

City of Colville

PLANNING COMMISSION

August 26, 2009

7:00 P.M. – City Hall

MINUTES

The Colville Planning Commission met for a regular meeting on Wednesday, August 26, 2009, in the Council Room at City Hall. Vice-Chairman Alan Bedford called the meeting to order at 7:01 P.M. with a quorum present.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Alan Bedford, Pearl Mance, Tracy Ferrell, Dee Hokom, and Russ Larsen. MEMBERS ABSENT: Jody Hoffman. One vacancy exists. STAFF PRESENT: Assistant Planner Melinda Lee and Recording Secretary Susan Davis. OTHERS PRESENT: Ray Driggs, Edith McNinch, Kathy McNinch, Renee Mahaney, and Jayne Evans.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the previous meeting of August 12, 2009 had been distributed to each member prior to the meeting. Pearl Mance moved and Tracy Ferrell seconded the motion to approve the minutes as written. Motion passed.

CONTINUED PUBLIC WORKSHOP – COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

Vice-Chairman Bedford explained that the purpose of the public workshop is to continue discussion on Chapter 5 - Transportation Element of the Colville Comprehensive Plan for updating during 2010, as required by the Growth Management Act (GMA). The public was encouraged to participate in discussions during the public workshop and at future public hearings.

Melinda Lee indicated that non-motorized transportation issues will be the focus of this discussion. She requested Planning Commission input regarding the type of non-motorized transportation desired throughout the community. She stated, along with statements in the Comprehensive Plan encouraging bike and pedestrian paths, and possibly trailheads and kiosks, a plan showing proposed locations throughout the community is also essential. As development proposals are submitted in the future, consideration could be given to recommending these things as a condition of approval. A copy of the 2004 City Sidewalk Plan had been distributed to each member prior to the meeting. Copies were made available to the public (copies on file).

Dee Hokom explained that on a recent bike ride she observed under-utilized space along Highway 395 from the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) office/yard all the way to Walmart. She asked if pedestrian and bicycle movement in that area could be facilitated by widening the sidewalk or installing another path. Melinda pointed out the first step is to identify a comprehensive non-motorized transportation plan, so that efforts can then be made to achieve it.

Russ Larsen explained that for many years the Kettle Falls to Colville Bike/Pedestrian Trail Committee has discussed and studied potential routes and connectivity for a trail. The committee studied possible routes along the Colville River, the railroad tracks, and Highway 395. The most feasible and safe route appears to be along Highway 395. The east trailhead is proposed to be the site of the new Senior Center

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in Colville and the west trailhead in Kettle Falls would at the Information Center at Happy Dell Park. Committee meetings are held the first Monday of the month at 6:30 p.m. at the TEDD office. Tracy Ferrell added that members of Get Fit Colville have discussed possible linkage with the Rotary Trail and they have expressed an interest in helping with funding. She noted that the Get Fit Colville program has created a map of designated local paths for distribution to the public and felt it would be beneficial to obtain a copy.

Pearl Mance suggested the creation of an advisory subcommittee to study the issue and form a recommendation to the Planning Commission. Melinda advised that a subcommittee would need to focus on the needs of our community. She felt that a recommendation could probably be accomplished in 2-3 meetings and offered to coordinate the formation of a subcommittee and develop a schedule for meetings. Potential subcommittee members were identified as representatives from Get Fit Colville, Kettle Falls to Colville Bike/Pedestrian Trail Committee, High School Track Coach Dean Fischer, Karen Van Soest from TEDD/RTPO, and Cross Country Coach Bob Ravet. Russ Larsen and Dee Hokom expressed an interest in representing the Planning Commission. Dee offered to talk to others about possible appointment to the subcommittee. Kathy McNinch, P.O. Box 801, Chewelah, WA, expressed an interest in bicycling in the city and asked to be contacted about bike trail meetings.

Melinda advised that in the past City staff looked into the WSDOT Safe Routes to School Grants Program. The program focuses on connecting sidewalk systems and installing crosswalks and lights to provide safer routes to schools. At the time, the School District was not able to participate as required to move forward with the program. Once the City has established a bike/pedestrian plan, Melinda indicated a desire to try to pursue the Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Grants Program to try to include bike lanes and maybe other facilities such as bike racks and shelters.

Renee Mahaney, 193 Dubois Rd., Colville, WA, brought up the increasing number of motorized scooters and wheelchairs that are used by disabled individuals on our streets and sidewalks. Ms. Mahaney encouraged consideration of this type of transportation in the plan to help provide an enjoyable and safe means of travel for these individuals. She felt inclusion in the plan might help increase opportunities for future grants.

Edith McNinch, 172 Aladdin Rd., Colville, WA, expressed an interest in the proposed new airport and a desire to stay informed.

Jayne Evans, Knapp Rd., Colville, WA, indicated she was interested in air transportation and questioned the accuracy of the estimated 18,000 takeoffs and landings at the current airport as stated on Page 8 of the Transportation Element. Melinda Lee explained that the figure was taken from the Airport Layout Plan prepared by David Ketchum, Airside. At the previous Planning Commission meeting it was recognized that further research is necessary to establish more accurate information prior to adoption.

