

**WHTIMAN COUNTY  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
01/06/2021  
MINUTES**

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Art Swannack – District 1 Commissioner – Chair  
Tom Handy – District 2 Commissioner  
Michael Largent – District 3 Commissioner – Vice-Chair

**CONSULTANT: LDC, INC:**

Todd Hall – Planning Manager  
Matt Covert - Planner  
Samantha Adams – Permit Technician

**Meeting Attendees:**

Shelley Chambers-Fox – League of Women Voters  
Hailey Lewis - SEL

Chad – Okay Alan, do you want to start?

Alan – Yeah. The next part is we're going to introduce, well we've already introduced LDC and the three persons that are involved in that right now. So, they are going to make a presentation to us. We're now about to launch into the Comprehensive Plan update, which is going to involve everybody, the Planning Commission, Board of County Commissioners', staff and of course the consultants. So, this will be the consultant's opportunity to introduce themselves to us and tell us hopefully how the plan is going to go. But, we're all going to have to be participating in this. So, Todd I will leave that up to you and you now have the floor.

Todd Hall – Thank you very much Alan for the introduction and again my name is Todd Hall. I'm the Planning Manager for LDC, Inc. We're located in Woodenville, WA, just

outside of Seattle. My colleague Matt Covert is one of our Planners at LDC, and he is co-leading this project with me and then I also have Samantha Adams, she is going to be assisting on this project. She'll be taking notes tonight, so she'll kind of be in the background taking all the feedback that we receive from you tonight and any future meetings that we embark on. So I'm going to try to share my screen here Alan, if not I don't know if you have control of that or not. I'm going to see if this work, hopefully it does. Sometimes they are locked.

Alan – I've got it.

Todd – Okay, I'm going to go full screen and hopefully everyone can still see this.

Alan – Can everyone see this?

Everyone answered yes.

Todd – Okay, good deal. Again thank you so much to Mark, Alan and staff, the County Commissioner's, and the Planning Commission. We're really excited to be able to help you on your first major update of your Comprehensive Plan. Believe it or not, and I don't know if everyone is aware of this or not, but your plan is about 42-43 years old, at this point. From the original adoption of the Plan, I understand that there was some small minor amendments over the course of those last 40+ years, but this is the first real comprehensive look, so to speak, at your Plan. We're just really thrilled to be able to participate and help the County out as you move forward into the future.

### **Power Point Presentation:**

#### **Page 2: Map**

Todd – Just to start out, here is one of your old maps here from the County's original Comp Plan.

#### **Page 3 and 4: Why Are We Here?**

Todd – The Whitman County Comp Plan, as I said, was adopted in 1978 and it hasn't received any full look at it since. And so, this particular effort will be an opportunity to take inventory on all parts of the Plan that remain relevant and work well and then also what needs to be changed, based on the changes of the community over the last 40+ years.

So, Whitman County is unique in that it is a legacy community, there's folks, possibly like many of you, who have grown up there, have lived there for decades and you have a lot of history with Whitman County. One of our goals is to capture that history and understand where the County has come from, but also capturing on those changes that are taking place. We definitely want to respect the history and the legacy of all of the communities that make up Whitman County. There is inevitably changes in public

attitudes, needs and experiences that will need to be reflected in an updated Plan. This is not unique just to Whitman County, all counties across the State of Washington, regardless of their size go through some kind of change and growth over a number of years. And Whitman County, obviously, as you know, has Pullman and Colfax as the two, so to speak, major towns of the County, but you also have a number of other smaller areas that may have some changes that we may want to take a look at a little bit closer. But, again like I said, we're respecting the history and the culture of those communities.

Another one is providing the public with an opportunity to express their visions of Whitman County and as Alan pointed out, it's going to take all of your participation, but the public, as a whole, all the citizens of Whitman County, it's our intention to reach out to as many people as possible. We know, as of right now and over the last year, it's been definitely challenging on public outreach and as we're seeing here tonight, we normally probably would have one of these meetings in person with you, but thankfully in our day and age we're able to utilize technology and this seems to be working pretty well for now. But, it's our full intention to get over to your community later this year and have in-person engagement opportunities, because that is the best way to connect with individuals that can tell their stories and what is really on their minds and it just makes for a better engaging process.

And then finally, updating the Comp Plan elements to reflect the 2019 Critical Areas, and it should say the Natural Resources Ordinances and the 2015 update to the Shoreline Master Plan.

One thing that I will get into in the next slide or two is, one thing that is unique about Whitman County and similar to maybe some of your neighbors like, Adams County and Lincoln County, is you're not fully planning under the Growth Management Act, you're only required to have your Critical Areas and Natural Resources updated. But, it is the desire of the County staff and the Board of County Commissioners to take a really comprehensive look and basically re-write, so to speak, on the Plan, because it's just been such a long time. We're still going to be in touch with the State and coordinating with them on the necessary elements, but for the most part this is going to be your Plan and this will have your stamp on it for sure.

So the next slide is, you may have seen this or not, this is a map from the Department of Commerce website. And the Department of Commerce Growth Management Division. They are the ones that are responsible for administering the Growth Management Act. The counties that are highlighted in green are those that are required to plan fully. There are 13 goals, on the side there, on the upper left, as well as a couple letters, that these counties need to fully plan to. The blue ones are 10 counties that opted in, they're not required to, but they decided that for whatever reason their Boards had decided to plan fully to the GMA. The remaining ones that are in gray are the ones that partially plan to the Growth Management Act. And again, as I mentioned, the Critical Areas and the Natural Resources are the two that just need to follow State law and luckily your county has just recently adopted a Critical Areas Ordinance and

there will just be some minor things to that, as well as, Natural Resources. So, you are half way there. So the Plan will really reflect the change on your own, what your input is based on what we hear from the public and yourselves. And I just clipped out a small snippet from the MRSC, which is the Municipal Research Service Center that states “The GMA establishes the primacy of the comprehensive plan. **The comprehensive plan is the centerpiece of local planning and articulates a series of goals, objectives, policies, actions, and standards** that are intended to guide day-to-day decisions by elected official and local government staff.”

## **Page 6: Board of County Commissioners and Plan Commission:**

The next slide represents the Board of County Commissioners and Planning Commission Roles and Responsibilities, throughout the process.

So as part of the Comp Plan process one of them is to identify existing challenges and any potential barriers that the County is facing and it will be to help us, the project team, and that includes the County staff to better understand the local context.

Sharing experiences that are lived by many of you in Whitman County

Representing the shared interest of Whitman County residents. And then also informing the Comp Plan changes.

So, as I mentioned at the beginning of the presentation, there is going to be, obviously we want to respect the history of Whitman County, but there is also going to be some changes that we are going to want to document, whether that be ones on transportation or growth in particular, local areas like Pullman or Colfax in the county, or Steptoe or some of the other smaller enclaves and then also looking at economic development, the impacts to any potential annexations that Pullman is considering and wanting to maintain that tax base in the county. So, there is going to be a lot of things that we are going to want to discuss and cover as we’re going through this Comp Plan.

