

**KITTITAS COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION
SPECIAL MEETING
Tuesday, August 15, 2006 @ 6:30 P.M.**

COMMISSIONER'S AUDITORIUM
205 W. Fifth Street, Ellensburg

Those present: Chairman David Black, Doug Harris, Well Bartsma, Grant Clark, and Don Williamson.

Also present: Community Development Services Director Darryl Piercy, Community Development Services Assistant Director Allison Kimball, Staff Planners Scott Turnbull and Patrick Butler, Planning Commission Clerk Susan Barret and approximately 20 individuals representing public interest.

I. Call to order and introduction of members and staff.

Having a quorum present the Chair called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Darryl Piercy introduced the proceedings briefly outlining the goals for the public hearing.

II. Proposed Text Changes to Chapter 16.09 of the Kittitas County Code

The Chair opened the hearing to Staff Presentation. Community Development Services Director **Darryl Piercy** read into the record portions of his staff report and KCC Chapter 16.09 Performance Based Cluster Platting and briefly reviewed the proposed changes giving an explanation for the changes. Attached hereto and incorporated herein is a full copy of that Staff Report and KCC Chapter 16.09 proposed revisions.

The Chair opened the hearing to Public testimony.

Paula Thompson, PO Box 23, Thorp, representing Kittitas County Conservation Coalition, read into the record and submitted suggested revisions to the code as **Exhibit A**, and stated that the currently proposed changes do not go far enough to protect the public.

Roger Olson, 2130 Nelson Siding Road, Cle Elum, representing himself, submitted into the permanent record **Exhibit B-1**, a letter dated July 21, 2006 and **Exhibit B-2**, a letter dated July 16, 2006 then spoke to minimum zoning in rural areas by reading and submitting into the record **Exhibit B-3**.

Mark Wald, Seattle, expressed his concern and displeasure over the recently imposed Cluster Moratorium by reading his testimony, submitted as **Exhibit C**.

Chad Bala, representing TerraDesign Group, spoke in support of the changes in the document.

Mike Caulkins, 23729 230th Place, Maple Valley, stated that he was very impressed with the Cluster Subdivision plan calling it “common sense and true growth management.” He said that the code allows the developer, within guidelines, to create open spaces for the public. He asked the commission to accept the proposal.

Pat Deneen, 1890 Nelson Siding Road, spoke to the history of the process and supporters that created this code. He stated that the smaller plats are a problem; the cost and liability of doing cluster subdivisions is high; he supports the proposed changes and suggested that this issue be revisited in a year. Deneen also expressed his opinion that the process needs to slow down and give important decisions more time to ruminant.

Dave Nelson, representing himself, spoke of his own experiences and the poor planning that has occurred in the past. He felt the idea of the cluster platting will work and would like to revisit the issue later to reevaluate.

David Gleeson, PO Box 1321, Maple Valley, saw this as an opportunity to have smaller, more affordable home sites backed up to open spaces; open spaces tangent on two sides; and an opportunity to create easements providing wildlife corridors and connectivity. He supported the proposal.

Bartsma questioned the noxious weed issue and the maintenance of the open spaces.

Deneen responded to this by stating in his current project the Home Owners Association and Covenants include requirements for the maintenance and funding of maintenance.

Piercy said that several options exist that address this issue, examples included Home Owners Associations, land conservancy organizations; public ownerships and that this issue must be addressed for final approval.

Gleeson questioned the taxation of open space.

Piercy responded with some options, but acknowledged that it would depend upon several factors including the developer and home owners, etc.

Mark Kirkpatrick, 108 E. 2nd, Cle Elum, feels that the changes are extreme due to the substantial up front costs to the developer. He agreed that the open space on two sides would be a benefit and that additional bonus density would encourage this. He also wished to emphasis the importance of the pre-application meeting and that he would like to see this issue revisited after a year.

Charles Weidenbach, 3300 Naneum Road, Ellensburg, was not convinced that this is a good plan for the lower county or for the farming community. He felt there were lot of good things in this document but that the negative public affects need to be addressed: increased traffic; people that do not understand how to protect nature; and the negative impact on good farm land.

Wayne Nelson, spoke in support of the document, additions of the minimum two sides of open space, and the mandatory pre-application meeting.

Tom Whitaker, Kittitas County, stated his biggest concern is the noise and controlling motorized access on these open spaces.

Piercy stated that this issue is addressed through individual projects and can be more tightly restricted through CC&R's, and imposed conditions.

John Jensen, PO Box 602, Easton, stated he truly values his open space, doesn't want to see cluster development and high density. He stressed the diversity of the county and that one policy can not work for this county.

The Chair opened the hearing to Planning Commission deliberation and motion

Black began the deliberations by reviewing the document and the proposed changes one at a time.

Page 1 was accepted as presented.

Page 2 was accepted as presented.

Page 4 – Open Space – Perpetuity.

Williamson suggested the rural points possible be dropped in half. **Piercy** stated that the high points were for incentive purposes. Discussion ensued over whether or not this would be enough incentive points to gain open space for perpetuity. It was suggested to drop the points to 20-40 with review in a year.

Page 4 - Open Space - 25 years.

Black questioned **Piercy** on the specific intent of this aspect. **Piercy** explained that this is a development tool for the future use. **Williamson** suggested that this is viable in urban areas and not rural and the points value should reflect this by reducing the rural points from 20 to 0.

Page 5 & 6 – Recreation

Passive, Active and Formal the Commission agrees with amendments.

Williamson recommended text be added to page 1 under criteria clarifying critical area lands.

“Designated critical areas can not be included in the calculation of land set aside for open space”

Williamson voiced concern over the ease of reaching the 100 points needed to achieve the density bonus and suggested changing the percentages in half. **Piercy** responded that the proposed changes have made it more difficult to reach 100 points and that lowering the density bonus would remove the incentive and make this a less viable development option.

Bartsma stated that he does not want cluster subdivisions on agricultural lands at all.

Piercy clarified that current code does not permit this type of development in commercial agricultural or forest lands.

Williamson voiced concerns with water and septic requirements being overlooked. **Piercy** addressed these issues as being situation specific and requirements need to be project specific. Further discussion ensued.

Williamson brought up the vague nature of residual parcels and if the intent of the code is have further subdivision within the created cluster subdivision.

Piercy stated that it is allowed under certain circumstances and language clarifying this would be appropriate. It was decided to use the KCC language and insert it into this document in the appropriate place.

Black brought up the need for a definition of “Affordable Housing”.

The Planning Commission wished to include two elements which came from the public testimony and requested that Darryl Piercy come up with appropriate language to incorporate these items.

- 1) The idea of having two property boundaries be part of the open space boundary.
- 2) Including a mandatory pre-application meeting. There would be a fee associated with this meeting that would be credited back towards the application fees.

Piercy brought up the sub area planning process which includes special designations for various communities taking into account the uniqueness of certain areas but this is a discussion comprehensive plan updates and discussion.

David Black made a motion to pass KCC Chapter 16.09 Performance Based Cluster Platting forward to the Board of County Commissioners forward with a recommendation of approval as revised and additions. Doug Harris seconded and the motion passed with a 4/2 poll of the Commission. Black, Harris, Williamson and Clark voted for; Perna and Bartsma voted against.

The Planning Commission Special meeting was adjourned at 8:49 p.m.

Susan Barret, Planning Commission Clerk