

**Skagit County Planning Commission
Election of Officers
Work Session: Shoreline Master Program Update
January 26, 2021**

Planning

Commissioners: Kathy Mitchell, Vice Chair
Mark Lundsten
Mark Knutzen
Amy Hughes
Tim Raschko, Chair (current and re-elected)
Joe Woodmansee
Tammy Candler (newly-elected Vice Chair)
Martha Rose
Joseph Shea

Staff: Hal Hart, Planning Director
Peter Gill, Long Range Planning Manager
Betsy Stevenson, Senior Planner

Others: Mark Daniel, Consultant (The Watershed Company)
Joe Burcar, Washington Department of Ecology

Public

Commenters: Paula Shafransky
Eric Hall
Tim Manns, Skagit Audubon Society
William Gregory, Sierra Club of Mount Baker
Jan Robinson
Tom Glade
John Day

Chair Tim Raschko: ... confirm your presence. Commissioner Mitchell?

Vice Chair Kathy Mitchell: Here.

Chair Raschko: Commissioner Candler?

Commissioner Tammy Candler: Present. I'm here.

Chair Raschko: Commissioner Hughes?

Commissioner Amy Hughes: Here.

Chair Raschko: Commissioner Lundsten?

Commissioner Mark Lundsten: Here.

Chair Raschko: Commissioner Rose?

(silence)

Chair Raschko: Is Martha here?

Commissioner Martha Rose: Yeah, I'm here. I didn't unmute it. Sorry.

Chair Raschko: Okay. Commissioner Woodmansee?

Commissioner Joe Woodmansee: Here.

Chair Raschko: Commissioner Shea?

Commissioner Joseph Shea: Present.

Chair Raschko: And Commissioner Knutzen?

Commissioner Mark Knutzen: Here.

Chair Raschko: Okay, thank you. I presume everybody's read the minutes. Would anybody like to offer a motion to approve?

Vice Chair Mitchell: I move that we – this is Kathy Mitchell – I move that we approve the minutes.

Chair Raschko: Okay, it's been moved. Is there a second?

Commissioner Rose: I'll second it. It's Martha Rose.

Chair Raschko: Thank you, Martha. Any discussion?

(silence)

Chair Raschko: All right. All in favor – all right, all in favor – I can't see anybody so, okay, very quickly: Commissioner Mitchell?

Vice Chair Mitchell: Aye.

Chair Raschko: Candler.

Commissioner Candler: Aye.

Chair Raschko: Hughes.

Commissioner Hughes: Aye.

Chair Raschko: Lundsten.

Commissioner Lundsten: Aye.

Chair Raschko: Rose.

Commissioner Rose: Aye.

Chair Raschko: Woodmansee.

Commissioner Woodmansee: Aye.

Chair Raschko: Shea.

Commissioner Shea: Aye.

Chair Raschko: Knutzen.

Commissioner Knutzen: Aye.

Chair Raschko: And I vote aye so the minutes of the previous meeting are approved. I'll let you go to Public Remarks. I'm unable to see on my computer screen who's there from the public. But first of all, we have received 17 letters of public comment. Everybody has received in a pdf document that includes all of them, so they're there for you to read. They're also posted on the County website for anybody in the public to see those as well. I propose then to not read those letters at this time in order to promote efficiency in this meeting, but if anybody from the public who is online with us and wishes to speak, please identify yourself by typing in the Chat Box your name. And if you want to speak, you can have three minutes and please speak your name and address. So we are not able to see –

Unidentified female voice: Hello, I'm –

Chair Raschko: Mr. Gill, can you identify the people please?

Paula Shafransky: My name's Paula Shafransky. I'm not on the computer. I'm on the telephone. Can I leave a public comment at this time?

Chair Raschko: You may. Please go ahead.

Ms. Shafransky: Thank you for allowing me to talk. I just have something quick to say. I would request that you remove the censure on Mark Lundsten and put the bylaw amendments back on the agenda as they were for the January 12th meeting that was cancelled. Thank you.

Chair Raschko: Okay, thank you. Mr. Gill, do you see another –

Peter Gill: Yes.

Chair Raschko: Okay, why don't you go ahead and –

Mr. Gill: Yes. Eric Hall, if you would go ahead and unmute yourself and you have the floor.

Eric Hall: Okay, thank you. Good evening and thank you for the opportunity to share my comments today. I also thank you for your willingness to put in the time to represent our respective constituencies in the matters of land use planning in Skagit County. I'm sure that it's an unforgiving task for which there is difficulty in making everyone happy about the recommendations you make. It's not easy serving on a body where there are differing views regarding the best use of our precious county lands. Fortunately there are systems in place that can help with civil discussion

and decisions that may not be what everyone wants. Further, I commend this body for considering and hopefully adopting an amendment which adds a provision which would – with processes to facilitate a dissenting opinion so that your recommendations can be presented to our elected Commissioners with both sides of an argument before they finally create law based on your recommendations. I would also respectfully encourage you to follow that action with a motion to remove the censure of Planning Commissioner Lundsten so as to show the good faith we have in respecting the multiple facets that any decision might have. Finally, I hope that when evaluating the information on any issue in the future the Commission can always find ways to respect the opinions of professionals in the fields related to any recommendation you make and not discount them simply because their data do not fit your wishes for the outcome of the issue. Thank you very much.

Mr. Gill: Thank you. The next person on our list is Tim Manns. Go ahead. You'll have to unmute yourself.

Tim Manns: Thank you. Tim Manns, Conservation Chair for the Skagit Audubon Society. I live on 13th Street in Mount Vernon. A growing number of Skagit County citizens are concerned about the Planning Commission's conduct and decisions. Generally, most residents pay little attention to your work, but in the last year or two several issues have brought the Commission attention you might rather not have. The censure of one of your members was not your finest hour. The optics, if you will, are pretty poor when the public sees you punishing someone for expressing a minority opinion. Up until then, most of us hadn't read your bylaws and had no idea there's no provision for minority opinions. Since it's your job to advise the County Commissioners, we would have thought you would as a matter of course not just hand them a decision but also provide the range of other opinions you've heard and reviewed. How else are they to make the best decision possible? Why would you not want the County Commissioners to see the full picture of each of the important issues on which you deliberate?

In the Supreme Court _____, I think it's good enough for the Skagit County Planning Commission too. Clearly, you need to repair the Planning Commission's public image. You need to revise the bylaws to specifically include a provision for minority and dissenting opinions. This should have been done a long time ago. And you need to remove the censure of Commissioner Lundsten, which was done with a totally unnecessary animosity. We Skagit County citizens appreciate your volunteer service, but we also expect better of you. Thank you.

Mr. Gill: Thank you. We've got a couple of folks with their hands up that went up right away. We've got Bill.

William Gregory: Hi, I'm William Gregory. I'm a resident of Sedro-Woolley and I'm also representing the Sierra Club of Mount Baker group, which includes Whatcom, Skagit and Island Counties.

