



**COUPEVILLE PLANNING COMMISSION**  
**Island County Annex Building - Commissioners Hearing Room**  
**(1 NE 6<sup>th</sup> Street, Coupeville)**  
**October 1, 2024**  
**6:00 pm**

**CALL TO ORDER**

**LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

*The Town of Coupeville is located on the homelands of the Lower Skagit People. For thousands of years, Coast Salish tribes have stewarded the lands, waterways, plants and animals in our region. We pay respect to the elders and their families, past, present, and emerging for they hold the memories, traditions and culture of their people. The Town of Coupeville is committed to respecting this long history as we honor and acknowledge the continued presence and rights of all Indigenous people. We will advocate for and partner with our Indigenous neighbors as we continue to work together as an inclusive community.*

**CHANGES AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

- September 3, 2024 Meeting

**PUBLIC HEARING**

- None

**PUBLIC INPUT**

**DISCUSSION**

- Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update
  - Historic Preservation + Community Design Element
- Hand delivered packets

**COMMISSIONER COMMENTS**

**ADJOURNMENT**

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## **DRAFT MINUTES**

### **COUPEVILLE PLANNING COMMISSION**

**Island County Annex Building – Commissioners Hearing Room  
(1 NE Sixth Street, Coupeville)  
September 3, 2024 – 6:00pm**

#### **CALL TO ORDER AND LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

Chair Cook called the meeting to order at 6:00pm and read the land acknowledgement.

#### **COMMISSIONERS PRESENT**

- ✓ Chair **Michelle Cook**
- ✓ Vice-Chair **Gary Armstrong**
- ✓ Commissioner **Von Summers**
- ✓ Commissioner **Evan Henrich**
- ✓ Commissioner **Susan Upchurch**

#### **STAFF PRESENT**

- ✓ Community Planning Director **Joshua Engelbrecht**

#### **APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Action: A motion was made by Vice-Chair Armstrong, seconded by Commissioner Summers, to approve the agenda of the September 3, 2024 meeting as submitted. The motion passed unanimously.

#### **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Action: A motion was made by Commissioner Upchurch, seconded by Commissioner Henrich, to approve the minutes of the August 6, 2024 meeting as submitted. The motion passed unanimously.

#### **PUBLIC INPUT**

Laurie Taylor addressed the Commission regarding the previous meeting's discussion about sidewalks in Coupeville. Taylor feels that the statement that sidewalks are "too urban" for Coupeville is an ableist opinion and that a community of this size should be more walkable. Taylor also addressed the Commissioners about the future land use map that proposes a zoning change at the Community Bible Church.



## **DISCUSSION**

Community Planning Director Engelbrecht lead a discussion on the Land Use Element of the 2025 Comp Plan Update. Questions were asked and answered regarding ADA accessibility, sidewalks, zoning changes, ADU's and how to ensure they're used for long-term housing, Land Use Element goals, and sites for possible affordable housing development.

## **COMMISSIONER COMMENTS**

Chair Cook brought up concerns about a NE Sixth St that were presented at the August meeting. Asked Joshua about permits and whether they are following building codes.

## **ADJOURNMENT: 7:22pm**

Respectfully submitted

Community Planning Director

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Deputy Clerk Chris Jolly

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Joshua Engelbrecht



## Town of Coupeville

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### STAFF REPORT

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**DATE:** October 1, 2024

**TO:** Coupeville Planning Commission

**FROM:** Joshua Engelbrecht, Community Planning Director

**RE:** Discussion – Comprehensive Plan Historic Preservation Element  
Planning Commission,

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This is our second meeting to review our existing elements of the Comprehensive Plan. Our Middle Housing Code update is close to having a public draft available. However, it was not ready in time for our discussion in October. In line with that, Staff felt that looking at the Middle Housing Code and the Housing Element at the same meeting would pair well and lead to a productive discussion. As such, I am expecting to bring those components to our November 5, 2024 meeting and have shifted our discussion related to Historic Preservation and Community Design to this meeting. As I will restate in all my reports, we don't expect much of the content from 2023 will change, but we wanted to give you the opportunity to make those recommendations if there are content or priority changes that you would like the Town Council to consider.

Overall, the Historic Preservation and Community Design element includes 2 goals and 13 more specific policies.

