

**WHITMAN COUNTY  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
REGULAR MEETING  
OCTOBER 2, 2019  
MINUTES**

**MEMBERS:**

Chad Whetzel – Chair	Guy Williams – Member
Keith Paulson – Member	Brian Davies – Member
David Gibney – Member	Bob Hill – Member
Russell Jamison - Member	

**STAFF:**

Alan Thomson – County Planner  
Katrin Kunz – Assistant County Planner  
Mark Storey – Public Works Director/County Engineer  
Elinor Huber – Clerk

**7:05 p.m.** – Chad Whetzel opened the meeting with introductions of members, staff and audience.

Motion by Guy Williams and seconded by Bob Hill to approve the minutes from September 4, 2019, as published.

**7:07 p.m. – Motion carried.**

**REPORTS:**

- a. Board of Adjustment: Boyer Park marina dock replacement and rehabilitation set for October 10, 2019.

Alan Thomson – We've got a conditional use application coming up on October 10<sup>th</sup> for Boyer Park. We've talked about this one already. They're doing some renovations to the dock there. They are replacing a lot of the dock there and some on the land adjustments too. So that will take place on October 10<sup>th</sup>, which is next week.

- b. Forthcoming Administrative Use Permits: Weis Towers proposes a new cell tower on Bald Butte. Issuance of permit is still pending. No action will be taken on this application tonight. AT&T proposes a new cell tower on Kamiak Butte.

Alan Thomson – Weis Towers. We went on a little tour this morning of Bald Butte. Mark Storey, Katrin and I and David Hall and a couple/three botanists. And we did a second review of the area. So we had another local botanist and I asked for a second opinion to the report that came in from Weis Towers. And Rich Old is the local botanist and we went up there and we had a botanist from Fish and Wildlife as well with us. And we had a little talk up there about this with Vince Bartells, who is the botanist from Weis Towers,

he's the author of the report. There is Palouse Prairie there. There is very good Palouse Prairie where they want to build this tower. So, what we concluded was, Rich Old and the Fish and Wildlife botanists are going to give us a report and tell us what their findings are. It looks extremely like that is not going to work in that location. We looked around that area to see if there was another, maybe more appropriate location for a new tower, because there is an existing tower there and we were standing right there where that existing tower is and right in front of that tower is an area that has been impacted and is no long Palouse Prairie, it is all weeds. So, that is a possibility and is something that maybe we'll look into. But, we're waiting on the report from the Fish and Wildlife botanist and Rich Old and then we'll go from there. But, the preliminary judgement right now, I don't know that that location is going to work for them because there is really good Palouse Prairie there. And they plan on scraping the whole 10,000 square feet to put the new tower in there, so that would basically destroy the Prairie that is up there.

Guy Williams – What type of tower are they wanting to put up there? I mean construction wise.

Alan Thomson – Well, it's a pretty substantial tower, by the sound of it. I haven't seen any engineered details on that yet, but 10,000 square feet, 100' x 100' approximately. That is a big area, so it's going to be a big tower. And there is already a substantial tower up there, that tower that is there is a pretty substantial tower. And it has some space on it, so one of the questions we're going to ask is, can you co-locate on there? And look for alternatives. So, that is ongoing, so now there is some movement on the Bald Butte site.

Guy Williams – How was the discussion between the botanists going?

Alan Thomson – It was very interesting, even for non-technical persons, like us. It was pretty interesting.

Guy Williams – Colorful?

Alan Thomson – Yes, it didn't get too heated. There was a definite discussion going on and a definite difference of opinion.

Guy Williams – Apparently.

Alan Thomson – But, Rich Old and the Fish and Wildlife botanist were pretty much on the same page and the Weis Towers botanist was in disagreement with their analysis of the area. And we have a third botanist, James Riser, who did the initial report on that area. He's made a comment on the report from Weis Towers and so we've got three against one, right now. So a decision is going to have to get made. We're waiting for the report to come in and then there is going to be a rebuttal from the Weis Towers people probably and then we'll see what happens.

Keith Paulson – Well, isn't it pretty much cut and dried that there is either Palouse Prairie there or there isn't.

Alan Thomson – There is Palouse Prairie there and it is in very good condition. There is no such thing as 100% good condition Palouse Prairie, it doesn't exist. There are invasive species that are always there and that is understood and typical. But, then there is a scale of gradation, you know, it can go from as much as 80% good prairie down to not very good at all. Part of this location was in the 80% range, which according to, and I'll paraphrase Rich Old, it doesn't get any better than this. That said a lot right there.

