



Approved as submitted at the February 21, 2020 PC Meeting.

SAN JUAN COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING

MINUTES OF THE JANUARY 17, 2020 MEETING

The meeting of the San Juan County Planning Commission was called to order by Chair, Tim Blanchard, at 8:34 a.m. in the County Council hearing room, Legislative Building, 55 Second Street, Friday Harbor, and San Juan Island.

Planning Commission

Members Present: Tim Blanchard, Dale Roundy, Steve Rubey, Victoria Compton (by phone) and Georgette Wong (by phone).

Planning Commission

Members Excused: Camille Uhlir and Michael Pickett

Department of Community Development (DCD) Staff

Present: Erika Shook, Director; Linda Kuller, Planning Manager; Adam Zack, Planner III; Sophia Cassam, Planner I; and Lynda Guernsey, AS II.

Administrative Items

Confirm Agenda – No changes were made to the agenda.

DCD Update – Erika Shook, Director

1. An updated Planning Commission and County Council calendar was handed out.
2. There will be a briefing to the Planning Commission today on the Shoreline Master Program periodic update and a hearing at their next meeting in February.
3. Staff is looking for more direction from the County Council on the marijuana regulations then they will be coming forward to the Planning Commission.
4. Staff is planning to attend the 2020 Ag listening sessions with the Agricultural Resource Committee on January 23, January 29, and February 12, (Lopez, Orcas, and San Juan) for relatable information that can be used as part of the Agriculture Element in the Comprehensive Plan Update public process.
5. A request was made for information about water law. A Department of Ecology presentation on water law was posted under the water element tab on the Comprehensive Plan Elements webpage.
6. Vacation rental certificates of compliance are being organized. There are about 80 abandoned vacation rentals at this time. There are still people that haven't responded and staff will be contacting them.
7. Staff is preparing items to bring forward to the Planning Commission, including landuse issues, in the next couple of months.

Erika Shook responded to questions and comments from the Planning Commission.

*****Minutes of December 20, 2019**

Moved by Steve Rubey, seconded by Dale Roundy, to approve the December 20, 2019 minutes as submitted. Motion passed with four yes votes, zero no votes, and one abstention (Wong).

*****Election of Officers**

Moved by Dale Roundy, seconded by Victoria Compton, to postpone the election of officers to the February meeting. Dale Roundy – yes, Steve Rubey – yes, Victoria Compton – yes, Georgette Wong-yes, and Tim Blanchard – yes. Motion passed unanimously.

*** Note: The items above were done after the DCD Update due to the lack of a quorum.

Public Access Time – The following spoke:

Rene Polda, San Juan Island

Briefing on the Capital Facilities Inventory: Sophia Cassam, Planner I

Sophia Cassam gave a presentation on the third draft of the Capital Facilities Inventory. She addressed the changes made and comments received. Sophia Cassam then responded to questions and comments from the Planning Commission.

Briefing on the Utilities Inventory: Sophia Cassam, Planner I

Sophia Cassam gave a presentation on the second draft of the Utilities Inventory. She addressed the changes made and comments received. Sophia Cassam then responded to questions and comments from the Planning Commission.

Briefing on the Housing Element: Sophia Cassam, Planner I

Sophia Cassam gave a presentation on the preliminary draft of the Housing Element and the fourth draft of the Housing Needs Assessment. She addressed the changes made to the document to-date and briefed the Planning Commission on the comments received. Concern was expressed by members of the Planning Commission, in regard to vacation rentals, to make sure there is legal counsel involved in review of those issues.

A handout was given to the Planning Commission on Housing Goals and Policies, Section 5.7 of the Housing Element, with items in red being changes/suggestions by the public and items in green made by the staff. The Planning Commission went through the document with guidance by staff to those goals and policies that the public had suggested changes to. The Planning Commission made the following changes and suggestions by consensus. Attachment A to these minutes will show the changes and/or items accepted by the Planning Commission in blue.

5.7 HOUSING GOALS AND POLICIES

5.7A GENERAL HOUSING INVENTORY, TYPES, CATEGORIES, AND CONDITION

Goal 1. Accept as stated.

Policies:

1. Third bullet – Accept underlined changes.
2. Accept underline/strikeout changes.
3. Accept with the deletion of the words “permit requirements and” and with staff to add specific actions as suggested by Byers.
5. Accept the underlined changes.
6. Accept that this policy be deleted.

Goal 2. Accept as stated.

Policies:

1. Accept the underline/strikeout, and add the words “regulations and” between the words “appropriate” and “land”, delete the underlined word “projected”, and take the section of the paragraph starting with the word “support” and make it a new policy 2. The policies would be renumbered.

