

PLANNING COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET

Meeting Date	Staff Contact
8/19/2010	BRIAN SMART

Subject:

The purpose of the public hearing is to consider a Comprehensive Plan amendment and a site specific rezone to Area 1C of the Happy Valley Neighborhood Plan to change the land use and zoning designations of the property from Multifamily Residential to Institutional. This will include corresponding amendments to BMC 20.00.090 Happy Valley Neighborhood Table of Zoning Regulations.

Attachments:

- 1. Staff Report
 - 1.A. Draft Findings of Fact, Conclusions and Recommendations
 - 1.B. Draft Ordinance
 - 1.C. SEPA Determination of Non-Significance
 - 1.D. Neighborhood Plan Amendment and Rezone application
 - 1.E. Aerial Vicinity Maps

Meeting Type	Category
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public Hearing	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Legislative
<input type="checkbox"/> Public Meeting	<input type="checkbox"/> Quasi-judicial
<input type="checkbox"/> Work Session	<input type="checkbox"/> Information Only
<input type="checkbox"/> Briefing	

Clearances	Initials	Date
Greg Aucutt, Senior Planner	<i>GA</i>	7/29/10
Brian Smart, Planner II	<i>BJS</i>	7/29/2010
Alan Marriner, Legal	<i>AM</i>	8/9/10

Previous Commission Meeting or Action:

Recommended Action:

Approval of the proposed rezone and text amendments for Area 1C the Happy Valley Neighborhood Plan.

1 **STAFF REPORT – PLANNING COMMISSION**
2 **FILE # ZON2009-00010**

3
4 **Agenda Topic:** A comprehensive plan amendment and rezone of Area 1C of the Happy
5 Valley Neighborhood Plan and zoning table.
6

7 **For:** August 19, 2010 Planning Commission Public Hearing
8

9 **Staff Contact:** Brian Smart, Planner 2
10 Greg Aucutt, Senior Planner
11

12
13 **I. SUMMARY**
14

15 The owner of the property in Area 1C of the Happy Valley Neighborhood Plan, (Western
16 Washington University), submitted an application for a site specific rezone and comprehensive
17 plan amendment to change the land use and zoning designations of the property from
18 Multifamily Residential, High Density to Institutional. The change would allow WWU to use the
19 property for non-industrial campus support services.
20

21 The application packet from the property owners (WWU) is included in this staff report (see
22 Attachment A)
23

24 **II. PLANNING COMMISSION ROLE**
25

26 The proposal before the Commission is a legislative neighborhood plan amendment and rezone
27 requiring a Type VI process. The Planning Commission must hold a public hearing and issue
28 findings of fact and conclusions along with a recommendation to the City Council. Draft findings
29 and conclusions are included in the staff report (Attachment A). The Commission should adopt
30 or modify the draft findings as needed to support the Commission's final recommendations.
31

32 **III. BACKGROUND**
33

34 Western Washington University submitted a docketing request for a comprehensive plan
35 amendment and rezone in 2009. The proposal was docketed for review in the 2010 cycle of
36 comprehensive plan amendments by the City Council in March.
37

38 On March 16th, 2010, the applicants held a neighborhood meeting for the proposed
39 amendments. Representatives from WWU and city staff were present. No members of the
40 public attended the meeting.
41

42 A Notice of Planning Commission Public Hearing was mailed to all property owners within 500'
43 of the subject property in addition to the neighborhood association and the Mayors
44 Neighborhood Advisory Committee. This notice was also published in the Bellingham Herald 30-
45 days prior to the hearing.
46

