

From: [dbobena@yahoo.com](mailto:dbobena@yahoo.com)  
To: [PDS\\_Planning\\_Commission](mailto:PDS_Planning_Commission@co.whatcom.wa.us); Council; [Barry Buchanan](mailto:Barry.Buchanan@co.whatcom.wa.us); [Todd Donovan](mailto:Todd.Donovan@co.whatcom.wa.us); [Gail Erley](mailto:Gail.Erley@co.whatcom.wa.us); [Bob Brown](mailto:Bob.Brown@co.whatcom.wa.us); [Kathy Kerchner](mailto:Kathy.Kerchner@co.whatcom.wa.us); [Talyn Burr](mailto:Talyn.Burr@co.whatcom.wa.us); [Ben Ellebaas](mailto:Ben.Ellebaas@co.whatcom.wa.us)  
Cc: [Ashley Ubil](mailto:Ashley.Ubil@co.whatcom.wa.us)  
Subject: Regarding my previous email today requesting a link to the 6/25/20 Planning Commission meeting be posted  
Date: Friday, July 03, 2020 at 4:00 PM

Dear Whatcom County Planning Commission and Whatcom County Council:

I had copied Planning Commissioners on an email (below my signature line) that I sent today to Ashley Ubil regarding the latest recording of the Planning Commission virtual meeting from June 25, 2020 not having been posted on the Planning Commission meetings materials page.

I just received the following automated response from Ms. Ubil's email account: "Hello, I will be out of the office from July 3rd - July 7th. I will be back in the office on July 8th. If you have a question that needs to be addressed immediately, please call our main line at (360) 778-5900. Thank you, Ashley Ubil Coordinator (360) 778-5935"

Rather than call that number she provided, I wanted to contact you all and have this be made part of the public record regarding the Cherry Point Amendments. I have been communicating with Ms. Ubil, and at times with Ms. Boxx, while copying Planning Commissioners and County Council Members on some of those emails, during the process of the Planning Commission's review of the Cherry Point code and Comprehensive Plan Amendments, about the need for prompt posting of meeting recordings and minutes. I feel it is your responsibility to facilitate Ms. Ubil in doing everything that can be done to maintain transparent and easily accessible records on the Whatcom County website during this review process.

I have sent four emails to Ms. Ubil, three of which Planning Commissioners have been copied on, and one of which County Council Members were copied on, requesting that Planning Commission meeting minutes be posted in a timely manner. In my September 26, 2019 email to Ms. Ubil, I had noted, among other things, there had been no Planning Commission minutes posted since January 2019. On September 27, 2019 I wrote to Ms. Ubil, copied Planning Commissioners and County Council Members expressing gratitude that at least minutes through April 2019, had been posted, but pointing out the importance to the public of posting minutes in a timely fashion. Subsequently, one set of meeting minutes for the Planning Commission's September 12, 2019 meeting were posted.

**Since that date, no minutes are showing as posted on the Planning Commission's Meeting Materials page, as of today. Eight meetings have occurred since that time.**

Meanwhile, on the morning of November 21, 2019, I had again written to Ms. Ubil, copying the Planning Commissioners, remarking on the delay of posting audio for the meetings (Thursday meetings were being posted on Tuesdays the following week. That week I wrote, however, no meeting had been posted by the morning of the following Thursday). I received a reply from Ms. Ubil that day saying she had been ill and would post the audio that day. I replied that same day, and copied Planning Commissioners, saying I was sorry she had been ill and thanked her for posting the audio, also saying, "I look forward to the Planning Commissioners approving minutes from past months so that they can also be posted."

Now here it is July of 2020. It appears that the Planning Commission has met four times since my November 21, 2020 emails. No minutes have been posted since September 12, 2019 and there are no minutes showing, except for that date, going back to May 2019, which is the earliest date available now on the Planning Commission Meeting Materials webpage. Audio for all meetings through February 27, 2020 have been posted, however, there is no audio/video posted, nor minutes posted, for the virtual meeting held a week ago, last Thursday, on June 25, 2020.

It appears, because luckily there is some minimal information included in the June 30, 2019 [Cherry Point Amendments Memo](#) posted on the Planning Commission Meeting Materials page related to the June 25, 2020 meeting, that the Planning Commission is very close to holding a public hearing on the Cherry Point Amendments. How is the public supposed to be ready to speak to the review process and amendments, without officials and staff providing them all the basic resources to do so? This question goes to both Planning Commissioners and County Council Members.

I call on you all to do what it takes to immediately get the June 25, 2020 meeting recording and, at least, all draft minutes for Planning Commission meetings posted on the Planning Commission's meeting materials page. Especially with the history I have just recounted, it is not adequate to post those the day before your July 9, 2020 meeting, when Ms. Ubil returns to work.

