

March 7, 2024 Eastsound Planning Review Committee Meeting Minutes

In attendance were Charles Toxey - chair, Scott Lancaster, Jason Bradshaw, new member candidate April Duke, SJC Council Liaison Cindy Wolf, and DCD Planner III Sophia Cassam online.

Meeting was held in the Orcas Senior Center Multi-Purpose Room in person and online and commenced at 3:01PM.

Agenda modification - None

February 22nd Special Eastsound Lighting Meetings and February 1, 2024 Regular EPRC Meeting Minutes unanimously approved with changes asked for by Cindy Wolf.

Public Comment

Susan Mustard showed photos of new development at Fern and Madrona Street. Susan says she could not read the notice she was sent. She requests DCD to send larger printed materials. She also asked how much population can Eastsound support? She comes from Texas where growth management is out of control. She wants to see facts about how big we can grow. Scott Lancaster, former Eastsound Water board member, directed those interested to the latest Water Quality and Availability Report. Since putting monitors into the water source wells, EWUA has learned that we have more than enough water. The Water board is so confident that desalinization is not needed in the foreseeable future. Jason Bradshaw stated that everything is tied to water rights. ESWD owns the original water rights. The new Clark well has created a new large quantity of high quality ground water for Eastsound.

Judy Watson commented that Water board meetings are public and meet there in the Senior Center where issues of development are discussed.

Joseph Segault is concerned about the kind of development in Eastsound. He does not want to see residential development in VC which takes up the land that we need for commercial uses. Wants to address zoning so that retail and restaurants are built in town, not residences. What are we going to do to prevent that? Charles and Scott explained the EPRC's recommendations to remove single family residences from VC and to require mixed use development where retail is below and multi-residential is above. However, in order to get those things changed, we have to update the Eastsound Subarea Plan. The update of this plan has been postponed several times. Sophia Cassam said these changes would need to be made in Title 18 in the Eastsound Subarea Plan. Cindy Wolf asked for clarification on the code changed Joseph wanted to see. Mixed use was discussed and limits of residential development in the core. Rick Hughes said the Eastsound Subarea Plan was removed from the Comp Plan so that we could make more surgical changes to the Eastsound Subarea Plan outside of the Comp Plan agenda.

Council Update with Cindy Wolf – Council Member Wolf went to Washington DC with the National Assoc of Counties, worked on Groundwater issues with the Energy, Environment and Land Use Committee, and attended workshops on, amongst other things, how to work for earmarks. Met with Rep. Larsen and discussed the \$7 million portion of a larger regional Climate Resilience grant proposal. The \$7 million would be used to address short term repairs to MacKaye Harbor Roar on Lopez due to coastal erosion and inundation and to begin planning for long term relocation of the road due to projected sea level rise. Cindy also met with the Director of Appropriations in Senator Cantwell's office to discuss the

Pea Patch and got an invitation and offer for guidance for the Pea Patch group to apply for Community Directed Spending (Earmark) funds for that project. In the 2023-24 WA State Legislative Session HB 2012 passed which makes it possible to get a property tax exemption for OPAL projects and other County funded housing development programs. Legislature got 500K appropriation to WSF to explore how to provide walk-on ferry service to the San Juans and other Puget Sound routes. Another \$180K was awarded to Western Washington University to study the economic impact of schedule disruptions on all communities affected by the WA State Ferry System. Also passed in the Supplemental Transportation Budget were an extra ferry run for Orcas in the summer, and \$100K to reimburse people for housing or transportation to another terminal when they are stranded by cancellation of the last ferry service of the day. Rep. Lekanoff got an additional appropriation for \$360 K in planning funds for the Eastsound Pea Patch project.

Presentation – Jason Bradshaw – Expansion Project – Request for Community Support

ESWD is in the middle of the project build-out. However, costs have gone up since it started. Costs when from a 14M project to a 22M project. ESWD can set a tax but prefers to get grants if at all possible to keep taxes and user fees low. Jason is asking for letters of support to apply for additional grant funding sent to Rick Larson's office. Several suggestions were offered on how to reach out for support. EPRC. Rick suggested making a template for the community to use and putting it in the Sounder. Leith said she would put it in the Sounder for Jason.

*Motion – Scott Lancaster made a motion for EPRC to send a letter in support of pursuing more grant funding for the ESWD expansion project to Rick Larson's office. Charles seconded. Jason abstained. Unanimously passed. Charles to send the letter. This was done.

EPRC Institutional Knowledge Discussion – Goals EPRC has been pursuing for decades to bring to the attention of the current and new EPRC members who will remain after Charles and Scott leave:

- **Airport in relation to Mount Baker Road** – It has long been the position of Eastsound community members and all previous EPRCs to maintain Mount Baker Road's in its current location.
- **The Eastsound Design Standards** were written with an exemption for single family dwellings. One goal of these standards is to have a cohesive look and feel of old and new buildings in Village Commercial (VC) and Village Residential/Institutional (VRI) with the majority of new buildings meeting the design standards. The authors of the standards, architects John Campbell and Fred Klein, intended the exemption to apply only to an individual building his/her own house and not for the multiple dwellings built on spec that have been built in recent years. The language "one single residence, built at one time, on one parcel, not multiple dwellings built at the same time." needs to be added to the exemption language. Failure to do so will allow more and more large buildings and clusters of buildings which do not reflect Eastsound's style.
- EPRC has recommended **removing single dwellings from Village Commercial** altogether so that only 2 or more dwellings could be built in the downtown core. Single family dwellings would still be allowed in VRI.
- EPRC recommends that future long-term housing only be built in **Mixed use buildings in Village Commercial** with commercial uses on the ground floor and residential uses above.