47 The Planning Commission is scheduled to hold a public hearing on the proposal on August 19,
48 2010.
49
50
51

1 **IV. PROPOSAL**

2
3 Area 1C consists of the block west of the WWU Physical Plant bounded by 25th, 26th,
4 Taylor and Douglas (see attached maps). This block was identified in the 2001 Happy Valley
5 Neighborhood Plan update process as appropriate for use by WWU once they obtained all the
6 property. The applicant proposes to amend the neighborhood plan and zoning designations
7 from High Density Multifamily Residential to Institutional. The effect of the change would be that
8 WWU could use the property for non-industrial support services and administrative offices as
9 identified in the HVMP and the WWU Institutional Master Plan (IMP). This would be done by
10 changing the neighborhood plan land use designation to "Institutional" and adding new text to
11 limit the uses as identified in the WWU IMP. The zoning designation and table would also be
12 amended. The amendments to the HVNP and zoning table needed to approve the proposal are
13 shown in the attached draft ordinance (see Attachment B).

14
15 The following contains relevant excerpts from the current HVNP for Area 1C.

16
17 **HVNP Area 1C:**

18
19 Area 1C consists of the block west of the WWU Physical Plant bounded by 25th, 26th,
20 Taylor and Douglas. It was originally a part of Area 1A. The base residential multi
21 zoning of Area 1A has been retained here.

22
23 The neighborhood plan suggests that the property could be considered for a rezone to
24 Institutional under the following circumstances:

- 25
- 26 • WWU establishes a need for additional land area beyond the current campus boundary
27 to accommodate projected growth, and WWU owns or controls all of the property in the
28 block or obtains the signature of all the property owners on a rezone petition.
 - 29 • If this block is rezoned to Institutional, permitted uses should be limited to student
30 activities, residential, or non-industrial support uses as defined in the Institutional Master
31 Plan.
 - 32 • Appropriate development standards would be identified and site plan approval would
33 occur in a concurrent process.
 - 34 • The area could be considered for a rezone as early as one year from the date of
35 adoption of the Happy Valley Neighborhood Plan (2001). This should provide sufficient
36 time for the University to obtain funding, acquire the property, and produce an acceptable
37 development proposal.
- 38

39 The HVNP recommends that, if this block is rezoned to Institutional, permitted uses should be
40 limited to student activities, residential, or non-industrial support uses as defined in the
41 Institutional Master Plan.

42
43 The HVNP also contains policy language suggesting that appropriate development and
44 performance standards should be established in the rezone process. As part of the process,
45 vacating the 26th Street right-of-way should be considered in exchange for an equal dedication
46 of land for open space on the east side of 25th Street. If this occurs, Western should be required
47 to permanently own and maintain the open space. Parking in this area could serve uses located
48 in Area 23 (Physical Plant) but parking for uses north of Bill McDonald Parkway should be
49 prohibited.

1 WWU IMP, Area 22

2 The WWU Institutional Master Plan was adopted in 2001. It is essentially a master plan and
3 development regulations for the main campus and other areas owned by WWU. Area 1C is
4 identified as District 22 in the IMP. It is designated as appropriate for "Residential and
5 Administrative Support" uses.

6
7 The IMP specifies that non-residential uses are allowed in this district only if rezoned to
8 'Institutional' through the annual neighborhood plan amendment process. The IMP recommends
9 that, if rezoned, permitted uses should be limited to student activities, offices, residential, or
10 non-industrial support or other similar uses.

11
12 **Street and Alley Right-of-Way Vacation Proposal**

13
14 The Hearing Examiner will review the requested street right-of-way vacation for the portion of
15 26th Street within the subject property and the associated alley to the west. The request has
16 yet to be processed as the appraisal is still pending as of the time of the staff report.

17
18 **V. COMPREHENSIVE PLAN GOALS AND POLICIES**

19
20 Relevant Comprehensive Plan goals and policies are listed below.

21
22 **VI. ANALYSIS:**

23
24 The following factors should be considered when reviewing comprehensive plan and
25 neighborhood plan amendment proposals BMC 20.20.060.C.

