

League of Women Voters of Pullman Observer Report

Name of Agency: Whitman County Planning Commission Date: Sept 21, 2022

Observer Reporting: Shelley Chambers Fox Length of Meeting: 1 hr 57 minutes

Members Present: Chad Whetzel, Brian Davies, Russ Jamison, Dave Gibney, David Tysz (Tekoa).

Absent: Fred Wexler, Keith Paulson, Matt Webb, Weston Kane (LaCrosse),

Others Present (i.e., media, public): Staff: Alan Thomson, Whitman County Planner, Grace DiBiase, Assistant County Planner, Brandon Johnson, Public Works, Elinor Huber, Notetaker.

Public: none.

Reports

1. None
2. There is a discussion of a landfill opening in Cell 5 of the current Whitman County transfer station.

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, should hear from them next month. The consultant appears to be ready to schedule a meeting: Oct 5 or Nov 2. October 19 may be a Public meeting for the code changes that the commission has been working on.

New business:

1. Review potential changes to County Code Chapter 19.03 – Definitions; Chapter 19.10 - Agricultural District; Chapter 19,12 – Cluster Residential District; Chapter 19.41 – Rural Community Center District (RCC-1); Chapter 19.54 – Nonconforming Uses and Special Exceptions; Chapter 19.59 – Surface Mining and Rock Crushing and the SEPA ordinance, Chapter 9.04. Tonight again Alan reviewed the changes discussed and if commissioners are ok with them, they will move on to the Public meeting.
 - a. Chapter 19.10
 - i. The initial section notes that the new Comprehensive Plan allows 2 homes on the same parcel in the agricultural zone.
 - ii. 19.10.050 There are no height restrictions on buildings on agricultural land to allow the building of wind farms.
 - iii. 19.10.065 e section on accessory dwelling units is no longer necessary.
 - iv. Three ways to build a house in rural Whitman County: create a parcel following the rules of short plats, altering an existing parcel, construction on a parcel which existed before Jan 1, 2007 which has not been certified by the Planning Office. Now a parcel must be at least 2 acres in order to meet required setbacks from the road and from agricultural land and to meet the 1500 feet view shed requirement. If the landowner is building under the last circumstance, she/he must comply with setbacks if it is possible.
 - v. There are lots and blocks that were set out in towns that are unincorporated so must follow county rules to be built upon. The builder must use enough lots to have room for a house, well and septic field.
 - vi. Rural housing certificates are generally required to build a house on agricultural land.
 - vii. RRSR Rural Residential Site Review shall be required to remodel an existing house or to build a barn or a shop. AND this same process will be also used for second residence on a certified Rural parcel.

- viii. When building a second house on a certified parcel in the agricultural zone, the new house should be built within 500 ft of some portion of the existing house. The goal is to keep the house close together so that agricultural land is not impacted.
- ix. When replacing a house on a certified lot, it would be built within 50 ft of the original house.
 - x. Creation of a residential group requires a Rural Housing certificate. This regulation allows up to 9 houses on the same parcel no more than 300 ft from the existing house.
 - xi. There was a discussion about whether accessory dwelling units built near historic residences that have been placed on national or state register be built to be compatible. Alan will investigate to see if this section can from a WAC or whether it can be stricken.
 - xii. 19.10.080 residential short plats are limited to 3 lots, 4 lots for commercial.
 - xiii. Businesses in agricultural district that will be considered conditional uses 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. Nonprofit environmental nonprofits would be added to this section and permitted with a conditional use permit evaluation to determine the impact on adjacent landowners.
- b. Chapter 19.59 Expansion of surface rock crushing does not require a new conditional use permit as long as the quarry is only being expanded 10% or less of the original size and the quarry is not within 1000 ft of a residence.
- c. New businesses to be built within the Pullman Moscow corridor must undergo a Board of Adjustment hearing. Existing businesses that want to expand will be permitted administratively. Adjacent landowners within 300 ft are notified.
- d. State Environmental Policy Act ordinance needs to be amended to note that an appeal of intermediate steps cannot be allowed.
- e. Chapter 19.41 The BOCC would like to add Assisted Living facilities to conditional uses for Rural Community Center 1 (RCC1) districts in the county.
- f. Chapter 19.03 definitions,
 - i. assisted living facility: housing for individuals who require nursing care, housekeeping and/or prepared meals as needed.
 - ii. Bunkhouses: structure with bunk beds used for sleeping quarters for ranch hands
 - iii. Cabins: recreational dwelling unit used for temporary residence that may be electrified and plumbed and contain a kitchen and bathroom.
- g. 19.54 Strike the section on nonconforming uses that applies to a house that is no longer lived in.
- h. Chapter 19.12 Cluster residential developments are 20 acres, 4 houses and will require a public well drawing no more than 5000 gallons/day that allows 4 hook ups. The section on long plats using 60 acres must be taken out because the state law no longer permits this.

Public Meetings of interest to League

1. None this month. Alan will try to schedule a public meeting on October 19 to approve the changes in county code discussed above.

Process & Protocol: *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 October 5, 2022. Consultant will be brought in again on the Shoreline Management Plan in possibly October 5, Oct 19 or Nov 2.*