Previous Policy 2, now 3. Accept the underline/strikeout changes.

Staff will post the Homeless Plan on the website

Goal 3. Accept as stated.

Policies:

1. Accept as stated.
2. Accept with the addition of the words “accessibility improvement and” between the words “as” and “the”.
3. through 5. Accept as stated.

Goal 4. Accept as stated.

Policies:

5. Accept to leave as is.
6. Accept with the deletion of the words “Council’s” and “codes in 2020.”, and add an “s” at the end of “home”.
7. Accept with the deletion of the words “the prevalence of”.
9. New – By consensus, to not accept the new policy 9.

*** Staff to send the WA State Building Code Council’s tiny home codes to the Planning Commission.***

Goal 5. Accept with adding back the deleted words “Promote climate resiliency”, deletion of the words “Reduce greenhouse gas emissions associated with housing by 50% by 2030”, and addition of the words”, such as greenhouse gas emissions,” between the words “impacts” and “of”.

5.7. BAFFORDABILITY

Goal 6. Accept as stated.

Policies:

- 2. Accept with stated revision.
- New 4. Accept as stated.
- New 5. Accept with staff to revise.

Goal 7. Accept as stated.

Policies:

- New 5. Accept with staff to confirm and revise concept.
- New 6. Accept with revision and incorporating the ideas of Commissioners Blanchard and Compton.
- New 7. Accept to leave in the document.

Goal 8. Accept as stated.

Policies:

- 6. Accept the move of this policy 6. from Goal 6. to Goal 8.

Briefing on the Land Capacity Analysis Employment Capacity Methodology: Adam Zack, Planner III

Adam Zack gave a presentation on the Draft Employment Capacity Analysis (DECA) and responded to questions and comments from the Planning Commission.

Briefing on the Shoreline Master Program Periodic Update: Linda Kuller, AICP, Planning Manager

Linda Kuller gave a presentation on the Shoreline Master Program periodic update process to-date and included the comments and suggested changes from the Department of Ecology. Linda Kuller then responded to questions and comments from the Planning Commission.

Adjournment

Moved by Steve Rubey, seconded by Dale Roundy, to adjourn the meeting at 1:25 p.m. and the motion passed unanimously. The next meeting of the Planning Commission will be Friday, February 21, 2020, at 8:30 a.m. in the County Council hearing room, Legislative Building, 55 Second Street, Friday Harbor, San Juan Island.

Respectfully submitted,


Lynda Guernsey

Attachment A – 5.7 Housing Goals and Policies hand out from 1/17/20 with Planning Commission edits/suggestions in blue.

5.7 HOUSING GOALS AND POLICIES

Housing goals and policies guide San Juan County's actions pertaining to housing. Goals are items the County hopes to accomplish, and policies are the practices or actions the County intends to carry out as a way of meeting goals. These goals and policies are informed by many sources, including existing policies, community feedback, and the data and analysis in the Housing Needs Assessment (Appendix 5).

5.7.A GENERAL HOUSING INVENTORY, TYPES, CATEGORIES, AND CONDITION

Goal 1. Meet the projected 2036 housing demand for permanent and seasonal homes.

Policies:

1. Take the following actions in Urban Growth Areas and Activity Centers:

- Incentivize the construction of multi-family and mixed-use developments;
- Reduce the cost of public services by increasing incentives for denser development; and
- Work with the SJC Building Advisory Committee, the Eastsound, Lopez Village, and Deer Harbor Planning and Review Committee to understand market factors that limit more dense development in these areas. **[BYERS, BISHOP]**

"These points above are a commitment to more and more building, and more population growth and it does not address the vision of the islands to stay rural" [ALDORT]

2. ~~Develop housing stock~~ Build dwellings that meets the needs of those in the low, moderate, middle and upper-middle income brackets. **[BYERS]**
3. Increase the inventory of long-term rentals through ~~permit requirements and~~ modifications to the development code, such as [placeholder]. **[BYERS SUGGESTS SPECIFYING ACTIONS]**
4. Increase the availability of seasonal rentals for workers. Support development of specific standards for locating seasonal and year-round worker housing such as dorms, bunkhouses, hostels, group homes, home shares, and other communal living arrangements.
5. Allow farm stays and farmworker housing accommodations on properties where commercial agriculture is conducted, not only those properties in agricultural open space tax programs. **[staff recommendation consistent with County code]**
- ~~6. Impose an enforceable purchase or rental price cap for each housing unit improvement funded from federally tax exempt sources to prevent private financial gain from increase in property value arising from that improvement alone, except in cases where private inurement is permitted.~~ **[APPEL]**

