

**CITY OF BLAINE
PLANNING COMMISSION MINUTES
Thursday, March 10, 2016
7:00 PM
Van Tabb - Chair**

A. CALL TO ORDER: 7:00 PM

B. ROLL CALL:

PRESENT: Van Tabb, Calvin Armerding, Ken Ely, Richard May and Kevin Owens, Sue Sturgill

ABSENT: John LeBrun

STAFF: Community Development Director, Michael Jones
Community Planner II, Alex Wenger
Community Planner I, Maddie Ottley

Motion by Commissioner Ely and 2nd by Commissioner Armerding to excuse Commissioner LeBrun, passed 6-0

C. AUDIENCE COMMENTS:

1. Carol Solomon addressed the Planning Commission regarding her support of Gale Evans and allowing Airbnb's within Blaine City limits due to lack of temporary lodging options.

D. PUBLIC HEARING: 7:10 PM

Rules of order and procedures for quasi-judicial hearing stated by Van Tabb

1. Public Hearing - Transportation Chapter of Comprehensive Plan.

Mr. Jones gave a presentation summarizing the contents of the draft transportation chapter of the comprehensive Plan. Mr. Jones noted that since the last time the Planning Commission saw the draft chapter, staff has made minor changes mostly editorial in nature, in addition to Chairperson Tabb and Commissioner LeBrun's comments.

Commissioner Ely asked if the chapter would reflect the status of Interstate 5 exit 274 interchange project.

Mr. Jones responded, stating that while the status of state funding may have changed, staff believes it should remain in the chapter since it is an important project for the future.

Commissioner May asked if information regarding rail transit would be included in the chapter.

Mr. Jones replied yes, stating a discussion on commercial and passenger rail transit is included in the chapter.

Chairperson Tabb inquired if an explanation of abbreviations would be included in the chapter.

Mr. Jones stated that an explanation can be included. Mr. Jones then requested the Commission to forward the draft transportation chapter of the comprehensive plan to the City Council for review.

MOTION MADE BY COMMISSIONER ELY TO FORWARD THE DRAFT TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN TO THE CITY COUNCIL FOR REVIEW, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER ARMERDING AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY (6-0).

2. Public Hearing - Vision Statement for the Comprehensive Plan

Mr. Wenger gave a presentation summarizing the contents of the proposed vision statement for the comprehensive plan.

Commissioner Ely stated that he would like to see more of a futuristic tense used in the vision statement since it is a projection of what we want to see Blaine become, not what is currently present.

Commissioner Sturgill indicated that she prefer to see the “flags flying high” statement removed, and replaced with something similar to “a place where travelers are welcome with open arms...friendly but open minded”.

Commissioner May highlighted Blaine’s noteworthy Fourth of July Celebration, which could be featured in the vision statement instead of the flag language.

Commissioner Owens asserted that the vision statement should emphasize commerce since this is what creates growth and prosperity.

Mr. Wenger stated that language regarding the Chamber of Commerce could be added, tense of the statement can be edited, and the flag language can be edited to incorporate Commissioner Sturgill and Commissioner May’s comments.

E. NEW BUSINESS:

1. Vacation Rental and Bed and Breakfast Report.

Mr. Wenger presented the report on vacation and short term rental units. Mr. Wenger highlighted that vacation and short term rental units are currently not allowed within residential zones with the City, unless they are registered as a bed and breakfast. Mr.

Wenger noted that Ms. Gale Evans was present, and would like to address the Planning Commission.

Ms. Evans Clarified to the Commission that in her first she requested a zoning text amendment to allow for Airbnb establishments. Ms. Evans then stated that her second letter retracts this request.

Commissioner May asked Ms. Evans what the difference is between traditional bed and breakfasts, and Airbnb's.

Ms. Evans stated that traditional bed and breakfasts have the homeowner or manager on site, while that is not always the case with Airbnb's.

Commissioner Ely stated that he would like to table the discussion of Airbnb's, and would like to see staff present a zoning text amendment to correct a past zoning text amendment which left out zones in which bed and breakfasts were previously allowed.

MOTION MADE BY COMMISSIONER ELY TO PRESENT A ZONING TEXT AMENDMENT REGARDING APPROVED ZONES FOR BED AND BREAKFASTS, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER OWENS AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY (6-0).

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER ARMERDING FOR STAFF TO PRESENT A ZONING TEXT AMENDMENT TO CREATE A DESCRIPTION FOR BED AND BREAKFASTS, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER MAY AND PASSED UNANIMOUSLY (6-0).

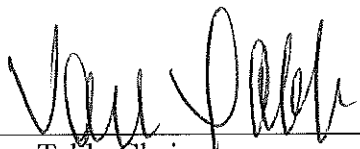
F. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS:

1. Mr. Jones provided an article about home values in Whatcom County to the Planning Commission

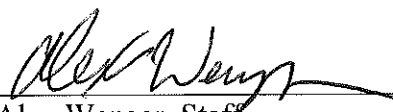
G. APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

MOTION BY COMMISSIONER ELY TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 25, 2016 AS PRESENTED, SECONDED BY COMMISSIONER OWENS AND APPROVED UNANIMOUSLY.

I. ADJOURNMENT: 7:50 PM.



Van Tabb, Chair



Alex Wenger, Staff

Planning Commission minutes of March 10, 2016, were approved at the March 24, 2016 Planning Commission meeting.