



Planning Commission Meeting Minutes

A meeting of the Okanogan County Regional Planning Commission was held on Monday, September 26, 2011 at 7:00 pm. The meeting was held in the Commissioners' Hearing Room 123 5th Ave N. Okanogan, WA.

PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBERS present included: Chair Albert Roberts, Vice Chair Becki Andrist, Commission Member Mark Miller, Commission Member Phil Dart, Commission Member Tina Wood, Commission Member Tamara Porter, and Commission Member Schulz.

OKANOGAN COUNTY STAFF MEMBERS present included: Natural Resource Senior Planner II Angela Hubbard, and Administrative Secretary Sharon McKenzie.

APPLICANTS OR THEIR REPRESENTATIVES: Mike Schlueter

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE: Russ Baker

Chair Roberts called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm.

Approval of September 26, 2011 Agenda

Commission Member Schulz moved to approve the September 26, 2011 Planning Commission Meeting Agenda. Vice Chair Andrist seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Approval of August 22, 2011 Meeting Minutes

Vice Chair Andrist moved to approve the August 22, 2011 Planning Commission Meeting Minutes. Commission Member Dart seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Public Hearing Item #1

- **Schmitt OST 2011-5**

Chair Roberts requested the summary report on the **Schmitt OST 2011-5**. Natural Resource Planner II Angela Hubbard requested the Staff Report be placed into the record. Natural Resource Planner II Hubbard explained the applicant is applying for a transfer from Designated Forest to Open Space Timber on 19.02 timberland acres. She said Clay Brown, Professional Forester, prepared a Forest Management Plan for the property in July of 2011. She said the Proponent is not here to answer questions.

Chair Roberts asked if there were any other questions from the Board.

Commission Member Schulz recommended thinning in 3 years as a condition.

Chair Roberts opened the meeting to public testimony. There being no public testimony, he closed the meeting to public testimony.

Chair Roberts said he would entertain a motion.

Vice Chair Andrist moved to recommend approval of the **Schmitt OST 2011-5** to the Board of County Commissioners subject to the attached Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law and the Conditions of Approval to include the addition of “pre-commercial thinning shall start within three years with tree spacing at 16 – 19 feet with a 6 inch DBH” to Condition # 2. Commission Member Schulz seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Public Hearing Item #2

- **Schlueter/Green OST 2011-2**

Chair Roberts requested the summary report on the **Schlueter/Green OST 2011-2**. Natural Resource Planner II Angela Hubbard requested the Staff Report be placed into the record. Natural Resource Planner II Hubbard explained the applicants are applying for a transfer from Designated Forest to Open Space Timber on 19 timberland acres. She said the Forest Management Plan has been done by Robert Anderson, Professional Forester. She said Michael Schlueter is in attendance to answer any questions.

Chair Roberts called the Proponent forward to speak to the issue.

Michael Schlueter, residing in Moses lake, came forward to answer questions.

Addressing Commission Member Schulz’s question regarding not including thinning information in the Staff Report, she said these plans are existing plans that are being transferred. Commission Member Dart questioned the thinning requirement as he said it may not be appropriate in all cases to include this in all plans.

Mr. Schlueter explained the thinning on the subject property has started. He explained each picture in the Staff Report explaining where the thinning had been done, some harvesting had been done and the areas of the concern noted by the forester, Robert Anderson. He noted two acres were thinned two to three years ago. He noted the property adjacent to the subject property had recently been clear cut. He also noted an area of approximately two acres had been clear cut on the subject property for the view purposes. Mr. Schlueter discussed the aerial photo of the subject property with the Commission Members explaining the area of concern noted by the Mr. Anderson, forester. He said the property has about 99% Douglas fir. His said the plan is to use the timber as an investment for the future and that means he and the co-owners need to maintain good forest health.

Chair Roberts opened the meeting to public testimony. There being no public testimony, he closed the meeting to public testimony.

Chair Roberts said he would entertain a motion.

