

League of Women Voters of Pullman Observer Report

Name of Agency: Whitman County Planning Commission Date: July 6, 2022

Observer Reporting: Shelley Chambers Fox Length of Meeting: 1 hr 42 minutes

Members Present: Chad Whetzel, Brian Davies, Dave Gibney, Matt Webb,
David Tysz (new commissioner from Tekoa), Russ Jamison.

Absent: Weston Kane, Fred Wexler, Keith Paulson

Others Present (i.e., media, public): Staff: Alan Thomson, Whitman County Planner;
Grace Di Biase, Whitman County Assistant Planner; Mark Storey, Director Whitman
County Public Works; Brandon Johnson, Public Works; Elinor Huber, Notetaker.

Public: Ken Duft.

Reports

1. Forthcoming **variances** – Setback variance for Danette Merritt. Hearing is set for July 28, 2022.
2. Board of County Commissioners' action – **Public hearing on the Comprehensive Plan** set for July 5, 2022. **Approved unanimously with only minor changes.** Thank you to the Planning Commissioners for doing a great job on it.

Unfinished Business

1. The **Shoreline Management Plan** is reviewed by counties in Washington state every 8 years. The plan addresses environmental protection and public access to shorelines. Consultant is working on this at the moment. No updates.
2. **Changes made by the BOC in the Comprehensive Plan:** minor edits to maps (removed the Pullman to Colfax and Pullman to Uniontown lines since they are no longer in operation), added a map of the Palouse to Cascades trail, a few grammatical edits, simplified the rail portion eliminating the language that was added as part of the discussion with constituents. The section simply says that the **county supports railbanking.**

New business:

1. Since the Commission changed the Comprehensive Plan, there are some **changes that need to be made in the following ordinances:** County Code Chapter 19.10 - Agricultural District; Chapter 19,12 – Cluster Residential District; and Chapter 19.59 – Surface Mining and Rock Crushing.
 - a. Chapter 19.10
 - i. Commissioners **discussed allowing parcels in the agricultural district to be used for government and agriculture-related, non-profit activities.** Commissioners wondered whether the non-profit would be exempt from property taxes. It was decided to allow these types of situations as conditional uses that would be approved on a case-by-case basis so that the impacts on the adjacent landowners can be considered.
 - ii. Another issue in the agricultural zone is that **there are no restrictions on the heights of wind turbines in this zone.**
 - iii. The new Comprehensive Plan allows **2 homes on the same parcel in the agricultural zone.** Some of these created before 2007 are small enough

that they will not be able to meet the view shed requirements that are now specified for residences. These parcels will not be held to the setback requirements if they have existing buildings on them but the proposed building must be built on the 'impacted area' of existing parcel and not half a mile from the original house. **Commissioners will think about this and add clarifying language when they meet next. The intention is to keep houses on the parcel close so that agricultural land is not taken out of production.**

- iv. RRSR- Rural Residential **Site Review** shall be required to build a second residence on these parcels.
 - v. 19.10.065 The section on accessory dwelling units is no longer necessary.
 - vi. 19.10.080 creation of a parcel needs to follow the **rules of short plats.**
 - vii. Section on businesses in agricultural district should include commercial horse boarding and large trucking repair. The Board of Adjustment can make rules about when the business can operate if it is expected to be noisy.
- b. Chapter 19.12 **Clusters are 4 houses** and will require a public well that allows 4 hook ups.

Public Meetings of interest to League

- 1. None this month.

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. Next meeting is tentatively August 3, 2022 if a quorum is possible. Consultants will be brought in again on the Shoreline Management Plan in September.*