Thank you for other more helpful efforts you have made during the review process. Copies of the emails I referenced are below my signature line.

Sincerely,  
Dena Jensen  
Birch Bay, WA

[dbobena@yahoo.com](mailto:dbobena@yahoo.com)

Since that t

From: [dbobena@yahoo.com](mailto:dbobena@yahoo.com) <[dbobena@yahoo.com](mailto:dbobena@yahoo.com)>  
To: [ashub@whatcomcounty.us](mailto:ashub@whatcomcounty.us); [council@whatcomcounty.us](mailto:council@whatcomcounty.us);  
Cc: [PDS\\_Planning\\_Commission@co.whatcom.wa.us](mailto:PDS_Planning_Commission@co.whatcom.wa.us); [pds\\_planning\\_commission@co.whatcom.wa.us](mailto:pds_planning_commission@co.whatcom.wa.us);  
Sent: Friday, July 3, 2020, 03:55:11 PM PDT  
Subject: Requesting a link to the 6/25/20 Planning Commission meeting be posted

Dear Ms. Ubil:

I checked the Planning Commission Meeting Materials page today on the Whatcom County website and it appears that a link to a recording of the June 25, 2020 Planning Commission meeting from last Thursday has not yet been posted. I am hoping it can be posted as soon as possible so people have time to review it before the next Planning Commission meeting on July 9, 2020.

Also, there are no Planning Commission meeting minutes posted at all since the September 12, 2019 meeting. The main reason I am copying the Planning Commission on this email is so that Commissioners can be alert to the need to approve those minutes, or to authorize the posting of draft minutes, so that those can get posted more promptly on a consistent basis for members of the public to view.

Thank you for your efforts and I wish you well for your weekend.

Sincerely,  
Dena Jensen  
Birch Bay, WA

[dbobena@yahoo.com](mailto:dbobena@yahoo.com)

From: [dbobena@yahoo.com](mailto:dbobena@yahoo.com) <[dbobena@yahoo.com](mailto:dbobena@yahoo.com)>  
Sent: Thursday, September 26, 2019 5:19:35 PM  
To: Ashley Ubil <[AUbil@co.whatcom.wa.us](mailto:AUbil@co.whatcom.wa.us)>; Becky Boxx <[RBoxx@co.whatcom.wa.us](mailto:RBoxx@co.whatcom.wa.us)>  
Subject: Regarding posting information related to the Cherry Point Comprehensive Plan and Code amendments

Dear Ms. Ubil and Ms. Boxx:

If I have not directed this email to the correct persons, I hope you might forward it to those who can address the issues that I am describing. Thank you.

The Whatcom County Planning Commission is currently holding meetings and work sessions to review the Cherry Point Comprehensive Plan and code amendments. This is a subject of keen public interest, for which it will be important for community members to have relevant information posted promptly.

I could not find a place on the Whatcom County website where minutes for the Whatcom County Planning Commission have been posted since January of this year. Here is the page I was able to find where I thought such minutes would be posted: <https://whatcomcounty.us/1640/Planning-Commission-Meeting-Materials-https://www3.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwhatcomcounty.us%2F1660%2FPlanning-Commission-Meeting-Materials&data=02%3D%3D%3DCAUbil%40co.whatcom.wa.us%7C82cb7fa601d4882e8fc084742e06da%7C2122b8ce9a1d4565931bd0534ef12e43%7C0%7C0%7C637051403956576650&sdm=2BWC-AMXVegV6TJNQWHSXEHy9pHtZ%2Bndf4RHlcmqKVN0%3D&reserved=0>. I hope that past minutes could get approved by the Planning Commission, or that it would be permitted for draft minutes to be posted that would bring minutes for past meetings up to date.

Additionally, I noted that the Cherry Point Amendments page: <https://www.whatcomcounty.gov/2849/Cherry-Point-Amendments-https://www3.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.whatcomcounty.gov/2849/Cherry-Point-Amendments&data=02%3D%3D%3DCAUbil%40co.whatcom.wa.us%7C82cb7fa601d4882e8fc084742e06da%7C2122b8ce9a1d4565931bd0534ef12e43%7C0%7C0%7C637051403956576650&sdm=2BWC-AMXVegV6TJNQWHSXEHy9pHtZ%2Bndf4RHlcmqKVN0%3D&reserved=0>, which displays links to public comments that community members have sent in regarding the amendments, only had comments listed through September 12, 2019 earlier today. I notice those have now been updated this afternoon to include additional comments since that time. I hope that posting these comments can be prioritized to a degree that members of the public can view those comments as soon after they are received as possible. It's valuable for community members to have, at least, a day or two, if not more, before the next meeting to review the comments on that topic.