Skagit County's been blessed with an abundance of resources such as renewable timber and water; ongoing, such as agriculture and fishing; nonrenewable, such as mining; and irreplaceable various plant and animal species and their habitat. The highest calling of each citizen of our county is to be a steward of these resources and officials overseeing these resources are accountable at a much higher level. When making decisions that may have a permanent and a powerful impact on these resources is incumbent on each member of the Planning Commission to be fully informed of the consequences of their decisions. No doubt each of us suffer a confirmation bias to some degree, but when we're using that instead of listening to science and experts is an unacceptable response. Recently the Planning Commission ignored the testimony of residents,

scientists, and even expert witnesses from the state to repudiate recommendations that Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife in their efforts to protect heron nesting grounds. While stunning, even worse came from the situation. The members of the Skagit County Planning Commission decided to censure a fellow member. For what? For daring to voice an alternative point of view? I thought Skagit County was a part of the USA where free speech is guaranteed by our constitution. Our democracy has not survived but thrived because we take the time to listen to and process ideas that may differ from ours. Your action is dangerous to the very foundation of our nation – to *the* very foundation our nation was founded on. Right now you might be in the majority of this commission and be able to stifle others with whom you disagree, but make no mistake: That type of action can come back to haunt you. If you still believe in democracy I urge you to rescind your ill-advised censure and encourage minority reports. They'd be beneficial to the public for a greater understanding of reasoning behind commission recommendations and alternative viewpoints. It is all part of a greater transparency that is sorely needed in county government. I support bylaw changes to make minority opinion statements not just allowed but encouraged as part of the documentation of decision-making.

Thank you for all of your work, and I look forward to seeing good progress in the future.

Mr. Gill: Thank you. I think I missed Jan ___ Robinson. If you want to go ahead?

(silence)

Mr. Gill: You will have to unmute yourself, Jan.

Jan Robinson: Am I on now?

Mr. Gill: Yes. Thank you.

Ms. Robinson: Thank you. I'm Jan Robinson. My husband and I live at 3660 Rosario Crest Lane in Anacortes. I support Planning Commissioner Lundsten's request for the Planning Commission to withdraw the September 2020 censure of Mr. Lundsten. The censure was punitive and inappropriate. Planning Commissioner Lundsten deserves an apology from the Chair and each of the guilty parties. Any commission member is entitled to express a minority opinion. Mr. Lundsten did so properly and respectfully. When creating good public policy any PC should be encouraging informed discussion and considerations of important issues, not stifling them. Lundsten's position on the changes to the critical areas ordinance in relation to Great Blue Heron nesting sites represents the views of the majority of the public that commented to the PC on this matter. His dissenting opinion is an even more important piece of the public record. It is well past time for the Planning Commission to adopt a more transparent and fair procedure for conducting business and for allowing respectful dissent, and to listen to all of its constituents.

If put to the vote of public opinion, the public would demand that the Planning Commission remove the censure and encourage and allow for opinions and ideas by all to be heard and reported. The PC would benefit from a change in its bylaws to allow and encourage dissenting opinions. Encouraging dissenting opinions gives the public a greater understanding of the thinking behind the PC and their recommendations along with dissenting points of view. Transparency in government is a good thing. One would think that would be clear.

Thank you very much for your service. Jan Robinson

Mr. Gill: Thank you. Tom Glade? And if I could say, please – folks that aren't talking, please mute yourselves.

Tom Glade: Good evening. My name is Tom Glade and I reside in Anacortes. I've been a longtime member of Evergreen Islands and other environmental groups on the islands here – Guemes Island and Fidalgo Island – and I've known Mark Lundsten for quite a while now. And he's a good man and he shouldn't have been subjected to this kind of abuse. And so I join with the other people asking that you remove the censure on Mark and to adopt the bylaws, and especially the one item that says members with minority views have the full right to their opinions, recognizing that diversity of thought is essential for good decision-making. And the Planning Commission will not use psychological pressure for conformity. So I urge you to follow through with these. Thank you for the time tonight.

Mr. Gill: Thank you. Let's see, did we get to Eric Hall?

Mr. Hall: Yeah, I already spoke.

Mr. Gill: Okay. Thank you, Eric. And we heard William Gregory. John Day?

John Day: Yeah, John Day, Sedro-Woolley. I think that folks have already said everything I could say and more. I certainly want to support what Eric Hall and Tim Manns, Tom Glade, Bill, and Jan have said. Everybody else. I've also submitted comments – written comments – to the Commission asking for the revocation of the censure of Mark Lundsten and for adoption of bylaws that include robust provisions for dissent – for recognizing dissent and ensuring that it gets into the hands of the County Commissioners and the public. I am quite disturbed by the actions of the board that seem to be counter to the basic principles of transparency here. And even more disturbed after seeing the bylaw agenda item removed from the agenda and the last meeting cancelled. That makes me question what's going on here. I would appreciate an explanation from your board Chair regarding his intent there. That's what I have for now. I do appreciate the service of everyone on the Commission. We need all of our opinions to be heard. Let's try to represent the whole county and not just a narrow band of opinion. Thank you.

Mr. Gill: Thank you. And that takes up our 15 minutes that we set out on the agenda for comments – and Public Remarks, I should say. And it looks like we made it through. We always do take remarks at pdscomments@co.skagit.wa.us if folks would like to submit written comments as well.

Chair Raschko: Okay, thank you. I want to thank all the people who took the time and the effort to comment to the board. We very much appreciate it.

So we'll switch now to Nomination and Election of Officers. The floor is open for nominations for Vice Chair.

Vice Chair Mitchell: I have a nomination.

Chair Raschko: And who is this?

Vice Chair Mitchell: This is Kathy Mitchell. I'd like to nominate Tammy Candler for Vice Chair.

Chair Raschko: Okay. Are there other nominations?

Commissioner Rose: I have a nomination for Vice Chair. I would like to nominate Joe Woodmansee. This is Martha Rose.

Chair Raschko: Okay.

Commissioner Rose: So Joe Woodmansee for Vice Chair.

Chair Raschko: All right, are there any other nominations?

Commissioner Woodmansee: Chair, could I speak here? This is Joe Woodmansee.

Chair Raschko: Please go ahead, Joe.

Commissioner Woodmansee: Martha, I appreciate very much your nomination but I'm pretty new here and I would not vote for myself tonight for that position mostly because of that newness. And so if I could politely decline that nomination. I would want to do that without offending anybody. Anyways, that's kind of where I'm at on that.

Commissioner Rose: Since you're so polite...

(laughter)

Commissioner Woodmansee: Thank you.

Chair Raschko: All right, are there any other nominations?

Vice Chair Mitchell: Are we only doing Vice Chair at this point, Chair?

Chair Raschko: Why don't we just take nominations for both and, who knows, somebody might want to nominate Tammy for Chair as well. And then we'll vote on both. So nominations?

Vice Chair Mitchell: I'd like to make another nomination then.

Chair Raschko: Go ahead, please.

Vice Chair Mitchell: I'd like to nominate Tim Raschko for Chair.

Commissioner Rose: And I also have a nomination for Chair. I would like to – this is Martha Rose talking again, and I would like to nominate Kathy Mitchell for Chair.

Vice Chair Mitchell: Martha, thank you so much. I really appreciate it but I'm going to decline this year. I've got a really full plate. Thank you.

Chair Raschko: The floor's still open for nominations.

(silence)

Chair Raschko: All right. Hearing none, I'd really love to do a show of hands on this but I can't see anybody. We'll vote first for Vice Chair. Well, I guess it doesn't matter. All those in favor of Tammy for Vice Chair, please say "aye."