As part of this discussion and upcoming discussions, Staff will pose the following questions to the Commission about each goal and its associated policies:

1. What is missing from this goal and its policies?
2. Is there anything that should be removed?
3. What do you think this goal does well?
4. What do you think this goal doesn't do well?
5. Are these changes something that the Town should be directly involved in? or is partnership necessary?

We will start our discussion with these overarching prompts and then we can dive into more specific thoughts and recommendations.

For our November 5, 2024 meeting, (assuming all goes well...) I will bring forward our Housing Element and our draft middle housing ordinance for comments.

Attachments:

1. Coupeville 2023 Comprehensive Plan Historic Preservation and Community Design Element

# Historic Preservation & Community Design Element

## Introduction

This element combines historic preservation and community design as a singular, integrated element. Preservation is a dynamic process whereby the cultural values are both tangible and intangible and are acknowledged and perpetuated as part of an integrated planning program. With at least 136 contributing and non-contributing historic properties, the community takes great pride in its history and unique context within Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve.

## Central Whidbey Island Historic District and Ebey's Landing National Historic Reserve

In 1973 the Central Whidbey Island Historic District (CWIHD) was established, creating the largest national historic district in the Country. The CWIHD followed the original Donation Land Claim boundaries, acknowledging the historic landscape as well as historic buildings. It included more than 8000 acres of land surrounding Penn Cove. Located within the district are original Donation Land Claims preempted by early settlers according to the provisions of the donation Land Law passed by Congress in 1850, along with numerous historic buildings and sites.

The establishment of the CWIHD was instrumental in gaining congressional support for the formation of Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve (Reserve). The Reserve was established by Congress in 1978 "to preserve and protect a rural community which provides an unbroken historic record from nineteenth century exploration and settlement of Puget Sound up to the present time" (Public Law 95-625, Sec. 508 (a), November 10, 1978).

Nationally significant, when the Reserve was established, it represented a new approach to preserving land and heritage resources. The Reserve's distinct landscape, rural character and heritage resources are economically



Figure 19 - Will Jenne House

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Of the 136 listed properties in Coupeville, 106 are classified as contributing and 30 are non-contributing to Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve. All historic properties in the Ebey's Reserve Inventory are considered to have the same level of protection or categorization as individually listed buildings.

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## Sustainability

"Preservation is fundamentally a sustainable practice. Adapting and reusing historic structures reduces consumption of raw land, new materials, and other resources. Rehabilitating existing buildings for continued use and maintaining in-place building materials are standard preservation practices that are also good for the overall environment."

- Ebey's Landing National Historic Reserve Trust Board

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important within the agricultural, recreation and tourism industries, socially important within our community, and worthy of continued proactive preservation. This new approach recognized that the Town of Coupeville as a key partner in the Reserve.

### **Ebey's Reserve Trust Board**

The nine-member Trust Board is made up of representatives appointed by the four government partners of the 1988 Interlocal Agreement: Town of Coupeville, Island County, Washington State Parks and National Park Service. The Trust Board employs a Reserve Manager, Historic Preservation Coordinator and other staff as needed. The Trust Board's key responsibilities are to coordinate the partnership defined in the 1988 Interlocal Agreement, to monitor the NPS acquired scenic easements in the Reserve, and to advise local, state, and federal partners on preservation in Reserve. This includes serving on the Historic Reserve Committee (Reserve Committee) as part of the Design Review process.

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Learn more about the Reserve and historic preservation online:

[www.ebeysreserve.com/historic-preservation](http://www.ebeysreserve.com/historic-preservation)

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*Figure 20 – Colonel's House*