26
27 Comprehensive Plan Amendment Review Criteria:

28
29 **Review Criteria #1 - Is the proposed amendment to the plan supported by or**
30 **consistent with the existing goals and policies of the comprehensive plan and the**
31 **State Growth Management Act?**

32
33 The subject property is called out in both the HVNP and the WWU IMP as an appropriate
34 area for administrative offices and non-educational university uses. The amendment is
35 consistent with Happy Valley Policy #47 which encourages WWU to adopt measures to
36 mitigate impacts on the Happy Valley Neighborhood as enrollment increases. One of
37 those mitigations is to site off campus facilities in appropriate areas.

38
39 The 2001 WWU IMP also contains some policy language relevant to the proposal:

- 40
41 1. Maintain the central part of campus as the "academic core."
42 2. Accommodate future academic growth predominantly within the 10-minute walk zone
43 adjacent to Parks Hall.
44 3. Provide compatible transitions with community edges and appropriate neighborhood
45 connections.

46
47 "Administrative/Support" areas are defined in the IMP as areas appropriate for:

48
49 Administrative offices, utility systems support functions, Physical Plant, recycling,
50 copying services, business functions, archival functions, environmental health and safety
51 functions, parking facilities and related uses.

1
2 Finally, the proposed amendment is supported by the Bellingham Comprehensive Plan
3 goals and policies. Specific Comprehensive Plan goals and policies include the following:
4

5 **VB 11/DP 11** – Bellingham maximizes the contributions of Western Washington
6 University to the community. City coordination with University representatives ensures
7 that the impacts of the University’s ongoing programs and development are consistent
8 with the goals of the community as a whole.
9

10 **VB 20** – Bellingham’s economy builds on the educational research, teaching facilities
11 and technical resources provided by Western Washington University.
12

13 **VB 31** – Bellingham emphasizes ongoing interaction and exchange between citizens,
14 educational institutions and students, including community use of school facilities, and
15 information sharing and communication among educational institutions, government
16 and business.
17

18 **LU 51** – Outside commercial or industrial activity (including storage) in transition areas
19 between commercial/industrial areas and residential, institutional or public zoning
20 districts should be regulated in accordance with adopted standards.
21

22 **LU 126 - Institutional Areas** – This designation is appropriate for areas containing
23 public or quasi-public institutional uses requiring large land area. WWU, Whatcom
24 Community College and the St. Joseph’s Hospital campus are located in Institutional
25 zones.
26

27 **Review Criteria #2 - Have circumstances changed sufficiently since the adoption**
28 **of the comprehensive plan and/or neighborhood plan to justify the proposed**
29 **change? If so, the circumstances that have changed should be described in**
30 **sufficient detail so that a finding of changed circumstances can be made and a**
31 **decision as to appropriateness of the proposed neighborhood plan amendment**
32 **can be reached based on information in the record.**
33

34 Circumstances have sufficiently changed since the 2001 update to the Happy Valley
35 Neighborhood Plan and the WWU IMP. As mentioned earlier, Area 1C of the HVNP
36 is identified as an appropriate location for campus expansion of non-academic uses.
37 This was done in recognition of the fact that the current campus is much smaller than
38 other campuses in the states higher educational system. Also, WWU is landlocked by
39 a series of established neighborhoods. Land in the main campus must be used as
40 efficiently as possible for academic and residential uses. Administrative support uses
41 that do not need to be on the main campus should be located elsewhere if possible.
42 WWU now owns all the property in Area 1C following the intent of the policy direction
43 in the HVNP to use this block for administrative support uses. This rezone will allow
44 the University to create much needed office space for the Physical Plant operations
45 and other staff who do not need to be located on the main campus. This will free up
46 additional space on campus for educational related uses.
47

48 **Review Criteria #3 - Have the underlying assumptions found in the comprehensive**
49 **plan and/or neighborhood plan upon which the land use designation, density or**
50 **other provisions are based changed, or is new information available which was**
51 **not considered at the time the plan was adopted? If so, the changed assumptions**
52 **or new information should be described in sufficient detail to enable the Planning**

