

Critical Areas Ordinance Revision and Best Available Science Review

Meeting Summary

Meeting date: November 19, 2003

Location: Silverdale Community Center, Silverdale WA

Attendance:

Technical Review Committee (TRC) Members:
Mike Gustavson, Kitsap County Planning Commission
John Nantz, West Sound Conservation Council
Art Castle, Home Builders Assoc. of Kitsap County
Mary Ellen Madison, League of Women Voters
Tom Ostrom, Suquamish Tribe
Jeff Davis, WA Dept. of Fish & Wildlife
Dave Jones, Kitsap County Association of Realtors
Don Flora, Kitsap Alliance of Property Owners

Kitsap County Department of Community Development Staff:
Dave Greetham, Environmental Review
Rick Kimball, Environmental Review
Jim Bolger, Natural Resources
Paul Nelson, Natural Resources

Other:
Samantha Torpey, Home Builders Assoc. of Kitsap County
Tom Nevins
Mary Bertrand
Deana Jacobsen
Member, Kitsap County Association of Realtors

The meeting convened at approximately 2:10 with introductions by meeting attendees.

Jim announced that there will be a hardcopy version of the resource binder kept up to date in the DCD resource room if anyone not on the TRC is interested in looking over materials. Similarly, he is working on getting the information from the binders and the meetings, including BAS materials, meeting agendas, presentations and summaries on the web. He'll provide the URL when it's on-line.

Rick began the meeting by asking if there were any changes to the Nov. 12 meeting summary. Rick instructed the committee to point out any discussion points that were missed, etc. so they can be included in subsequent summaries. Art Castle mentioned that his question on how the CAO affects other ordinances was not captured in the summary. Jim pointed out that there is a list of these other related ordinances in the existing CAO in section 3 of the resource binders. Mike reiterated his suggested revisions to the language of the new Flood Ordinance. Jim noted they were included at the end of the summary.

Dave discussed a hand out with various considerations for the Frequently Flooded Areas section that staff identified from TRC's discussions at the Nov. 12 meeting. He asked if there were other points or information that should be included. Art suggested adding a consideration related to man-made issues that have lead to flooding situations in certain areas. He provided the example of blockages (i.e. inadequately sized culverts) that may lead to upstream flooding conditions. Tom O. added that there are also downstream responses to these situations as well such as channel incision in the example Art provided. Dave summarized his discussions with Health District staff regarding drainfields in flood zones. Health District staff typically require that septic effluent be pumped to a higher elevation if there is any indication of seasonal flooding or saturation.

There was additional discussion on the consideration of channel migration zones (Option 1 from handout). Mike G. pointed out that Pierce Co. was only looking at CMZ's related to their larger rivers so that this consideration might not be appropriate for Kitsap County considering there aren't systems of comparable size. Tom O. pointed out that in his discussions with King Co., they felt their proposed 165 ft buffers were adequate to provide protection for the migration areas of their smaller streams. Jeff added that if buffer zones are inadequate, meandering outside these zones leads to encroachment on structures and emergency measures such as shoreline armoring.

Jim reminded folks that during the revision of the CAO additional comments could be provided on draft elements of the ordinance. Rick encouraged anyone with comments to submit comments to the record throughout the process.

Prior to the presentation and discussion of geologically hazardous areas, it was noted that prior to the meeting, Don Flora had submitted some written comments on this topic for consideration. Copies of Don's comments were distributed to the TRC.

Paul Nelson presented a powerpoint presentation on geologically hazardous areas, including how these areas are addressed in the current CAO, their functions and how these areas are assessed and mapped. Dave Greetham identified the procedures for processing permits applications submitted for these areas, specifically describing the conditions under which a project sponsor must obtain geotechnical reports prepared by a licensed geologist or engineer with 4 years of work experience in the Puget Sound region. The point was made that often these reports constitute BAS for any particular site. Dave and Paul then described some of the printed materials distributed to the TRC at the last meeting.

During the presentation the point was made that the slope consideration for geohazard areas is generally 30%, which TRC members should remember is very different (more gradual) than a 30 degree slope. (e.g. 30% = 30 feet vertical change over a horizontal distance of 100 feet)

Following the presentation, discussion of the issue by the TRC raised the following questions/comments/considerations:

Jeff asked if the geotech. reports were ever reviewed by 3rd parties. Dave responded that this is very limited due to the expense.

Art suggested that perhaps there are opportunities for pre-engineered designs for certain conditions.

Tom pointed out that cumulative affects such as stormwater and drainage are contributing factors that should be considered. Art felt that when dealing with stormwater, conditions should be defined for when one ordinance should “trump” another if two ordinances contradict each other. He offered the example of requiring infiltration of storm water on sites in geohazard areas.

Tom suggested the use of best management practices to mitigate development impacts such as reducing soil compaction on sites, creating less impervious surfaces and retaining forested areas. He also suggested using a % basis rather than area for clearing to address cumulative effects.

John suggested a more global approach to looking at these areas. Dave responded that within the format of the geotech report, engineers are asked for more “global” considerations under the more extreme situations. In addition, the storm water ordinance attempts to confine affects on-site.

Don Flora asked if anyone has looked at the frequency of landslides vs. % slope? No one was aware of such a study.

Paul described the use of LiDAR and noted that the County now has the ability to more precisely determine steep slope areas. There was some discussion by the group that with this better mapping, it might be possible to not only identify those parcels actually within geohazard areas (due to discrepancies between currently mapped areas and actual topography) but also those steep slop areas that have not been identified in the maps.

Art Castle made the point that perhaps some portion of the buffer along steep slopes might be considered a “management area” rather than all buffer zone, thus allowing things like gardens to encroach on the top of the slope. Rick indicated that is something King County is considering for some of its buffer areas.

Mike asked if geotech reports have ever been compiled, and noted that this might be useful for future development in areas that have historical reports available. Dave noted that this has never been done in a formal manner, but could possibly be done under the County’s new Land Information System (LIS).

Jim asked if the TRC felt like seismic areas should be addressed in the section, but the group agreed that most seismic considerations are dealt with through the building code.

Jim distributed materials for the Dec. 3 meeting (same location and time) on critical aquifer recharge areas.

The meeting adjourned at 4:00.