

## Gig Harbor Peninsula Advisory Commission (PAC)

### December 12, 2018, Meeting Minutes

*Minutes of the PAC are not verbatim. Recorded copies are available upon request.*

#### MEMBERS PRESENT:

Patricia Peterson, Chair  
Gordon Ballantyne  
Garth Jackson  
Lucinda Wingard  
John Conway  
Peter Clement

#### MEMBERS ABSENT:

Chair Peterson called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM. A quorum was present.

#### NEW BUSINESS

##### Comprehensive Plan Amendments

Jeff Mann, Senior Planner, discussed the Comprehensive Plan Amendment process, went over meeting timelines, and showed the commission how to navigate the website to view applications and associated documents. Mr. Mann explained that recommendations will go to the Pierce County Planning Commission in January and all recommendations will go to the Pierce County Council in February and full Council expected for March or April.

##### Urban Growth Amendment

###### Application 891681

Applicant: Pierce County Planning & Public Works

Request: Reduce the City of Gig Harbor UGA, 298 parcels totaling approx. 245 acres, East Gig Harbor Area.

#### COMMISSION QUESTIONS

- Commissioner Ballantyne inquired how the banking system worked.
- Staff looked at multiple areas and this was the area the City identified as making sense.
- Property owners have until the effective date before property becomes rural – some could be grandfathered as urban.
- Property owners received notification of the proposed change and of the open house.

#### PUBLIC TESTIMONY

*Jeni Woock, 3412 Lewis Street*, stated that City Council voted unanimously to make this area rural. The area is subject to landslides and should not be characterized by urbanization particularly where septic systems would be required. Gig Harbor has hit a growth rate of 40%, exceeding the housing allotment for 2030. If this area remains in the UGA, it will create a financial burden to the City of Gig Harbor. There are two new lift stations for millions, roads are not up to City standards, hillsides would be affected by new streets, and the school district needs funding.

*Carole Holmaas, 7602 Goodman Drive NW*, has lived in Gig Harbor for a long time. She does not have any property to subdivide, so this is not a personal issue for her. She inquired as to whether other urban growth areas will be removed. If sewer comes in, property owners must pay for it anyway, so that is not an issue. Four or five years ago the City and East Gig Harbor Association tried to remove derelict boats, unifying the Harbor with police protection. The City annexed all of Gig Harbor bay so if a property is on the shoreline it is adjacent to the City. It doesn't make sense to put R5 zoning next to an urban zone.

*John Holmaas, 7602 Goodman Drive NW*, inquired why the TDR program won't work for this property. Staff explained they are not the same thing. TDR rights can come from rural but must have urban growth area to be the receiving site. Gig Harbor is wanting to protect trees by having rural designation.

*John Holmaas, Jr., 8913 Randall Drive*, expressed that he does not want to be part of the City.

Karen Shuey, 2723 83<sup>rd</sup> Street Ct NW, expressed concern for property owners who are not ready to subdivide right now, but plan to in the future. Changing the designation could hurt potential plans for retirement. She expressed frustration about paying so much for view properties and also asked if taxes will change.

Zack Worrell, 8321 Goodman Drive, is opposed to the proposal because it prevents him from doing what he wants to do with his lot. From an environmental standpoint, it is strange that there are all the houses on septic that sit on a slope and drain into Gig Harbor Bay. That is what killed Hood Canal. These are expensive properties and there are still septic systems leeching into the bay; the City sewer terminates 1/3 mile away.

#### **COMMISSION DISCUSSION**

- Has issue with the fact the City has not maintained the area's infrastructure, even areas within the City that don't have sewer. This will take revenue away for infrastructure that was supposed to be built, but never was and puts a cap on the City's growth.
- Trying to solve multiple problems with one action
- The area appears to be geographically and environmentally constrained – density might be an issue
- Higher density is more appropriate in North Gig Harbor
- Gig Harbor is expected to grow through infill. Annexing east Gig Harbor would make it subject to infill.
- Four houses per acre is City density and this area with its slope, etc. is not feasible to meet that density.
- North Gig Harbor has density of 20 per acre. There are ways to deal with slopes, like cluster houses.
- Concerned that Gig Harbor drew lines ambitiously and are now faced with the bill and want to shed it.
- Don't see a way to compel the City to expand services to this area.
- People who own property in the area had certain expectations that may not be feasible now. There is an obligation to the land owner to develop potential of the land before the government takes away the right.
- Plats can be difficult and time consuming. Property owners should be allowed time to apply with a letter of intent and be given a reasonable amount of time to make use of the land before changing the designation.