1 Commission and City Council to find that the land use designation or other
2 sections of the plan should be changed. Examples of the underlying assumptions
3 include expected population growth, utility or roadway capacities, available land
4 supply, or demand for land with the existing or proposed land use designation.
5

6 Since 2001 (when the IMP and HVNP were updated) the average full time enrollment
7 (FTE) has increased by over 1,000, a total of 441,000 gross square feet (GSF) of
8 building area has been constructed, and residential capacity increased by 236. This
9 growth has marginally surpassed the growth in student population forecasted in the IMP.
10 Available space on-campus remains a constant issue for the University. What land is
11 left on the main campus should be reserved for academic purposes. Non-educational
12 related administrative support uses should be relocated whenever possible. Both the
13 HVNP and the WWU IMP identify Area 1C as appropriate for administrative support
14 uses. These two plans also state that the rezone should be reviewed when WWU owns
15 the entire block. Throughout the review process, staff has not identified any substantive
16 reasons why this area is not appropriate for WWU administrative support uses. The
17 proposed rezone completes the policy direction in both the HVNP and the WWU IMP.
18

19 **Review Criteria #4 - Does the proposed amendment promote a more desirable**
20 **land use pattern for the community as stated in the goals and policies in the**
21 **comprehensive plan? Are there environmental constraints (such as wetlands,**
22 **steep slopes, significant stands of trees, etc.) present on the site to such a degree**
23 **that development of the site is economically or physically unfeasible under the**
24 **existing land use designation? If so, a description of the qualities of the proposed**
25 **plan amendment that would make the land use pattern more desirable and/or**
26 **would result in less environmental impact should be provided in sufficient detail**
27 **to enable the Planning Commission and City Council to find that the proposed**
28 **neighborhood plan amendment is in the community's long term best interest.**
29

30 The proposed amendment promotes a more desirable land use pattern for the
31 surrounding area. Area 1C is located adjacent to the current WWU Physical Plant
32 property (Area 2B). It is also adjacent to the Sehome High School playfields to the
33 north, and multifamily development to the south and west. Expansion of campus uses
34 in this area, if properly conditioned, would be appropriate and would achieve the policy
35 direction set in the 2001 HVNP and IMP.
36

37 There are no environmental constraints, such as steep slopes, wetlands, or streams
38 on the site.
39

40 **Review Criteria #5 - What impacts would the proposed amendment to the plan**
41 **have on the current use of other properties in the vicinity? What measures should**
42 **be taken to ensure compatibility with the uses of other property in the area?**
43

44 The site would be developed with administrative offices for WWU. The interface
45 between the future office buildings and the residential uses to the south and west will
46 be addressed through building design and landscaping buffering during the
47 development permit process. Additional performance/development standards can be
48 implemented during the same process as needed. Standards such as stormwater, site
49 and building lighting, street improvements, building aesthetics, etc., will mitigate
50 potential impacts to adjacent residential uses.
51

1 The following factors should be considered when reviewing rezone proposals per BMC
2 20.19.030. Note that some of these criteria are the same as those previously discussed for
3 comprehensive plan amendment proposals:
4

5 Rezone Criteria:
6

7 **Rezone Review Criteria A - Is the proposed rezone consistent with the**
8 **comprehensive plan or corresponds to a concurrent comprehensive plan**
9 **amendment application.**

10
11 The property is the subject of a concurrent comprehensive plan amendment proposal. See
12 previous criteria. Staff finds this criteria is met.
13

14 **Rezone Review Criteria B - The proposal will not adversely affect the public health,**
15 **safety or general welfare.**

16
17 The proposed rezone will not adversely affect health, safety and welfare and will result in
18 long-term benefits to the community. The site would be developed with administrative
19 offices for WWU. The interface between the future office buildings and the residential uses
20 to the south and west will be addressed through building design and landscaping buffering
21 during the development permit process. Additional performance/development standards
22 can be implemented during the same process as needed. Standards such as stormwater,
23 site and building lighting, street improvements, building aesthetics, etc., will mitigate
24 potential impacts to adjacent residential uses.
25

