

**Town of Coupeville**  
**Planning Commissions of the Town of Coupeville and Island County**  
**Joint Public Meeting**  
**Tuesday, October 20, 2009**  
**6:30 p.m.**  
**Coupeville Rec Hall**

**TOWN PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chair, David Day, Commissioners Doug McFadyen, Chet Baker, Molly McPherson. Absent: Barbara Cope

**STAFF PRESENT:** Town Planner Larry Kwarsick and Recording Secretary Nanc Garner

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Mimi Sheridan, Project Consultant, Bob Pederson, County Planning Director, Mark Preiss, Reserve Manager.

**ISLAND COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT:** Ray Gabelein, Terry Reynolds, Mahmoud Abdel-Monem, Scott Yonkman, Mike Joselyn, Val Hillers, and William Lippens

**CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order by Chair David Day at 6:35 p.m. The meeting was turned over to Island County Commissioner Gabelein to chair the public meeting.

**PUBLIC HEARING**

Unfinished Business (Continued from September 15, 2009) – Public Hearing and Deliberations – Ebey’s Reserve – Proposed amendments to the standards and procedures that regulate development within Ebey’s Landing National Historic Reserve. These amendments modify permit review procedures, development standards, and they incorporate references to a companion design manual.

Island County Planning Commissioner Gabelein welcomed everyone and explained the procedure for the public hearing. He explained the format of the public hearing and reminded the audience who wished to speak to present their comments relating to Ebey’s Reserve initiative and to stay within the time frame. Staff presentation began with Mark Preiss, Ebey’s Reserve Manager thanking all those involved in the process. He provided background information and said how important the reserve is to the community. He also reminded everyone of the deep tradition of stewardship found in the reserve. He stated that presented is a working draft and hopes for deliberation and to move the process along.

Town Planner, Larry Kwarsick, echoed Mr. Preiss sentiment on Ebey’s Reserve, the process involved to date and tonight’s public hearing. He stated the goal is a unified code and unified process that would be consistent throughout the reserve. There needs to be a frame work for a

decision making process. Planner Kwarsick hopes the Planning Commissions will take public input but at the end of public testimony, the hearing process is concluded in order to move into deliberations.

County Planning Director, Bob Pederson explained the staff report restates the goals and objectives as well as addressing some of the questions brought up by the public previously. Also distributed were recent public comment letters and a draft proposal of the Unified Code.

Commissioner Gabelein declared the public hearing open at 6:45 p.m.

Paula Spina: 1025 Crocket Farm Road, Coupeville, stated it was her joy to be in attendance, lucky to be in America to be able to share opinions and blessed to live in Ebey's Reserve. She stated everyone involved in the process has done an amazing job. Sometimes regulation can be a good thing and supports the proposed paint palette process which can enhance property value.

Alan Whitman: 4234 Indian Point Lane, Langley spoke about amateur radio operations on Whidbey Island. He said amateur radio operators provide a valuable service to the community, providing support for example, to the Red Cross and Whidbey General in times of emergencies. He stated the higher the antenna the better the reception and does not want regulations to prohibit tower heights.

Steve Foster: 547 Scenic Heights Road, Oak Harbor referred to page 6, first paragraph on communication towers and said he also agreed with the comments provided by the previous speaker, Alan Whitman on the same subject. He thanked everyone for their participation in the process but was unhappy with the proposed commission committee makeup.

Ron Van Dyk: 307 NE Front Street, Coupeville provided a verbal history of how the reserve came into being. He has served on various committees and over the years has seen how added or new regulations make for controversy among the people in the community. He thanked everyone for their contribution to the process and hopes the outcome is successful.

Leigh McWilliam: 935 West Viewridge Drive, Oak Harbor, had two statements to make. 1. He hopes that ideally, property owners would be on the new proposed committee and 2. he hasn't seen a fee schedule yet (application and building fees).

Claire Pickard: 1095 Burchell Road, Coupeville, thanked everyone for their efforts. She had a concern about the application process to paint a home and the color palette. She said that there are many places in the country that have covenants referring to paint colors which seem to work. She is on the Historic Review Committee and it has been her experience that those who come before the board usually are successful with their requests.

Rufus Rose: 6549 Four Sister Lane, Clinton stated he served on the Planning Commission some time ago and appreciates the hard work they do. He is curious what the economic impact will be (to county) with the establishment of the new commission. He is a licensed real estate broker

and hopes that the building permit process will be quicker as timing is an issue when building a new home. He would also like to see a disclosure statement added to the proposed standards and procedures and wanted to know more about the appeals process. He wished everyone involved in the process success and hopes there is consideration for municipal buildings to be included in this review.

Mel Vance: P.O. Box 2882, Oak Harbor, spoke of the history of amateur radios and the size of their antennas then and now. He recommends that type 3 or C be used for towers and agrees with accepting the staff's recommendation. He demonstrated the size and height of a sample antenna that should be used for amateur radio towers.

Tom Tack: 710 N. Main, Coupeville, stated he is a member of the HRC and owns an historic home in the town. He hopes the process will make it more streamline for Type 1 and Type 2 in order to move on with projects. He agrees it will be helpful to have a more unified and better organized process between county and town which will make it easier on those that own historic home. He appreciates what the committee has done to date.

Gretchen Luxenberg: 123 North 82, Seattle, stated she is a member of the HRC which is there to protect the national historic reserve. The town and surrounding area has national significance and it is not about preserving individual interests but preserving the area for the nation. The new ordinance will manage the change that is coming and protect future generations and she supports the process. She commented that radio antennas and their visual impact on the area needs to be looked at and to keep the proposed color palette as part of the process as it is an important tool.