Multiple Commissioners: Aye.

Chair Raschko: Okay, I vote aye. So was that everybody? Sorry – it's hard to do this blind. Okay, we're going to go very quickly. Commissioner Mitchell, how are you voting?

Vice Chair Mitchell: Aye.

Chair Raschko: Candler.

Commissioner Candler: Aye.

Chair Raschko: Hughes.

Commissioner Hughes: Aye.

Chair Raschko: Lundsten.

Commissioner Lundsten: Aye.

Chair Raschko: Rose.

Commissioner Rose: Aye.

Chair Raschko: Woodmansee.

Commissioner Woodmansee: Aye.

Chair Raschko: Shea.

Commissioner Shea: Aye.

Chair Raschko: Knutzen.

Commissioner Knutzen: Aye.

Chair Raschko: And I vote aye as well. All right. So congratulations, Commissioner Candler.

__ for Chair. All in favor of Commissioner Raschko, say "aye." _____. Commissioner Mitchell?

Commissioner Mitchell: Aye.

Chair Raschko: Candler.

Vice Chair Candler: Aye.

Chair Raschko: Hughes.

Commissioner Hughes: Aye.

Chair Raschko: Lundsten.

Commissioner Lundsten: Aye.

Chair Raschko: Rose.

Commissioner Rose: Aye.

Chair Raschko: Woodmansee.

Commissioner Woodmansee: Aye.

Chair Raschko: Shea.

Commissioner Shea: Aye.

Chair Raschko: Knutzen.

Commissioner Knutzen: Aye.

Chair Raschko: And I vote aye as well. Thank you. It's kind of embarrassing again. I would say that I'm happy to do this because I understand that people, as Commissioner Woodmansee was saying and Commissioner Mitchell that people working and with families have a lot of stuff on their plates, and I'm retired and I've got the time. I think at some point you need to change the Chair, but I'm willing to do it for one more year. So thank you for your trust.

So we'll move to our main topic of the night, the Shoreline Master Program Update Work Session. So, Mr. Gill, would you kindly introduce that topic?

Mr. Gill: Sure. We're here to provide a second meeting on the update to the Skagit County Shoreline Master Program Update. We have tonight here we have in addition to the normal PDS staff we have Betsy Stevenson, who manages our natural resource section. She is going to be presenting to you. We also have Mark Daniel from Watershed Company, the consultant that has been working tirelessly to help us through this. Department of Ecology is also on the line – here, I think, mostly to hear but also here for a reference as well. I appreciate everyone being here, and with that I will turn it over to Betsy.

Betsy Stevenson: Thanks, Peter. So if I'm not *normal* PDS staff does that mean I'm *abnormal* PDS staff?

(laughter)

Mr. Gill: That's not what I meant!

Ms. Stevenson: I'll take it. It's okay. But thank you. Yes, thank you for having us again. You're going to be seeing us quite a bit over the next few weeks. I guess I'm – or months – I guess I would like to call your attention to some of the packet materials that you received. One of those items was a focus sheet, which just kind of goes over a more detailed agenda of what we're going to talk about tonight. We thought this would be a good format for you guys in terms of knowing what we're going to be talking about at each meeting in a little bit more detail than just kind of bringing things before you. So if you have any feedback on that, please let us know. We can certainly adapt it if you think something would work better. The other thing that we put together is a schedule with the discussion topic items for each of the meetings that we kind of have tentatively

scheduled out for a couple of months. So tonight, obviously, is the 26th of January so we're going to go over those things, and then we have it out until March 23rd. And again, tentative. A lot of times, as you know before when we did this – those of you who were on the Commission at the time – you never know how long the discussion is going to go on certain topics. Some nights we got done early and we didn't have anything else for you guys to be hearing about. So this is our best guess at about the right amount of time to schedule for these items. So you have both of those things. I think you may have gotten a copy of the public participation plan too. That's kind of for your reference and it just gives people a sense of how we intend to get the word out about the meetings and the people that we will reach out to and that sort of thing. Those should all be posted and available on the website as well.

For those of the rest of you who are on the call, as well as the Planning Commission members, the County has updated their Shoreline website page. There is some new information. We will continue to post documents as they get finished and put together on that website. There's also an open house site that we kind of talked to you about a little bit and we'll talk to you a little bit more about that tonight. We've also scheduled monthly public meetings and we had our first one last Thursday. And I think, unless I'm mistaken, Planning Commissioners Mark Knutzen, Amy Hughes, and Kathy Mitchell all joined us. So thank you very much. The next meeting is scheduled for February 11th. They start at six o'clock. You can find information about them on the open house, which we can kind of go through a little bit a little bit later in our presentation. The one after that is March 11th, and we have another one scheduled for April 8th. Each meeting will be discussing different topics and subject matter, just kind of an update on where we are in the process, and then some items of interest that we hope will, you know, draw some people. We had, I think, 38 or 39 when I was looking at our meeting on Thursday, so a really good turnout for such a little amount of time of getting the word out ahead of time. So there is some interest and we appreciate that very much.

So with that, I'm going to see if I can share my screen and make this work. So bear with me. And also, if you guys don't mind waiting until the end to offer comments and questions, we'd really appreciate it. And then we'll give you a chance to ask your questions, if that's okay. Thank you.

Did that work?

Mr. Gill: Yes, we have that. Thank you.

Ms. Stevenson: Oh, okay. So I'm going to get started, Peter. Feel free to holler out if something happens because I can't see that screen anymore.

So the outline for tonight, which if you've looked through your materials you know this as well as I do and probably even better, but these are the items that we intend to go over tonight. We're going to do another little bit – a brief history of the comprehensive and periodic update. I know you've heard that before. We did it in a high level. We'll just go through that briefly again tonight. The project timeline and the Planning Commission meeting topics – I just went over the materials that kind of outline that, and you had – the focus sheet does have the graphics on a second page that you'll also see in the presentation tonight. I don't want to spoil all of it too early on. The Public Outreach Overview and then we're also going to start just diving in just a little bit, just getting our feet wet, on the proposed changes to the 2016 Planning Commission draft – the legislative updates that have come across since that time, since 2016, so there's quite a few of them. And those things that we will be making to keep our document consistent with the state laws, and also the critical areas ordinance integration that we're doing.

I think you saw this slide when we met with you in December, but it gives you a good indication of all the work that has been done already and the work that you, Planning Commissioners who were on the Planning Commissioners at the time, all the technical background and information and documents. The Shoreline Inventory and Characterization was completed. It was quite extensive and took quite a bit of time. That's what we used to create a baseline. The policies and regulations which will be moved into our Comprehensive Plan and our County Code, the mapping of the Shoreline Environment designations, the Cumulative Impact Analysis, Shoreline Restoration Plan, and the No Net Loss Evaluation. At least those last three will need to be updated and looked at a little bit, based on whatever we do in this process. So they are final as far as all the work that's been done to now, but they are draft in that they will have to be updated and evaluated again as we figure out what this document's going to look like when we get finished with it.

The public process I talked to you about a little bit before. Early on as we started we had visioning meetings all around the county to talk about what people wanted and why shorelines were important to them – the things that they wanted us to be aware of to protect the economic benefits of things on shorelines and what that meant to the community. We also had a Shoreline Advisory Committee that met for several years that were appointed by the County Commissioners. We had open houses further on in the process after we had developed some of the information and some maps for people to look at and give us comments on. And then we had a very extensive Planning Commission review over several years.

