

**MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING**  
**PIERCE COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION**  
Wednesday, January 9, 2019, 6:30 P.M.  
Public Meeting Room, 2401 So. 35th St., Tacoma

MEMBERS PRESENT

Sharon Hanek  
Jeff Brown  
Kathryn Jerkovich  
Julie Williams  
Jon Higley

MEMBERS ABSENT

Sharon Benson, Chair-excused  
Kevin Rau, excused

Clerk: Danica Williams, PPW-PALS  
Other Staff: Jeff Mann and Dan Cardwell, Long Range Planning

**CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 p.m. by Jeff Brown, Acting Chair. Roll was called and a quorum was present. Copies of all staff reports and related documents under review were made available. Members of the public were in attendance. An introduction of new staff Tiffany Aliment and Danica Williams was made to board.

Acting Chair Brown gave an overview of the process for review of plan amendments. It was announced that deadline for comments will be January 23, 2019 at 4:30 to allow the Clerk to get them to the commissioners prior to January 30. January 30 will be the meeting where recommendations will be made.

**PUBLIC HEARINGS**

2019 Comprehensive Plan Amendments

The Growth Management Act requires that comprehensive plans be subject to continuing review and evaluation with consideration of amendments and revisions no more than once per year. Chapter 19C.10, PCC Title 19C.10, Pierce County's amendment procedures, directs the Planning Commission to review initiated Plan amendments and make recommendations to the County Council. Council Resolution R2018-108s directs the Planning Commission to submit its recommendations to the Council by February 15, 2019.

Amendments to the Comprehensive Plan include: Text Amendments (changes in policies or text); Area-Wide Map Amendments (changes in the Land Use Map resulting in changes in zoning); Urban Growth Area/Urban Service Area Amendments (changes to designated Urban Growth Areas/Urban Service Areas); and Community Plan Amendments (changes to text or policies of a community plan). Related documents can be viewed at [www.co.pierce.wa.us/4694/2019-Comprehensive-Plan-Amendments](http://www.co.pierce.wa.us/4694/2019-Comprehensive-Plan-Amendments).

Jeff Mann, Long Range Planning Senior Planner, provided information relating to the County and GMA requirements and procedures for amendments to the Comprehensive Plan, noting that Council resolution R2018-108s initiated the amendments in this review cycle. PALS is required to transmit the Planning Commission's recommendation to County Council by February 15, 2019. Staff will provide an overview of each application as review proceeds.

Staff provided an overview of each application and the staff recommendation. A power point presentation was provided as well that addressed each amendment as well as the website and process used for review of the 2019 Comprehensive Plan amendments.

**Application #891681, Applicant: Pierce County Planning and Public Works**

Reduce the Urban Growth Area (UGA) and the City of Gig Harbor's (City's) Potential Annexation Area (PAA) in the East Bay area by a total of 230 total acres on 298 parcels, change from an Urban to Rural designation Rezone from Single Family(SF) to Rural 5(R5) and Rural Sensitive Resource(RSR). Staff recommends supporting amendment.

**DISCUSSION**

There was a discussion regarding the UGA Bank and how it works regarding priority status, re-designation as a UGA, capacity (including existing towns, cities and unincorporated Pierce County), and using the credits within the UGA bank and the process. Clarification that the purpose of a UGA is for the area to be annexed or incorporate.

**PUBLIC TESTIMONY**

Doug Thompson is a resident of Buckley and ask a question regarding the requirement of services being provided for residents living in a UGA. He asked if there are not services being provided currently, is the city eventually required to provide services. Dan Cardwell clarified that this not a requirement, but rather there is a requirement for the city to work with the county to eventually annex it into the city and later providing services.

Bud Rehberg sat on committees for revisions to the stormwater management manual and commented on clustering. He would like to see some language other than 'promote' because the idea of clustering sometimes is read as more intense development.

**Application #891623, Applicant: City of Buckley**

Buckley UGA/PAA Expansion: This proposal is to expand the Urban Growth Area (UGA) and the City of Buckley's (City's) Potential Annexation Area (PAA) boundary. This Changes 720.32 acres on 156 parcels from Rural to Urban. The land use designation would change from Rural 10 (R10) to Moderate Density Single Family (MSF). It would be rezoned to Residential Resource (RR) zoning classification allowing 1-3 units per acre. Staff does not support the proposal because it is inconsistent with provisions in the Growth Management Act (GMA), Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs), and Pierce County Comprehensive Plan in relation to UGA expansion. In addition, the reduction in the units from Gig Harbor (96 units) would not allow for increase in Buckley (361 units). In addition, the boundaries outlined by the City of Buckley would create rural islands due to the presence of ARLs. Staff presented a modified plan reducing the increase of units to 89 and following a more fluid boundary line in relation to the City of Buckley. Staff recommends a modified proposal that matches capacity coming out of Gig Harbor and also follows a logical boundary.