## **Page 7: Project Schedule and Timeline:**

This next slide talks a little bit about our project schedule and timeline. So this is a kind of high level, 30,000 foot deal of what we are going to be doing over the next year. So, the top task, which is tonight’s meeting and that is the project kickoff. And then the next phase will be working with Mark and Alan and staff to develop a public outreach strategy and survey and then also the County will have a landing page or website that will have all the information we’re working on throughout this process. That yourselves and the public will be able to access and find out what is going on as we move through this project.

The first star there, at April, it is our intention to have a first virtual public meeting, understanding that we’re still probably, we’re getting at the tail end of COVID and hopefully, cross our fingers, we’re getting that over with and then later on in the year, I

marked another opportunity to have in-person public meetings in July, sometime this summer and then maybe at multiple locations. So that is going to be in greater discussion as we move through it. Where those actually will be, but we will definitely be going to locations where we think we will get the most participation and involvement. And the weather will be a lot better by then, nice and warm in Whitman County, so we could probably do some of these outdoors at local parks or wherever that works. So stay tuned for that.

Task 3, this is data review, existing conditions and mapping. So, Matt, Sami and I will be looking at reviewing all the existing data that the County has, that we will want to pull into the new Plan. And then also, create new maps. So, as you saw on that first slide, that was one of the County's first cartographic efforts, back in the day, prior to GIS and computer mapping. So, now we will be able to have very colorful and hopefully usable maps that will be able to stand the next couple of decades at least, through the next update.

Task 4, develop draft narratives, goals and policies. So this is kind of where we really delve into the major issues and focus areas on all of these particular elements. And Matt will probably talk about that on one of these future slides, but there will be an element on land use, environmental, natural resources, transportation, capital facilities. So all of those are going to be separate elements and then each of those will have their own county goals and policies, embedded in each one of those sections.

Task 5, as I mentioned earlier, will have some more outreach with the BOCC and the Planning Commission and then also the public. That will be later this summer.

Task 6, we will be reviewing Title 19, which is the County Zoning Code doing a little bit of an audit. Seeing if there are any opportunities or what opportunities there are based on what we find with the Comprehensive Plan update on those code sections that would need to be adjusted.

Task 7, and lastly as we hit later in the process and into the fall, we'll be coming up with the final draft and the SEPA checklist, which is the environmental, state required environmental review that goes to the State Department of Ecology. Typically those are relatively straight forward and I don't expect that to be anything major that would have a setback to it.

Task 8, and then public hearings and adoption will be the later part. And LDC will take a step back a little bit and we'll participate as needed, at that point.

So, that gives you a kind of overview of what the next 12 months will be happening. At this point I will shift it over to Matt and he can take care of the next few slides here.

Matt Covert – Absolutely. Good evening everyone. Again it's nice to meet you all and thank you so much for having us on. So I'm just going to go through the last 3 slides.

## **Page 8: Requirements for Public Engagement**

To kind of cover what we are seeing as the requirements for public engagement and how you can help us with that. And then a window into our framing the questions we ask ourselves and asked county staff about how to approach this meeting and how to approach the scope of the project overall. And then delve into some specific questions for you, because you are the subject matter experts on the place where you live and we would love to get a little feedback from you on those. I know from the beginning of the meeting, several of you have been in meetings all day and might be a little bit zoomed out, but we are very much looking forward to whatever ideas are generated. Of course this will be circulated and information can be provided later, if you want or during this meeting if you prefer, whatever works for you all.

As Todd mentioned, we will be doing mostly virtual for the beginning of this process and hopefully moving to some in-person work in the summer. We deliberately put those outreach efforts where we did, to be mindful of the agricultural community in Whitman County, so that we can kind of straddle either side of the planting season, hopefully. And then that summer engagement effort, we hope we will reach more people, because it's hopefully after a lot of the field work is done. But, in the meantime, we are going to continue to proceed with developing a broader public engagement strategy with these elements and more if appropriate. Definitely we will be working with county staff to get the project, whether its documents for review or meeting information or embedded surveys, if possible, up on the website, periodic public meetings online, as I mentioned public noticing around the county where appropriate and where those will be most effectively used. And then emails, mailing lists and surveys, this is something where we are really going to tap into your expertise and to staff's expertise. We spent a little time just going through, looking up stuff in the communities and putting together a list of potential groups, organizations, agencies and entities to reach out to, to help distribute whatever we need feedback on. And we already got some great feedback from Mark, thank you very much for that. Alan, Mark was that document sent to the Commissioners at all or is that something can follow up with later?

Alan – I sent it to the Planning Commission today and I don't remember if I sent it to the BOCC. BOCC, did you receive that from me at all?

Art – I don't remember it.

Alan – Okay I will send that out to the BOCC tomorrow.

Matt – Great, it's just the first crack that we took at putting together a list of groups that would be willing to hopefully be engaged and we would really like your feedback on that once it gets out to you all. That can be provided to us directly or to Alan and Mark, whichever you prefer.

## **Page 9: Current Plan:**

This next slide kind of gets into our, the way we approached setting up this meeting and setting up the project as a whole. So, the Current Plan as we mentioned has definitely been around awhile, but that doesn't mean that all elements of it need to be totally re-worked. I'm sure there's several pieces of it that would work quite well for your purposes and we want to not get rid of what works well. At the same time we want to take a real close look and use our resources efficiently on the elements that we think are going to need the most work. And so, that includes not just topics, but also groups in the community that may or may not be well represented in the current plan, as it stands. And the interests of the general community, as well as the interests of those groups that we're going to be reaching out to. The box on the right here is the list of all of the elements in the Comprehensive Plan. As Todd mentioned before, the only ones you're statutorily required to update are, environmental critical areas and natural resources. One of which has already been done very recently. But, the rest of these are all inter-related elements of planning in the county and we think that we would like to approach this project as a, the first question of all of you is, what elements of the plan as it stands now work really well and we should spend less time on those and which of these really need the most attention? Whether it's transportation, if there is issues with county roads and with the rail corridors, the rail to trails initiatives, whether it's the economic development issues associated with the Pullman-Moscow Corridor, you know, what are the big ticket items that are going to need the most attention from us and from you.

#### **Page 10: Questions:**

So this is a good opportunity to move onto the questions. So, as a first question, if any of you have taken a hard look at the existing plan or have experience with working with the existing plan, what are going to be the elements that are the biggest ticket, the hottest items for us to address?

Alan – I'll pitch in. Residential is probably going to be a hot topic. And then of course agriculture is the mainstay of the county and that it's going to be a large question. And marijuana will probably crop up too, pardon the pun there.

Michael – We're done with marijuana.

Alan – Have you smoked it all? Laughter from the group.

Matt – One of the specific topical questions we had in here was, business flexibility in agricultural zones, we understand that is an issue that the County may want to explore. Are there any thoughts among the Commissioners about which specific elements of the, you know, business enterprising and agricultural zones, is the most pressing issue and how we can better allow flexibility in the agricultural zones as we work on plan revisions.

Dave – Let me jump in here. Since I have been on this Commission, a frequent activity is to change the zoning of an existing commercial or industrial operation within the AG zone so that they can expand or change or do what they would need to do. While we're

here can we maybe survey the county for the remainder of those situations and even proactively correct that?