This is a new graphic which gives you a sense – hopefully you can see it; I know some of it's kind of light. I'm not sure how it's showing up for you but you did get a copy in your packet as well. It gives you an idea of the timeframe at the bottom there on the Comprehensive Update on the left-hand side, and it shows you by the check boxes of all the work that was done and some of the things that I just kind of went over with you.

The periodic update: We have done some of the background work on that, just evaluating the 2016 SMP draft that the Planning Commission completed. So we have quite a bit of information that we did do on that. Again, because there are some new rules and regulations that have gone into place since we'll have to make sure that we're up to date, and we're doing that work now with our consultants.

What's left there that hasn't been checked off is the public review process and that's where we are now with you as the Planning Commission. So we do still hope – I know it's a(n) optimistic and – it'll be a busy timeline to try to get this to the Commissioners by June of 2021 but we're going to try and we're going to work with you and we're going to provide you the information that you need to feel comfortable working with us on this and coming up with some recommendations that we can put together when we're completed for your recorded motion.

So the next step: I kind of went through this a little bit but for the stakeholder outreach it's the online open house that's been launched. We will start the public review of the draft SMP which we still hope to have out by February 2nd. The Planning Commission review is in process now and should go at least into May or June, and then local adoption hopefully by the end of June. This is still tentative. And then the state review would start after that. And I guess I would like to just mention that because we have combined our comprehensive update and our periodic update, we are working with representatives from the State Department of Ecology and they have graciously agreed to work closely with us through this process over the next six months. And hopefully we can work out a lot of the details and incorporate any concerns or issues that they may have so that when we come to a close when we're ready to adopt something that they're also close to

being to that point if not ready to adopt it as well. And that's our shared goal and that's where we're starting the process. I think Joe Burcar may want to comment a little bit later when we get done with the presentation.

So again, as we talked about the meeting schedule, here is the schedule of the meetings and the topics that we hope to be discussing in less detail than what was in your packet. But for those of you either on computer or if you're on the phone, I think it's probably better if I just kind of go through them, so bear with me.

Tonight we're going to talk about the legislative updates for consistency with state law and the critical areas ordinance integration. On the meeting on February 9th, it'll be the general regulations and the uses and modifications. On February 23rd it will be a continuation of the uses and modifications, and by "modifications," that's shoreline modifications not necessarily modifications to the document.

March 9th we'll be talking about legally established preexisting uses and structures, the Administration section, Definitions, and Shoreline Environment Designation Mapping. And then on March 23rd that's the date for a possible public hearing.

And in terms of public outreach, I mentioned that the website has been updated and we'll continue to post documents and information there. Our consultants have also created and are sponsoring a platform for our online open house. At this time it's a good place to gather information. There's little clippings of it there that you can see what's available to be looking at. You can also subscribe to the Planning Department's listserv email subscription site so that if you're not getting notifications now you would at least be getting the Shoreline notifications through that website about upcoming meetings or if there's additional information that's been posted to the website that might be important to you. So that information is available. I mentioned the public information meetings already. And then the Online Open House site will also be a place where you will be able to officially have a public comment on the document when we're in the public comment period during that process.

And with that, I think my portion of the presentation is complete, and we're going to see if I can just let Mark take over the screen.

Mark Daniel: Thanks, Betsy.

Ms. Stevenson: Or if I – do I have to get out of it first? We'll see. Somebody's going to have to tell me what I need to do because I can't see.

Mr. Gill: I think we got your screen now, Mark.

Mr. Daniel: Okay, great. Just getting my windows sorted out here. Thanks, Betsy. This is Mark Daniel with The Watershed Company. We're assisting the County with the update of the Master Program. And I actually thought I would start out here by just sharing the Online Open House that Betsy mentioned. So you should be seeing it now here. This is really designed to be a really easy-to-use portal for the general public to really see the essentials of what's happening with the Master Program Update and also to provide comment during the comment period. So just by way of a quick tour here, you can see it gives just a real quick overview that, you know, this is the process for performing a comprehensive update as well as the periodic review of the master program. It's got just a few kind of essential, frequently asked questions. You can see the answer to any of those by just clicking on the plus sign. It's got some key next steps – where we are now, what's

coming soon, what's going to happen when the work is complete. It's got the estimated project timeline that you saw earlier during Betsy's presentation. And then it also has kind of real information on how to get more involved. As Betsy mentioned, this is where you can sign up to go to an online public information meeting. You can also sign up for email updates from the Planning Department. You can also provide at this time if you have informal feedback or if you have some questions, you can do that here. And again, during the public comment period, it will be very easy for the public to submit comments via this site.

Mr. Gill: And Mark – this is Peter – just for folks at home or that are on the computer, I put the URL to the online open house in the Chat.

Mr. Daniel: Much appreciated. Thank you, Peter.

Okay, so now I guess before diving into some of the changes since the 2016 draft SMP, I wanted to touch on some of the issues that were addressed in the 2016 draft. There was quite a bit of work that went into it. And so I'm just going to touch on here some of the key items that are addressed by the 2016 version.

Nonconforming uses and structures: The SMP addresses previously existing uses and structures and includes some allowances for repair and modification of those types of structures and uses. The SMP addresses over-water structures. There's a variety of provisions for piers, docks, boating facilities, mooring buoys, boat ramps, and similar structures. And in many cases, the SMP provides specific dimensional standards for those items. The 2016 SMP includes updated mapping of the shoreline environment designations, and for those of you that are unfamiliar, the shoreline environment designations – it's kind of easy to kind of think of that as zoning in the shoreline area, sort of an overlay of a standard land use zone.

So for the 2016 version, the prior mapping was transferred to a modern GIS-based system. There were some changes to the prior environment designations based on underlying land use and environmental conditions. And also of note, some of the names of the environment designations changed.

The 2016 draft SMP addressed shoreline armoring. It defined what constitutes hard versus soft shoreline stabilization. It also includes thresholds for the repair, replacement and modification of shoreline stabilization. The 2016 also included a variety of provisions for vegetation, conservation, and environmental protection. Here it includes the general requirement to follow mitigation sequencing to ensure no net loss of shoreline ecological functions. And sort of in short, this is a process to avoid and minimize impacts, and compensating for such impacts when they are unable to be avoided.

The 2016 draft also includes limits for vegetation clearing and tree replacement standards.

The 2016 SMP, in terms of buffers and setbacks, references the buffers and setbacks that were used in the critical areas ordinance as those were already addressed in that document. And by way of CAO integration, originally the 2016 SMP was going to use the version of the critical areas ordinance in effect at the time. But since 2016 the critical areas ordinance has been updated so the Shoreline Master Program in 2021 will reflect the most recent critical areas ordinance.

So Betsy spoke a bit about the comprehensive update and what constitutes that. There is also a process called the periodic update which is a much more minor update, and might be considered as a maintenance update in comparison to the comprehensive update. The State requires these

every eight years and this periodic review is intended to keep master programs consistent with changes in state law, and Ecology makes it easy to do that by having a checklist that you can go through to see what changes have occurred. A periodic review is also to address any changes in local plans such as the comprehensive plan or other County regulations that may be in need of being made consistent. And finally the periodic review is intended to address any new or improved data information. That might include a recent Ecology guidance or new science.

