

**City of Gig Harbor Planning Commission
Work Study Session and Public Hearing
March 31, 2011
Council Chambers
4:00 pm**

PRESENT: Harris Atkins, Michael Fisher, Jim Pasin, Jill Guernsey and Ben Coronado. Bill Coughlin was absent.

STAFF PRESENT: Staff: Peter Katich, Jennifer Kester, Diane Gagnon and Kim Van Zwalenburg from the Department of Ecology.

CALL TO ORDER: at 4:00pm

OPEN HOUSE

Open discussion was held. Approximately 40 people were present.

Chairman Harris Atkins welcomed everyone and introduced the Planning Commission giving a brief synopsis of each of the Commissioner's background. Commissioner Michael Fisher gave a presentation on the history of the Shoreline Master Program update process. He explained each of the shoreline designations and their features.

Senior Planner Peter Katich gave a summary of the jurisdiction of the Shoreline Master Program and its relationship to the Urban Growth Area. He then went through each of the graphics surrounding the room and explained their content. Mr. Katich then took questions from the audience. Questions were asked regarding the cost of the adoption and enforcement of the Shoreline Master Program, the effect on existing projects, non conforming rights and the content of the vegetation conservation strip.

Chairman Atkins asked everyone to please take the next 30 minutes to look at the graphics on display and ask questions of the Commission and staff. He noted that the Planning Commission will open the public hearing at 6:00 p.m.

PUBLIC HEARING

Mr. Katich gave a brief synopsis of the changes made to this version of the draft Shoreline Master Program. Mr. Atkins went over the upcoming schedule for the adoption of the program.

Chairman Atkins opened the public hearing at 6:07 p.m.

Dennis Reynolds, on behalf of Gig Harbor Marina, Inc.

Mr. Reynolds stated the he has represented a number of industry groups in various Shoreline Master Program adoptions and commended the Commission for the changes

they had already made in response to his comments. He addressed non-conforming uses and the negativity of the label. He suggested that they only apply the vegetation conservation strip to undeveloped land, not the built environment. He reminded the Commission of their discretion in developing these regulations. He asked that the Commission look at the Puget Sound Partnership plan for restoring the ecological functions of Puget Sound.

Carl Halsan, P.O. Box 1447, Gig Harbor WA., on behalf of Stan and Judith Stearns. Mr. Halsan addressed the Stearns property at 9110 Randall Drive and asked that the Commission change the shoreline environmental designation from the proposed Urban Conservancy designation to Low Intensity. He stated that on March 21st the Stearns had a private biologist review the site (Harbor Environmental). He noted that ESA Adolfson relied on the 2003 Pentac Report as the partial basis for the findings in draft Shoreline Inventory and Characterization Report that provides the basis for the proposed environmental designations. In the Pentac report the area around the Crescent Creek estuary had a higher “score” relative to existing function and value than the Stearns property, and that the scores rise about 800 feet to the north of his clients parcel. There are only two small pockets of estuarian wetlands. He asked that the Commission reexamine the line of delineation and re-designate the Stearns property as Low Intensity.

Charles Traaen, Mr. Swain, and several neighbors

Mr. Traaen presented a written statement and asked Mr. Swain to read it into the record since he forgot his glasses. Mr. Traaen’s letter referred to a property within the UGA north of the spit, in Colvos Passage classified Urban Conservancy. He maintained that those properties should not be any different than the ones on the other side of the Harbor classified as Low Intensity. He noted that all other areas of Urban Conservancy are related to stream estuaries which are not present in this area.

Dan and Georgia Swain

Mr. Swain emphasized his sincere appreciation for the work put into this document. He felt that the DOE guidelines were based on “junk” science. He stated there was no scientific proof that there will be any improvement to the Puget Sound with the passage of these regulations. Mr. Swain said that at most it will affect 1% of the real problem, but will rather grow government and raise the cost of development. He stated that only the very rich will own shorelines. He asked that the Planning Commission not adopt these regulations as the current regulations were more than adequate. He stated that rivers, streams and rainwater deliver the majority of pollution into Puget Sound. He suggested that if we destroyed their predators, fish will remain.

Robert Stuart, 2813 Harborview Dr., Gig Harbor

Mr. Stewart commented that he had just learned of this meeting from the Gateway and hadn’t had a chance to review the Shoreline Master Program. He felt that two weeks was not enough time. He stated that he has an armored bulkhead with a 6-7 knot tide flow and without the bulkhead his property would be gone. He stated that he has 2 fishing cabins built in 1912 and he was concerned that he wouldn’t be able to rebuild.

Mr. Atkins stated that Mr. Katich would answer his questions after the hearing regarding his ability to rebuild.

Karen Triplett, daughter Walt Williamson, GH Marina. Mr. Williamson passed away this week and she is concerned with what could be done with their property if they cannot have a viable marina.

Chairman Atkins closed the public hearing at 6:30 p.m.

Mr. Atkins reminded the Commission about the next meeting on April 7th and asked Mr. Katich for the comment letters received. He noted that he wanted to examine the breakpoints on the habitat quality and other comments received tonight. Mr. Fisher said that he would like to review the standard used for Urban Conservancy versus Low Intensity. Ms. Guernsey stated that perhaps Mr. Stewart wasn't here in the earlier portion of the meeting where they discussed the ability to rebuild non-conforming structures and asked that he contact staff to confirm his ability to rebuild.

MOTION: Move to adjourn at 6:35 p.m. Fisher/Coronado – Motion carried.