

**ISLAND COUNTY  
PLANNING COMMISSION SUMMARY MINUTES  
JANUARY 03, 2024  
WORK SESSION**

*To hear the Planning Commission's full discussion of a specific topic, or the complete meeting listen to the audio stream available [HERE](#)*

**CALL TO ORDER:**

**(Approximate recording timestamp: 00:00:05/00:49:16)**

Meeting called to order at 6:10pm

**ROLL CALL:**

**(Approximate recording timestamp: 00:00:24/00:49:16)**

**Present:**

District 1 – Margaret Andersen, William Criswell, Kristi Lovelady

District 2 – Steve Bristow

District 3 – Fred Kiga, Steve Schwalbe

**Absent:**

District 2: Darin Hand

District 3: Paul McCausland

**Planning & Community Development Staff Present:** Jonathan Lange, Assistant Director; Long Range Planners: John Lanier, Emily Neff & Emily Carr; Carol Strohschein, Program Coordinator

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

**(Approximate recording timestamp: 00:01:00/00:49:16)**

Commissioner Andersen: Question from Mr. Blaisdel: have the demographics and projections been given to the IRTPO (Island Regional Transportation Planning Organization) Executive Board?

John Lanier: Yes, and we have a meeting scheduled with them.

Commissioner Andersen: Question directed to Heather Kortuem from Commissioner Lovelady regarding the septic (BUSSE) treatment system, what kind of metrics they were using? Has she been able to determine the follow up? Not yet.

December 20, 2023 minutes: Approved with one abstention.

**ANNOUNCEMENT:**

**(Approximate recording timestamp: 00:03:22/00:49:16)**

Commissioner Schwalbe: Public Hearing that we were having today is postponed to February 7<sup>th</sup>, and today's meeting will focus on annual training for Commissioners.

**ITEMS FROM THE PUBLIC– UNRELATED TO TOPICS ON THE AGENDA**

**(Approximate recording timestamp: 00:04:36/00:49:16)**

Brad Thompson: Topic: Shoreline Stabilization and Island County Code. Dwellers of the south end of Mutiny Bay have been trying to get bulkheads built to protect properties against high tides and storms and have been denied. Island County Code has a 3 year trend analysis, that no one else in the state uses and is not manageable. Asking for inclusion in the Island County Code of Washington State laws components and parts of the Statute of Ecology that would protect their properties. South Whidbey Shoreline Group, himself, engineers and consultants rewrote the shoreline stabilization part of Island County Code.

**(Approximate recording timestamp: 00:08:29/00:49:16)**

Perry Lovelace: About the sustainability of Island County freshwater systems. We must not extract more water from our aquifer system than is recharged from rainfall. At present, it is unknown how much water is being taken from wells in the Island. Porosity of the surface must be addressed in the Comp Plan. He and his cohort offer to provide technical support and work with Island County Planning.

Barbara Bennett: Discussed the unique assets and ecological functions and vulnerabilities and limitations that islands have, and that the current development practices on the shorelines of the island are strangling those assets and ecological functions. Asks for the Comprehensive Plan to address the marine character of island communities. Also requests the creation of a "crosswalk" that allows us to compare across the Growth Management Act, Comprehensive Plan and Shoreline Management Program.

Doug Brand: supports previous comments and is particularly concerned about water issues. Also addresses the importance of strengthening the definition of rural character. Thinks the 2016 Vision Statement doesn't need a large alteration.

Marianne Edain: Topic: supports what Barbara Bennett, and a good deal of what Perry Lovelace said. Said a budget for water on IC is on the agenda. Referred to Thompson's comment saying that building new and bigger bulkheads is not an answer. Asks that the GMA definition of rural character be put up front. Says we need to look at planning for Island County as being a green belt and serving that function.

Anne Tearse: addresses concern about the water situation, and that Oak Harbor has been buying water from Anacortes but there will be a moment Anacortes will have no extra water supply to Oak Harbor.

## **DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

**(Approximate recording timestamp: 00:22:10/00:49:16)**

Assistant Director Jonathan Lange declared he hadn't anything to report and asked the Planning Commission to let him know if they had any questions for him.

Commissioner Andersen: Island County is the ninth largest shoreline and asked if when we look at the update to the Comprehensive Plan, are we looking at the other counties to see how they prioritize shoreline?

Lange said that we do we look at counties that are ahead of us in the Comp Plan cycle Discussion continued on topic.

## **PRESENTATION**

**(Approximate recording timestamp: 00:27:26/00:49:16)**

Emily Carr presented slideshow on "2024 Annual Training". See presentation materials [here](#).

The training is for the Commissioners to remember what being a Commissioner is all about. Members of the Planning Commission play an essential role in influencing politics that affects island county. It is important that they stay informed about current issues, legislative activities, statutes and events that may affect their decisions.

Presentation continued about the election of officers, meetings, emails.

John Lanier continued presentation commenting on the need to be cautious of conflicts of interest and ex parte contact.

Presentation continued on Public Comments, Public Hearing Process and Open Public Meeting Act Certification. Commissioner Lovelady asked about public comments during public workshops, to what Lanier answered that yes, we do take them. Carr clarified it should not be back and forth between Commissioners and the public.

Commissioner Bristow asked about quorum to which Lange replied. Discussion continued amongst Lange and Commissioners. Lanier clarified that according to Robert rules, a quorum is needed to make any decisions, if members have to leave early and the remaining ones don't keep the quorum complete, very few actions can be taken – for example, booking a new day for the meeting. The need for quorum applies to workshops and trainings too. Discussion continued on topic.

Commissioner Andersen asked for definition of "crosswalk" that was used in an earlier comment. Lanier answered it is like a matrix of how the different plans fit together on the same issues. Carr provided example of IRTPO wanting our current numbers to match.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

**(Approximate recording timestamp: 00:49:10/00:49:16)**

Meeting Adjourned at 6:55pm