26 Staff finds that the proposal meets this criteria.
27

28 **Rezone Review Criteria C - The proposal is in the best interests of the residents of**
29 **Bellingham.**

30
31 The University is one of Bellingham's largest employers. The benefits of having WWU in
32 the city are many. Both City government and the community at large have a vested
33 interest in the continued success of the institution. Neighborhoods surrounding the
34 campus have an interest in how on campus development occurs. Preserving land on the
35 main campus for academic use will limit the need for significant campus expansion. The
36 proposal would allow expansion of office and support uses that do not need to be located
37 on the main campus in an area that has been identified in two plans as appropriate.
38

39 Staff finds that the proposal meets this criteria.
40

41 **Rezone Review Criteria D - The subject property is suitable for development in**
42 **general conformance with zoning standards under the proposed zoning district.**

43
44 The subject property is suitable for development of administrative offices under the
45 proposed Institutional zoning. WWU now owns the property and it is cleared and free from
46 environmental constraints. It has adequate access and infrastructure needed to support
47 office uses. Development standards such as stormwater, site and building lighting, street
48 improvements, building aesthetics, etc., will mitigate potential impacts to adjacent
49 residential uses.
50

51 Staff finds that the proposal meets this criteria.

1 **Rezone Review Criteria E - Adequate public facilities and services are available to**
2 **serve the development allowed by the proposed rezone.**

3
4 The proposal was reviewed by the public works department in terms of adequate public
5 facilities. No issues were identified with the proposed office uses. Staff finds that the
6 proposal meets this criteria.
7

8 **Rezone Review Criteria F - The rezone will not be materially detrimental to uses of**
9 **property in the immediate vicinity.**

10
11 See response to Criteria B. Staff finds that the criteria is met.
12

13 **Rezone Review Criteria G - The rezone is appropriate because either:**

14
15 **(1) Conditions in the immediate vicinity have changed sufficiently since the**
16 **property was classified under the current zoning that a rezone is in the public**
17 **interest; or**

18
19 **(2) The rezone will correct an error in zone classification or a zoning boundary; or**

20
21 **(3) The rezone will implement the policies of the comprehensive plan.**
22

23 Conditions have changed as noted above. A rezone to Institutional and WWU use of the
24 subject property was identified as appropriate in both the HVNP and the University's IMP.
25 The proposed rezone will implement the essential public facilities policies of the
26 comprehensive plan. Staff finds that the criteria has been met.
27
28

29 **VII. REQUIRED FINDINGS CRITERIA**

30 The City can adopt amendments to the comprehensive and/or a neighborhood plan only if it
31 finds that:

32 **(1) The proposed amendment bears a substantial relation to public health,**
33 **safety, and welfare;**

34 **(2) The proposed amendment is consistent with the Growth Management Act;**

35 **(3) The comprehensive plan will be internally consistent; and**

36 **(4) The proposed amendment will result in long-term benefits to the**
37 **community as a whole and is in the best interest of the community.**
38

39 The City's comprehensive plan is consistent with the GMA. As stated above, the proposed
40 amendments are supported by both the Happy Valley Neighborhood Plan, the WWU IMP, and
41 the goals and policies of the comprehensive plan. Circumstances identified and described in
42 the HVNP and the WWU IMP have occurred -enrollment and demands for academic space on
43 the main campus continues to increase; land on the main campus is even more limited, as are
44 potential expansion areas; new academic buildings have been constructed on the main campus
45 and more are planned; additional residential space has been constructed and more is planned.
46 Scarce campus land must be reserved for academic, residential and support uses that are
47 within easy walking distance. Therefore the comprehensive plan will be internally consistent as
48 a result of the proposed amendments.
49

1 The proposed rezone will result in long-term benefits to the community. The University is one of
2 Bellingham's largest employers. The benefits of having WWU in the city are many. Both City
3 government and the community at large have a vested interest in the continued success of the
4 institution. Neighborhoods surrounding the campus have an interest in how development
5 occurs. Preserving land on the main campus for academic use will limit the need for significant
6 campus expansion. The proposal would allow expansion of office and support uses that do not
7 need to be located on the main campus in an area that has been identified in two plans as
8 appropriate.