**Motion made (Wingard/Conway) to recommend approval of the proposal.**

**Vote:** Ballantyne – no  
Conway – yes  
Jackson – no  
Peterson – no  
Wingard – yes  
Clement – no

***Motion failed.***

**Motion made (Jackson/Wingard) to recommend approval with the condition that affected property owners be allowed to apply for subdivision within a minimum of three years under the current rules. *Motion passed unanimously.***

#### **Comprehensive Plan Text Amendment Application 891596**

Applicant: Pierce County Planning & Public Works  
Request: High Density Single Family (HSF) zone – Add policy to allow for attached residential (townhomes) in the HSF zone.

#### **COMMISSION QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION**

- Commissioner Ballantyne inquired if Pierce County is now allowing fee simple condos. He likes the proposal but would like to see Condo ability.
- This type of development is different from Additional Dwelling Units (ADUs) by housing type and ownership.

**Motion made (Ballantyne/Conway) to recommend approval of the proposal. *Motion passed unanimously.***

**Comprehensive Plan Text Amendment  
Application 891627**

Applicant: Pierce County Planning & Public Works  
Request: Rural School Policies – Amend policies consistent with State Legislation allowing schools in the rural area and extension of sewer service to schools in the rural area.

The goal of this proposal is to allow the location of schools in rural areas because it is currently too difficult to do so. School Districts went to the legislature to amend the Growth Management Act to make allowances for schools. This adds policies to the Comprehensive Plan to support and become consistent with the State RCWs. This would not extend the Urban Growth Area or change any zoning. This is intended to increase coordination between jurisdictions and school districts.

**COMMISSION QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION**

- Cannot use impact fees to calculate for rural schools
- Everyone in rural areas pays impact fees but are not going to rural schools.
- There are provisions to extend sewers for schools and allows for other property owners to connect if their septic system were to fail.
- Cannot use lack of sewer service as a reason to change the Urban Growth Area.
- Questioned if schools are required to be on sewer
- Might be difficult to find property that is in the right location and sewer

**PUBLIC TESTIMONY**

*Karen Anderson, 4021 52<sup>nd</sup> Ave Ct NW*, is the CFO for Peninsula School District and is in favor of the amendment. There are schools in both urban and rural areas and this would benefit them greatly.

**Motion made (Peterson/Clement) to recommend approval of the proposal. *Motion passed unanimously.***

**Comprehensive Plan Text Amendment  
Application 891683**

Applicant: Pierce County Council  
Request: School Concurrency – Add new policies requiring concurrency of school services with development/population growth.

The Growth Management Act encourages jurisdictions to provide adequate facilities to accommodate growth. The County has a certain period to accommodate growth with levels of service. This policy should also include school classroom capacity with other infrastructure concurrency requirements.

**COMMISSION QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION**

- Schools must have constructed portables for classrooms to show the State they need funding. Construction) bonds are difficult to pass.
- The inability to grow would affect economic development and there are concerns over changing zoning for concurrency purposes.
- Concerns about giving up land use authority to the school districts.
- Staff is working with the school districts to address concerns and come up with alternative language that is not tied to permanent facilities.
- Staff encourages input from the commission.
- The proposal is meant to spur the discussion.
- The language about permanent facilities would have an adverse impact countywide.

**PUBLIC TESTIMONY**

*Karen Anderson, 4021 52<sup>nd</sup> Ave Ct NW*, met with proposer to understand the intent. Appreciates the attempt, but it conflicts with the way the structure for state and local funding is currently set up. Schools must prove they have unhoused students to receive funding. New schools require more than impact fees; they require bonds with 60% majority and that is difficult to achieve. There needs to be more of a conversation about how to

do things differently for districts that need new facilities and how to work with the building industry. As written, this proposal does not help the school districts. Need to look at impact fees and state-matched funding.

### COMMISSION DISCUSSION

- Communities must take some ownership over this issue
- A moratorium may help with funding
- Growth cannot exceed capacity of educational system
- Portables are money pits
- Impact fees aren't sufficient; developers should contribute more
- There are good school systems in decrepit facilities
- Maintaining facilities, such as schools, help keep property values up
- Not sure about imposing something that voters haven't approved
- People who are not supportive of growth may use this as a lever to halt it by not supporting funding for schools
- Many homes in Gig Harbor pay high fees that should be allocated for this but are not.
- Builders shouldn't bear the entire cost
- There is definitely a problem, but this is not the forum to solve it

**Motion made (Jackson/Ballantyne) to recommend denial of the proposal. Motion carried 4-2.**

### Community Plan Amendment Application 895958

Applicant: Gig Harbor Peninsula Advisory Commission  
Request: Amend Gig Harbor Peninsula Community Plan policies to pursue a tree canopy coverage goal of 75 percent within the Urban Sensitive Resource Overlay and the Rural Sensitive Resource zone to implement the Gig Harbor Peninsula Open Space Corridors map.

