

**Whatcom County
Council Planning and Development Committee**

**COUNTY COURTHOUSE
311 Grand Avenue, Ste #105
Bellingham, WA 98225-4038
(360) 778-5010**



Committee Minutes - Final

ESTIMATED TIME - MEETING MAY BEGIN EARLIER/LATER THAN 2:45 P.M.

Tuesday, February 25, 2020

2:45 PM

Council Chambers

COUNCILMEMBERS

Rud Browne
Tyler Byrd
Ben Elenbaas

CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

Dana Brown-Davis, C.M.C.

Call To Order

Committee Chair Ben Elenbaas called the meeting to order at 2:45 p.m. in the Council Chambers, 311 Grand Avenue, Bellingham, Washington.

Roll Call

Present: 3 - Rud Browne, Tyler Byrd and Ben Elenbaas

Absent: None

Also present: Barry Buchanan, Todd Donovan, Carol Frazey, and Kathy Kershner

Committee Discussion

1. [AB2020-099](#) Discussion regarding the Whatcom County Business and Commerce Advisory Committee's recommendations on housing

Councilmembers discussed a history of the recommendations; a request from the advisory committee to have Planning and Development Services Director, Mark Personius, come to give his perspective about what is viable; and an email response (on file) from Personius on the six stated recommendations; whether the recommendations could potentially cause other unintended consequences or are geared more to the cities; whether further discussion should happen with Personius present; what it would mean to declare a housing crisis; and what growth is currently taking place and how it is meeting the demand.

The following people spoke:

- Don Goldberg, Port of Bellingham
- Matt Aamot, Planning and Development Services Department

The speakers answered questions about and Councilmembers discussed the number of units that are currently permitted; historical data about how many houses have been built over the years and how many are needed to accommodate growth; extending City utility services into the County where the County borders the Cities so that some of the density is within County property; annexation rules and rules about putting services into urban growth areas (UGAs); a map being developed that shows infrastructure around the county; hearing first from the Planners from the small Cities; the possibility of working on a housing plan; creating a County or City wetland mitigation bank; and looking at the County's fee schedule for wetland mitigation banking and associated building fees.

Byrd suggested having Karen Frakes, Prosecuting Attorney's Office, and Mark Personius come speak to the Committee before deciding whether to declare a housing crisis.

Browne suggested finding out what language has been used by other jurisdictions that have chosen to declare a crisis.

Byrd moved to recommend that the full Council draft a letter to the Business and Commerce Advisory Committee stating that they are in the process of reviewing their recommendations and will get back to them shortly with a response.

Councilmembers discussed the motion.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye: 3 - Browne, Byrd, and Elenbaas

Nay: 0

This agenda item was DISCUSSED AND A MOTION WAS APPROVED.

Other Business

There was no other business.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 3:48 p.m.

ATTEST:

WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL
WHATCOM COUNTY, WA

Ben Elenbaas-via email 7/16/2020

Dana Brown-Davis, Council Clerk

Ben Elenbaas, Committee Chair

Kristi Felbinger, Minutes Transcription

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