## **DISCUSSION**

Clarification regarding the zoning. Once the city annexes they have the ability to modify the designated zoning. There was a clarification explaining that the “units” are referring to “dwelling units.” Concerns were also raised about the notification of land use designation and what the process is for notifying residents when changes are being made. Becoming a UGA is a step towards annexation, however some UGAs have remained unincorporated for 20 years before the city annexed them. Further discussion regarding annexation. Buckley is a different situation and the duration would likely be much shorter. Ms. Hanek asked to clarify how the voting process would go for this specific application. You would need to vote no and then motion to accept staff recommendation instead.

## **PUBLIC TESTIMONY**

Doug Thompson is a resident of Buckley and asked the question regarding a bullet in a letter received from the city of Buckley. He wanted to know how the City of Buckley obtained priority status in the first place and if they will lose it. This status was achieved because they had previously not had a UGA.

Joel Cowert is a resident of Buckley and owner of one of the parcels within the UGA proposal. He stated that it would be nice if our high school was within city limits. He has concerns regarding street safety and that the City of Buckley could help provide safer streets. He explained that the pockets were due to the ARL designated lands and that no one is growing commercial crops. Recommended that the ARL parcels be redesignated to Residential. Joel is for the proposal presented by the City of Buckley and that he would strongly recommend that the City of Buckley’s original proposal as it stands.

Mara Heiman, a resident of Buckley, stated 20 years ago they applied during a comprehensive amendment cycle and were denied. Her land became a buffer zone between two cities. Mara was unaware that she was part of an ARL and expressed concerns about never having the opportunity to be annexed to the City of Buckley. She stated that one of the parcels located in the proposed UGA area was designated as ARL. She asked why they weren’t offered the opportunity to be included in this potential annexation area Mara asked for information regarding who to talk to with City of Buckley regarding the selection of parcels.

Mary Francl spoke on behalf of Maracu LLC. Mary described fact finding that she had regarding the parcel designation of an ARL that she only learned about. A description of the definition of ARL land was given and Mary explained how the parcel did not meet that criteria and she therefore did not understand why it was designated that way. Very concerned about the notification process and not being aware that the parcels owned by Maracu LLC were designated as ARL.

Mario Rodriguez owner of Maracu LLC asked question about the letter that was sent that should have notified him that his land was designated as n ARL.

Alan Marris, a resident of Buckley, is opposed to the annexation from Buckley. The property north of Highway 410 at intersection of Mundy Loss Rd should be taken into Buckley. It would provide businesses and jobs. In conclusion he explained they didn't want to be in the city.

**Application #891624, Applicant: Pierce County Planning and Public Works**

The proposal is a technical amendment which will update land use tables and corresponding text in the Pierce County Comprehensive Plan and applicable Community Plans to reflect the correct acreages for ARL designated land as adopted in Ordinance No. 2018-39s. Ordinance No. 2018-39s adopted new criteria for the designation of ARL lands based on the Community commissioned "Fresh Look at Pierce County Agriculture" study as revised by Staff recommendations. The new criteria resulted in revisions to the location and number of lands designated ARL and is reflected in revised Pierce County Zoning Atlas maps. Staff recommends approval.

**DISCUSSION**

Clarification on process. This started during the 2016 amendment cycle and there was a recommendation and property owners were notified. The properties that were recommended to be changed were notified at the time. Then the council got together and settled on the staff recommendation. There was notification initially, but a lot of hang time. Further discussion on ARL designation.

Mario Rodriguez-asked question about letter. Is there a way to be notified as to who received the letter?

**Application #895958, Applicant: Pierce County Council**

The proposal would amend the Gig Harbor Peninsula Community Plan relating to tree canopy cover within Urban Sensitive Resource Overlay and Rural Sensitive Resource zones to implement the designated Open Space Corridors. The proposed amendment would apply to the areas of the two zones where located within the Open Space Corridors as shown in Attachment A. Staff supports proposal for amendment.

**DISCUSSION**

Clarification if this goal generates restriction on property owners and tree removal. They want this to be a goal and not regulatory. They would use non-regulatory methods such as conservation funds to purchase properties, easements that would preserve trees for tax incentives. Further discussion on concerns regarding the size of the Crescent Valley area and that goals can eventually turn regulatory.

**PUBLIC TESTIMONY**

Scott Gallagher wanted clarification, this only applies to the Gig Harbor Plan and not the Key Peninsula. It was confirmed yes only for the Gig Harbor Plan

**Application #891875, Applicant: Key Peninsula Metropolitan Park District**

The proposal would designate four parcels owned by the Key Peninsula Metro Parks with the Parks and Recreation land use designation.

**DISCUSSION**

We would recommend approval. Discussion regarding the type of park Key Pen Parks wishes to maintain. Mr. Brown would like to see in park planning processes that some of the natural areas are maintained. Mr. Gallagher reassured Mr. Brown that they are striving to keep the natural beauty and recreation.

End of meeting further brief discussion regarding:

- ARL lands. A statement was made that it was a hot topic and further questions about the notification process for the ARL Lands.
- Question regarding Tree Canopy and if notifications were sent out to the residents.
- Receiving hard copy packets for the next meeting.

**ADJOURN**

The meeting adjourned at 8:15 p.m.