

## **BY-LAWS and RULES OF PROCEDURE**

### **Planning Commission Walla Walla County, Washington**

Revised April 2, 2008

#### **ARTICLE I -- PREAMBLE**

The County Planning Commission is created by ordinance of the County Commissioners of the County of Walla Walla, Washington, to direct the growth and physical development of the County of Walla Walla in a sound and orderly fashion for the health, safety, morals and general welfare of the citizens of Walla Walla County.

The function of the Commission shall be to consider matters related to planning; to make recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners, County departments, citizenry and other governmental agencies. Its duties shall include undertaking and carrying out comprehensive studies and surveys of existing conditions and prospective future growth of the County; formulation and maintaining a Comprehensive Plan and development regulations in compliance with the Growth Management Act for the long-term development of the County; serving as the Zoning Commission of the County, formulating regulations of the subdivisions of land; and promoting public interest in and understanding of the work of the Commission in the performance of its appointed tasks. The Commission may initiate, for the entire County's benefit, petitions for rezoning of an area.

The County Planning Commission sees its basic responsibility as the creation of an organized development pattern, which will guide public and private endeavor towards producing a better and more efficient community for the benefit of both the community and the individual. Amendments to the Comprehensive Plan and development regulations shall be made sparingly and only for the general welfare of the entire community.

In order that the functions, duties and responsibilities of the Commission may be carried out in an orderly and consistent fashion with full public knowledge of the procedures involved, the following by-laws and rules of procedure are adopted.

#### **ARTICLE II -- OFFICERS**

A. The officers of the County Planning Commission shall be:

1. Chairman: The chairman shall preside at all regular, adjourned and special meetings and public hearings of the Commission, have general supervision of the conduct of the affairs of the Commission and perform such other duties as are usually exercised by the Chairman of the Commission.

2. Vice-Chairman: The Vice-Chairman shall perform the duties of the Chairman during the absence or disability of the Chairman. In the event that both the Chairman and Vice-Chairman are absent, then the members present shall choose one from among their number to be Chairman Pro-Tem for that meeting.

3. Vacancy: Vacancies in the office of Chairman or Vice-Chairman for any cause shall be filled for the unexpired term by a new election at any regular meeting of the Commission.

4. Secretary: The Community Development Director is hereby designated as the Secretary, who shall keep a written record of all business transacted by the Commission, notify members of meetings, keep on file all official records of the Commission and be responsible for serving legal notice of all public hearings.

B. The officers of the County Planning Commission shall be elected each year from the members of the Commission for a one-year term at the Annual Meeting.

### ARTICLE III -- MEETINGS

A. Annual Meeting: The annual meeting for the installation of new members and election of officers shall be held at the first regular meeting in January.

B. Regular Meetings: Regular meetings of the Commission shall be held at 7:00 p.m. on the first Wednesday of each month in the Walla Walla County Community Development Department auditorium. Any regular meeting may be adjourned to a definite date and place by the majority vote of a quorum of the members. Adjourned or special meetings may be held at any time or place determined by the Commission.

C. Special Meetings: Special meetings of the Commission may be held at the call of the Chairman or the request, in writing, of any three (3) or more members and if the Chairman shall fail to comply with such a request, said members so requesting shall call such a meeting all signing the notice. All members shall be notified at least 48 hours in advance of the time and place set for a special meeting.

D. All meetings and hearings of the Commission shall be opened to the public.

E. Notices of all annual, regular or special meetings shall be mailed to each member at least five (5) days before the meeting.

F. A quorum necessary for the transaction of business shall consist of four (4) members. With a quorum present, the business of the Commission shall be transacted by majority vote of members present, including the vote of the Chairman.

G. The Commission shall keep minutes and records of all its resolutions, transactions, findings and determinations and if the vote is not unanimous, the vote of each member present shall be recorded with each order or resolution. All votes taken by the Commission shall be verbal. The minutes, records, resolutions, transactions, findings and determinations shall be of public record. Non-unanimous decisions shall be by roll call and the Chairman shall be last to vote.

H. After a matter has been officially considered and the Commission has reached a decision, the Commission shall not reconsider that matter or decision until the matter has been entered upon the agenda for and heard at a subsequent meeting of the Commission.

