

## **ISLAND COUNTY COMMISSIONERS - MINUTES OF SPECIAL SESSION – FEBRUARY 5, 1998 - GMA WORKSHOP**

The Board of Island County Commissioners met in Special Session on February 5, 1998, beginning at 9:30 a.m. in Main Street Conference Room, Coupeville, WA. The purpose of the special session was to provide an opportunity in joint workshop for the Board to meet with the Planning Director and staff, Island County Planning Commission members and Keith Dearborn, to discuss Transportation, Utilities, Essential Public Facilities and Capital Facilities related to the GMA Comp Plan.

### ATTENDANCE:

**Board of County Commissioners:** Wm. L. McDowell, Chairman and Tom Shaughnessy, Member.

**Planning Commission:** Sheilah Crider, Bill Vincent, Rufus Rose, Anne Pringle and Linda Moore.

**Consultants:** Keith Dearborn, Bogle and Gates.

**Staff:** Vince Moore, Director, Planning and Community Development; Larry Kwarsick, Director, Public Works; Matt Nash, Senior Planner, Debby Ross, Adm. Asst. – Planning Commission.

**Others Present:** Tom Noyes, NW regional office of State DOT; Andy Swayne, Puget Sound Energy. There were approximately ten people in the audience [Attendance list on file].

### TRANSPORTATION [Handouts: Least Cost Planning]

#### Presentation by Larry Kwarsick.

Transportation planning did not begin with GMA but is now a required element. The Transportation Plan is embedded in the Capital Facilities Plan. The County has produced a Transportation Plan adopted as an interim plan consistent with the requirements of the GMA. County developed a sub-regional plan with Skagit County, and Island County has been selected by the State to develop a pilot program for a "Least Cost Planning" plan for the Island County sub-region of the RTPO, and that is work in progress. The Rural and Land Use elements of the Comprehensive Plan are necessary to complete this process. Concurrency means the County has to adopt level of service (LOS) standards for transportation facilities and those have to be maintained so when projects occur under GMA, systems have to come on line within a six-year period to handle the traffic generated by growth. There is no concurrency requirement for State systems, but the State does look at LOS standards and environmental impacts on a State system.

#### Explanation of Level of Service Standards contained in the Transportation Plan.

Mr. Dearborn said it is necessary to separate the standard from the obligation to mitigate the impacts.

Mr. Kwarsick said that through the interim plan adoption, LOS standards were seen at C or above for the unincorporated areas. For the urban areas, LOS set at D & E for the State Roads in urban areas. For State roads outside of urban areas, suggested an LOS of D. The State Plan sets a LOS objective at C for rural roads and D for urban areas. The RTPO adopted Island County's recommendation for State highways. GMA forced cities and counties to look at their systems far into the future and tie them to land use

planning. It does not address funding so if financing is not available, have to go back and address the land use decisions. Freeland and Clinton are included as arterials as being urban roads for the purposes of the LOS standards spelled out. There are uniform LOS standards between the cities and the county for the urban growth areas. Only a few problem areas have been found in the County when setting those standards. State Highway 532 does not achieve the standard approaching the Mark Clark Bridge. The northern section of East Camano Drive and the intersection with Hill Road do not achieve the standards, nor does Ault Field Road.

Mr. Dearborn asked Mr. Kwarsick how increasing in-county jobs by 4,000 would affect the Plan and Mr. Kwarsick responded that unless it is site specific, it will be accommodated in the current plan.

Mr. Dearborn explained that there would not be an updated transportation plan in the Comprehensive Plan when released in March because the land use decisions have to be made at least 60 days prior to the completion of the update by Public Works.

### **CAPITAL FACILITIES PLAN**

The plan itself discusses what capital facilities planning is all about, what the State requirements are, what do county-wide planning policies say about it, what are the benefits, what are some of the county's objectives. It contains a very detailed list of objectives, principles and standards. In addition to the plan element, there is the capital improvements plan which deals with taking a look at the capital facilities in the community, inventories them, measures them, assigns realistic levels of service standards for them, rolls in growth and development and then projects the needs for those capital facilities in the future and discusses how to achieve those needs. The six year capital improvement program is a budget tool which is updated every year. There are two appendices. One deals with the revenue sources for the construction of capital facilities. The other is an inventory of county facilities and those owned by other entities.