Wilbur Bishop: 1520 Hill Road, Coupeville, stated that complaining about something is not easy for him to do. He referred to the October 13 report and said he doesn't see how the ordinance will help in preserving agriculture. He does not want to see more regulations and he thinks he will need to have more approval to do anything (ex. paint, fencing) on his property with the proposed process. He would like exemptions be more clearly defined as it relates to mechanical farm equipment, radio towers, etc. He appreciates how far the reserve has come but thinks that there is too much regulations that hampers farming.

Kelly Keilwitz: 986 Wannamaker Road, Coupeville, stated he is supportive of renewable energy and sustainability. He referred to page 63 and wanted to know more about the reference to photo voltaic panels and their placement. He commented on windmills for consideration on a case by case basis and who will make the decision. He is the owner of Whidbey Sun and Wind and stated that wind turbines need to be at a certain height in order to work properly. Regarding the overall proposed guidelines, he is concerned the reserve is not about history and scenic views but also for supporting a sustainable way of life. He does not want the reserve to be turned into a museum or giant homeowners association.

Robert Warder: 209 NE Ninth Street, Coupeville stated his concerns about the DRB instituting action without any explanation of fines and penalties. He believes the National Parks Service has a new agenda and that historic home owners need consulting. Historic home owners need technical help fixing their homes as well as financial assistance.

Gary Ray: 1153 American Lane, Coupeville, stated that some of the language referring to green buildings and boundaries of the reserve needs clarifying as well as what (buildings) can be seen within the reserve. He believes a lot of people who are not at the meeting tonight don't feel represented in the process. Historical home owners need help instead of hearing that they can't get a demolition permit. He said to figure out a way to preserve houses before they (ex. Libby House) are beyond help.

Georgie Smith: 399 S. Ebey Road, Coupeville stated she is concerned about orchard removal and the amount of money it will take to maintain trees. She has an issue with the proposed fencing heights and agrees that the reserve should not be a museum but a working, cultural landscape with financial assistance available to maintain historic buildings.

Renea Smith: 399 S. Ebey Road, Coupeville, stated she is a farmer in the reserve and likes the lifestyle. She bought the home and building before the reserve was established and it is difficult to maintain the home due to expenses. She has a tin roof on her historic building and would not be able to replace it with shake wood, as proposed in the new guidelines, due to costs.

Board Action: Commissioner Gabelein entertained a motion to close the public hearing at 8:15 p.m. Commissioner Hillers made a motion, second by Commissioner Reynolds to close the public comment portion of the hearing.

Motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Gabelein called for a short recess at 8:20 p.m. and reconvened to regular session at 8:27 p.m.

Planner Kwarsick provided a brief overview of the themes raised throughout tonight's session. He stated that the guidelines were developed to preserve the landscape and that they are taking an existing process and trying to make it better. He stated there is still a lot of work and fine tuning to do with the process.

Commissioner Gabelein stated in beginning the deliberations, he would first like the two planning commission board members to express their comments of the draft guidelines in order to be able to vote on the issues.

Commissioner McPherson: commented on the makeup of proposed board, financial and economic hardship for historic property owners, demolition specifics, 100 ft. buffer definition, and how best to support farmers and agriculture.

Commissioner Lippens: commented on financial and economic hardship for historic property owners, providing technical and financial support for historic home owners, sustainability and

the energy impacts and that we are inhibiting positive creativity, reserve not meant to be a museum, demolition specifics, and makeup of proposed board.

Commissioner Baker: commented that it appears too costly for historic homeowners to upgrade their homes, discussed economic impacts and that historic home owners need financial relief.

Commissioner Abdel-Monem: commented on what properties and exhibiting structures will be impacted by the proposed regulations, area one and two definitions and supports unified process and tiered evaluation but need clarification in the code.

Commissioner McFadyen: commented on the criteria for developing the historic properties list, makeup of proposed board, fairness and cost to maintain historic property, and how best to support agriculture and farming concerns.

Commissioner Gabelein: commented not all farmers have bought into the process, needs more support of agriculture, permit issuance issues, demolition specifics, 100 ft. buffer definition, significant and diameter of trees definition, agriculture exemption specifics, existing structure wording, wall/fencing heights, tree removal, appeals process and to review draft for typos and missed words.

Commissioner Day: commented on makeup of proposed board, agriculture exemption specifics, enforcement and penalty issues, draft needs more clarity and specificity and agrees with proposed color palette and paint process.

Commissioner Joselyn: commented on adding a landscape architect as well as more farmers, professionals, town and reserve representatives (who have resided on island for at least 10 years) to the proposed board makeup.

Commissioner Hillers: commented on definition of historic buildings and structures compared to list in back of draft manual, using words that are consistent and precise, contributing vs. noncontributing definitions unclear, makeup of proposed board, appendix reference, update inventory base, accessory structure definition, negatives and digital photos, disclosure statements, and historic easement definition.

Commissioner Reynolds : commented on regulations and farming, wind turbine beauty on landscape, amateur radio operators and antenna height, disclosure statements for realtors, and makeup of proposed board.

Commissioner Yonkman: commented on what commissioners have said and he agrees, staff appreciation of their work and the public's involvement, improving reserve process, draft manual needs more work, review economic impact and add exemptions for farmers and businesses.

Commissioner Gabelein stated the boards should come to an agreement as to whether or not to proceed but feels it is too early to call for a motion to vote. He would like staff to rework and update the draft manual and that changes are made before the board votes.

Board Action: Commissioner Yonkman made a motion, second by Commissioner Abdel-Monem to close public comment and to have planners and staff revise the draft including the collective comments.

Motion approved unanimously.

A date to reconvene will be determine with a 6 p.m. start time.

**Adjournment:** 9:58 p.m.