Commission Member Schulz moved to recommend approval of the **Schlueter/Green OST 2011-2** to the Board of County Commissioners subject to the attached Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law and the Conditions of Approval to include the addition of “pre-commercial thinning shall start within three years with tree spacing at 16 – 19 feet with a 6 inch DBH” to Condition # 2. Commission Member Dart seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Public Hearing Item #3

- **Deliberations on the Okanogan County Critical Area Ordinance – Continuation**

Natural Resource Planner II Angela Hubbard began the discussion by reviewing the changes which had been requested at the last Planning Commission meeting. The first discussion addressed the changes to the Riparian Buffers. She reviewed the changes requested regarding the riparian buffer widths which included deleting items six and seven from the previous proposal and alternative language for item #5.

Commission Dart suggested not using “shall” and change “shall” to “may”. It was agreed to change the wording in item #5.

Planner II Hubbard discussed the changes requested in the Administrative Reduction of Standard Riparian Buffer Area Width. She said she took out the maximum buffer. She said the Habitat Management Plan requirement has been added. Planner II Hubbard discussed the Riparian Buffer Width Averaging and said she took out the minimum width and added the buffer width averaging is contingent upon the submittal and approval of a Habitat Management Plan.

The Commission Members asked who would do the Habitat Management Plan and how the plan is to be done. Planner II Hubbard said Staff could find the information for a Habitat Management Plan but questioned whether Staff would be qualified to create a Plan. She noted it is up to the Planning Commission Members to decide who would be designated to prepare a Plan. She noted there are various organizations which can assist the land owner in developing a Plan. She stated Staff can delineate the habitat. The Commission Members said they wanted to keep the process simple but noted if the landowner chose to go through the Habitat Management Plan process, the landowner would bring in a professional.

In the revised section of the administrative determination, it was noted the appeal of the decision being heard by the Planning Commission needed to be corrected since the Planning Commission only makes recommendations. It was noted there needs to be clarification on whether or not there is legal standing for the Planning Commission to hear an appeal.

Vice Chair Andrist made the motion to continue deliberations on the Critical Areas Ordinance which will not be open to public comment at the next regularly scheduled meeting on October 24, 2011 at 7:00 pm in the Commissioners Hearing Room. Planning Commission Member Dart seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Old Business

There was no old business.

New Business

Commission Schulz expressed concern that some of the documents included in the packets for Open Space Timber were not acknowledged during the motions. Planner II Hubbard explained those documents include in the packets were not signed and approved until the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) approved the project. The BOCC then signs the documents and then the documents are recorded. To reference them in the preliminary approval would be premature.

Vice Chair Andrist moved to adjourn the meeting. Commission Member Dart seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Chair Roberts adjourned the meeting at 8:01 p.m.

Summary of Motions

Commission Member Schulz moved to approve the September 26, 2011 Planning Commission Meeting Agenda. Vice Chair Andrist seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Vice Chair Andrist moved to approve the August 22, 2011 Planning Commission Meeting Minutes. Commission Member Dart seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Vice Chair Andrist moved to recommend approval of the Schmitt OST 2011-5 to the Board of County Commissioners subject to the attached Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law and the Conditions of Approval to include the addition of “pre-commercial thinning shall start within three years with tree spacing at 16 – 19 feet with a 6 inch DBH” to Condition # 2. Commission Member Schulz seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Commission Member Schulz moved to recommend approval of the Schlueter/Green OST 2011-2 to the Board of County Commissioners subject to the attached Findings of Fact, Conclusions of Law and the Conditions of Approval to include the addition of “pre-commercial thinning shall start within three years with tree spacing at 16 – 19 feet with a 6 inch DBH” to Condition # 2. Commission Member Dart seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Vice Chair Andrist made the motion to continue deliberations on the Critical Areas Ordinance which will not be open to public comment at the next regularly scheduled meeting on October 24, 2011 at 7:00 pm in the Commissioners Hearing Room. Planning Commission Member Dart seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Prepared by Sharon McKenzie
Administrative Secretary