Thank you both for the efforts you make to facilitate a robust public process.

Sincerely,  
Dena Jensen  
Birch Bay, WA

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From: [dbobena@yahoo.com](mailto:dbobena@yahoo.com) <[dbobena@yahoo.com](mailto:dbobena@yahoo.com)>  
To: Ashley Ubil <[AUbil@co.whatcom.wa.us](mailto:AUbil@co.whatcom.wa.us)>  
Cc: [pds\\_planning\\_commission@whatcomcounty.us](mailto:pds_planning_commission@whatcomcounty.us); [council@whatcomcounty.us](mailto:council@whatcomcounty.us);  
Sent: Friday, September 27, 2019, 12:07:23 PM PDT  
Subject: Re: Regarding posting information related to the Cherry Point Comprehensive Plan and Code amendments

Dear Ms. Ubil:

Thank you for your email response and for updating me on the status of the meeting minutes for the Planning Commission. It's good to see minutes have at least been posted up through April now. Your attention to the matters I raised and your prompt follow-up are very much appreciated.

Thank you for pointing me to the audio of the meetings. It is, in fact, very helpful to have the audio recordings. However, there is a challenge because I notice that, at least during the 2019 Planning Commission meetings I have listened to, the people speaking are rarely identified, especially when Commissioners are speaking, and even staff members are often just referred to by first name. In cases where meetings are video recorded, that can at least help to mitigate this informality so that members of the public might be able to recognize who is speaking.

I really recommend the Planning Commission adopt the practice of recognizing speakers by name, especially if they are only performing audio recordings of their meetings, and if timely posting of minutes is not temporarily practicable during some periods of time. To me this would be good practice always, however, it's especially important under conditions where there are issues of keen public interest and a transparent and accessible public process is vital.

Additionally, minutes are really helpful when looking for specific topics within an audio, so that people know during what section of a meeting a certain issue was discussed.

Regarding the posting of public comments on the Cherry Point Amendments page on the County website, I understand it can be really challenging to take on the heavy workload that can occur when more documents are coming in that need to be processed. I do hope that assistance can be made available to you for the purpose of handling that workload regarding the amount of written public comments coming. Those documents can provide vital information to people seeking to engage further in the public process, in this case, the process surrounding the Cherry Point Comprehensive Plan and code amendments.

Again, thank you for your responsiveness and the effort you are making to provide the community vital information that will allow a robust public process.

Sincerely,

Dena

[dbobena@yahoo.com](mailto:dbobena@yahoo.com)

**From:** dbobena@yahoo.com [mailto:dbobena@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 21, 2019 8:39 AM  
**To:** Ashley Ubil  
**Cc:** PDS, Planning Commission  
**Subject:** Audio and minutes for Planning Commission meetings

Dear Ms. Ubil:

I hope you week has been going well. I have been watching for the audio for the November 14, 2019 Whatcom County Planning Commission meeting to become available on the Planning Commission Meeting Materials page and still do not find it posted this morning. I am hoping that it might be able to be posted today.

It seems in the past, that audio would be posted at least by Tuesday of the next week following the Planning Commission meeting, which is already a time span that is longer than those in which the other civic meeting recordings (that I happen to access) are made available. I am sure each department has their unique challenges and I am sympathetic to those, however, from the perspective of a community member trying to stay engaged in the public process, the delay in getting audio posted, and additionally, as I had referenced in a past email, the absence of meeting minutes for months-worth of Planning Commission meetings seems counter-productive to any kind of robust public process. I am copying the Planning Commissioners in case there is a way they can help provide needed support to make meeting minutes available to the public promptly.

As always, I appreciate your efforts.

Sincerely,  
Dena Jensen  
Birch Bay, WA

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**From:** dbobena@yahoo.com <dbobena@yahoo.com>  
**To:** Ashley Ubil <AUbil@co.whatcom.wa.us>  
**Cc:** pds\_planning\_commission@whatcomcounty.us <pds\_planning\_commission@whatcomcounty.us>  
**Sent:** Thursday, November 21, 2019, 12:26:58 PM PST  
**Subject:** Re: Audio and minutes for Planning Commission meetings

Dear Ms. Ubil:

I am sorry to hear that you were sick this week! I hope you are feeling much better.

Thank you for addressing the posting of the audio for the November 14, 2019 Planning Commission meeting. I have been able to access the link you posted to download the audio of the meeting.

I look forward to the Planning Commissioners approving minutes from past months so that they can also be posted.

Thank you again.

Sincerely,  
Dena Jensen  
Birch Bay, WA

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