Brian Davies – Wasn't Weis Towers at all embarrassed on behalf of their botanist trying to muscle us a little bit?

Alan Thomson – We don't know that yet, we haven't had a response from Weis Towers. That will probably happen soon.

Brian Davies – Well it sounds like we have a couple really good alternatives to talk to them about, co-location and that other spot.

Alan Thomson – Possibly. We've got a little bit of a climb in front of us here.

Guy Williams – So, after you make your decision, do you go into a protection program?

(Laughter all around)

Alan Thomson – Well, there are a lot of people who like Palouse Prairie and don't want it impacted. We've got to make a decision based on the code though, on the Critical Areas Ordinance and the reports from the experts. That is the movement on Weis Towers.

Kamiak Butte and AT&T, they've gone dark, we haven't heard anything from them, at all. So I don't know if they've gone away yet. We'll need to get in touch with them this week and find out where we are with that one. It has been awhile.

- c. Forthcoming Variances: None
- d. Update on Previous Conditional Use Permits and Variances: Melissa Dugger CUP for a seasonal RV Park off Palouse-Albion Road was approved on September 12, 2019. David Lange Event Venue CUP was approved on September 12, 2019.

Alan Thomson – We had a CUP for an RV Park, Melissa Dugger and her husband, out on Palouse-Albion Road, right by SR 27. That was approved on September 12<sup>th</sup> and the Dave Lange Event Venue CUP, that was also approved on September 12<sup>th</sup>.

David Gibney – I drove up to Palouse on that game day, a while back, but there was another one, north of Albion, but there was another one.

Chad Whetzel – That was the Dugger one.

Alan Thomson – On highway 27?

Katrin Kunz – Towards Palouse.

David Gibney – Yeah.

Chad Whetzel – That was Melissa Dugger.

David Gibney – No, it was quite a bit north of the Palouse-Albion Road, or the turn off onto Palouse-Albion. It was on SR 27, when you leave Pullman, north Albion is this way...

Chad Whetzel – No, that is the Pullman-Albion Road, we're talking about the Palouse-Albion Road which drops out just south of Kamiak Butte, just before the Jeff West barn.

David Gibney – Okay.

Alan Thomson – That is the same location, David.

David Gibney – You know, there was a number of RV's there.

Alan Thomson – Right, so they've got their permit now. It seems like RV Parks are very popular now, there always seems to be a lack of places for RV's to go during these game days and other events that happen in Pullman.

Brian Davies – I also think that there is a lack of motel space for all the people who come to town, so it just makes sense that now...

Guy Williams – Well, the scheduling is bad, U of I and WSU have been, for the last two home games have been maxed out.

- e. Update on Previous Administrative Use Permits: None.
- f. Board of County Commissioners' Action: None.
- g. Update on Previous Board of County Commissioners' Action: Signing of Resolution 082178 declaring Whitman County's periodic review of natural resource lands complete on September 16, 2019.

Alan Thomson – The resolution for the periodic review of natural resource lands, that was signed by the Commissioner's on September 16<sup>th</sup>. So that part is done now and we are in, finally in compliance with the GMA regarding natural resource lands.

- h. Forthcoming Shoreline of the State Substantial Development Permits: None.
- i. Update on Previous Shoreline of the State Substantial Development Permits: Avista Utilities Palouse River transmission line replacement approved on September 16, 2019. Boyer Park dock replacement project approved on August 19, 2019.

Alan Thomson – The Avista Utilities one is still ongoing. So, that is off of Brayton Road and they are redoing the line there, realigning it and that was approved on September 16<sup>th</sup> and now we're in an appeal period. The Department of Ecology has to sign off on this one, eventually, so there is an appeal period and that will be coming up soon, I think in the next week or two and that will be over and done with.

- j. Planning Commission Forthcoming Hearings: Update on Critical Areas Ordinance to include definitions accidentally left out from the update approved on April 1, 2019. Hearing to be held on October 2, 2019.

Alan Thomson – So this is the one that we just finished up with today. And that is all for reports.

**UNFINISHED BUSINESS:** Continue discussion on cannabis ordinance.

Chad Whetzel – Okay, we will move onto the workshop to continue the discussion on the marijuana ordinance.

**NEW BUSINESS:** None.

**7:26 p.m. – Adjourn to workshop.**