

## PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Community Center  
1808 Main Street, Lake Stevens  
Wednesday, March 5, 2014

CALL TO ORDER: 7: 00 pm by Chair Petershagen

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Gary Petershagen, Vice-Chair Janice Huxford, Linda Hoult, Pam Barnet, and Jennifer Davis

MEMBERS ABSENT: Sammie Thurber, Tom Matlack

STAFF PRESENT: Planning Director Rebecca Ableman, Senior Planner Russ Wright and Planning/Public Works Coordinator Georgine Rosson

OTHERS PRESENT: None

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**Excused Absence:** Commissioner Hoult made a motion to excuse Commissioners Thurber and Matlack, Vice-Chair Huxford second, motion passed 5-0-0-2.

**Guest Business:** None

### **Action Items:**

*Approval of Minutes from February 5, 2014:* Commissioner Hoult made a motion to approve minutes, Commissioner Barnet second, motion passed 5-0-0-2.

### **Discussion Items:**

*Staff Presentation: Draft 2015 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update – Scope of Work, Public Participation Plan & Preliminary Schedule – Planning & Community Development*  
*Director Ableman and Senior Planner Wright*

The Scope of Work and Public Participation documents along with schedules will be discussed at the joint meeting with City Council. The purpose of these documents is to define what the city is going to do, and how the city plans to engage the public during its comprehensive plan update. Staff is completing the self-audit: the PRSC review is underway and the Department of Commerce portion is complete. These processes will define the city's scope. Staff is reviewing each element of the comprehensive plan, and looking at the optional elements. The main elements are defined under section 2.1 "Growth Management Act Planning Goals." The Public Participation Plan will include press releases, social media, posting sources, reaching out to partners, and a survey going out on survey monkey. Senior Planner Wright presented a draft of the survey. The Plan will also include a series of open houses with the first one being an introduction to the update, the final open house will be a culmination of the completed work. Internal work groups will be formed to process amendments, environmental review is pending until the scope of work is established. Social media outlets will be emphasized, along with coverage on the local cable channel. The Planning Commissioners had suggestions on how to increase public participation, including emphasizing the project at Aquafest outside of the city's booth, since not everyone attends the street fair; reaching out to the various clubs that participate in Aquafest activities and asking if they can

promote the update on their website or on other forms of Aquafest advertising. Other suggestions included reaching out to the schools and PTA, an article in The Journal emphasizing the importance of the update written in nontechnical terms with an interesting title, and reaching out to a private website, the "Lake Stevens News Hotspot" where several members of the community are members.

*Vision Statement – Planning Director Ableman, Senior Planner Wright:*

Senior Planner Wright started the presentation by reading the current vision statement. The current statement looks at both the past and future with an emphasis on working and living close to home. The statement also recognizes the role of regional and statewide planning as the city moves forward. Planner Wright asked the question: "Is this statement still relevant for the city today?" The commissioners had several comments; they felt the statement says the city is growing, but not enough emphasis on employment growth along with population. When the current statement was created, the city was trying to keep the "small town" atmosphere in the midst of a growing population. The "small town atmosphere" tag is not original and the commissioners would like to see something unique that defines the strong points of the city. A typical land use pattern of higher density towards the center of town with lower densities towards the outskirts is not realistic for Lake Stevens due to the higher density zonings in the UGA's. It might be worthwhile to look at the vision statements for the subareas, and try to incorporate portions of these into the new city vision. The new vision statement needs to include past successes and accomplishments of the city and a view towards the future where growth is not looked upon as being detrimental, but beneficial to the city and its residents. The direction Council is going for a vision statement is a "sustainable community around the lake with a vibrant economy, unsurpassed infrastructure and exceptional quality of life."

Commissioner Hoult asked if the city has an economic development department or staff person dedicated to promoting the city. Director Ableman responded that right now the economic development staff consists of herself and City Administrator Berg. Commissioner Hoult also asked about a citizen advisory group, Director Ableman responded that staff is considering such a group, but at this point the city does not have staff available to oversee this group, the Council does have an economic development sub-committee.

**Commissioner Reports:** None.

**Staff Reports:**

Director Ableman mentioned a market analysis that has just been completed for the city, staff has met with the city's economic development consultant and is in the process of reviewing the analysis, the report has not been released yet. More information will be forthcoming at the next Planning Commission meeting. The other current item staff is working on is exploring a branding effort with an emphasis on establishing a city identity, this process is just beginning and staff is still in the process of getting approval from council. The branding process identifies who you are, the wayfinding process carries out that identity in the form of signage, banners, etc., the market analysis will be a great help in the branding effort. Director Ableman reported the city is working with department of Fish and Wildlife on a joint grant application, still in the preliminary stages, to replace the boat launch. Since the grant is with another state agency, the city will not have to come up with a match.

Senior Planner Wright gave an update on the final marijuana regulations. Retail outlets are limited to 1,000 square feet; producers will be restricted to Tier 2 production, no restrictions on processors. The minimum separation clause was removed, however there is a maximum square footage cap of 100,000 square feet combined for the whole city. Since the lifting of the moratorium, the city has received two business license applications for marijuana operations. Vice-Chair Huxford asked if the city has joined with other jurisdictions in petitioning the state legislature for more revenue from marijuana related activities, Director Ableman responded the city is part of AWC (Association of Washington Cities) which has a group petitioning the legislature.

Commissioner Davis asked about the Senior Planner position and if the city has made any progress. Director Ableman responded the city conducted interviews, but was not able to fill the position. The city plans to recruit again.

**Future Agenda Items:**

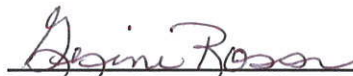
*Joint Meeting with City Council, March 24, 2014:* The Planning Commissioners will discuss the Scope of Work, Public Participation Plan & Preliminary Schedule with Council. Director Ableman stated the purpose of the meeting is for the commissioners to have dialog with Council, since the Planning Commission is an advisory group to Council. There was lengthy discussion on what will be discussed, if the commissioners should introduce themselves, and if they should do the presentation, or let staff do the presentation. The commissioners want to ensure a meaningful discussion occurs. Commission members suggested the room layout be around a "round table" rather than the typical Council setup to facilitate more dialogue.

**Adjourn.** Vice-Chair Huxford made a motion to adjourn at 8:20 p.m., Commissioner Davis; second, motion passed. 5-0-0-2.



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Gary Petershagen, Chair



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Georgine Rosson, Planning/Public Works Coordinator

