


APA Washington – Spokane 2014
Legacy & Prophecy
 Explore the past **Aspire** for the future **Evolve** in the present



THE "REFINING FIRE" OF CODE SIMPLIFICATION & CONSOLIDATION

Yakima County Washington
 Moderator: Lynn Deitrick, AICP – Planning Division Manager



THE "REFINING FIRE" OF CODE SIMPLIFICATION & CONSOLIDATION

WHERE IS YAKIMA COUNTY WASHINGTON?

THE "REFINING FIRE" OF CODE SIMPLIFICATION & CONSOLIDATION

- Moderator: Lynn Deitrick, AICP – Planning Division Manager
- Presenter: Steven Erickson, CPO – Planning Director
- Presenter: Zella West, Yakima County Planning Commission Chair
- Presenter: Thomas Durant, President Durant Development Services Inc.
- Presenter: Tommy Carroll, Long Range/Environmental Section Manager



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Steven Erickson, CPO
 Planning Director




Yakima County's land use codes were adopted in separate decades and modified in response to specific local issues or to meet State mandates:

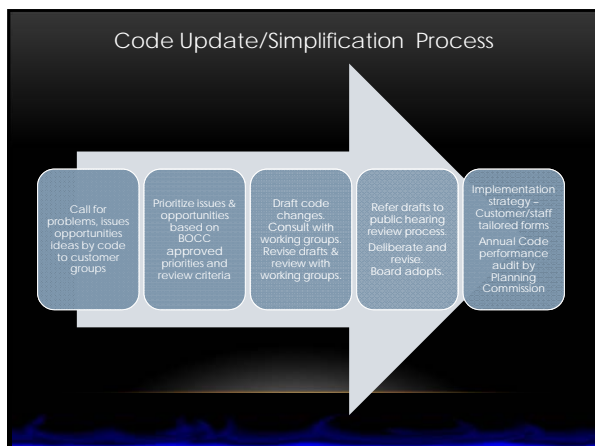
1974	Subdivision	
1975	Zoning	updated 2000 GMA
1986	Yakima Urban Area Zoning	updated 2003
1984	SEPA	updated 1998
1998	Project Permit Administration	
1990	Fees	CPI adjustments through 1998



GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

- Clarify, simplify and streamline County land development codes consistent with State law and adopted comprehensive plans.
- Integrate & consolidate related code Titles;
- Establish legislative intent for chapters and sections to guide the use of the code;
- Examine unwritten practices & procedures to determine whether they should be incorporated into code or discontinued;
- Differentiate code requirements by urban, rural and resource locations where such development review distinctions make sense;
- Create clear standards & criteria to evaluate project compliance with code requirements;
- Eliminate unclear cut-points & thresholds for development standards;
- Create a basis for modification or adjustment of requirements according to criteria;
- Provide objective standards, predictable process and procedures for project review.





LESSON – ENGAGE THE ELECTEDS

- The Board started with *commitment* - a healthy budget, dedicated staff and a two week meetings cycle. All Legislative intent and major issues were vetted.
- Difficult keeping the Board's interest while Working Groups & Planning Commission developed hearing draft.
 - Board thought the hearings would take months when in fact most LWG issues were resolved.
 - Board now hyper-focused deliberations thus far on page by page review in study sessions.

LESSON - TRANSPARENCY

- Illustrate *HOW* changes are made in a consolidation of codes
- In addition to traditional ~~strike through~~ & underlined text,
 - Identify sources of codes & documents
 - Use edit logs with verbatim comments and responses –
- Simplify decisions to keep process moving.

LESSON – SWG & LWG provided REFINING FIRE

- Two groups added time. Some people did not seem to fully participate until the PC hearings and LWG process.
- Over 35 meeting time investment allowed for the *Refining Fire*
 - Code significantly improved.
 - Learned a lot from each other's respective roles in community development.
 - Built understandings and relationships that will carry beyond the ULDC.

LESSON – SCHEDULE IMPLEMENTATION

- Planning Commission recommended Implementation Team
 - Training for staff in all divisions and customer groups.
 - New forms and Development Assistance Bulletins tailored to process and application
 - Revise fee structure to work with new code requirements & procedures
- Monitor Provide mechanism to fix *real* problems after adoption – 'cut the shoelaces but not the content' with annual implementation audit by PC.
- Set criteria now for evaluating how and whether to amend.

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"Questions and Answers"

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Zella West
Yakima County Planning Commission Chair



Don't
Take it
Personally



Consider
"All"
Opinions



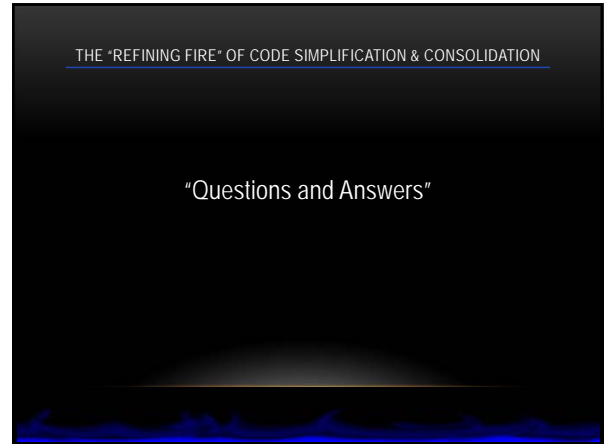
Remove
the
Personalities



Clearly
outline the
process



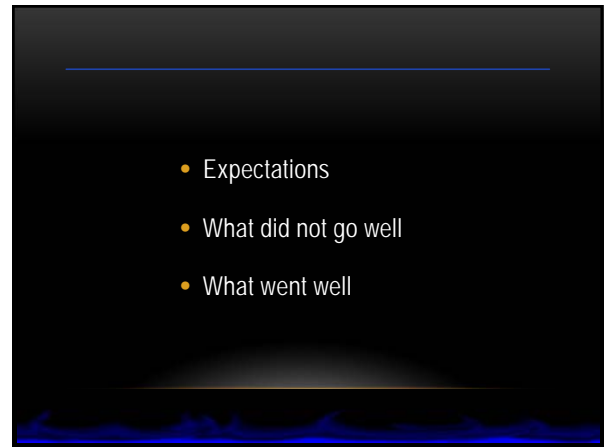
AGREE MORE WORK DISAGREE



"Questions and Answers"



Thomas Durant
President Durant Development Services Inc.



- Expectations
- What did not go well
- What went well



"Questions and Answers"



Tommy Carroll
Long Range /Environmental Section Manager

Administrative - Lessons Learned

- You need all relevant divisions of your jurisdiction (i.e. roads, utilities) involved and committed to the project.
- Release the entire draft to your work groups – don't piecemeal.
- Allow for enough time for your working groups to read and comment on the materials.
- Allow enough time for staff to make revisions and edits to the initial draft language.
- MOVE to electronic copies and editing among groups.

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"Questions and Answers"

CONTACT INFORMATION

Yakima County Planning Division
128 N. 2nd Street
Yakima, Washington 98901
planninginfo@co.yakima.wa.us
(509) 574-2300

APA Washington Chapter
603 Stewart Street Suite 610 Seattle, WA 98101
206-682-7436 office@washington-apa.org