Okay, so in terms of anticipated amendments to the prior 2016 draft, there are elements to address the periodic review, which I was just referring to. This is going to address items such as definitions, changes in exemption thresholds. Another item to be addressed in the 2016 draft is recommendations from the Planning (Commission) in their 2016 recorded motion. Also addressing Ecology comments on the draft. As I mentioned a little bit, it's going to integrate the most current version of the critical areas ordinance. There's also some formatting adjustments to align policy sections and to also modernize the document by providing hyperlinks to make electronic navigation of the document easier.

I'm going to touch on here a few of the legislative amendments or the changes in state law that the 2016 version is being updated to address as part of the periodic update. In terms of definitions, the current draft of the SMP clarifies that development does not include dismantling or removing structures that there is no other associated development or redevelopment. It also clarifies that a floating home is not a vessel even though it may be capable of being towed. As far as dredging, the SMP clarifies that a shoreline permit is not required for disposal of dredge materials at approved dredge material management program sites.

For forest practices, it clarifies that timber cutting is not development under the Shoreline Management Act and does not require shoreline review.

There's also been some administrative language added. There's clarification on what is the day of filing, which is sort of a technical term here. And that is when there is a substantial development permit associated at the same time with a conditional use or variance permit.

Let's see. It also clarifies some instances where development does not require a shoreline permit or is not subject to the Act, and here we're talking about some fairly rare activities such as remedial actions, certain boatyard improvements when they're done to meet certain standards, and also things like Washington State Department of Transportation maintenance and safety projects. Further, there is going to be a full list of the shoreline water bodies that are under shoreline jurisdiction of the SMP and also an indication of the upstream extent of shoreline jurisdiction, which is defined as the point where 20 cubic flow per second is seen.

Okay, in terms of critical areas ordinance integration, the state requires that the critical areas within the shoreline jurisdiction are included in the Shoreline Master Program. The County separately maintains a countywide set of critical areas regulations, and as I've mentioned before, that most recent version of the critical areas ordinance will become an appendix of the Shoreline Master Program and these critical areas regulations will remain in effect in the Shoreline Master Program until such time as there's a master program amendment, which is to say that if the critical areas ordinance countywide gets updated before there's an SMP amendment the master program would not reflect those countywide changes.

The critical areas ordinance is a requirement of the Growth Management Act, and, of course, here we're talking about the Shoreline Management Act, so there are some modifications that are necessary to the critical areas ordinance to make it applicable in shoreline jurisdiction. An

example of that here is that reasonable use exceptions are prohibited under the Shoreline Master Program. Instead, applicants would need to pursue a shoreline variance.

So there's been recent changes from Department of Ecology in terms of wetland buffer guidance, and the most recent version of the Shoreline Master Program is proposing to reflect that guidance. It's a relatively minor change. But the basic change is that wetlands that have a habitat score of 5 are now included with lower scoring wetlands with scores of 3 or 4. And sort of the effect of that is that when using the optional wetlands system for buffers, if there was a wetland that previously had a score of 5 and it had a certain buffer attached, it would now have a lower buffer – the same buffer as a wetland scoring 3 to 4. In Ecology's estimation, that level of buffer provides adequate protection for the wetlands with a habitat score of 5.

And lastly here, I'm just going to do one slide that sort of touches on the general provisions which are mostly going to be covered next week. I wanted to talk a bit about mitigation sequencing. This was previously not included in the 2016 SMP. It was included in the critical areas regulations. But for the current draft, that mitigation sequencing is being brought over to the master program, really because it is very essential for the SMP to achieve the no net loss standard. I also want to note here that mitigation sequencing isn't *always* required. You know, if there's a project and it's meeting the basic development standards, it's not a requirement. It's really for projects that are proposing to do a little bit – something less ordinary. When mitigation is required pursuant to the master program, a mitigation plan is something that is required. But I want to note here that the current draft SMP that will be available February 2nd does offer some alternative mitigation strategies in an effort to allow flexible approaches.

So that's kind of the main stuff that I was going to cover. As Betsy mentioned, next week or – I'm sorry – at the next meeting, the Commission will be looking more at general regulations and also at uses and modifications.

So that's a lot of information and I think at this point we'll go ahead and open it up to questions.

Ms. Stevenson: Can I step in real quick before you do? Sorry. Peter –

Mr. Gill: Yeah, go ahead, Betsy.

Ms. Stevenson: Is that okay? I'd like to just take a minute to introduce Joe Burcar from the Department of Ecology. He's the northwest regional office shoreline section manager. So if he wants to just say a couple of words before we start taking questions, that'd be fine – or at least say hello.

Joe Burcar: Good evening, everyone. I'm happy to be here. My name's Joe Burcar. I'm the section manager for the northwest regional office. So we have a number of shoreline planners and wetland specialists and flood specialists that work in our group and work with local jurisdictions in the northwest region – King County north, including San Juan/Skagit County.

Yeah, I'm happy to be here. I will be working with some of our other folks in our section to help support the County's update. And we had a previous planner who was involved in the 2016 update who has moved on to a different position so I'm kind of in a similar position to many of you in needing to learn about this program along the way, so we'll learn together.

Betsy mentioned sort of our common goal in having a program locally developed that meets Ecology expectation and authorities, and I think I want to reiterate that goal. That is really our

goal. We basically play sort of three roles that I think of. One is we're providing some grant funding to help the County with this update. And then right now I'd say we're more in the technical assistance role, so hopefully joining you in answering questions that are appropriate for Ecology to weigh in on as you develop your local master program. And once the County's done and it's locally adopted, then we take on the formal review before the SMP becomes effective to make sure it's consistent with the Shoreline Act and the Shoreline SMP guidelines.

So I'm looking forward to getting to know more of you and helping you get through this process, and that's about it. Thank you.

Mr. Gill: Thank you, Joe. Go ahead, Betsy. I was going to say if there's nothing else from Ecology, we could open the question and answers up to the Planning Commission at this time. I don't know if Chairman Raschko is available.

(silence)

Mr. Gill: Tim, are you with us? We're not hearing – I'm not hearing audio from you, Tim.

(silence)

Mr. Gill: He may be muted. Tim, it looks like you're there. If you're having trouble, maybe hang up and call back in and (we'll) get you unmuted. Kathy, do you mind fielding questions while Tim rejoins us?

Commissioner Mitchell: Nope. No, no problem. No problem at all. Oh, should we have Tammy field these questions?

Mr. Gill: Oh, that's true! Sorry, Tammy. Sorry, Commissioner Candler.

Vice Chair Candler: No worries, no worries. So for the members of the Planning Commission, are there questions for Betsy or any of the other speakers – Mark or anybody?

Commissioner Shea: Just a minor question. For your next virtual public info meeting on March – I guess, on those three meetings, are you talking about kind of the same things and then just addressing questions or is there different topics on each meeting?