Matt – I think that there are some real avenues within the plan for creating policies that allow flexibility more as a matter of a right within a zone rather than...

Dave – I guess I don't have enough AG experience myself, but I'm not sure that I would favor allowing those activities within the AG zone outright, so much as identifying where they are already occurring and make it easier for those landowners to change and improve their current practices.

Matt – Okay that is really helpful. Thank you.

Alan – Alan, just to piggy-back on that one. There is some difficulty with changing zones in the County, even for existing businesses. We've run into a head wind with those and one of the things that I would like to see in this update, is discussing where those commercial or industrial zones should be and then make, like Dave said, making it easier. The plan before was to change for instance, all of the agricultural commodity warehouses, elevators, all those businesses, some of them now are in commercial zones. That means that they can expand without a conditional use permit. Traditionally they had to go through a conditional use permit and that is where we started to run into a headwind there with the public. Some public said no, we don't want that stuff going on here and they would fight any kind of zone change that would happen in the county there. I think that is the question that Dave is getting to, that those businesses, it's difficult for them to expand because they have to go through another conditional use if they want to expand. But, if they are in a commercial zone, it's an outright allowed use. So any expansion would be allowed, without a CUP.

Dave – Yeah.

Matt – That's certainly a question we will be exploring as part of this plan. Thanks for that feedback. Are there any other thoughts on the commercial element of agriculture, whether it's the CUP issue or the marijuana issue or anything else?

Art – One of the big issues you had come up recently, was quarries in AG areas.

Alan – Yeah, at the moment that is allowed in the Agricultural District with a conditional use permit. And everybody knows that quarrying is not something that the neighbors want or anywhere near them. So, there is always a resistance to that. And this ties into Natural Resources, the natural resource part of the GMA that we have to address. And that was my thought guys, that the comprehensive plan should reflect that somehow, to make it less difficult for natural resource areas to be opened up.

Brian – Yeah, I think Mark would agree that we need those areas to supply the county with rock to put on the roads. We don't want to see it get out of hand and I don't know what the language looks like for the last 40 years, but it probably needs updating. I was

just going to say that I think we need to take a good look at what we can do for transportation in the county, to help the farmers get that grain to the river or wherever it needs to go. They are going to need help with that going forward, because as we have seen, it comes off so much faster now. That is something that I am concerned about.

Mark – I would agree. It is getting much more challenging to develop rock sources, whether public or private, it gets harder every year.

Tom – I think from the public, I have been hearing a lot about the trail initiatives too. So, we need to be prepared to put some thought into how the county wants to deal with that.

Matt – Absolutely. Are there any additional thoughts on that? That is something that came up in our initial scoping meeting.

Rusty – One of the questions that I have is, we've been able to kind of work through these things over the last 30-40 years. I'm not really quite understanding exactly why we won't be able to do it in the next 40 years without a plan. I'm not really quite sure why so much effort needs to be put into this. You haven't really answered that in anything that you've said so far.

Alan – Are you talking about why we are really updating the Comprehensive Plan? Is that your question?

Rusty – I am and I'm also wondering, why is it useful to make a few changes to a plan that has been working? I really don't understand, as I've been listening, what major problems have been given to the Commissioners' or anybody else that they foresee as a huge big change here in Whitman County. I certainly have my own opinion of things that are going to change in the next 20 or 30 years, but I haven't heard any of those mentioned yet.

Matt – What are those? We would like to hear more about that.

Rusty – Well, I guess in my opinion, if you just looked at the history over the last, I'll just say in the last 30 years, our school systems have done a really good job of educating our young people so that they can go to college or go into the service and get a real good high paying job that takes them away from Whitman County. And as a result of their great efforts, which I am glad they did, our little towns have decreased in size and population to an extent where there really isn't too many small towns that have a viable economic source in them anymore. I mean in my little town of Garfield, the J E Love Company used to employ several hundred people and I think there are 7-8 that normally work there now. There really isn't a business section in Garfield, not like it was 30 or 40 years ago. So, for like us, you know several years ago we put new sidewalks in Garfield and Farmington and all these other little towns, well, no one uses them because no one lives there. Now maybe with the COVID thing, maybe some people will come back, I don't know. If people will move out of Portland and Seattle and all these

other towns that are having major problems, but if you look at the history, the people are moving away because they need jobs. That is why Pullman is growing, it's because they have a good source of income there for people that have a good job and they make a good living. That is why there are new homes down there, it's because of the industry that is there. All the other parts of the County, it just hasn't been that way. And so, I guess what I'm kind of wondering is, is when you look at Whitman County, and I know the Commissioners' talk about this, what direction is Whitman County really going to go in the future? As the population shifts from rural Whitman County to urban Pullman, then the control of the County is going to shift with it and there really isn't anything we can do about that. And who's to say whether that is right or wrong? That is all I've got to say for now.

Dave – I would think that some of what you said is a good reason to try and plan and be more proactive rather than just letting things just happen. I would say that something that I have known, it's been clear for a long time, and I think the Commissioners' will agree too, is that Whitman County has a relatively limited economic base, especially outside of the urban areas and the main urban areas. If there are things that we can do to facilitate that kind of economic activity, both in the Garfield and Farmington areas, but also in the other unincorporated areas. Whitman County needs income generating activities, government income generated activities outside the incorporated areas because the roads are still going to be built and things like that. That was my 3 cents.

Chad – I've got a question here. You guys were talking about your meeting times for the public and trying to straddle different issues of farming. I know, I think it was April, something, you had one meeting and then in July. Well the county is primarily AG right now and that hopefully, in my opinion, it's going to stay that way for quite a while, not exclusively that. But, that April date, depending on what the weather does, you're going to be smack dab in the middle of spring work for most farmers. And then the July 12<sup>th</sup> or 19<sup>th</sup>, for anything, east of, or actually west of the twin bridges, they're going to be in harvest already.

Erina – Also, that July date, we're going to be haying. So you may or may not get people on that one also.

Chad – Yeah that is the other thing, usually haying for the rest of the county is about that time too.

Matt – That is really good to know. Thank you.

Todd – Yeah, we were talking with Alan and Mark, on trying to pinpoint when the best times would be and this is certainly up for adjustment, so these aren't set in stone. We can chat about that offline.

Chad – Right. And the problem is, the county has some interesting climates throughout and so the whole county doesn't go in at the same time. So, it may be something where

you have to think about doing, if you're going to try to go more locally, certain areas you can get input there one day and then move someplace else.

Matt – That is really helpful, thank you.

Mark – We were just trying to pick some dates that would work and we know they won't for some people, no matter what we pick.

Chad – Yeah, it is hard to tell right now, I mean we've started spring work as early as February in the Pullman area and they have started as late as the middle of April. So, weather does play a big role in that. But, typically in April, they are either finishing up or just getting started.

Matt – Okay, that is very helpful. Thank you.

Todd – Yeah, we'll coordinate more with staff and figure out the best sweet spot, I guess to pick.

