

League of Women Voters of Pullman Observer Report

Name of Agency: Whitman County Planning Commission Date: Feb 1, 2023

Observer Reporting: Shelley Chambers Fox Length of Meeting: 62 minutes

Members Present: This was a hybrid meeting with 3 participants in the Colfax meeting room, however, they could not all be identified. One appeared to be the Notetaker. On Zoom: David Tysz (Tekoa), Brian Davies, Chad Whetzel, Dave Gibney, Weston Kane (LaCrosse), Mark Tolman (new member).

Absent: Fred Wexler, Russ Jamison (Garfield).

Others Present (i.e., media, public): Staff: Alan Thomson, Whitman County Planner; Grace DiBiase, Assistant County Planner; Director Public Works Engineer, Brandon Johnson, Public Works (running Zoom); Rachel Granrath (consultant, SCJ Alliance).

Public: Ken Duft (Zoom)

Content (What is being discussed):

Reports

1. Board of Adjustment forthcoming hearings – **Conditional use permit** application for an adult family home in Steptoe. **Approved** February 26, 2023.
2. Update on **previous conditional use permits and variances** – Side setback variance for Sam Young, Stoneway Electric was approved on November 2, 2022. Conditional use permit for GRYM K9 for a canine behavioral training center was approved on November 2, 2022.
3. Update on **previous Board of County Commissioners' action** – Public hearing for zoning code amendments to Chapters 9.04, 19.03, 19.10, 19.12, 19.15, 19.16, 19.41, and 19.59 was held on November 21, 2022, and **all amendments were approved.**
4. Planning Commission forthcoming hearings – **Public hearing for the Shoreline Master Program update to be held on February 15, 2023.**

Unfinished Business

1. The **Shoreline Master Program** is reviewed by counties in Washington state every 8 years. The plan addresses environmental protection and public access to shorelines. The Shoreline Master Program **final draft will be presented by the consultant SCJ Alliance. Open for public discussion.**
2. **Draft Plan** is 180+ pages. Some commissioners have not seen it because it was too big to load. Here is the link: <https://www.whitmancounty.org/DocumentCenter/View/5540/Whitman-County-Coalition-Shoreline-Master-Program-Draft-Documents---Jan-10-2023-PDF>
3. Shoreline Management is required at the state level so intended to coordinate development along shorelines. Protect natural shoreline habitat. Coordinate local uses of shorelines (agriculture).
4. This is a compliance audit to make sure our plans are consistent with state regulations. The plan is largely the same.
5. The new draft proposes the following changes to Whitman County's Shoreline Master Program:
 - a. Federal exemption that streamlines approval of shoreline projects proposed by the federal government. This applies to projects exclusively managed by the Corps of Engineers.
 - b. Updated definitions: development, floating homes or houseboat, non-conforming uses, non-conforming structures, substantial development (\$8504).
 - c. Review time target for state highway projects that impact the county's shoreline is 90 days.
 - d. Exemptions for fish passage project, local review, cost threshold for freshwater docks, projects to improve environmental quality, ADA compliance projects
 - e. Clarified nonconforming uses and development
 - f. New on-water residential development (floating homes) is not permitted.
 - g. Maps have been updated in terms of roads and development. Each town with shorelines has separate maps. Alan requests an overall map of the county.

6. Process

- a. Agency and stakeholder outreach
 - b. The consultant has met with all communities to discuss their wishes. The plan covers six other jurisdictions.
 - c. First draft to Department of Ecology (November)
 - d. Whitman County input includes discussion at the Planning Commission meetings and a website that the public can use to provide input.
 - e. Intent to adopt (January). The SEPA checklist has been posted but there have been no comments.
 - f. Findings of Facts and Conclusions will be sent to commissioners tomorrow, Feb 2.
 - g. Public meeting (Feb 15)
 - h. Representative from Dept of Ecology will present to those in Olympia who will approve the plan.
7. Mark Storey clarified in December that when making repairs to local roads they are not subject to the Shoreline Master Plan unless they change the footprint of the road.

Public Meetings of interest to League

- 1. Planning Commission forthcoming hearings – Public hearing for the Shoreline Master Program update to be held on February 15, 2023.**

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 link to the draft Shoreline Master Plan document was on the County website.

Next meeting is February 15, 2023.