1 **Goal 2. Meet the housing needs of special populations such as veterans, the elderly, differently abled,**
 2 **mentally ill, victims of domestic violence, and those at-risk of or currently facing homelessness.**

3 Policies:

- 4 1. ~~Identify~~ Assure that there are appropriate regulations and land use designations ~~to expand areas~~
 5 ~~that to~~ allow housing ~~that to~~ meets the projected needs of the elderly population, such as group
 6 homes, assisted living residences and skilled nursing facilities., ~~and~~
- 7
- 8 2. Support weatherization and home maintenance programs for the elderly. **[BYERS]**
- 9
- 10 3. ~~Advocate for~~ Support the cold weather shelters on San Juan and Orcas islands and promote the
 11 development of a shelter on Lopez Island. **[BEYERS]**
- 12
- 13 4. Implement the County’s five-year Homeless Plan and support services in order to reduce
 14 homelessness and increase opportunities for wellbeing in San Juan County.
- 15
- 16 5. Reduce obstacles for the development of new housing opportunities for vulnerable populations
 17 such as safe homes for domestic violence victims, transitional housing for the recently homeless,
 18 and the host home program for at-risk youth and youth experiencing emergencies.
- 19
- 20 6. Continue to implement housing assistance for eligible veterans through the Veterans Assistance
 21 Fund.
- 22

23 **Goal 3. Improve housing condition and reduce the number of substandard housing units.**

24 Policies:

- 25 1. Utilize all available resources to complete weatherization upgrades and provide energy
 26 assistance.
- 27
- 28 2. Promote health related improvements to older homes, such as accessibility improvement and the
 29 abatement of lead based paint, asbestos, and other potentially harmful materials.
- 30
- 31 3. Review and revise permit process for home remodels to ensure compliance with State lead
 32 regulations and reduce the risk of exposure.
- 33
- 34 4. Support grant acquisitions for the development of home improvement programs to raise the
 35 quality and safety of currently substandard housing.
- 36
- 37 5. Support non-profit programs that identify and reduce the number of substandard units.
- 38

1 **Goal 4. Reduce the costs of maintaining existing homes and constructing new housing units.**

2 *“This is just more of making it easier to destroy this island by building more. We are basically at capacity!!!*
 3 *Waterwise. Roads wise. Traffic wise. Pollution wise. Population wise. The aiming at some prediction of*
 4 *growth 2036 is the wrong approach. That prediction should be seen as a warning to avert.” [ALDORT]*

5 Policies:

- 6 1. Boost the development of construction trades on the Islands by supporting the Economic
7 Development Council to provide training and certification courses at Skagit Valley College.
8
- 9 2. Expedite permitting of approved stock construction plans to reduce building permit costs.
10
- 11 3. Continue the owner-builder permit program to enable County residents to construct their own
12 homes.
13
- 14 4. Reduce barriers to the construction of affordable housing by lowering building permit fees for
15 affordable housing development projects.
16
- 17 5. Adopt increases in SEPA categorical exemptions for residential and mixed-use development using
18 the maximum SEPA categorical exemption levels in WAC 197-11-800 to save developers time and
19 money. [BISHOP and BYERS suggest striking out this proposed policy. “This is contrary to good
20 stewardship practices all developers need to adhere to...SEPA is rarely onerous”]
21
- 22 6. Develop standards for tiny home building site plans where water and sewer services exist and
23 adopt the Washington State Building Code ~~Council’s for~~ tiny home ~~codes in 2020.~~
24
- 25 7. Expand ~~the prevalence of~~ tool lending libraries on the most populated islands to increase people’s
26 access to the tools they need to maintain their homes.
27
- 28 8. Provide information on pre-fabricated building materials and encourage their use as a way for
29 owner-builders to reduce construction costs.
30
- 31 9. ~~Except as provided by RCW 36.70A.070(5)(d)(iii), establish priority for creation, extension or~~
32 ~~increase of utility rural government services outside urban growth or currently served water and~~
33 ~~sewer district service areas, to serve affordable housing in preference to housing serving a higher~~
34 ~~income or wealth markets so long as affordable housing is substantially insufficient. [APPEL]~~
35

36 **Goal 5. Promote climate resiliency ~~Reduce greenhouse gas emissions associated with housing by 50%~~**
 37 **~~by 2030~~ by minimizing the environmental impacts, such as greenhouse gas emissions, of the existing**
 38 **and future housing stock in San Juan County. [BERNHEIM]**

39 Policies:

- 40 1. Consider climate change risks in siting Urban Growth Area expansions and new affordable housing
41 locations, and avoid sites projected to have increased risk of flooding, landslides, severe erosion,
42 or water shortages.
43
44
45

