

Key Peninsula Advisory Commission (KPAC)
Special Meeting Minutes | May 25, 2023, 6:00 p.m.
Key Peninsula Civic Center, Gymnasium
17010 S. Vaughn Rd. NW, Vaughn, WA 98394

(NOTE: These minutes are not verbatim. An audio recording is available online at <http://www.piercecountywa.gov/burleylagoon> or upon request.)

Members Present:

Sami Jensen, Chair
Kip Clinton, Vice Chair
Julia Runyan, Secretary
Stephanie Andrews
Jennifer Dow
Angela Mattison-Lindbom
Kristen Zink

Members Absent:

Eddie Clark, *excused*

Chair Jensen called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. A quorum was present.

NEW BUSINESS

**Shoreline Substantial Development Permit / Shoreline Conditional Use Permit
Case No. SD/CP15-14 - Burley Lagoon Geoduck Farm (Taylor Shellfish Farms)
Application Numbers: 778791, 778792, 778793, 778794, 823304, 1004944**

Applicant: Taylor Shellfish Farms, Attention: Erin Ewald

Staff: Ty Booth, Planner, and Dave Risvold, Shoreline Planning Supervisor/Environmental Biologist

Proposal: Convert existing shellfish beds from the cultivation of Manila clams/oysters to geoduck clams planted in PVC tubes and/or HDPE flexible mesh tubes throughout a 25.5-acre project area. Predator exclusion netting may also be utilized during some portion of the 6-year grow-out cycle. Planting would be done in phases. Located at the southern half of Burley Lagoon within the Key Peninsula and Gig Harbor Peninsula Community Plan areas. The shoreline environment designations are Urban, Rural Residential, and Natural. The proposal would be $\frac{3}{4}$ mile from Kitsap County, within Secs. 13/23, T22N, R1E, in Council District #7. Parcel numbers: 0122133078, 0122231065, 0122231067, and 0122231071

Note: The primary purpose of this meeting was for the KPAC to ask questions of the County and Applicant, to deliberate, and make a recommendation on the proposal. Otherwise, there were no presentations by the Applicant, County, or public testimony. These all occurred at the joint PAC/KPAC meeting held on May 22, 2023.

County Staff:

Ty Booth, Planner, and Dave Risvold, Shoreline Planning Supervisor/Environmental Biologist, were in attendance and answered questions.

Applicant/Agent:

Erin Ewald and Jesse DeNike were in attendance and answered questions on behalf of the applicant, Taylor Shellfish Farms.

Commission Questions/Discussion Topics:

- Impacts of this proposal, with mitigation, as defined in the draft and final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

- Third-party reviewer of the EIS not used; the draft and final EIS (including the preliminary drafts of both) were reviewed by County staff.
- Inquired about algae blooms and seaweed blooms, specifically in Burley Lagoon, and whether any studies had been conducted to determine where the nutrients come from.
- Potential environmental impacts of the long-term harvesting of the geoduck.
- Inquired about staff's recommendation and approval or denial of this proposal.
- Inquired about older, existing farming operations that had been established prior to the adoption of current County permitting and Shoreline Code requirements.
- Discussed If proposal is approved, whether the County would be permitted to monitor for compliance with the conditions of approval. This would only apply to the 25.5 acres included in this proposal, it would not include existing farming operations.
- Inquired what, if any, issues, or concerns had been reported to the County regarding current geoduck farming operations in the Puget Sound area of Pierce County.
- Impact on the proposed farm and salmon populations.
- Historical information regarding issues with existing aquaculture farming operations in Pierce County.
- Inquired if this proposal mirrored existing geoduck farming operations. What are the differences and similarities?
- PVC pipes (tubes):
 - Possible long-term effects of using PVC pipes for farming operation.
 - Oversight will be provided by State and Federal agencies. The County will also have conditions for approval.
 - Concerns with the possible erosion of PVC pipes and the life span of PVC pipes; specifically, the impact on the life span due to underwater installation.
 - Alternatives to the use of PVC pipes.
 - Difference between PVC pipes and the flexible mesh.
 - Requested an overview of the PVC pipe process (i.e., use of, recycling practices, number to be installed per acre/at any given time.
- Discussion regarding the de Tienne geoduck farm proposal appeal.
- Inquired about the definition and use of the word "subtidal" in relation to the proposal and geoduck farming operations.
- Proximity of the proposed project area to homes and the number of homes impacted by the site.
- Inquired if this proposal is the only application for geoduck aquaculture in an estuary within Pierce County.
- Inquired on the frequency of monitoring by local, State, and Federal agencies for adherence to established guidelines.
- The County's timeline to investigate issues and concerns that are reported.
- Inquired about what resources are currently used or have previously been used by the applicant to communicate with/distribute information to residents.
- Inquired on the number of geoduck farms Taylor Shellfish Farms operates and the number of employees they have.
- Question regarding the type of netting used for geoduck farming operations in comparison to clams and oysters.
- Inquired on compliance and safety check procedures. Also, asked about the procedures if a mass mortality were identified within an area.
- Inquired about outcome of 'scatter planting' which was previously used in the area by another company in 2001.

- Amount of debris and pollution generated by geoduck farming operations comparative to existing aquaculture farming operations (clams and oysters).
- Impact of king tides and storm surges on geoduck farming operations in Burley Lagoon.
- Proposed project area is on a 5–6-year cycle, approximate length of time to harvest 5 acres annually. Maintenance and monitoring are ongoing throughout the year.
- Conversion of existing operations and the potential economic impact on Taylor Shellfish Farms.
- Noise reduction and mitigation measures.
- Broad overview of the current appeal, as referenced in the EIS, and the reason(s) it was filed.
- Number of days per year geoduck planting and harvesting will be done within the entire tract areas.
- Number of applications Taylor Shellfish Farms currently has pending in other counties (jurisdictions) for geoduck farming operations.
- Inquired about the process used to produce geoduck seeds.
- Inquired about the feeding process of planted geoducks and the potential impact on nutrients found in the soil.
- Inquired if baseline or historical studies, prior to Taylor Shellfish Farms having operations in the area, had ever been completed.

Motion made (Zink/Mattison-Lindbom) to recommend approval of Shoreline Substantial Development Permit/Shoreline Conditional Use Permit, Case No. SD/CP15-14 Burley Lagoon Geoduck Farm for Taylor Shellfish Farms with the recommendations that the County request Taylor Shellfish to mitigate, as best possible, additional noise produced in the lagoon, to communicate when they will be on-site in the lagoon doing clean-up or scoping for debris, and to communicate with the community when they are aware of storms or events happening that could affect the sea farm in a negative way. **Motion passed (5-2).**

Kip Clinton	Yes	Angela Mattison-Lindbom	Yes
Julia Runyan	No	Kristin Zink	Yes
Stephanie Andrews	No	Sami Jensen	Yes
Jennifer Dow	Yes		

OTHER BUSINESS

No other business was discussed.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:28 p.m.