

PLANNING COMMISSION  
STUDY SESSION - SHORELINE MASTER PROGRAM  
December 2, 2004 - 6:30 a.m.

Commissioners Present: Bob Bernd, Henry Wood, Jim Liebrecht, Yvonne Parker, Rick Penhallurick, Tor Hartman and Todd Lengenfelder Absent: Dean Kastanis and Bill Ecret

Staff Present: Anne Henning, Lori Barlow, Dale Schulze, Bill Aukett, and Judy Thompson

The study session was called in order to continue discussing the general policies of the Shoreline Master Program beginning with Signage.

Signage

A sign is defined as a device of any material or medium that is used or intended to be used to attract attention to the subject matter for advertising, identification, or informative purposes. The following provisions apply to any commercial or advertising sign within the shoreline jurisdiction directing attention to a business, professional service, community, site, facility, or entertainment, conducted or sold either on or off premises.

There was discussion about signs on the lake or on islands. No changes were made.

Policies:

1. Signs should be designed and placed so that they are compatible with the aesthetic quality of the existing shoreline and adjacent land and water uses.

No changes were made.

2. Signs should not block or otherwise interfere with visual access to the water or shorelands.

No changes were made.

3. Signs within the shoreline jurisdiction should be of a permanent nature and be linked to the operation of existing uses.

No changes were made.

4. Signs attached to buildings are preferred over free-standing signs.

No changes were made.

Utilities (Accessory)

Accessory utilities are for small-scale distribution services connected directly to the uses along the shoreline. Electric, gas, telephone, cable, water and sewer lines are examples of utilities accessory to shoreline uses.

No changes were made.

Policies

1. Accessory utilities necessary to serve shoreline uses should be properly installed so as to protect the shoreline and water from contamination and degradation.

No changes were made.

2. Accessory utilities and associated rights-of-way should be located outside the shoreline area to the maximum extent feasible. When utility lines require a shoreline location, they should be placed underground.

No changes were made.

3. Accessory utilities should be designed and located in a manner which preserves the natural landscape and shoreline ecology and minimizes conflicts with present and planned land uses.

No changes were made.

4. Whenever possible, existing utility systems should be improved to enhance shoreline appearance and use.

No changes were made.

### Vegetation Conservation

Vegetation conservation includes activities to prevent or minimize the loss of and increase the extent and viability of plant communities that contribute to the ecological functioning of shoreline areas. The intent of vegetation conservation is to provide habitat, improve water quality, reduce destructive erosion, sedimentation, and flooding; and accomplish other functions performed by plant communities along shorelines. Vegetation conservation may also be undertaken to improve the aesthetic qualities of the shoreline or to enhance shoreline uses and minimize habitat loss and the impact of invasive plants, erosion, and flooding. Vegetation conservation deals with the protection and enhancement of existing diverse plant communities along the shorelines, aquatic weed control, and the restoration of altered or threatened shorelines by reestablishing natural plant communities as a dynamic system that stabilizes the land from the effects of erosion.

Mr. Wood was concerned that words such as “improvement” and “preservation” are open to interpretation. He was not in support of requiring property owners to improve or enhance the shoreline functions of their lots.

There was considerable discussion by the Commission about balancing shoreline development and vegetation conservation, and the following changes were made:

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Vegetation conservation provisions are important for several reasons, including water quality, habitat, and shoreline stabilization. Shoreline vegetation improves water quality by removing excess nutrients and toxic compounds, and removing or stabilizing sediments. Habitat functions of shoreline vegetation include shade, litter and woody debris recruitment, refuge, and food production. Shoreline vegetation, especially plants with large root systems, can be very effective at stabilizing the shoreline. An additional reason that vegetation conservation provisions are important is that the Shoreline Management Act sets preference for shorelines of statewide significance, such as Moses Lake. Those preferences include preserving the natural character, resources, and ecology of the shoreline.

Mr. Wood suggested that a different word than “litter” be used since to most people that will mean paper, tires, and other inappropriate objects.

Anne Henning, Associate Planner, stated that in this case it refers to leaves, needles, branches, and other natural materials that fall from trees and shrubs but that she would provide different wording.

No other changes were suggested.

Vegetation conservation provisions apply even to those uses that are exempt from the requirement to obtain any sort of shoreline permit.

No changes were made.

### Policies

1. Natural plant communities within and bordering the shorelines should be protected and maintained to minimize damage to shoreline ecological functions and processes.

No changes were made.

2. Natural shoreline vegetation should be maintained and enhanced to reduce the hazard of bank failures and accelerated erosion. Vegetation removal that is likely to result in soil

erosion severe enough to create the need for structural shoreline stabilization measures should be prohibited.

No changes were made.

3. Shoreline vegetation degraded by natural or manmade causes should be restored wherever feasible.

No changes were made.

4. Non-structural methods of shoreline stabilization, such as vegetation enhancement and soil bioengineering, are preferred to arrest the processes of erosion, sedimentation, and flooding.

No changes were made.

5. Removal of vegetation should be limited to the minimum necessary to reasonably accommodate the permitted use or activity.

It was pointed out that Policies 4 and 5 were already being done by the City. No changes were made.

6. The physical and aesthetic qualities of the natural shoreline should be maintained and enhanced.

No changes were made.

7. Preference should be given to preserving and enhancing natural vegetation closest to the ordinary high water mark.

The Commissioners supported this policy since it implies that it may be acceptable to modify vegetation further from the water. No changes were made.

8. Aquatic weed management should stress prevention first.

No changes were made.

Ms. Henning stated that these policies will be given to the consultant who will draft the regulations. When those are available, additional study sessions will need to be scheduled.

The study session was adjourned at 8 a.m.