Kitsap County
Shoreline Master Program Task Force
Meeting Report
April 22, 2010

Meeting Attendees

Task Force Members Present
Jim Aho; Linda Atkisson; Bob Benze; Susan Cruver; Michael Ellis; Dan Fallstrom; Michele Filley; Jennifer Forbes; Zachary Halls; Mike Ingham; Rebecca Mars; David Nelson; Tom Nevins; Teresa Osinski; Ken Parker; Carrilu Thompson; Sunny Wheeler

Kitsap County Department of Community Development Team (DCD)
Patricia Charnas; Susan Donahue; Carolyn Gourley; Larry Keeton

Committee Staff
Margaret Norton-Arnold, Facilitator; Mary Morrissey, Administrative Support

Meeting Summary

The first Kitsap County Shoreline Master Program Task Force meeting was held Thursday April 22, 2010 from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.at the Island Lake County Park. The primary focus of the meeting was an introduction of all of the Task Force members. The group also reviewed their charter, groundrules and schedule of meetings. The group had a brief discussion as a follow-up to the Washington State Department of Ecology presentation that had been held in the Kitsap County Board of Commissioners chamber on April 15. As will be the case for all meetings of the Task Force, ten minutes on the agenda was made available for open public comment.
Introductions and “Definitions of Success”

Task Force members introduced themselves to each other by describing how they saw themselves fitting on a “spectrum” – with one end being “back to Eden on the shoreline; no new development” and the other end identified as “The shoreline is degraded already, why do we have to worry about protecting it further?”

Most members saw themselves as somewhere in the middle of this spectrum. They expressed concern for the natural resources on the County’s shorelines, and talked about making sure that all of us do what’s right for the future of this shoreline. Nearly everyone acknowledged that we can’t turn back time completely and return to an “Eden” as it were, but they also wanted to ensure that remaining resources are fully protected, and, where possible, restored. A prevalent theme was that we should protect Puget Sound and Hood Canal from future mistakes, and that the SMP should be written with an eye toward the long-term common good for both the environment and for the people who live and work in Kitsap County.

The term striving for a balance was used often as members described both their own philosophies and their goals for the SMP.

In general, members also expressed support for making sure that shoreline management is based in good science; that is, that any new policies can be backed by strong scientific rationale. A couple of the members noted that the new Shoreline Management Program must also be legally defensible.

A couple of members also expressed concern over possible new regulations that might be burdensome to shoreline property owners. One talked about the importance of constitutional and property rights. Another noted that there are already a number of regulations that are aimed at environmental protection, and expressed the concern that the SMP not conflict with, or further add to, this regulatory burden.

The expressed visions of success will be documented in a “report card” that the Task Force will review from time to time throughout their process to ensure that they are on track with their original goals. A draft of this report card will be shared at the next meeting, which is scheduled for May 6.

Discussion on Charter and Meeting Schedule

Margaret reviewed the Task Force charter and schedule of meetings with members. Copies of these documents are available at www.kitsapshoreline.org

For the most part, members agreed with the key issue areas that are scheduled to be addressed over the next year. One member, however, wondered if it was truly the Task Force’s role to
create an overarching “vision” for the shoreline. Susan Donahue and Patty Charnas replied that the Department of Ecology requires community visioning as part of the SMP process and noted that a sense of this vision was currently being assembled via surveys and discussion sessions with various groups throughout Kitsap County. The Task Force will be reviewing, and adding their perspectives to, this broader community-wide vision. Other Task Force members said they welcomed this idea of a vision, noting that it is important to have a common understanding and starting point goal for the Shoreline Management Program.

Upon review and discussion, members agreed with the meeting layout, Task Force operating format, and groundrules, all of which were included in the Charter document.

Members noted that it was important to build some level of flexibility into the schedule. Margaret acknowledged this and noted where there are several “wiggle room” meetings in the schedule that have no specified agenda.

One member requested that meetings not be longer than they absolutely need to be, noting the extensive time commitment required to serve on the Task Force. Another member suggested that a new groundrule be added requesting that members not engage in “side conversations” during the course of the meetings. The groundrules will be modified in response to this request.

Members wondered about the groundrule that specifies that the Task Force must appoint members to act as spokespersons for the group in response to media requests. Larry Keeton responded that any member of the group is free to talk to the media at any time if they are only representing their own individual viewpoint. But any official recommendations of the group, or any official group positions on key issues, must only be represented to the media through members who have been selected by the Task Force to play that role. The group agreed that this made sense.

Several times throughout the meeting, Task Force members noted the importance of understanding, agreeing to, and “being on the same page” with respect to the various terms and definitions that are inherent to the shoreline master planning process. DCD staff agreed that a glossary of terms would be useful, and promised to provide these definitions throughout the course of the group’s work.

**Comments on Ecology Presentation**

The group discussed the Department of Ecology presentation on April 15. Most felt it had been helpful and believed the presenters had done a good job relaying a great deal of information. A few felt that the presenters had been somewhat vague in answering questions, but other members noted that this reflected the need for flexibility at the local level, and thought the responses had been appropriate. Several members noted the difficulties in shoreline management between jurisdictions; local flexibility means that a city can take a different approach from a county, and that even two counties that are geographically adjacent to each
other might take different approaches in their SMPs. In general members had concerns about this “piecemeal” approach.

Public Comments

- A question was asked about how the Task Force would interact with other agencies/businesses with extensive shoreline activity and impacts. For example, how will the Task Force interact with the Navy?
- The comment was made that it is important to provide evaluation and follow-up regarding County regulations and actions. For example, the County often cleans out ditches and hauls the material away. Who is monitoring the effectiveness and final outcome of this type of activity? The same type of an evaluation should occur for shoreline management.
- Doris Small from Fish and Wildlife offered to field questions and provide information from her office if members would find that useful.

Next Steps

The next meeting of the Task Force is scheduled for Thursday, May 6, again at Island Lake County Park. The focus of that meeting will be on the contents and process of the Shoreline Master Program – what it is and how it will be completed.

Two beach walks have been scheduled for Task Force members, and will be conducted by Sea Grant. The dates are May 15 and May 27, with more details regarding times and locations to follow.