

Eastsound Planning Review Committee

Minutes of December 4, 2025

Meeting open 3:04

In attendance: Jason Bradshaw, Cindy Wolf, April Duke, Commissioner Justin Paulsen, online -Morgan Meadows, Sophia Cassam

Several members of the public including Lisa Byers, Evan Wescott, Bob Eagen, Brian Weise, David Kau

October minutes – approved as written

Public Comment

-Bob Eagan and Woody Ciscowski were sworn in to Orcas Park and Recreations board of directors in front of Commissioner Paulsen

-Question about when public can comment on changes to the UGA? On November 25th the public hearings started. December 9 the council meets to decide.

When is the deadline for getting information to the council? Citizens can participate in the hearing online or in person.

(Person's name?) How are the new rules being implemented and can the public affect them? He wants the public and especially neighbors to be informed on permitting going on. He wants the comments from the public to be solicited and listened to.

Sophia – there are participation opportunities – any building or land division permit coming through the Eastsound UGA comes through the EPRC so can come to the meetings. If there's a hearing about the permit, then there are more opportunities to get involved.

Commissioner Paulsen- there is a notification to neighbors 300 feet around the boundary of the parcel when there is a conditional use permit.

-Anyone can sign up with the county to get notifications for different SJ committees.

-Darcey Miller – Rose Street plat needs a wetlands study

-There are concerns about the blue heron rookery and old growth trees – worries about the scale of homes to be built and how many

-Many questions about low-income housing are not being answered leading to concerns about how the island might be changing with the laws being changed and policies being installed by the Commission

Sev Jones, DCD Director – of several months

25 years of experience in planning, all in PNW and Alaska, from the PNW

Meeting with a community group on Orcas on Sunday to discuss a specific issue

Open door policy - he has a lot to do with stepping into a department that didn't have a leader for a while. Email or phone message to start the process.

Development Code Amendment for comprehensive plan consistency- Changing Village Commercial density from 4-40 units/acre to 12-40 units/acre

Presentation Sophia gave to the Planning Commission at their November meeting was shared

April- Language should be used when mandating minimum building, that it's on buildable acreage, not just acreage. For example, the Village Commercial lot at 215 A Street has critical area and setbacks that severely restrict the ability to build the minimum number of units per acre

Evan Wescott – parking space mandates, you can have more units but with parking you don't have room for building.

Commissioner Paulson- State regulations are deemphasizing parking to emphasize more room for housing.

The committee needs to look at sub-area plan and design standards to determine if there are some changes that would enable more housing without changing the village feeling that we all enjoy.

David Kau – how is density determined with mixed use? Mixing in a dense area could make parking more problematic.

Sophia – the residential would be the qualifier for the density, not the commercial below.

Annual Report and Work Plan

San Juan County would like a summary of what we worked on this year and what our plans are for 2026. The county has a new template for us to use to streamline the process.

We have until the end of January to submit the annual report to the county council.

Due date for the Work Plan is our March meeting

Commissioner Paulsen – last year’s report was great and close to the new format.

Jason – this year’s report almost ready to submit.

We will submit it after it’s approved at the January meeting.

For 2026 -Our work is mainly dictated by the county and items that they would like us to review now that the comprehensive plan is done.

Brian Wiese – after the comprehensive plan was approved, the EPRC subarea plan was supposed to be approved, LOOK at it again – this year is a good year to push it!

Council Update

Comprehensive plan – December 9 final public hearing. Still have pieces to approve, including Friday Harbor. Council will submit its work as complete to the Department of Commerce to be reviewed. Friday Harbor will have to play catch up.

Budget – the county is cutting and slashing. Funds for code amendment process were reduced by 30% so some money left to work on them (for consultants) DCD will hire the consultants.

Could have been a \$10,000,000 short fall, now down to \$1.5 mil short fall for biennium. 2026 will only be a 1-year budget so they can re-structure for 2027 budget.

Parking lot closure – ferry landing – towed out 13 vehicles for tree work

County talking about consolidating committees – EPRC can help decide if it is going to include other community committees – is it even legal for us to expand the EPRC – County needs to open up the charter to expand the “authority”.

Permits

BUILD-25-0246 – permit 217223002000- modular tiny home to replace an a-frame, Sunset Ave.

Everything looks fine, a way to bring a family member to live closer to the rest of the family. Park model.

LANDUSE-25-271414003000 – permit 27144003000 – preliminary long plat on Rose Street

Evan Wescott is working hard to come up with a plan to provide housing in Eastsound. The county did not approve his first neighborhood idea.

This elicited a discussion about the ability to build affordable housing on Orcas Island.

BUILD-23-0343, -0344, -0345, -0346, -0347 – permits 271411023000, 271411024000, 271411025000

Kidder Way – OPAL Housing Project – Landscaping Requirements

They need to make sure that they are complying with the Eastsound Sub Area, but it looks like the changes from the October version made to the plan satisfy the requirements

Bob Eagen – plantings at each side of the entrance to the parking lot should be low enough for good visibility for entering and exiting onto Mt Baker Rd

Meeting adjourned at 5:05 pm

Next Meeting January 8?