

CITY OF SEATAC
PLANNING COMMISSION
Minutes of January 5, 2016
Regular Meeting

Members present: Joe Adamack, Roxie Chapin, Tom Dantzler, Robert Scully, Jim Todd
Members absent: None
Staff present: Joseph Scorcio, CED Director; Steve Pilcher, Planning Manager; Mike Scarey, Senior Planner; Justin Rowland, Planning Intern

1. Call to Order

Chair Adamack called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

2. Approval of minutes

Moved and seconded to approve the minutes of the December 15, 2015 meeting as presented.

Passed 4-0.

3. Briefing on GMA Consistency program

Senior Planner Mike Scarey reminded the Commission that there are nine code amendments that are necessary to accomplish by June 16, 2016 in order to ensure there is consistency between the City's Comprehensive Plan and its development regulations. Included within those amendments are changes to the City's wetland regulations; these were identified in a communication received from Department of Ecology staff in 2015. Four of the nine amendments were presented.

The first amendment will specify that Critical Area special studies must be based on the Best Available Science as defined in State law and must be completed by a qualified professional. The Commission requested that staff define what constitutes a "qualified professional."

The second amendment includes "anadromous fisheries" in Habitat Conservation Areas and also updates the definition to exclude certain man-made features. The Commission concurred with this change.

The third amendment proposes update the definition of a "wetland edge" to be consistent with current typology. The Commission concurred with this change.

The final amendment addresses the definition of an "isolated wetland" to ensure it is consistent with Department of Ecology guidance. The Commission also concurred with this change.

Mr. Scarey mentioned he will be back at the next Commission meeting with two more amendments for review.

4. Wireless Communication Facilities regulations

Planning Manager Steve Pilcher reminded the Commission of past discussions on this issue and the need to amend City code to ensure it is consistent with changes in Federal law. The basic issue is that per Federal regulations, there is now a class of antenna improvements (“eligible facilities requests”) that local governments must approve within 60 days of receipt of an application. The short time frame does not allow time for these to be considered through any type of special review process (i.e., a conditional use permit), meaning these applications will only require building permits.

After reviewing several options, staff is recommending adopting the City of Olympia’s approach, which is to add a new chapter to the Code addressing Eligible Wireless Communication Facilities Modifications. A minor cross reference in the main WCF chapter will direct users to these provisions as appropriate.

Mr. Pilcher noted that there may be other desirable amendments to the City’s WCF regulations; he will be coordinating with a representative of AT&T and the Port of Seattle regarding these other potential amendments.

6. CED Directors’ Report

Director Joe Scorcio noted there would be a special City Council meeting at 6:30 and that staff is recommending the Commission adjourn its meeting in time to allow the Commission to attend the Council meeting.

He handed out a copy of the recently published Comprehensive Plan, reminding the Commission that staff had received praise from both the State’s Growth Management Services division and also PSRC.

Mr. Scorcio mentioned that staff has received a report from Smart Growth America regarding the workshop held in October. Staff is reviewing and will provide comments back to SGA.

Mr. Scorcio also noted that the City Council voted in December to extend the interlocal agreement with the Port of Seattle for an additional two years.

8. Adjournment

Moved and seconded to adjourn. Motion passed 5-0. The meeting adjourned at 6:28 p.m.