Mark – Remember, I'm not a farmer, so I've got to rely on you guys to tell me if I say something foolish.

Dave – Speaking of the timelines, I don't think this is actually as complicated an effort as maybe it might be. I've been in on a part of a couple of these comp plans here in Pullman and they usually take longer than initially planned, to accomplish. So, I was just wondering how confident you are in getting this accomplished in one year.

Todd – Is that directed to us?

Dave – It is directed to the LDC but also the staff.

Todd – Well, it's our goal to get through. We have a strict schedule with the county staff to get the work done during the course of this calendar year. So, the schedule that we have laid out and worked with Mark and Alan is our effort to conclude this project by the end of 2021.

Dave – The three of you aren't hunting for other jobs at other firms right now? That is what burnt the last one here in Pullman.

Mark – Let me speak to that just a little bit, Dave. And I'm partly the reason we picked the year, and I can only budget for one calendar year at a time with the Commissioners'. So we had a lot of conversations early on with the consultants, about whether to finish or not in 2021. We don't know, but let's try for it and maybe the best we do by the end of this year, is that we have a good rough draft or a good medium draft or a good nearly final draft, but even if we have to poke at it into 2022, it won't be as big of an effort. For budgetary reasons, I wanted to get at least the heavy lifting done in 2021. So, that is kind of why we pressed them to allow a one year schedule. And I always find that if you

start with a 1½ year schedule that is exactly what you'll get. If you start with a year, you might end up stretching it, but let's do the heavy lifting while we are focused on it.

Todd – One thing to keep in mind too, is because Whitman County is not a fully planning county, and you're not mandated to do the full Commerce checklist, which that is the piece that really bogs down the review process, so to speak. So, we've done a number, myself I have done a number of comprehensive plans across the state in my 20 year career, and all those that have involved the Commerce checklist, that tends to be the one biggest thing that slows stuff down. It's not the county or the public process, it's really the review of the State and so the fact that you don't have that piece, in this whole review process, that makes a huge difference on accelerating the process. That is going to help a lot.

Alan – And Dave, to answer that, it's going to fall upon me to have a pretty clear picture by the end of the year on how things are supposed work out. Then staff would pick up the slack there. We can definitely finish that off. The heavy lifting is done, then the finishing touches could be falling upon the Planning staff.

Dave – Okay, there has been two factors that have been major delays for the City of Pullman, in this effort. One is that the consultant that we hired was really good, had a falling out or for some reason left that firm and that firm never ever really caught back up. But the other was Planning staff got busy with zones and all the other duties and you know, the public has the right for a proper response when they make an application. So, if hypothetically if COVID leaves and things are back, you could find yourselves busier and pushing this further out. I'm just asking, I'm fully in support of this right now.

Alan – Well there is no way to predict what you just thought about there. So, if stuff happens, stuff happens. But we plan on getting it done, close to being done by the end of the year. Then we'll see where we are.

Mark – The other thing, the County Commissioners' are listening into all of this, and I'm glad that they are. If we have that enviable position of actually having a lot of people wanting to do something, we'll figure out how to improve our resource base or do something to fix how we operate and be a little more efficient or we can extend the contract with LDC. I think those are things that we can manage from a management perspective.

Art – I think I would focus on the big areas that have caused us problems over time. One of them that you could look at is your building permit rights and relinquishment, and are you vested or not, and how does that work. All that Alan and I and Prosecutor Tracy have had discussions about. I'd look at the AG use areas. I think Rusty, that one of the opportunities in this plan is to keep ag use a focus of this plan and to set it out that it is something that is primary to the county, just like it is in the current comp plan, so that that guides all the planning actions of the codes into the future, until you do a whole revamp of the plan again. I think there are some issues that are a little more up in the air that need to be talked about. I don't know if they fit in here, but one that comes to

mind is this whole Palouse Basin water system. As to whether that one is something this plan needs to address, because it's a limited area of the county that has water resource issues. It's that Pullman-Moscow area. And do we want to address that as an area in this plan or not. I'm just tossing it out as something that ought to be thought about, because it doesn't affect most of the rest of the county. But it could in the long run be something that Ecology decides to just you don't get any more expansion use. I heard the comment on trails and so on, I don't know how they fit into this plan, because unlike the full planning, they are not a mandatory part of this. So, trails and like the Palouse Prairie issue has come up I don't know how many times, and do we need to address that in this one, because it really wasn't in any of our code stuff, prior. The other one I was thinking about was the focus on voluntary measures to address AG critical areas, with the VSP and how we can incorporate that voluntary attitude of management towards solving problems rather than more regulations. Just some thoughts.

Matt – Okay, thank you for that.

Rusty – That is the kind of guidance that I was looking for, as to what direction that Whitman County is wanting to go. And those are the kind of bullet comments that help me understand kind of what we're supposed to be doing here, as far as issues that haven't been a concern, not only now, but in the past that the county Commissioners' have had to deal with. And the other thing I would say too is, we need some comment from the City of Pullman, I realize they have their own plans for their city and stuff, but as I said, the population is changing and I don't want to be pegged as someone that thinks that Pullman should run our county, but at the same time I do understand that if we do not recognize the needs and the wants of the populated area of our county, that could cause problems for us in the future. So, things and comments that are being made from that community will certainly weigh heavily on my mind, I guess, as we make any kind of changes. I know that the county has changed a lot in the last 40 years, since 1978, or whatever that number is.

Tom – I might suggest that we get the public involved a little earlier, just to see what the pulse is out there. Because, the 15 of us have got our individual ideas, but we are actually working for the public, in the end. And so, getting their input, at least to a certain degree, I think, would help shape it. If we're 4 months in, maybe we need to have a work group, just to kind of give us a little bit of focus from the public's perspective. Yeah, we'll probably just get the local people and that may be the majority, but at least it would let us know what the noise is out there.

Erina – You know, that actually brings me to a question that I had, thank you Tom, because that was something that I was thinking about. I was looking at your survey that Alan had put out, and there are a lot of great questions on here. I think you guys were going to do that, like survey and put it on the website, things like that, right?

Todd – Yeah, that was our intention, was to have the next step after this meeting, in the later part of January and into February and it wouldn't be too much longer, to have a

survey with about a dozen to 15 questions that would be posed in different topic areas. So, Mark and Alan and I would decide on the final questions and then get your guys input as well and then that would be the start of it. But, what I am hearing too, is there a possibility of having something sooner for some kind of public, even if it's a smaller committee or something.

Erina – Well, something else that I was thinking about too, I think surveys and things like that will work for a certain demographic, like Tom was saying, people who are going to be vocal. I'm wondering if it would work for people, for example, who want to get together and have coffee at McGregor's or Wilbur-Ellis. And I think that is also valuable feedback and I'm willing to bet that they're not going to fill out a survey. So, how are we going to get that feedback?

Tom – I would be willing to bet that 99% of the people have no idea what is in the Comprehensive Plan to begin with.

Erina – That is probably true.

Tom – We might need to have a little educational thing ahead of the public comment.

Erina – Yeah, interesting.

Art – Could I get a clarification thing, real quick? And I'm not picking on Tom, but I just wanted to make sure that the Commissioner's...