Ms. Stevenson: Yeah, thank you. We do intend to cover different topics so that you could come to all of them and maybe learn something at each of them. We're not going to cover the same topics. Just kind of quick housekeeping and what we're up to and what's going on right then, and then a different topic of interest that we think – or even one that we're getting questions about or things like that. It'll be kind of depending on the feedback that we get. But we should be posting something for the next meeting before too long so that you have an idea ahead of time, and if it's something that interests you we hope you'll join us and become part of the discussion.

Commissioner Shea: Thank you.

Ms. Stevenson: Thank you.

Vice Chair Candler: Anyone else? I don't see any hands but I don't know if I can see everything.

Commissioner Woodmansee: Commissioner Woodmansee here. I have a question. When you were doing your presentation, you talked about the reasonable use exemptions being prohibited and then that there would be a variance process in its place. So my question is: Is the criteria for a variance the same as the criteria for a reasonable use exemption? Or is the criteria changed so that it actually completely changes the ultimate outcome of those processes? That's my question.

Ms. Stevenson: That's a good question. I guess I would just – I'm hearing feedback. Is that me? Okay. The reasonable use process is outlined in the critical areas ordinance so the process that will be used would be a shoreline variance, which is pretty much the same criteria that we use for shoreline variances now. So yes, the criteria – it doesn't change but it just changes from a – they allow for reasonable uses without having to get a variance in the critical areas ordinance, which you may have come across in the work that you do. So it would require a shoreline variance if it's a critical area within shoreline jurisdiction. The difference, I guess, that maybe isn't so clear is that right now we have someone who comes in and wants to do something and maybe encroach into the buffer a bit of a critical area that's within shoreline jurisdiction. They're required to get a shoreline variance *and* a critical areas variance in that kind of a situation. So the shoreline program is just written so that it requires variances and the critical areas laws are written so that there's some flexibility, and if there's no other opportunity and you can't go through the mitigation sequencing and still recognize some sort of development on your lot, that reasonable use process allows you to do that. The shoreline laws just don't have that in them so there's no way that we can just bring that over and have it be consistent with the state law for shoreline management. Does that answer your question?

Commissioner Woodmansee: Yeah. I mean, what I'm hearing is that it's not making a fundamental change in what the end result may be in a particular case. It's just that it's a slightly different process.

Ms. Stevenson: Yes, and in this case at least it would only be one variance instead of a couple for the same project because we'd have, you know, critical areas ordinance *and* a shoreline program that they would have to comply with. Now by – you can't see my hands, but I'm using my hands! – by integrating the critical areas requirements *and* the shoreline requirements in those critical areas that fall in shoreline jurisdiction, it's only one variance. So it'll be less expensive in terms of applications but it'll be this kind of same ending. You'll still be required to be consistent with both codes at that point, if that makes sense.

Commissioner Woodmansee: Yeah, great. Thank you very much.

Ms. Stevenson: Good question.

Vice Chair Candler: Good. Thank you for those questions, Commissioner Shea and Woodmansee. Is there any other questions?

Commissioner Knutzen: I have one, if I can. This is Mark Knutzen.

Vice Chair Candler: Absolutely. Go ahead.

Commissioner Knutzen: I'm not sure who I would address this to, but my question is: How much leeway does the County have in writing regulations in regard to what the state law is?

Ms. Stevenson: That's a good question. I can start out and if Joe wants to add something, or if I step on it and he disagrees with me I will defer to Ecology. The Shoreline Management Act is

something very different than most of the legislative mandates and things that the counties and state are required to do because it is a partnership between local and state government to both develop and then implement these regulations. So all along the way as we put it together, as we use it and implement it, as we do enforcement and things, we do it jointly. So there has always been, and I'm hopeful that there will continue to be, the ability for the local governments to have some flexibility within the guidelines and regulations where we can still meet and be consistent with state law. But it gives us a chance to make it our own in terms of the things that are near and dear to us in terms of our natural resources and those sorts of things. So I'm hopeful that that will continue because that's been the case in the years that I've been doing shoreline management, which – you know, 30 years in this state. I've had great working relationships with the folks from Ecology and we don't see any reason for that to change, but we do also have to realize that there are certain things that we will have to do. But we may be able to be creative in the way that we are able to comply, and I'm hoping that we don't have too many of those situations, but there may be some that come down to some negotiations towards the end.

Joe, I don't know if you want to add to that or not.

Mr. Burcar: Good answer, Betsy. The only thing I would add is, you know, I think that there – you look at shoreline master programs across the different jurisdictions throughout the state and you do see some differences. There is intent to bring in local interests into some aspects of the shoreline master program. There's other aspects that are pretty prescribed under the shoreline guidelines. So, for example, the shoreline stabilization sections, the shoreline modifications: Those standards and protocols are pretty prescribed. Whereas there could be a lot – there's intended to be a lot more local interest inserted into other – you know, other policy goals and provisions within the master program. So it's kind of a mixed bag.

Mr. Knutzen: Thank you.

Vice Chair Candler: And I don't know whether that thought – if you need to follow up, that's fine. If not, I will ask if there are other questions.

(silence)

Vice Chair Candler: I'm not seeing any follow-up questions from Commissioners in the Chat. If you have a question, speak up; otherwise, we'll be moving on to the next agenda item. I don't want to move on without giving our Chairman an opportunity to have questions, but I think that this will be coming up again and he can ask questions later. But I don't want to – if anybody has another question, go ahead and speak up.

Commissioner Lundsten: This is Mark Lundsten. I have a question.

Vice Chair Candler: Certainly. Go ahead.

Commissioner Lundsten: Just of anyone – with Betsy or Mark or Joe. The question I have is just: Was there one thing that made this not be approved in 2016? Why did it not move along? Was there any particular thing you can point to that made it not happen?

Ms. Stevenson: I can take that question.

Commissioner Lundsten: We could avoid that this time.

Ms. Stevenson: Yeah.

Commissioner Lundsten: Thank you.

Ms. Stevenson: So back in that time I was working on getting the Shoreline Program updated. We also had two major projects at the refineries come in that both required very extensive environmental review and EISs, and I was working on both of those as well. And the workload just go to be too much and there were comments and complaints and some things about what was happening just in terms of time on all things, so we got it to the point of the Planning Commission being completed; their recorded motion went before the Board; and the Commissioners made the decision to put it on hold until we got those projects completed and taken care of.

Commissioner Lundsten: Thank you.

Vice Chair Candler: Anyone else?

Mr. Gill: Commissioner Candler, this is Peter Gill.

Vice Chair Candler: Okay, Peter, go ahead.

Mr. Gill: I just wanted to kind of ask or make comment about the draft. When can we expect to get a – at least an early draft into the hands of the Planning Commission?

Ms. Stevenson: February 2nd.

Mr. Gill: Excellent. So that will be in time for the next Planning Commission meeting then, it sounds like.

Ms. Stevenson: Yes.

Mr. Gill: Excellent. Thank you, Betsy.

Vice Chair Candler: Peter, before we move on, anything further from the Department on this topic?

Mr. Gill: I don't believe so. And I guess I would also add that I think the Chair is back with us.

Vice Chair Candler: Okay, I'll turn it over to him. Commissioner Raschko, if you can hear me, we are at the stage where we've asked some questions. If you have questions regarding the Shoreline Master Program Update Work Session, we can ask those; otherwise, we're ready to move on to the Director Update.

Hal Hart: Great. Peter, can you hear me?