This proposal is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and is supported by Staff. Staff showed the Open Space Corridor map and where the amendment would cover. There is a high degree of correlation between the RSR zoning and Open Space Corridor overlay.

### COMMISSION QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION

- This proposal identifies the goal, but the critical issue will be how to implement it.
- This proposal will not affect areas within the City of Gig Harbor
- Surface Water Management may have lidar data that can measure canopy coverage.
- Staff planned to recommend the Stewardship Plan definition of 'canopy', rather than full tree canopy.
- This will cost property owners more of their usable land
- It would be problematic to maintain 75% on individual properties because of tree and native vegetation retention
- RSR is not urban or very developable
- Open Space Corridors offer great public benefit and value for residents
- This won't prevent property owners from building what regulations already allow, but it raises consciousness of what they have to preserve
- This will offer benefits to waterways
- Could change language from 'tree' canopy to 'native vegetation' canopy
- Would like to see something other than Cedars and Firs in the canopy coverage

**Motion made (Peterson/Wingard) to recommend approval of the proposal as an aspirational nonregulatory goal and change 'tree canopy' to 'native vegetation canopy'.**

**Vote: Ballantyne – no, with comment. Too much stick and not enough carrot.  
Jackson – no, with comment. Application is lacking details on how to implement.  
Wingard – yes  
Peterson – yes  
Conway – yes  
Clement – yes**

**Motion carried 4-2.**

## OTHER BUSINESS

### Docks/Piers Proposals by Councilmember Young

#### Ordinance 1:

With the new Shoreline Master Plan, most cases will no longer go before the Pierce County Hearing Examiner or the Land Use Advisory Commissions (LUACs). This Ordinance would keep the LUACs in the loop, working with planners on reviews. This has gone through two preliminary hearings and will be at Final Council on Tuesday.

#### COMMISSION DISCUSSION

- Commissioners can attend the Council hearing and voice individual opinions
- Commission can also make a united recommendation, which may weigh more heavily with Council
- Planning Staff appears to not be supportive of this Ordinance
- Planning Staff has not been consistent with docks/piers approvals
- Property owners need education on how to mitigate
- The peninsula has a particular geography that's marked by its shoreline
- Commission does not want to lose the opportunity to see the effects that docks/piers have on public benefit
- LUAC meetings provide a venue for members of the community to have a voice, speak with each other, and share ideas.
- Tidelands – policies are not consistent, and regulations are the same whether you own them or not
- The new Shoreline Master Plan could save time and money for applications.
- The LUAC provides some good middle ground for applicants. Commission can work to come to a consensus on how to move forward with a proposal, as opposed to just denying it.
- There needs to be education of community members and industry professionals of what is acceptable for this community.
- Perhaps the applicant could request review by the LUAC if they want more input for Staff.

**Motion made (Peterson/Wingard) to provide a statement of support of the Ordinance to the County Council.  
Motion carried 3-2, with 1 abstention.**

#### Ordinance 2:

This Ordinance would put a 6-month moratorium on the approval of docks and piers in the Shoreline Conservancy area.

#### COMMISSION DISCUSSION

- Pieces of shoreline are Conservancy based on survey of geographical characteristics
- In most cases, Conservancy areas are not appropriate for piers and docks
- The new Shoreline Master Plan would allow them in these areas
- This will need to be reviewed and negotiated at the state level
- Moratorium should be a single 6-month timeframe. If a decision is not made in 6 months, remove the moratorium and move on.
- Some Shoreline Conservancy is privately owned. This Ordinance would be dictating to private land owners what they can do with their property.
- Docks/Piers were not previously allowed in these areas, so property owners aren't losing any rights.

**Motion made (Ballantyne/Conway) to support the Ordinance that places a 6-month moratorium on approving docks and piers in the Shoreline Conservancy area.**

**Vote: Ballantyne – yes**

**Peterson – yes**

**Wingard – yes**

**Conway – yes**

**Clement – yes**

**Jackson – yes, with comment that the moratorium not be renewed after the initial 6 months.**

***Motion passed unanimously.***

Chair Peterson will write a letter of support, distribute it, and may attend the hearing.

***Motion made (Wingard/Jackson) to table the remaining agenda items until the next regular meeting. Motion passed unanimously.***

**Move to adjourn.**

**Meeting adjourned at 9:24 PM.**