the fall to avoid conflict with harvest.
9. The checklist changes will be reviewed with each of the local jurisdictions so they understand if there will be impacts.
10. The shoreline ordinance states that if you have shoreline on your property, you will need to follow certain procedures to be in compliance with the ordinance. The consultant notes that there is an individual who specializes in the management of beavers who could be helpful in planning shoreline management involving beavers.
11. What are the periodic changes that have occurred since Whitman County last reviewed their SMP?

- a. Cost thresholds
 - b. New processes
 - c. What to do about nonconforming areas
 - d. Exemptions on Federal lands, ADA, enhancement projects
 - e. Definition clarifications
 - f. Critical areas/wetlands regulation streamlining
12. Alan clarifies that agriculture is not affected by this. They are asked to voluntarily help with some of the issues that shoreline management entails. The Voluntary Stewardship program allows farmers to do what they need to do to farm, which may include exemption from shoreline regulations.
 13. Each jurisdiction presently has its own shoreline management plan. There has been some discussion of consolidation.

Public Meetings of interest to League

1. Board of County Commissioners' action – Public hearing on the Comprehensive Plan set for June 21, 2022, 1:30 pm by Zoom. There will be some changes in the plan that have been put into the draft; changes on the railbanking section.

Process & Protocol: (Observations about participants and procedures of the meeting) *e.g., Did the members appear to have done their "homework"?* Yes *Were members courteous to each other and the public?* Yes. *Was access to materials for certain agenda items available to you?* Yes, the agenda and meeting link were sent via email. The most recent draft of the Comprehensive Plan can be found at [Comprehensive Plan | Whitman County, WA](#)

Next meeting is tentatively July 6, 2022 unless there is nothing to talk about.

There will be no meeting in August. Planning Commission will be brought in again on the Shoreline Management Plan in September.