9
10 The Planning Commission considered these criteria in their review of the proposal and in the
11 development of the attached Findings of Fact, Conclusions and Recommendations.

12 13 **VIII. PUBLIC COMMENT**

14
15 On March 16, 2010, the applicants representative held a neighborhood meeting for the
16 proposed rezone of the property from Residential-Multi to Institutional.

17
18 Notice of the Planning Commission hearing was mailed to neighborhood representatives and
19 associations and other parties with an interest in this topic. The notice was also published the
20 Bellingham Herald.

21
22 To date, staff has received no written comments on the proposal.

23 24 **IX. STATE ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT (SEPA)**

25
26 A non-project SEPA Determination of Non-Significance was issued by the City of Bellingham on
27 July 28, 2010.

28 29 **X. STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

30
31 Staff believes that the proposal to change the land use and zoning designations from RM to
32 Institutional in Area 1C are consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, Happy Valley
33 Neighborhood Plan, the WWU IMP and the comprehensive plan amendment review criteria. We
34 therefore recommend that the Planning Commission approve the attached Findings of Fact
35 document, thereby forwarding a recommendation of approval to the City Council for review later
36 this year.

37 38 **XI LIST OF ATTACHMENTS**

39
40 Attachment A Draft Planning Commission Findings of Fact
41 Attachment B Draft Ordinance
42 Attachment C SEPA Determination of Non-Significance
43
44
45
46

1
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ATTACHMENT A

9

DRAFT BELLINGHAM PLANNING COMMISSION FINDINGS OF FACT, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

10
11
12
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14
15

AUGUST 19, 2010

16

DRAFT FOR REVIEW

17
18
19
20
21

Note: the following Findings of Fact, Conclusions and Recommendations were prepared in draft form to support the staff recommendation. The findings can be adopted as written, or modified to support the final Planning Commission recommendation.

22

SUMMARY

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24
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26
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28

The owner of the property in Area 1C of the Happy Valley Neighborhood Plan (WWU), is requesting amendments to the Happy Valley Neighborhood Plan and zoning. The amendments would change the land use and zoning designations of the property from Multifamily Residential, High Density to Institutional. The change would allow WWU to use the property for non-industrial campus support services.

29
30
31
32

Following the public hearing and deliberation on the proposal the Bellingham Planning Commission recommends that City Council approve the proposed amendments

33

I. FINDINGS OF FACT

34

1. Proposal Description

- 35
36
37
38
- A neighborhood plan amendment to change the Land Use Designation of Area 1C of the Happy Valley Neighborhood from Multi Family Residential, High Density Institutional.
 - A rezone of the property in Area 1C from Residential Multi, Multiple to Institutional.

39

2. Background Information/Procedural History

40
41
42
43

Western Washington University submitted a docketing request for a comprehensive plan amendment and rezone in 2009. The proposal was docketed for review in the 2010 cycle of comprehensive plan amendments by the City Council in March.

44
45
46
47

On March 16th, 2010, the applicants held a neighborhood meeting for the proposed amendments. Representatives from WWU and city staff were present. No members of the public attended the meeting.

48
49

A Notice of Planning Commission Public Hearing was mailed to all property owners within 500' of the subject property in addition to the neighborhood association and the Mayors Neighborhood Advisory Committee. This notice was also published in the Bellingham Herald 30-days prior to the hearing.

The Planning Commission is held a public hearing on the proposal on August 19, 2010.

1 **3. Public Comment**

2
3 [Summary of public comment will be inserted.]

4
5 **4. State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) Determination**

6
7 A non-project SEPA determination of Non-Significance was issued by the City of Bellingham on
8 July 28, 2010.