- EPRC recommends that new development/expanded development in **Village Commercial have a maximum 5' setback** from the public right of way and to provide parking in the rear of the building or on the side so that the new building is accessible immediately from the street. This is far more pedestrian friendly. As you walk up and down the street, you see storefronts and seating areas instead of front parking lots.
- **Parking ordinance** – EPRC recommends that the County institute a parking ordinance with a 4-hour parking limit in the busy months, and that small “pocket” parking lots be built just outside the commercial core so that visitors to Eastsound can easily walk to shops restaurants and events. **Parking credits should be minimized unless they are backed up by new parking built.** Credits issued without providing corresponding new parking spaces just add to the Eastsound parking problems. County Council has not yet formed the Eastsound Parking Committee. Scott added that the lack of parking is throttling down Eastsound business.
- **Not allowing back-out parking onto the street.** Please always identify unsafe back-out parking on permits. Recommend smaller driveway entrances with hammerhead turnarounds which allow cars to drive straight onto the street.
- Wider **multi-use pedestrian and bicycle paths** in congested areas in town and in higher density land uses with lines of **street trees between the cars on the street and the walkers/cyclists on the path.** This is a better alternative to cutting down trees to widen roads to add 4' shoulders. It allows streets to be narrower which slows drivers down and is safer for pedestrians and cyclists because it means an unsafe driver is more likely to hit a tree than a person. This also preserves heritage trees. Look at the map in the Eastsound Subarea Goals and Policies Document at the treed entrances to Eastsound. Do all you can to prevent these heritage planted trees and especially the very large stately native Douglas Firs from being cut down unnecessarily. Keeping narrower roads and streets with more tree cover is one of characteristics that sets Eastsound apart from Friday Harbor. Keep Eastsound tree-covered with narrower (slower and safer) streets.
- **Dedication of Paths in Eastsound** – There are several informal paths in Eastsound especially around and through April Duke's, Clyde Duke's and Joe Cohen's parcels which connect central Eastsound to the residential areas farther north. Please work on dedicating those paths to the County right of way to keep them as paths in perpetuity. Rick suggests getting an attorney to draw up a document and present it to County Council to accept or reject.
- **A Street Completion** – The next streetscape improvement needing to be completed is the A Street. There have been two big ideas on how to get traffic in and out of this dead end street. 1) to have an exit to the west through to Orion and 2) to have a roundabout to safely bring traffic around and back out of this area. Rick Hughes commented that he hoped a public private partnership could be established that could use public funds to improve private parking lots. He used the example of the Seaview theater parking lot which is routinely used by the general public as essentially public parking which causes wear and tear and yet is currently maintained privately.
- **Promote Large Shade Trees** – We need to prioritize large shade trees. Too often large shade trees are removed and replanted with smaller trees which will never provide the shade that the original tree did. Whenever streetscapes are being modified, require designs that accommodate canopy street trees in Eastsound which will grow tall enough (25+ feet) that you can walk under them in full shade.

- **Restoration of the Main Street Streetscape.** Various owners over the years have paved over the planting strips and removed street trees from their designated places along Main Street. Make it a priority with Public Works to remove the pavers which were placed in the planting strips and re-plant the street trees in the public right of way on Main. Rick Hughes said this issue is a County Prosecuting Attorney issue and suggests sending this issue to the prosecuting attorney and making a recommendation to the County Council to direct the prosecuting attorney to rectify this issue. Cindy Wolf volunteered to bring this up with the County Manager to ask how to get this resolved.
- Address issue of **unpermitted signs** being posted in several places on the same parcel. Scott identified parcel across the street from him.
- Address the issue of property owners **posting signs** stating that public parking spaces are **private parking**.
- **Urban Gardening** - Make a point of adding verbiage to the Eastsound Subarea Plan Goals and Policies and Title 18 Regulations stating that everyone is allowed to grow whatever food plants and ornamental plants that they want on their own property, including greenhouses as long as the structure does not have lighting that illuminates the glass/acrylic walls – essentially that greenhouse lighting should follow exterior lighting regulations.
- Continue to pursue the **Eastsound Exterior Lighting regulations update**. Charles gave an update on the community's input on exterior lighting regs they would like to see such as having a cutoff time of 10pm for sports event lighting, extending holiday lighting to a full six months, and requiring any new public streetlighting in Eastsound to match the Prune Alley streetlights installed in 2022 in manufacturer/model/height/color temperature and lumen output.
- Continue community dialog about how to deal with rising sea level on **Crescent Beach Road** for the next century while allowing water to flow and tidal exchange. Alternatives include closing the road which would leave only one road connecting each side of the island, one bridge, raising the road with a series of bridges to allow water to move in and out, and building a rock in causeway with large piped areas to allow water flow in and out.

Meeting attendee, Evan Westcott, asked if there would be any problem if he decided to attach a work of art to the side of his new building in the "air space" above his private property. A discussion ensued resulting in a general consensus – as long as the work of art met building code and was confined to his property outside of the public right of way and did not otherwise constitute signage with lettering, logos, etc., it would probably be allowed.

The meeting was adjourned at 4:59pm.