Tom – Oh, come on, I'm the new guy. (laughing).

Art – So, I'm assuming that this is primarily done by the Planning Commission with the Commissioners' just listening, like we've pretty much everything else. Is that the vision as it goes forward? The Planning Commission would be doing this work, is that right?

Alan – Not necessarily, I mean you (BOCC) have a big part to play in this too. The meetings are all kind of channeled through the Planning Commission. So, the regular meetings and ultimately we are creating a new ordinance or a new plan, that goes through the Planning Commission first and then it passes through the BOCC. But, you should be involved in this all the way through.

Art – I just wanted to get clear where our role is on this one, versus some of the other stuff that we do with the Planning Commission.

Todd – I can speak from experience. In a fully planned community or county or city, the typical process, and Alan is right, this should involve everybody. But, typically the Planning Commission are usually the stewards of the Comp Plan, of whatever community it is, and then they are the recommending body to the decision makers, whether that is the County Commissioners' or the City Council. But, in this case, because you're not a fully planning community and there is not as strict of guidelines, I

think you have a lot more flexibility available to you on how you want to have this fold out. So, you know, Alan is right, I think it's definitely going to be an all hands on deck exercise. So, we can structure this on however you think would be the best way to get people engaged. Ultimately the end goal is to get a plan that you guys are happy with and can carry on for the next, hopefully not 40 years, but you know, the normal life span of a comprehensive plan is about 20 years. So, that is our goal to address those issues that you believe are the biggest ones that you see affecting the county and carrying that forward.

Chad – I've got a couple questions. And I don't know if it's going to be Alan or LDC that is going to answer it, but are there any lines that we need to be careful of crossing in our planning that might end up pushing us into being a fully planned county as opposed to a partially planned county?

Alan – Hopefully we never become a fully planning county.

Chad – That is why I asked the question.

Alan – Well, there are some specifics for us to reach that point. A population of 50,000, we're not there yet. And then, there is, I think, a 17% annual growth rate for a specific time frame. I don't think we're going to reach that.

Chad – I was thinking more, okay, I didn't know that was the difference there in those, I just wanted to make sure if we start putting things in place and somebody looks at it and says, oh wait, if they are going to plan all this, then they have to be fully planning.

Alan – No.

Todd – Not unless you had a huge master planned community out in the middle of the county.

Art – I don't think that is the case, Chad or Alan, unless you start writing things in the comp plan and then your code doesn't address them. If you write a section of a comp plan, even if it's not required, take transportation as section, and you write the complete street criteria in that comp plan that you want, you want paths and trails alongside all roads, for an example, off to the left and then you have no code to address that and somebody brings it up, it seems to me like that could end up requiring you to have code to address the issue and follow it, because you have it in the comp plan. That is just my interpretation. I don't know if Alan or Mark have thoughts on that or Todd.

Brian – Having to come through the back door and then rewrite code to deal with something that we, may be set out as a goal in the comprehensive plan.

Mark – The engineer in me wants to make a comment here and say that our comp plan should be as simple and as precise as we can make it to get done what we need to get

done. Not as verbose and overbearing as we could make it. And then I think we should be careful that we don't embellish a bunch of things that we aren't going to do.

Brian – And I think the way that we're going to get that done is by identifying where the pressure is going to come from in the next 20 years. I just wanted to say to Rusty, yeah I have seen this problem, Rusty, in my community. I have seen it decline, I have seen the size of family farm communities decline and kids go off to school and yeah, it's the changing demographic of our landscape, but we still need to keep AG front and center, because that is our big economy in this county and then just try to find out the pressure points in the real.. The things that are going to be constraints, whether it's our quality of life or those sorts of things. But, the constraints that are going to be put on us by that kind of growth over the next 20 years. Thank you.

Rusty – Well I agree with you and that is why I said what I said. I think for someone to be able to kind of make a guideline or a plan, like we're going to try to do, we really have to understand the way the county was and the way it is today. You can always try to predict the future, but what you predict and what really happens is going to be two different things, obviously. It appears to me as we go through this and all we can do is try to feel our way through it and try to understand what guidelines the county will need in the future. One question I do have, though, that has not been brought up. But, whenever we're dealing with county policies and regulations, we certainly have to always consider what the State says, because they are the ones that give us the funding to operate. So, is this update something that the State is going to be telling us how they want the format and everything, so that when they pull them out of their files, they all look the same? What kind of things are we going to expect from the State, as far as them telling us how to do it?

Todd – So, as I mentioned at the beginning, Whitman County is only required, because it is a partially planned county, is to do the Critical Areas and the Natural Resources. All of these other items that are listed here, you can either highlight a huge portion of your new comp plan on it or take out things that are not relevant or leave them the same. If they are not broken, you don't have to fix it. So, the answer is, because you are not a fully planned community like all these other communities on this map, the green ones, they're the ones that have to go through the full checklist. So, what I am saying is, the benefit of that is, twofold. One you don't have to comply with the many GMA issues and two, it helps speed the process by getting through the schedule here much quicker, because you're not bogged down with the same process that all those major counties have to. So it's really a much more simplified process, as Mark pointed out, it should be a higher type of a plan. So, if you look at the existing one, it was relatively simple, but really captured, back then, on the major points that the community wanted back then. And a lot of those may still be valid today and there is nothing wrong with them. But, you may want to adjust things that are more relevant to today's communities. And as you pointed out Rusty, some of these smaller towns are just becoming less viable because people are going to the larger job centers or those companies aren't existing anymore or the change in times, so that would be a way to connect with economic development too, is what has changed in the last 40+ years, that the county needs to

focus on to try to capture those tax dollars and try to retain the area so that Pullman doesn't take up all of your x urban areas that are just outside the city. It's my understanding, and correct me if I'm wrong on the specific language, you've got that stuff around Sunshine Road and south of town, in between Pullman and Moscow and there may be some discussions on them wanting to sometime annex that portion. Well, if you put in policies and goals or there may be an Interlocal agreement that is on-going, I mean that is something that you're really going to want to make certain that those are retained. Because that is really a huge portion of the county life blood for tax dollars. And there may be some other areas that you're looking at throughout the county, whether around Colfax or others, but Pullman is really the biggest one.

Dave – There is an Interlocal agreement between Pullman and the County. There is that joint tax sharing area that has been defined already and I believe it's in the best interest of both the County and the City of Pullman for it to continue. The only way development in continued economic growth is going to happen is through utilities in that corridor. I do have another comment later on, but Chad is trying to get in.

Chad – I think it was Art that said something about the Palouse Aquifer between Pullman and Moscow, the one thing I would caution and everyone on the Board has heard me talk about this before, while it may be good idea to possibly put that in the growth management or the comp plan, excuse me, we also have to be extremely cautious of regulating water. That is not something that I think the County wants to be in the business of. DOE does that and they have very specific rules and I don't know, Alan is that something that you are interested in regulating water?

Alan – Heck no. And I would say to Art, I don't think it is necessary for us to go there because if ever we have an issue with water in that basin, Ecology is going to be the first and they are going to tell us that we've got an issue there.