9
10 **5. Consistency with the Bellingham Comprehensive Plan and Review Criteria**

11
12 Bellingham's neighborhood plans must be consistent with and carry out the goals and policies of
13 the comprehensive plan. In addition, neighborhood plan amendments must be consistent with
14 the comprehensive plan amendment and rezone factors and review criteria in BMC 20.19.030,
15 and 20.20.060. The attached staff report from the August 19, 2010 Planning Commission public
16 hearing contains an analysis of the review criteria. The Planning Commission agrees with staff's
17 review of the criteria in relation to the current proposal.

18
19 In addition to the review criteria, the Planning Commission must find that the following factors
20 are met by the proposal:

- 21
22 **(1) The proposed amendment bears a substantial relation to public health, safety,**
23 **and welfare;**
24 **(2) The proposed amendment is consistent with the Growth Management Act;**
25 **(3) The comprehensive plan will be internally consistent; and**
26 **(4) The proposed amendment will result in long-term benefits to the community as**
27 **a whole and is in the best interest of the community.**

28
29 The proposed rezone will result in more efficient use of land, both on the main campus, in the
30 area of the WWU Physical Plant and on the subject site. Limitations on the uses allowed at the
31 site and the design and development standards written into the new zoning for the area will
32 ensure that the public health and welfare are protected. The effect of the proposal (reserving
33 land in and around the main campus for academic and residential uses; providing space for
34 non-academic uses off the main campus) will be positive for the university and the community.

35
36 As stated in the August 19 staff report, the proposed amendments are supported by both the
37 Happy Valley Neighborhood Plan and the WWU IMP and the goals and policies of the City's
38 Comprehensive Plan. Supporting Comprehensive Plan goals and policies were identified in the
39 staff report and included in the Planning Commission's deliberation of the proposal. The
40 proposal is consistent with the GMA and the plan will be internally consistent as a result of the
41 proposed amendments.

42
43 The proposed amendments will result in long-term benefits to the community. The University is
44 one of Bellingham's largest employers. The benefits of having WWU in the city are many. Both
45 City government and the community at large have a vested interest in the continued success of
46 the institution. Neighborhoods surrounding the campus have an interest in how development
47 occurs. Preserving land on the main campus for academic use will limit the need for significant
48 campus expansion. The propose would allow expansion of office and support uses that do not

1 need to be located on the main campus in an area that has be identified in two plans as
2 appropriate.

3
4 **II. CONCLUSIONS**

5
6 Based on the staff report, the submittal from the applicant and the information presented at the
7 public hearing, the Planning Commission concludes:

- 8
9 1. The proposed amendments are consistent with and meet the BMC review criteria for
10 comprehensive plan amendments and rezones.
11 2. The proposed amendments are in the best interests of the community and the university for
12 the reasons stated above. Approval will result in a more desirable land use pattern for the
13 community by preserving land on the main campus for academic and residential uses.
14 3. The proposed amendments are consistent with the goals and policies of the Bellingham
15 Comprehensive Plan.
16 4. Limits on permitted uses and design and development standards for Area 1C will be added
17 to the zoning table to ensure that development is at a scale appropriate for the location.
18 5. The proposed amendments are consistent with the policy direction established nearly a
19 decade ago in the Happy Valley Neighborhood and the WWU IMP.

20
21 **III. RECOMMENDATION**

22
23 Based on the findings and conclusions, the Bellingham Planning Commission recommends that
24 the City Council approve the proposed amendment to the Happy Valley Neighborhood Plan and
25 the zoning designation and requirements for Area 1C as shown in the attached ordinance.

26
27
28 **ADOPTED** this _____ day of _____, 2010.

29
30
31 _____
32 Planning Commission Chairperson

33
34
35
36
37 **ATTEST:** _____
38 Recording Secretary

39
40
41
42
43 **APPROVED AS TO FORM:**

44
45 _____
46 City Attorney