Raymond Driggs, 210 Aladdin Rd., Colville, WA, stated that in the past two weeks he has observed approximately 50 planes taking-off and landing at the Colville Airport. During that same period, eight helicopters landed. Alan Bedford explained, in his research, he found that there is equipment available for about \$3,600 that would count take-offs and landings based on engine noise, which could provide a more realistic figure.

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Kathy McNinch questioned whether records must be kept at the local airport or flight plans filed by pilots. She wondered if data collected by the type of equipment that Mr. Bedford mentioned wouldn't be somewhat skewed because there would be no way to differentiate between pleasure pilots, flight students, fly-ins, etc. Al Bedford responded that Visual Flight Rules (VFR) do not require flight plans to be filed. Melinda felt that if the data is collected over a period of time it would likely average out.

Renee Mahaney stated that it appears that part of the emphasis for relocating the airport is to accommodate small corporate jets. She asked if anyone knew how many people have small jets that want to land in Colville. Tracy Ferrell noted that in the past some of the larger businesses in the area supported a longer runway to bring in small jets. She pointed out how times have changed and noted the downturn in the economy.

Tracy explained while working on the Washington State Transportation Plan during her past employment with the RTPO, they determined that the biggest issue in NE Washington was "freight mobility". At one time, representatives from WSDOT Local Planning and the Freight Mobility Office came and toured all of the major employers in the region and talked with people in charge of freight mobility. She recalled that only Hearth & Home mentioned the cost involved in regularly sending runners to the Spokane Airport to pick up parts. She added that there were no other comments about increased productivity or added benefits of an airport.

Kathy McNinch commented that it seems that local tax incentives would be something that a potential business would look at when researching relocation opportunities rather than the length of an airport. She noted that the companies that are mentioned in the Airport Feasibility Study regarding primary need are heavy manufacturing. Ms. McNinch suggested those companies would most likely use the railroad or trucks instead of air freight. She felt it would appear their only possible need for an airport would be to fly in corporate executives. She questioned how this need for convenience translates into increased jobs or increased tax revenues.

Pearl Mance requested clarification of Policy #15, on Page 17 of the Transportation Element. Melinda explained that the City Engineer requested inserting this new policy to "establish and regularly contribute to a fund for a pavement preservation program to regularly maintain the roadway surface within the city". The City does not have a pavement preservation program in place at this time.

Regarding sidewalk maintenance, Melinda advised that WSDOT's Safe Routes to School program does not apply to on-going maintenance of sidewalks. Staff confirmed that adjacent property owners are responsible for sidewalk maintenance pursuant to City Ordinance. Melinda noted it was recognized that there are sidewalks in the city that are not maintained, especially in the winter. At the last meeting, it was suggested that a new goal be added to try to identify problem areas and seek input from the Street Department for possible solutions.

In response to a question about a public participation process for the proposed airport, Melinda advised that authorization is required by the City Council. Kathy McNinch stated at last evening's City Council meeting it was reported that the City received e-mail confirmation from WSDOT for \$10,000 for a public participation process. The Council authorized \$8500 of City funds to get the process started prior to receiving WSDOT funds.

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OLD BUSINESS: There was no Old Business to be presented.

### NEW BUSINESS

#### A. Consideration of rescheduling the November 25, 2009 meeting.

Staff requested that the November 25, 2009 meeting be rescheduled due to pending public hearings and the Thanksgiving Holiday. Alan Bedford suggested that the November 25<sup>th</sup> meeting be rescheduled to November 18<sup>th</sup>. There were no objections.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD: There were no additional comments from the public.

### REPORTS

Melinda Lee presented a report from the RTPO Transportation Summit that she had attended earlier in the day. Part of the discussion at the Summit touched on population projections. She indicated that most agencies use the figures from the Office of Financial Management (OFM). She stated she has been using a percentage of Stevens County's medium projections. The Commissioners requested that staff use OFM figures. One of the other issues brought up was "level of service" (LOS) criteria. Through coordination with WSDOT, the state highways in Colville have an LOS standard of D for traffic circulation. It affects both the highways and the side streets where they intersect with the highways. LOS is defined by the average delays at intersections. Because WSDOT has made some modifications to their criteria and LOS standards, the City may be able to take another look at its LOS. The Commissioners encouraged staff to review the City's LOS standard. Melinda noted it was stressed that City Councils, Commissions, and Boards need to be very active in prioritizing transportation needs, which could help increase eligibility for grant funding. There was some discussion regarding interaction with tribal agencies.

Melinda also confirmed that the intercity bus program is moving forward. WSDOT has ordered some small buses and shelters, which are expected to be delivered in December. WSDOT will entertain bids from contractors to provide the bus service. The successful contractor would work with each community to provide a bus stop that can accommodate the needs of the riders including ticket sales, food and restrooms. It was mentioned at the Transportation Summit that in other areas Safeway has proven to be a great location for a bus stop. It is anticipated that bus service will begin on July 1, 2010 with two round trips from Kettle Falls to Spokane per day, with stops in Colville, Chewelah, Addy, Loon Lake, and Deer Park. The buses will go to the Greyhound terminal in Spokane as well as the airport. Until the bid is awarded, the cost of the bus fare is unknown. Melinda advised that there will be a community contest to name the bus line, which has to have something to do with the area.

### ADJOURNMENT

As there was no further business, Tracy Ferrell moved that the meeting be adjourned. Pearl Mance seconded. There were no objections and the meeting was adjourned at 8:35 P.M.