Dave – On the other side of that, a specific element required in specific elements that we are required to do in the Critical Areas Ordinance, one of those areas is aquifer recharge. Right now we want to reinforce the idea, I believe, that there are no known aquifer recharge areas.

Alan – I really don't think it's even a good idea to talk about water. That is going to be dictated to us if we ever reach that point. Ecology shuts down basins or turns the tap down a little bit on certain basins. That would be their call. We're not going to have that much development nor residential development. Mostly in that area the concern is the four entities, Pullman, Moscow, and the two universities. They're the ones sucking down the water, not the county.

Art – I'm not pushing for it, I just thought it needed to be mentioned, because somebody is going to bring it up somewhere in this conversation.

Mark – I would say that we need to make sure that Ecology and the Palouse Aquifer Committee are identified as participants in our outreach program in addition to other

organizations. That way the folks from those organizations can say their piece and we can incorporate their comments into our process. That is the important part.

Art – The other one that we might want to address in this somehow is communication, in terms of like broadband and those technologies. Something we can do to enable that in this process of code.

Brian – Fiber optic placement and possibly the Port District and their help with. I know they've done the fiber to home placement in the north part of the county. In the Colton, Uniontown area, we've got conduit, but we have no fiber and we have a franchise with our local telephone company that will keep it that way until they come up with an idea.

Alan – I just want to make a general comment. The comp plan is a vision of Whitman County and this addresses Rusty's comments a little bit too. If we don't have a particular thing written out in the comp plan, we really can't do anything with the development regulations. You can't create a development regulation, so I think we really need that. If we're going to have something about trails in there, it absolutely has to be mentioned in the comp plan. Whether or not we develop a trail, that doesn't really matter, we may or may not. But, it has to be in the comp plan in order for us to think about doing it in the future. And, I'm not really sure that we need to have a zoning ordinance that talks specifically about how a trail gets developed. I am not aware that that is necessary. Just the fact that it is in the comp plan would allow us to develop a trail if we ever get to that point.

Art – Yeah, my comment is more along the lines of just because you have a road, it doesn't have to have full complete streets planned with it. In your comp plan you're saying that all your roads will be complete street type by designs.

Alan – You don't want to do that.

Art – You don't want to do that that is what I am saying.

Alan – No, we don't want to do that at all.

Brian – With regards to trails and things like that, really we just need to maybe submit them as a goal or under our quality of life section of our comp plan. We just need to say that it would be really great to have more trails. We did that with the Town of Uniontown, about 20 years ago when we wrote our comp plan and we just listed all the goals and the things that we would like to see and make changes. I'm sure we're going to have to redo that here in the near future. But, with the checklist for the critical areas ordinance, having just gone through that and the comment period, I would say that we would want to stay away from water, because the Department of Ecology will comment.

Todd – Yes, they will. I don't know if it was you Brian or another Commissioner that mentioned about the Port too and the influence on the County and economically too, what additional things that we will need to add to the comp plan? Because, well we

haven't delved into the old one quite yet, but there may be some additional things that we will want to consider based on today's economy and impacts to the county as a whole, but the smaller communities within the county.

Tom – It might not be a bad idea to try to develop some sort of communication corridor language that allows for that fiber or whatever to be developed easily and deployed easily.

Rusty – I want to make a comment to Alan about his statement as this being a vision. I really like the way you said that. I can really see a situation where a lot of rural residents can see this as government trying to tell them the direction that our county is going to go. And if they don't understand what this is, I think some of the comment sections or times when we meet with the public, it could get very ugly. So, when you said that this is a vision for Whitman County, I really like that. And I think that anytime you are addressing the public, especially in these little smaller towns, you need to make it clear that what you say, they hear it, so that they know that we're not trying to force the county to go in one direction or the other, but simply we're trying to get guidelines and a vision, like you said. So, that we have direction for the operation of the county. They need to hear that, because they don't understand. Most people would not understand what this comprehensive plan is or why they need it. And unless they know what we're trying to do, it could get ugly. I just feel that with the way that the country is right now, when you're addressing the public, we need to be very careful and let them understand what the government and that would be us, what we're doing. And I just want to make that clear. I like your comment Alan, I really did, and it helped me understand that when I visit people here in my community and they ask what are we doing? I'll be able to tell them.

Alan – That is an important point, Rusty. Because you're right, I don't think people understand this. And this is an opportunity to clarify what a comprehensive plan means versus the development regulations. And that is the part of the issues that I am having right now and why I think this is important for the county to revamp this comp plan, because you've witnessed it. We have the public showing up telling us that this is not in the best interest of public health, welfare and safety. They apart our comp plan and they take that little section that boosts their point of view and then they throw that at us. So, we have an opportunity here to clarify a lot of that language in the current comp plan and it also makes the county people aware that certain things are going to happen in the Agricultural District that you have to understand and you have to accept. And, you know, we're making the plan to have these type of activities in these areas and if you don't like that kind of thing, then maybe you shouldn't move there and then start fighting us. To help clarify the role of the comp plan and the vision and then the development regulations are developed from that vision. And so, the County Commissioners', when they pass an ordinance, they're saying in this specific area, these activities are allowed. And that, I think is very important, because we don't want people coming in and saying, well now I've built my house here shut the door, nobody else can do anything anywhere around me. No, if you live in the county, in the unincorporated area, there are certain other activities that are allowed to happen there.

You don't get to say no, you can't do that there. So, I want the plan to be clear about what those responsibilities are. And when somebody goes and lives in the county, they understand the other stuff that is happening around them, farming for instance, mining, that kind of thing.

Dave – That is somewhat of a segue maybe into another comment that I wanted to make. And this occurred back in the GMA inaction days too, I believe. While you are looking at our existing plan and our existing code, you will probably want to take a look at Title 20, called Coordinating Government Regulation. It's in the code.

Alan – What do you do in your spare time, Dave?

Dave – I just remember things. The other part is, when you're talking about trails you need to remember that we also have a good chunk of the Palouse to Cascades, which was formally called the John Wayne Trail, in our county.

Alan – Oh, yeah.

Dave – And then general recreation is a positive economic activity that we want to be able to support where it doesn't interfere with Ag and other such things.

Keith – I have a comment on the commercial development, where it should be allowed. I'm starting to get old enough now and I've seen a lot of this growth that a lot of businesses have been put at the edge of town because it's convenient and stuff. And the next thing you know, these towns, and Pullman is a good example, they grow so much that these businesses are now actually in the towns. And that is something that we should look at. I don't know what we are expected to do about it, but it seems, like Hinrich's before long there is going to be a lot of growth around there and all of a sudden people aren't going to like it, because of the noise and dust and things. It is something to be aware of and like I said, I don't know what to do or recommendations, but it is something to think about.

Alan – That can be addressed in the comprehensive plan and it already is, to an extent, right now. Where businesses are allowed, where we can have industrial, commercial zones and there are some specifics there. You have to have a road, obviously that is not closed in the winter time. A specific type of road that can handle commercial activities, heavier trucks for instance. So, that limits it right there, as far as, Whitman County is concerned. Because there aren't too many good roads out in the sticks there. So, that kind of limits the type of businesses, so if you're not dealing with large vehicles, maybe we could identify some areas, with the language in the comp plan, for instance, here would be a good area to have an industrial zone or a commercial zone, because it's got a good road and things like that. That is how we address that one.

