



**RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS OF THE  
WHATCOM COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION  
June 9, 2022**

Regular Meeting

1

1 **Call to Order**

2 Technical difficulties delayed the start of the meeting. The hybrid meeting was called to  
3 order by Whatcom County Planning Commission Chair, Kelvin Barton, at 6:41 p.m.

4 **Roll Call**

5 **Present:** Robert Bartel, Kelvin Barton, Atul Deshmane, Jim Hansen, Stephen Jackson,  
6 Julie Jefferson, Kimberley Lund, Dominic Mocerri, Scott Van Dalen

7 **Staff Present:** Cliff Strong, Mike Kershner, Steve Roberge, Becky Boxx, and Tammy  
8 Axlund

9 **Guest:** Steve Bennett, Public Health Advisory Board (PHAB)

10 **Department Update**

11 Steve Roberge, Assistant Director of Planning and Development Services (PDS),  
12 provided an update on Planning Commission items on the County Council agenda.  
13 These include code for battery energy storage systems, and interlocal agreements with  
14 five of our local cities. We are negotiating with the other two cities and may ask for a 6  
15 month extension of the existing agreements, so we can complete these negotiations.

16 **Open Session Public Comment**

17 **Timestamp: 04:30**

18 Alexander Harris and Michael Feerer provided public comment.

19 **Commissioner Comments**

20 Commissioner Mocerri stated that he spoke to Alex at RE Sources regarding the data  
21 tables presented for the meeting.

22 Commissioner Lund shared that she had email dialogue with Michael regarding his  
23 desire to seek more time so they could work with staff toward a solution that worked  
24 for all parties.

25 Commissioner Jackson congratulated Michael Feerer on becoming a granddad soon.

26 **Approval of Meeting Minutes**

27 **Timestamp: 13:21**

28 **Commissioner Bartel moved** to approve the meeting minutes from May 26, 2022.

29 **Commissioner Lund seconded.**

30 **Roll Call Vote: Ayes-Bartel, Barton, Deshmane, Jefferson, Lund, Mocerri, Van**  
31 **Dalen; Abstain-Jackson (Ayes-7; Nays-0; Abstain-1.)** Commissioner Hansen was  
32 unavailable due to internet issues during the vote. **The motion carried.**

33 **Public Health Advisory Board Opportunity for Connection and Participation**

34 **Timestamp: 15:26**

35 Steve Bennett, PHAB Chair, explained that the State has expanded the roles and  
36 responsibilities of the PHAB to encompass review of health policy and the impacts other  
37 policies might have on public health. He expressed the need to expand the PHAB, and a  
38 desire to include representation from other boards and committees. He presented the  
39 opportunity for the Planning Commission to have a representative join the PHAB as a  
40 voting member. Julie Jefferson expressed interest in becoming a PHAB member. Mr.  
41 Bennett will provide application materials to her.



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1 PHAB holds hybrid meetings, from 7-8:30 a.m. on the first or second Thursday of the  
2 month. These meetings are open to the public and any member of the Planning  
3 Commission is welcome to attend at any time. Mr. Bennett said PHAB is open to other  
4 opportunities to partner with the Planning Commission.

5 **Proposed Amendments to Planning Commission Business Rules**

6 **Timestamp: 22:28**

7 Tammy Axlund, Commission Secretary, provided background regarding the proposal to  
8 update the Business Rules to align with ESHB 1329. By removing the second bullet in  
9 rule 9 the public would be allowed comment on items still under deliberation. Ms.  
10 Axlund then responded to commissioners' questions.

11 **Commissioner Lund moved** to accept the amendment to remove the 2<sup>nd</sup> bullet from  
12 rule 9 of the Business Rules as presented by County staff.

13 **Commissioner Deshmane seconded.**

14 **Roll Call Vote: Ayes-Bartel, Barton, Deshmane, Hansen, Jackson, Jefferson,**  
15 **Lund, Mocerl, Van Dalen; (Ayes-9; Nays-0; Abstain -0). The motion carried.**

16 **Proposed Amendments to the Lake Whatcom Watershed Overlay District (WCC**  
17 **20.51), Water Resource Protection Overlay District (WCC 20.71), and the**  
18 **code-referenced stormwater manual throughout WCC Title 20 (Zoning).**

19 **Timestamp: 32:18**

20 Cliff Strong, PDS Senior Planner, noted that there are basically three policy decisions to  
21 be made: the amount of tree canopy that can be removed when not associated with  
22 development, the amount of tree canopy that can be removed when it is associated  
23 with development, and determining the penalty for removing significant trees without a  
24 permit. He discussed three ways to approach the issue of canopy retention and  
25 provided tables to show how the options differ.

26 Commissioners discussed the options, and staff and attendees responded to questions.

27 Commissioner Barton requested future agenda packets contain the changes without  
28 comments in the side bar, so the font is not so reduced.

29 Mr. Strong presented various ideas & examples from other entities regarding penalties  
30 for tree removal without a permit. He then requested clarification as to Commissioner  
31 preferences. Commissioners prefer using the approach of tree canopy to be retained.  
32 Staff will meet with Mr. Feerer and Mr. Harris to develop a recommendation and bring it  
33 back to the July 14<sup>th</sup> Planning Commission meeting. Regarding penalties, the  
34 Commission preferred a mix of the ideas presented.

35 **Adjournment**

36 The meeting was adjourned 8:08 p.m.

37 Minutes prepared by Tammy Axlund.

38 WHATCOM COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION ATTEST:

39 Handwritten signature of Kelvin Barton in blue ink.

40 Kelvin Barton, Chair

Handwritten signature of Tammy Axlund in blue ink.  
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Tammy Axlund, Secretary