Mr. Gill: Yes. Is this Hal?

Mr. Hart: Yes, yes. Go ahead first.

Mr. Gill: Commissioner Raschko is not able to unmute at the moment. Commissioner Candler, shall we go ahead?

Vice Chair Candler: Yes, I think we should proceed to the Director's Update.

Mr. Gill: Excellent. I'll go ahead and share my screen. Okay, Hal.

Mr. Hart: All right. Thank you, Commissioners. Thank you, Peter and Betsy, and welcome, visitors. At the end of each meeting or as we close in on the end of the meeting I give a quick update. So let's go to the three hot items for this part of January. We can go to the next slide, Peter. Great. So the Board has adopted the Countywide Planning Policies amendments earlier today, so congratulations to the Planning Commission for their work at looking at this. And for anybody visiting, Countywide Planning Policies are part of the state's Growth Management framework. They kind of set it up so that the Cities in Skagit County and the County itself will work together and provide a framework across the landscape of where growth should go. So there were some minor amendments, and if you have questions on that Peter is there to assist, but I think things were moved forward that we had previously seen on that today.

We do have a new legal representative for the Department with the departure of Julie. Will Honea will be our attorney for the Department. He's going to be assisting us while the search is on and so with that he has currently worked on compliance issues daily with us for the last several years and water issues. We are continuing to work on those issues, but he is now going from a part-time status to a full-time status while the search is on. And so if we need legal assistance he is the person that Peter will help you coordinate through.

The other update is ag tourism update. This week is the Agricultural Summit so put a note on that if you want to see one of the, you know, more important annual summits that is held. WSU Extension puts that on. I see that there's a hand up, so I will go through our Chair, our acting Chair here, and recognize that. So, Chair Candler?

Vice Chair Candler: Are you able to see whose hand that is, if that's a Planning Commissioner _____?

Mr. Hart: Yeah, Kathy Mitchell.

Vice Chair Candler: Peter, will you take a question then from Commissioner Mitchell, please?

Mr. Gill: Certainly.

Commissioner Mitchell: Yeah, this is for Peter and Hal. Could you pronounce Will's last name again for us, please? I can never get it right.

Mr. Hart: (laughing) I'm not exactly sure, but Will Honea (sounds like "honey")? Ho-nay?

Mr. Gill: Ho-nay.

(several people talking together)

Commissioner Mitchell: Ho-nay. Is that right?

Mr. Hart: Yeah.

Commissioner Mitchell: Okay. The question for you is this. Thank you for finding somebody to help us while you're looking for somebody else. I really appreciate that. We've got in a meeting

where Peter sent out an email – Peter, was it yesterday or today? – about putting the letters and information on the next meeting in February?

Mr. Gill: Yes. Yes, February 9th. Right.

Commissioner Mitchell: Okay. Can we have our legal representative with us that day?

Mr. Gill: Yes, we'll certainly make a request to legal to participate. Sorry, Hal.

Mr. Hart: Nope, that's appropriate, and I agree with what Peter just said. And this gentleman is a little different than – you know, everybody has their own style. We're finding that we want to get to him with a little bit more leeway at this point as we adapt to one another. So the earlier you want something, let us know (and) we'll get it. It's more likely to happen then at the time that you want it to. So just a little more warning. The most warning possible – how about that? So yeah.

Commissioner Mitchell: I've got a follow-up question then. With that – because I feel for him coming on – I guess this happens to lawyers all the time. You get a boatload of other things. I'm assuming you guys have already handed him all that information and the videos and things like that so he can get up to speed on where the Planning Commission is on that issue?

Mr. Hart: I'll leave that to Peter to answer. I'm not sure of how much we've given him at this point.

Mr. Gill: Yeah, he's been copied on, I think, *all* the letters at this point.

Commissioner Mitchell: How about the video links?

Mr. Gill: No.

Commissioner Mitchell: That might be a good idea.

Mr. Gill: We'll have to sit down and bring him up to speed if we want him there. Yeah.

Commissioner Mitchell: Yeah, I think that would be a real good idea because the meeting speaks for itself and that's very important that he see that as well.

Mr. Gill: Okay.

Commissioner Mitchell: Thank you.

Mr. Hart: Very good. So we will continue with a – if there are any other questions, let me know. Again, Friday is the Agricultural Summit. And at that point, Peter, do you want to talk a little bit about what we're going to – who's going to be there on the key committee where *we're* going to be talking?

Mr. Gill: Sure. Sure, we are going to present on agritourism at the annual Ag Summit. We're looking forward to it with working with BERK on that project, and we are getting things going. We're going to have a website up by Friday and some opportunities for the public to provide some feedback on what they think of ag tourism ideas. And we'll be – we're in the discussion on how local regulations affect and can improve access to markets. So I hope others can join us on Friday, and if you Google Skagit WSU Extension, I'm sure you can get access to that forum and those meetings. That's this coming Friday.

Mr. Hart: I would only add to that one quick tidbit, in that for all of you when you're thinking about this there's probably three things to think about in terms of agriculture from a planning commission standpoint. One is: What are the regulatory-based things that we do? Zoning. That would be one. You know, putting it in the Comprehensive Plan and then zoning. That's regulatory.

What are the incentive-based things that we do? We have a purchase of development rights program run out of the Public Works office so that might be an example of one of those other programs.

And then the final thing – and there will be a speaker or many on this one, but even in our group discussion, that talks about economic vitality. It's one thing to talk about land use, but it's a completely – to really integrate and preserve agriculture, it has to be – it has to have a lot of vitality. And so that is another really important part of agriculture, and hopefully that'll be addressed as well.

Then there's one last slide. And here's an example of vitality. So the Vikima Seed Company. They're expanding. So they're investing in Skagit County. Sakata Seed is investing. Many other companies are also investing so they're building infrastructure for the long term in agriculture. And so another example is Westland Distillery. And then put all that aside and then we see a lot of smaller investments in agriculture related to tourism. Well, some of them are very large, by the way. But some of those tourism things – Tulip Town and others – are changing hands. And so it's really important that we think about how the economics of agriculture are changing and think about economic vitality of agriculture overall.

So that's my last comment. Thank you, Commissioners.

Vice Chair Candler: Thank you, Mr. Hart. Peter, do you have anything further?

Mr. Gill: I do not. Thank you. Our next meeting is February 9th.

Vice Chair Candler: Okay. Then at this time, we will move on to the Planning Commissioner Comments and Announcements. To start that off, I just want to mention I don't know if everybody looks at the Chat. Betsy Stevenson mentioned that the information packet mentioned in her presentation is available on the Planning Commission page next to the agenda for the meeting and also on the County SMP webpage, for anybody who didn't have the Chat open.

But we'll move on and I will ask if anyone has – it looks like Kathy Mitchell. Commissioner Mitchell, your hand is raised for the Comments and Announcements? Please go ahead.

Commissioner Mitchell: I've got some housekeeping questions. This has been an unusual meeting because of the breadth of the SMP stuff, which I get. And I also missed a meeting so I could have missed how things have changed. So the housekeeping question is this: We were instructed initially when we started doing these meetings not to use this Chat other than to say "Question," "Comment," and that was it. And I was also wondering because now the public is using it as well and it's become part of the record as well. Have the rules changed?