I. The Chairman shall rule on all procedural questions subject to reversal by two-thirds (2/3) majority of the members present.

J. Membership: The County Planning Commission shall consist of seven (7) members appointed by the County Commissioners. Appointments shall be for a four-year term. A member having more than three consecutive unexcused absences will be replaced on the Commission.

K. Conflict of Interest and Appearance of Fairness: Any members having a direct monetary interest in the outcome of any matter brought before the Commission or who feels that personal reasons may prejudice his decision, shall disqualify himself and leave the room without reason or suggestion of his interest and take no part in the discussion or voting of the matter.

#### **ARTICLE IV -- ORDER OF BUSINESS**

A. The order of business is as follows:

1. Call to order by the Chairman or Vice-Chairman
2. Roll Call
3. Determination of a quorum
4. Conflict of interest/appearance of fairness
5. Approval of minutes of last preceding meeting
6. Unfinished Business
7. New Business
  - Staff presentation/public hearings
8. Staff update
9. Adjournment

#### **ARTICLE V – PRESENTATION OF MATTERS BEFORE THE COMMISSION**

A. Every matter on which the Commission is authorized or required to act, brought before the Commission by any person, official, organization or agency shall be presented in writing or on forms provided for the purpose and shall be complete, per Walla Walla County Code (WWCC) 14.05.040.

B. Filing: All matters to come before the Commission shall be filed with the Community Development Director. The Community Development Director shall reject any application that is improper or incomplete.

C. Docket and Calendar: Each matter of presentation shall be numbered serially under the proper heading and shall be placed upon the docket and remain under the docket until placed upon the calendar, or withdrawn by the applicant or his duly authorized agent. Docket numbers shall begin on the first day of January of each year and shall be referenced with the number of the year in which said matters were filed or presented. For example, CUP-01-01 (CUP-year-sequence). All matters docketed shall be set for hearing, in the order docketed, after a Notice of Completeness has been issued by the Director.

D. On matters requiring publication of notice, such matters shall be docketed for the next regular meeting, in accordance with the Notice of Hearing, following the publication of notice thereof.

E. Only those cases set for hearing at a given meeting shall be heard and they shall be heard in the order in which they appear on the calendar for that day, unless the order of hearing is changed by the Chairman or by motion and a vote of members.

F. Conduct of public hearings:

1. The Chairman or Community Development Director will call the agenda item.

2. Staff presentation, including submittal of any administrative reports and written correspondence received prior to the hearing shall be given. Members of the Commission may ask questions of staff.

3. The applicant, or a designated representative of the applicant, may present any information or testimony he/she believes pertinent to the application and the Commission members may address questions to the applicant through the Chairman.

4. The Chairman will establish rules of order with time limits and call for testimony or comments by the public, which are pertinent to the matter. The Chairman shall decide whether to separate statements from persons attending, opposed to and in favor of the application, and if so, which statements will be heard first. The Chairman, at his discretion, shall pose questions.

5. The Chairman shall allow for a time for rebuttal, response and/or clarifying statements by the staff and the applicant.


6. After the Chairman has closed the public hearing, the Chairman will not recognize further comments. During the period of discussion by the Commission, a member may request the Chairman to call on an individual for specific questions. The Commission may leave the record open for written testimony to a specific date after the close of oral testimony.

7. Voting on all but minor administrative actions shall be by roll call if the vote is not unanimous and the vote of each member present shall be recorded in the minutes as a "yes", "no" or if abstaining to vote, it shall be noted. A motion that fails to pass will be considered the same as a motion that lacks a second. A motion recommending denial by the Commission must be through a motion recommending approval or recommending denial by a "yes" vote of a majority of those voting.

#### **ARTICLE VI – RECOMMENDATIONS AND ACTIONS**

The Secretary shall prepare and the Chairman shall execute a resolution setting forth the Commission's findings and conclusions, which include a statement of how the criteria specified in the appropriate sections of the code are addressed by the application. The resolution shall be finalized no later than the next regularly scheduled Planning Commission meeting. Actions that require a recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners (WWCC 14.03.030) shall be forwarded to the Board upon finalization of the resolution by the Planning Commission Chairman.

Recommend approval by the Board of County Commissioners



Dirk Fledderjohann, Chairman  
Walla Walla County Planning Commission