Mark – We also need to consider the Pullman Airport Overlay Zone when we talk through this too. People move in next to the airport and then they complain that the airport is noisy. Just make sure we don't forget that part of it.

Dave – That was something that I’m going to ask our new planner, what happened, the next chance I get.

Alan – Yeah, that one time got forgotten about. Pete and I were supposed to get together and come up with a new plan for both the town and the county and that didn’t happen.

Art – One thing I wanted to mention was, things that you might not realize that this plan gets used for, it came across my desk today. So, if you guys know about housing vouchers for people who are homeless or low income, today we had a document that needed signed that was for, it is a work for housing program and HUD in D.C. required that it be in compliance with the comp plan of our county. It turned out the comp plan was this comp plan that we are talking about here, not a housing plan or something on that order. So sometimes there are unintended things that we never think about that this plan will be used or compared to and in that case it was the economic development section. And because our economic development section was pretty simple, it was easy for them to say, yes it complied with it. But I never realized our comp plan for this would be something that would affect whether or not you could get a trial grant for transitional housing type work in housing vouchers.

Todd – That is what you just sent me Alan. I haven’t had a chance to really delve into it, but yeah I was aware of it.

Alan – You know, that may be one thing that is in the comprehensive plan, but our development regulations specify how housing gets built in the county. And we can’t have large lot subdivisions in the County. So, I’m not sure what kind of housing you’re referring to, but single family residences is all we can build here in the county and the development regulations cover that.

Art – It wasn’t even that, Alan. It wasn’t down to that kind of level, it was this work to, and I can’t remember what the name of it was. Maybe Michael or Tom does, but this work to program with the current housing voucher is a trial program, it’s one of these experimental programs the Federal Government will let some housing agency do, so Spokane Housing Authority runs all of our housing voucher programs. They are the oversight agency and then they go the Community Action Center. The County itself, doesn’t do any of this stuff. But in order for that application to be able to go to D.C. and be Okayed and it had to be compliant with our County Comprehensive Plan and the section that applied was about economic development increasing jobs.

Tom – It’s called Move to Work.

Art – Move to Work, thank you Tom. It was something that I had no idea would ever be related to our planning documents, but it was something that it had to comply with it. I just tossed that out there, that there are unintended things or unexpected things that will reference our comprehensive plan in the future.

Matt – That is why it is important to have a plan, as Mark said earlier, that is as simple as possible and nimble, because you can't possibly identify all the things in the future that the plan will need to be used for or could be used for. But, you need to make sure that it's nimble enough to account for things like that that may come up.

Erina – So that is a question for me, how are you guys or are you able to project population growth in the county?

Alan – We don't do that, the State does that. We get that information every year. I can send you the latest copy of that. So that gives projections of each of the towns in Whitman County and the unincorporated areas of what is the projected count, population count is going to be.

Todd – Yeah, the Office of Financial Management, if you're curious. So, if you just google that and you can find all the population numbers. They do that on an annual basis by estimates. And then, you know, there is an official census comes out every 10 years too. Which they should be getting that completed here pretty quick.

Erina – That is just for the State?

Todd – Well, the OFM, The Office of Financial Management, if you go to that there is a population link, I think, and that has the information by cities, counties, all of that.

Erina – Thank you.

Brian – Rusty had said earlier. A second thing is I think this outreach is going to be educating. It's going to be Comp Plan 101 and if we can use this website and some other tools, now that we have much better technology for communication, I think that is going to be our secret to winning over the unincorporated county and again gentlemen and ladies, that is what we are looking at, is the unincorporated county. What Pullman does is what Pullman does, same thing with Uniontown or Colfax, we need to communicate with them.

Todd – Yeah and there are definitely resources, that we can get ahold of that the State puts out, that talks about that very thing, on the comp planning or even just planning 101. The other thing that we want to try to do and we'll have to coordinate with Alan and Mark is, for those folks that don't have easy access to computers, there may be quite a few out in the County, how do we get that information to them. Is it through billings somehow or is it through picking it up at your local post office or your community grange hall or whatever. Those are the things that we've got to try to figure out so that the folks that don't have an easy access or they don't frequently look at their emails, how do they get that information?

Brian – I just thought of one way. The question was posed earlier, how do the guys that are having coffee at McGregor's know about this? Maybe some of us are going to have

to go over to, maybe I'm going to have to go to the Uniontown Co-Op meeting every month or to the Board of Directors meeting and talk to them. Hand out some handouts and let everybody know that we've had this, we just want to update this, we've had it on the books for 40 years and we think it's time to make it a little more modern.

Alan – That is a good idea Brian. And I think that applies to every one of us involved in this process. We could take it upon ourselves, if we're at a meeting somewhere else, Commissioners', Planning Commission, there is an opportunity to start talking about it and then point people towards the website or where all the information is, but have those conversations when you're out and about.

Matt – We could definitely help provide a one-page or some sort of handout, if that is helpful, something to direct people to where they can find more information. A little synopsis of what this is all about, so that when they get home and look at it again, they are reminded, oh yeah, that is the thing that I heard about at the Co-Op meeting. So, we're happy to help with that.

Art – So for the next three or four months, you're not likely to have many of those meetings, other than maybe the guys get together at the McGregor's while they are picking up fertilizer or chemicals or something on that order, for a few minutes. So, I wouldn't plan on the grange hall and those things, because the way we're going, we're not going to have loosened restrictions until late spring. So, the method that you are going to have to use is going to have to be getting it out to the places where they frequent. It just popped into my head, where is the most frequent place people drop by, well it's probably the gas station getting gas or getting groceries.

Rusty – I think you're right Art. The other thing, when it comes to getting comments from people, I mean let's face it, I'm just looking at my screen here, except for maybe two or three of you here, our average age is pretty high and our abilities to get messages across, with the new technology, it isn't too great. I mean, I know my skills on the computer are pretty minimal. If I have to talk to kids, especially my son, he's the youngest, well Facebook is pretty much a dead issue anyway. I mean, young kids have gone to all these other new things and how they can communicate with each other. So, my suggestion is, for you that are younger here on screen, you need to be giving us the advice on how to get the message out to the people that it's going to affect and that is the young people in our community. They aren't participating very much yet, but they need to be. And when they look at the news today, I can guarantee you that they are pretty worried and if they're not, they should be. They're the ones that we need the comments from and I wouldn't know how to get ahold of them with my cell phone and stuff. I'm too old for that. But, if you hand a cell phone to a high school kid, why he's got a whole network of people out there. And they're the ones that need to be giving us the advice on how to get those people woken up and communicating with us.

Keith – How about Pullman radio, with Facebook, they're on there every day or even Twitter.

Rusty – And I don't know anything about all that stuff, other than what Sandy and I kind of fumble through when our kids are home.

Mark – We could get ahold of the radio stations and they will run some follow up free advertising. That is one source.