Mr. Gill: I think it would be best if we maintain that we don't actually – the Commissioners don't have a dialogue in the Comment section, that we keep it all available on the video. Because the video folks, people that are watching on TV-21, aren't able to see the Chat. So we want to try to – for the Planning Commission to keep everything here on the screen and with the audio.

Commissioner Mitchell: So a follow-up – I’ve got two questions then yet. As a follow-up question to that, I always appreciate when we have the public with us. That’s not the issue. My question is, Is it going to become the norm where the public will use the Chat now?

Mr. Gill: No, not necessarily.

Commissioner Mitchell: When do we know that’s okay and when it’s not?

Mr. Gill: We will have to – you know, we haven’t had a lot of public at the last few meetings, so we’re going to have to work through that.

Commissioner Mitchell: Okay. Then if that’s going to be – I don’t know how this is going to work. It was a question of standing for meetings and things like that, and I don’t know – you know, when we get to a public hearing, that has a certain process and things like that so I think it’d be a great idea for us to come back and revisit if there’s going to be rule changes on something like that where everybody’s on the same page, because if there are side conversations and information going in there that we don’t know about, all Planning Commissioner members might not have been looking at that Chat page either and seeing what’s going on. And I didn’t open it until late. I keep forgetting it’s there. But I think it would be a good idea for housekeeping purposes is at the beginning of the meeting, or certain portions if you’re going to open that up, to let everybody know that that’s acceptable or not. Because I was falling back on what we were originally told.

Mr. Gill: Yeah, and I would have gone through that in the beginning of the meeting but we had – it was a strange beginning. That’s all.

Commissioner Mitchell: A terrible time! So another question that’s a follow-up with the housekeeping: If – I don’t understand how it works for the visibility. What I’m seeing here on my screen may be different from what other people are seeing. But when we are in these meetings, I think it’s essential for us to be able to see each of the Planning Commission members as much as possible. And I realize when people are on the phone you can’t do that, but for the ones that are logged in on computers I need to be able to see their faces to see their reactions, to see what’s going on. And, again, I enjoy the fact that the public’s there and different people that are there. That’s great. But this meeting is supposed to be with the Planning Commission interacting with each other. So I don’t understand how the display goes. Is that something that can be controlled or not controlled?

Mr. Gill: Yeah. No, that’s a good question. If I could say, there’s a couple ways to do it. If you’re at your computer, you can change to the Large Gallery mode, which does show everybody that’s got a video on. That’s kind of nice. Everybody’s a little smaller but it would allow you to see everyone. If we decide our protocol is only to have Planning Commission members be able to use video, we can make some adjustments in the meeting settings to make that happen if that’s what the Commission wants.

Commissioner Mitchell: I would suggest that everybody think about it and that actually be brought up to discuss because, again, it makes a difference on the appearance of who is participating in the meeting and who is not. And when people are speaking in Public Remarks or in situations where we have a public hearing for public comments, then by all means that’s certainly appropriate. But when they’re not, that’s a whole – I think that’s a whole different ballgame because we’re supposed to be interacting with each other, and so I just want to throw that up there and have other people think about that.

Vice Chair Candler: Anything further, Commissioner Mitchell?

Commissioner Mitchell: No, thank you.

Vice Chair Candler: Okay.

Commissioner Mitchell: If there's anybody who wants to comment, I'd like to know what they think at this point on something like that.

Vice Chair Candler: I appreciate the reminder about the appropriate use of the Chat. I had kind of forgotten about that and I don't want to have stuff in there that's not part of the record. I don't think that's a good idea. I don't – I see a hand raised but unfortunately I'm not able to tell whose hand that is. Peter?

Mr. Gill: Yeah, so Commissioner Shea has his hand up, as well as Kathy.

Vice Chair Candler: As well as – yeah, okay. Commissioner Shea will have the floor for a moment.

Commissioner Shea: Yeah, thank you. I just wanted to reiterate what Chair Raschko said earlier. I really appreciate everyone coming in and sharing comments. That helps us out a lot. But secondly I do think that would be nice to get us back into a more meeting atmosphere, and whether it's on the Commissioners' end or on the people running the meeting it would be good to make sure that we can all see all the Planning Commissioners upfront and so we can see people interacting and listening and following along. It just helps with the public discussion and makes sure there's no misunderstandings or anything like that. It just really helps making sure that we're all feeling like we're engaging in a public meeting with each other and can see each other. So I agree with that comment. So thank you.

Vice Chair Candler: Great. Okay. Are there other comments from – I'll go down the line. Amy Hughes, do you have any comments tonight?

Commissioner Hughes: No.

Vice Chair Candler: Mark Lundsten? Commissioner Lundsten, do you have anything?

Commissioner Lundsten: Yes, I do. I have a suggestion to think over in the next two weeks, possibly to act on through emails via Peter, with whom I've spoken about this idea. And that is to form a committee of three people, possibly one from each district maybe. The people who have submitted comments about the bylaws might be likely candidates to be on this committee. But basically it would be to expedite what we've done on the bylaws and consolidate it in a civil form as a draft version. Instead of using the whole of the Commission to talk about it, just have three people with a staff member, (and) refer to Will as necessary about what the law is, if we have to. But, two, then come back to the Planning Commission with a draft for a simpler discussion and revisions or recommendations for revisions. And I would just like that idea to be floated at the next meeting. Think about it for the next week. And I don't think it's appropriate to bring it up for a vote now but to put that idea out there in order to streamline our time and our efforts without sacrificing the integrity of the process. That's what I would suggest we do between now and the 9th. So that's all the comment that I have. Thank you.

Vice Chair Candler: Okay, thank you. Commissioner Rose, do you have anything for tonight?

Commissioner Rose: I don't. No, I don't. Thank you.

Vice Chair Candler: Okay, thank you. Commissioner Woodmansee, do you have anything for the Announcements?

Commissioner Woodmansee: I have a comment, and it's more of a question for Hal, or just a – I don't know if a request is the right word or not, but in your slide you had talked about the water issues and stuff, and I was just wondering if maybe in the near future we could get – the Planning Commission could get an update on anything that is moving or any – the latest conversations about trying to restore the ability for people who aren't able to drill wells. See if there's any movement in that area. But maybe we could get some kind of a future report on that so we can be updated on the status of that.

Mr. Hart: This is Hal. The answer is yes.

Commissioner Woodmansee: Great. That's all I've got.

Vice Chair Candler: Okay. Commissioner Knutzen, anything from you?

Commissioner Knutzen: Yes, I do. I have one comment regarding Director Hart's comments toward the end of his presentation where he talked about the three issues of the Planning Commission: zoning, incentives, and the economic vitality. And I can't express how ecstatic I am to hear him say that, as a fourth generation full-time farmer over the years – more conversations with neighbors about how important the economic vitality is to us farmers for agriculture to survive here. So to hear the director of the Planning Department say that, it's – I thank you for that, Hal.

Mr. Hart: You bet, sir.

Commissioner Knutzen: That's all.

Vice Chair Candler: Okay. And I don't know if our Chairman has joined us. Chairman Raschko, if you have any comments? And certainly if anybody else has anything, speak up. If we need to go another round, I don't mind.

(silence)

Vice Chair Candler: Hearing none, I think we've reached the end of our agenda and we will adjourn.