- 1 2. Identify and support partners that work to increase the environmental sustainability of housing
2 on the Islands by means such as reducing energy use, protecting critical areas, and mitigating
3 climate change impacts.
- 4
- 5 3. Provide information about and support the use of green and alternative building materials.
- 6
- 7 4. Incentivize investments in energy conservation, efficiency, and renewable energy generation for
8 new and existing housing units.
- 9

10 5.7.B AFFORDABILITY

11

12 **Goal 6. Increase the number of resale-restricted affordable housing units.**

13

14 Policies:

- 15
- 16 1. Support applications to the WA State Housing Finance Commission Land Acquisition Program
17 (LAP) for assistance in purchasing land for affordable housing development.
- 18
- 19 2. Facilitate ~~collaboration among non-profit and private housing developers to encourage and~~
20 ~~enhance the conservation~~ the preservation of affordability, repair and durability of existing
21 housing units. [BYERS]
- 22
- 23 3. Promote the design, construction, and maintenance of quality affordable rental units to serve
24 long-term residents of various family sizes and income levels.
- 25
- 26 4. Prioritize housing units that have resale restrictions lasting at least 50 years for County funding
27 and density bonuses. [BYERS and BISHOP]
- 28
- 29 5. Allow REET funds to cover all building related fees associated with permits for developments that
30 are resale restricted for 50 or more years, regardless of whether or not the units receive REET
31 funds. [BISHOP] [placeholder. Needs refinement]
- 32

33 **Goal 7. Adopt regulations in the San Juan County Unified Development Code and Comprehensive Plan**
34 **elements that facilitate access to affordable housing by increasing the number of available**
35 **affordable units and widening the range of people who qualify for affordable housing.**

36 Policies:

- 37 1. Expand the existing density bonus program to provide further incentives for creating affordable
38 housing in Urban Growth Areas and Activity Centers.
- 39
- 40 2. Allow bonuses for multi-family affordable housing development.
- 41
- 42 3. Allow nonprofits and private developers to develop small-scale rural residential clusters with long-
43 term affordability restrictions and no more than twelve dwelling units each, within rural
44 residential, rural farm forest, and Village, Hamlet and Residential Activity Centers.
- 45

1 4. Expand allowances for detached accessory dwelling units restricted for affordable housing or
 2 long-term rental. *Pending GMA risk analysis*
 3

4 5. Require at least half of new units within UGA expansions to have income-based resale restrictions
 5 lasting at least 50 years. [BISHOP, BYERS and many VR commenters] [staff revision needed]
 6

7 ~~6. Allow recreational vehicle (RV) parks in Rural General Use and Rural Commercial land use~~
 8 ~~designations.~~ [BISHOP/STAFF]
 9

10 Explore alternative housing for transient and permanent workers such as RV parks, dorms, co-op
 11 housing...
 12

13 7. Give administrative priority to all housing project applications for development, construction,
 14 repair or rehabilitation of permanently affordable housing constituting [X]% or more in number
 15 of the housing units included in the application. [APPEL]

16 **Goal 8. Partner with organizations that support housing affordability, and leverage the County's access**
 17 **to resources to utilize and provide programs that increase access to housing for middle to low-**
 18 **income households.**

19 Policies:

20 1. Collaborate with non-profits to provide housing support services such as rental, homeownership
 21 and utilities assistance programs for low to moderate income households.
 22

23 2. Utilize state and federal housing resources and grant programs to the maximum extent possible
 24 consistent with the goals and policies of this Element for affordable housing development, rental
 25 and homeownership down payment assistance, weatherization assistance, and infrastructure
 26 development related to affordable housing.
 27

28 3. Leverage local funding sources to attract state, federal and private dollars to support the
 29 development of housing affordability programs.
 30

31 4. Provide, as appropriate, for the sale or lease of County-owned land for permanently affordable
 32 housing development.
 33

34 5. Expand and implement the 2018 Home-Share Pilot Program completed on San Juan Island and
 35 make it feasible in more island communities.
 36

37 6. Facilitate and support the development of down payment assistance programs such as the Equity
 38 Loan Program and work with banks to develop programs to roll down payments into mortgages.
 39 [Moved from goal 6 to goal 8—suggestion by BYERS]
 40

41 7. Lobby for funding support for affordable housing programs in rural areas using tax credits.
 42

1 5.7.C VACATION RENTALS

2 **Goal 9.**

3 **Policies: Placeholder to be completed after a public policy discussion.**

4 The majority of comments on the draft Housing Element received to this date call for reducing and/or
5 limiting the number of vacation rentals.

6 “de-incentivizing and limiting private short term rentals, while incentivizing private long term rentals”

7