Art – Remember that one source, at least in the last few months, has not had the outreach of the station signal that it used to.

Mark – Correct.

Art – Because out in my country now, I used to be able to listen to them easily. Now I have to be past St. John to really get a good signal anymore. So, you cut off probably the north and the west end of the county from what you used to get that signal.

Tom – They just put in a new transmitter in the last week though, I think.

Rusty – The thing is, they plan the same song every day at the same time and the number of people that listen to that is down. I mean, I used to listen to it pretty faithfully to find out what was going on in Whitman County. I hardly listen to it anymore because there is no DJ there to change the records or do anything. I get tired of hearing the same song at the same hour of every day, it's a dead horse.

Keith – Maybe we should do Fox News. (laughter)

Dave – If you want to listen early in the morning, then maybe it's time to go to NPR, which will also do the public service announcements.

Art – One of the biggest links in our county is the library system. They connect with pretty much every community. That is one that you will really want to use.

Brian – I agree with that.

Erina – I agree.

Chad – What's a library? (laughter)

Todd – Are your library's open? Are they open right now over there?

Art – They are right now. Right now they are running from 10:00 am to 5:00 p.m., Monday-Wednesday. And then they've got some other hours, I think 9:00 am to 4:00 p.m. on other days.

Todd – Yeah, they're all shut down over here.

Brian – The Uniontown library, which is part of the Whitman County Library system, is doing shorter hours, but they're still trying to do a few things.

Art – They also have a huge connection with a mailing list or media lists that people can access.

Michael – We digress.

Chad – Who was that?

Michael – That was Commissioner Largent waiting for a joke from Hailey.

Hailey – From me? I'm just watching.

Brian – I invited Hailey, we're going to try to recruit her as some point.

Hailey – This is all super interesting to me. So, I'm just learning what you guys are up to.

Rusty – We need young people to be a part of our group.

Hailey – Yeah, I was hearing what you're talking about, about how to reach out to the young people. Facebook is going to be, I think, the best bet for that. A lot of people are still using Facebook. A lot of the social media stuff that the really young kids are doing, like high school stuff, that doesn't really seem like something that the County would reach out to people through. I mean it would be worth exploring, but I definitely think Facebook is going to be the best bet. I also really like the library idea.

Brian – We need to reach the property owners. I mean, you know, that is kind of who we are talking about affecting. This policy is landowners and we want to include everybody in this, of course, but really we need focus on the landowners, so that they understand and have a chance to comment on the direction we want to go in our wish list.

Tom – It's too bad the tax bills just went out.

Chad – One of the other things I was just thinking of, at least for the rural areas, it would be pretty easy to have, like a little flyer or whatever, go to the Grain Growers, Cattleman's Association, they're still needing to talk and they'll pass those along.

Tom – And the service clubs too, like the Lions, Kiwanis and those. They've got a lot of people that pay attention to stuff in them too.

Dave – I think that all of this discussion about how to outreach is really great, but I also think you really ought to listen to what Rusty had to say about couching the procedure in terms and the information gathering, in terms of vision and the future, rather than, you

can't do this and regulate that. The format of the message is going to go a long way towards making this a successful endeavor.

Matt – Absolutely. Thank you.

Mark – Todd, what else do you want to get accomplished tonight?

Todd – Well, I mean, that was really just the opportunity to get a lot of feedback, which you guys have been fantastic tonight. I'm thrilled of all the feedback that you guys have been giving us tonight and this gives us a lot of food for thought. I'm sure that staff and we will be chatting in the next week on how to strategize on getting the word out and the next steps as we move forward in the process. We'll probably also think about, if we need to have another conversation, either amongst this group or another one coming up before we have an official kick-off meeting the public. But, that's certainly up for discussion too. But, I think really it was an opportunity to introduce ourselves, to get to meet you all and have the ability to introduce the project and just say that we're really excited to help you in the next step in this process. So, this is your plan and we're here to assist you in any way that we can. So, we're really thrilled.

Matt – And thank you for all of your great thoughts and feedback on this. I was saying that if we got just a little bit of feedback on some of these big hot button issues, I would be really excited and you guys have delivered in spades. So, I appreciate that.

Todd – This has been a great start.

Alan – I think the most important thing to get going, right now, is public outreach. Start that one as soon as possible, so we have to have something to get to them, to show to them.

Todd – Absolutely.

Art – Is there anything out there, like a Comp Plan 101 for this type of a plan that could just introduce people to it, without necessarily getting into all the details right off the bat of what we're looking at?

Todd – I know that the State has resources on their page. Whether it's a short presentation or video, our staff can take a look at that. But, at a minimum, like Matt was saying, it could be just as simple as a one page or front and back kind of thing that will just be very simple to understand and grasp on how Whitman County relates to that. So, there is definitely resources out there that are already pre-made or just make it real fast. That is not a problem.

Alan – Dave Gibney is suggesting MRSC.

Todd – Yeah, MRSC is a great one and commerce has stuff, so there is stuff out there.

Alan – And maybe it would be a good idea to find something like that and put it up on our webpage, on the Planning Divisions webpage, to get started with that.

Todd – Yeah, that'll be another thing, too. As I mentioned, getting that project webpage established on the county level and then we can put a basic narrative about it, have the facts, basic facts as we get started and then at a higher level, the schedule, things like that, those basic elements so that when we do go out they'll have a place to go and find updates as the plan progresses.

Alan – So, Mark is sounds like we need to maybe talk with Jeff to set up something here, webpage wise.

Mark – I think that is correct and I may need a little gentle nudge from the Chairman of the Board of County Commissioners', if he was to listen in, to make sure that our IT department plays ball with us on this to get that word out. We need to figure out the best way to make it easy for everyone, not just embed it as deep as possible on the Public Works website where no one will see it. So, I'll visit with Art a little bit about that and I'll visit with Jeff. Jeff is on vacation this week, he'll back in on Monday, but we'll start working on getting ourselves a presence and the way to do that and something that is searchable and easy to find.

Todd – Yeah.

Mark – I also like the idea of just a one page flyer that describes our process.

Todd – Sure.

Mark – If people only see this one thing, with 30 words on it, we want that to be out there for people to say, hey if I want to come and comment and say here's how I would do it.

Todd – Yeah, we'll get that flushed out here in the next week.

Mark – Hopefully next week sometime, I'll have a plan for a web presence.

Todd – Yeah, great.

Matt – Sounds good.

Todd – Well, thank you again everyone, it's been a pleasure to meet you all and we're excited to work with you all.

Alan – Thanks Todd.

Matt – Thanks everybody.

Erina – Thank you.

Alan – So, Planning Commission, I think that is it. We don't have anything more to talk about. We could have our next meeting the beginning of February, if we have something to talk about and do, so I'll keep you informed about that one.

Dave – I would think that we would possibly have something along the lines of progress on this, to talk about.

Alan – Yeah.

**Motion** by Dave Gibney and seconded by Erina Hammer to adjourn the Planning Commission meeting.

Art- I adjourn the Board of County Commissioners meeting also.

**8:58 p.m. – Adjourned.**