The State subdivision law requires that the approving authority make a finding regarding the adequacy of the public facilities specified in the statute. The plan recommends adoption of a procedure to fulfill the requirements of RCW 58.17. There is need for UGA agreements with the cities. Under the planning enabling act municipalities are required to submit capital facility plans to the county and those cities complying are given preferential treatment in the permit process for any projects proposed. Not all schools do long range planning. There has been much discussion on how to approach school facilities under GMA without that capital planning done by schools. The mechanism used was to fall back under RCW 58.17 and its finding of capacity to accommodate development.

### **PUBLIC INPUT**

**Charlie Stromberg, South Whidbey.** The ability to have adequate facilities speaks about the carrying capacity of the land and the cost to the County government. There are a number of pieces of this plan which are sliding or have not been finished. It is difficult to deal with this until there is the ability to see how it all fits together. Difficult to separate the state highways from the county road system because the state highway is an arterial. Oak Harbor does not have an operable plan until it is approved regarding the issue of capital facilities. Tourism is one of the County's economic development industries, and is not just generated by the State.

**Tom Noyes, DOT.** One thing the State would like to see addressed in the Transportation element of the

Comp Plan is the question of parallel arterials. It is clear State roads are not going to be able to handle all the traffic. There is a definite connection between land use and development patterns in the county and the impact on the transportation system. With respect to concurrency, the failing of GMA is that there is not defined concurrency across State facilities. There have been some proposals to mandate concurrency.

**Richard Collins, South Whidbey.** Cannot build a bridge or upgrade the ferry service for the peak periods.

**Larry Kwarsick.** The County has contacted the RTA and asked them to include in their planning process an inter-modal facility in Mukilteo that would allow foot passenger connections to light rail to the urban areas.

**Tom Noyes.** One of the issues with the ferry system is that until there is a new ferry terminal in Mukilteo, there is no practical way to add more boats but there is considerable capacity for more passenger trips.

**Bill Thorn, Camano Island, Citizens Growth Management Coalition.** There is money available for Park and Ride; could improve the situation by taking advantage of this, which would facilitate circulation to add passing lanes on the uphill sides of the roadways.

### **ESSENTIAL PUBLIC FACILITIES**

Vince Moore presented the Issue Paper, *Essential Public Facilities*, noting the need to have a process for siting such facilities, i.e.: group homes, substance abuse facilities, correctional facilities, etc. There is only one option - develop comprehensive plan provisions and development regulations to support the GMA requirement.

Keith Dearborn thought it would be important to deal with having a process where schools will be sited.

### **UTILITIES**

Matt Nash, Island County Planning Department, and Andy Swayne, Puget Sound Energy, presented the *Utilities Element*. Mr. Nash said it was important to distinguish between capital facilities and utilities; the element deals with the land use aspects of utilities planning. The County wants to ensure that utilities are available when the growth occurs and to make sure utilities are not extended prematurely to undeveloped areas. Utilities are not a big issue in Island County because utilities are available to anyone who needs them, and there is not utilities in large expanses of land where not needed. The GMA only requires the Utilities Element to include electrical lines, telecommunication and natural gas lines. The County could include others such as cell phone towers but it is not required.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

**Rich Melaas,** Community Planning Liaison Officer, NAS Whidbey Island, believed it was important to find out from cell phone operators their plan to put cell towers and notify airport operators.

**Bill Thorn.** The Utilities Element should obligate all utilities to have a conservation program and there should be a requirement to include alternative energy systems.

**Andy Swayne** said the only changes PSE proposes are to update the number of customers they currently serve or expect to serve and projects they completed and those that are proposed. One proposal removed was a dedicated 230 connection including a submarine cable at the north end. In response to a question from Rufus Rose, Mr. Swayne said that small, narrow buffers are a problem for PSE as the trees fall on the lines; he would prefer the trees be cut and replaced with more appropriate species for screening.

Keith Dearborn asked Mr. Swayne to determine if there are any electrical facilities that should be treated as Essential Public Facilities. Mr. Swayne stated that PSE did not believe facilities are difficult to site, the one exception would be for a large substation but did not think the Island would ever have one.

The workshop adjourned at 1:30 p.m.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

ISLAND COUNTY, WASHINGTON

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Wm. L. McDowell, Chairman

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Tom Shaughnessy, Member

[Mike Shelton, Member, *absent*]

**Attest:**

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Margaret Rosenkranz, Clerk of the Board