

**CITY OF FIFE**  
**PLANNING COMMISSION**  
**MINUTES OF MEETING**

Fife City Hall

June 1, 2009  
7:00 p.m.

**CALL TO ORDER –**

The Planning Commission meeting was called to order at 7:02 pm with the following present:

Commissioners: Chairman Jim Call, Donald Alveshere, Jeff Brown, Doug Fagundes, Richard Garchow, and Fred Thomas

Absent: Shannon Thornhill

Staff present: Public Works Director Russ Blount, Planner 1 Chris Pasinetti and Senior Administrative Assistant Katie Bolam

Public present: John Fietz, 5920 28<sup>th</sup> St E, Fife

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES –**

Commissioner Brown moved, seconded by Commissioner Thomas, to accept the minutes of May 4, 2009. The vote passed 4-0, with commissioners Alveshere and Garchow abstaining due to their absences at the last meeting.

However, this vote was called into question later in this meeting. See below NEW BUSINESS.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**a. Transportation Improvement Plan – Annual Update**

Director Blount introduced the packet items, pointing out first that one item missing on this year's update, and which was at #1 on last year's, is the Valley Ave Reconstruction Project from 70<sup>th</sup> to Freeman. This is due to the confident anticipation of this project going out for bid in July and being awarded in early August for construction to begin by mid-August. Valley Ave would then be closed for a 10-week period until late October, followed by 4-6 months of utility work during which traffic would not be impeded. Then, all construction would be completed in the spring of 2010. During the fall closure, the primary detour route would be down 70<sup>th</sup> to Levee Road.

Commissioner Thomas asked for clarification as to why the project was pulled from the TIP. Director Blount explained that state guidelines specify that a project that is under contract in this calendar year does not need to appear on the 6-Year plan, even if construction hasn't begun or isn't complete. While a contract hasn't been awarded at this time, city staff are confident enough of the impending contract to remove the item from the TIP. However, should something unforeseen occur that would cause this not to happen, this item can easily be inserted before Council adopts the Comprehensive Plan Amendments, usually in November.

Chairman Call asked about the property between the lettuce warehouse and the smoke shop. Director Blount explained that there is tribal policy against a net loss of trust land. The city needs some of the trust land that fronts Valley, and so a trade is in process involving the land in question in order to secure the right-of-way needed for this project.

Director Blount then briefly explained the top 8 items on the TIP which are those most likely to actually occur in the foreseeable future. In addition to local funds, numbers 1 and 2 have just been applied for federal funding; number 3 has some federal funding secured and there are applications in for additional funds; number 4 is working through an LID process; number 5 is working with the Puyallup Tribe; number 6 will be largely funded through developers; number 7 will also be funded by development, though the current developer is on hold and may be going through bankruptcy; and number 8 is next for the City to tackle.

Commissioner Alveshere asked if Item #3 is a change to an existing ramp or a new ramp. Director Blount answered that it will be a new ramp, using the map to give a detailed description. Expectation is for 38% relief of traffic from Port of Tacoma Road and the eventual reconstruction of 34<sup>th</sup>. There is a grant in place for 2011.

Commissioner Alveshere asked about a timeline for numbers 1-8. Director Blount explained about placeholder budgets and changes in the state acceptance of them.

Commissioner Thomas expressed concerned over the term “local funds.” Director Blount explained that means there is no outside funding at this time. It was also discussed that local funds can refer to funds from the tribe, port or public entities.

Chairman Call asked about the stimulus money that was available, wondering if Fife was able to receive any of that. Director Blount said that unfortunately no, because the stipulation for those funds was “shovel ready” projects. Attempts were made to move quickly on a few items, working with the Bureau of Indian Affairs and such, but ultimately couldn’t do it. Even the before-mentioned widening of 70<sup>th</sup> isn’t considered “shovel ready” at this point, with probate issues regarding the right-of-way purchase/trade arrangement.

Commissioner Alveshere asked about #6 on the list, the pedestrian overpass at 54<sup>th</sup> and the railroad tracks. Director Blount said there are meetings and procedures set to occur: first, the City will apply to the railroad, who have already indicated that they will turn it down; then the City will appeal to the UTC, who have indicated they will rule in the City’s favor. If all then goes well, the overpass can be built during the summer of 2010; otherwise, it may be the summer of 2011.

Commissioner Thomas asked about item #23, wondering why 54<sup>th</sup> can’t just be opened. Director Blount explained that, in the past, there was an outspoken champion for that item on the council, but at this time, interest has waned, and other items became higher priority items.

Commissioner Alveshere asked for the background on item #20, the 70<sup>th</sup> Avenue bridge over the river. It was explained that Pierce County is the lead agency on that, though Fife will have a

small, undefined portion of funding responsibility. The project consists of the “Northerly Extension” of Canyon Road, which would extend 52<sup>nd</sup> in a big arc to meet up with 70<sup>th</sup> in a continuous 5-lane arterial, to be 6 lanes where it crosses the river. Discussion then continued on the possible future of Melroy Bridge and Waste Connections.

**Commissioner Brown moved to forward the 2010-2015 6-Year TIP to the Council with a recommendation of adoption with no changes. Commissioner Fagundes seconded the motion. The vote passed 6-0.**

**b. Water Comprehensive Plan – Update**

Director Blount explained that he didn’t copy the full water plan for commissioners, as each copy would cost between \$60 and \$80, but one is always available for viewing. If the commissioners are more comfortable receiving a copy with time to review in detail, he’d be happy to return to the next meeting for a recommendation. Council has already adopted this water plan – what is before the commission now is a recommendation to adopt the plan into the Comprehensive Plan. He then went on to explain what the report says, showing a map and outlining the locations of water mains and planned future water mains. Future water service will be provided by drilling additional wells (not for several years) to supplement what we buy from Tacoma and maybe Puyallup. Some discussion ensued regarding the recently drilled Holt Well, at a 1,006 foot depth and 1,000 GPMs. Chairman Call asked about the quality and was told there is no hydrogen sulfate, virtually no arsenic, some elevated levels of magnesium and iron.

**Commissioner Thomas moved to recommend to Council the adoption of the water plan as presented to the City’s overall Comprehensive Plan. Commissioner Alveshere seconded the motion. The vote passed 6-0.**

**UNSCHEDULED ANNOUNCEMENT:** Commissioner Garchow noticed that his name is listed as the second motion for the Development Design Standards vote in the May minutes, even though he was not present at that meeting. Sr. Admin. Asst. Bolam said she would pull notes and report back with corrected minutes at the next meeting.

**STAFF REPORT**

**a. Fife Truck Door Tax – Update**

Planner Pasinetti reported that this item failed at Council. Some discourse continued.

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Commissioner Thomas moved, seconded by Commissioner Garchow, to adjourn the meeting at 8:15 p.m. Motion carried 6-0.**