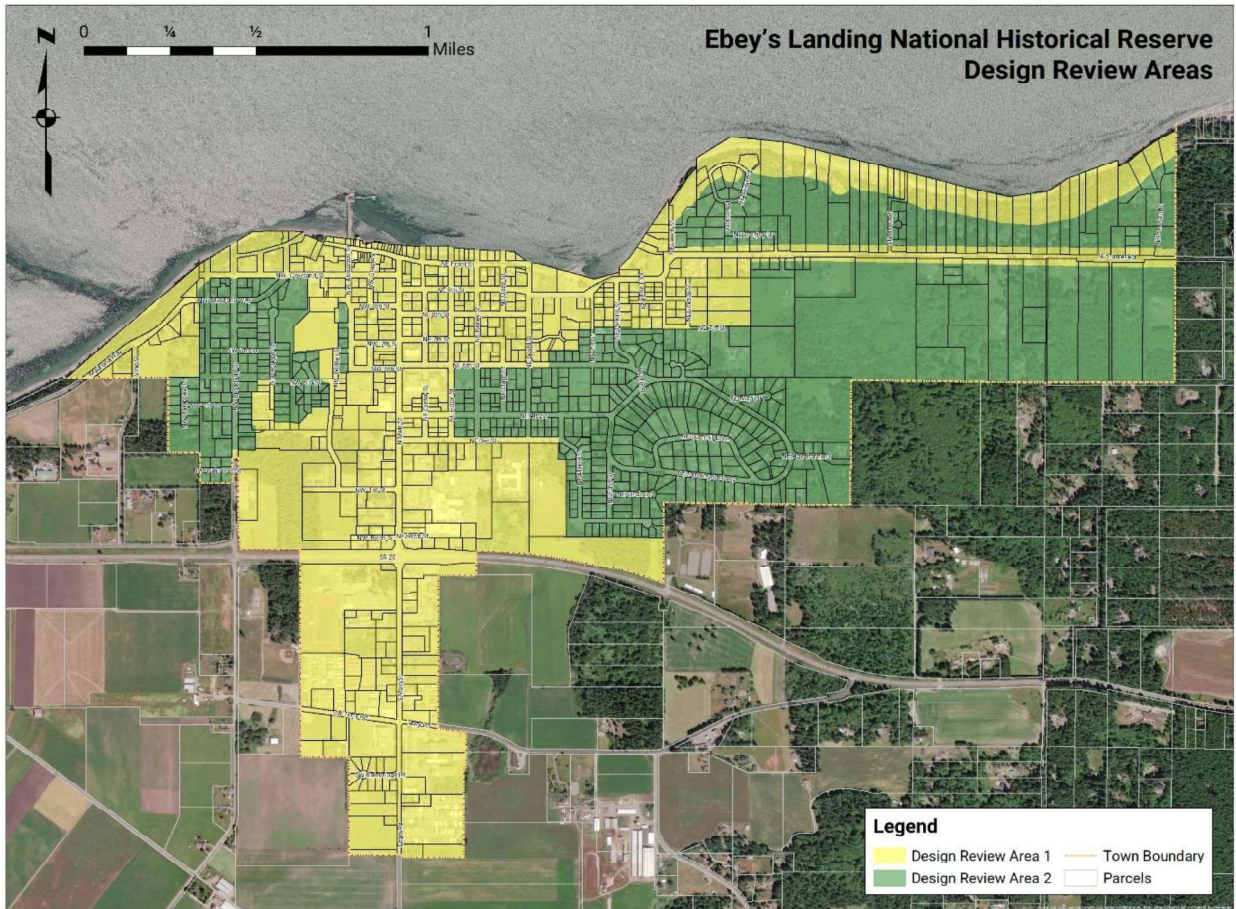


Figure 21 - Design review areas in Coupeville

### **Ebey's Reserve Design Review Process**

The Ebey's Reserve Design Guidelines were adopted in 2011, along with *Chapter 16.13 – Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve Design Review and Community Design Standards*, serve as the tools to facilitate the protection of historic resources in the Reserve. Design review is the process of applying context-specific design guidelines to proposed development and land use projects, including remodeling and/or restoration of projects. This process is intended as a tool to help property owners care for, preserve, and conserve the overall character and appearance of the Reserve. Design review promotes sensitive rehabilitation and new construction that maintains the unique character of the Reserve, helping to retain strong property values for the entire community, and preserve our shared heritage. For this reason, and for consistency,

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### **Design Review Areas**

The difference in Areas 1 and 2 is the range of design guidelines applicable to rehabilitation and construction projects. Design Review Area 2 has a more modern character and less stringent review requirements and standards.

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the Town of Coupeville and Island County have unified codes that for the most part, mirror each other.

The success of the Design Review process to date is attributed to the dedication of the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC), made up of appointed volunteers representing the Town and the County. The primary role of the HPC is to identify and actively encourage preservation and conservation of the Reserve's historic and cultural resources by maintaining a register of historic places and to issue or make recommendations on the issuance of Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) decision for new and modified building and sites.

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#### **Further Reading**

For additional background information on the history of Coupeville, refer to "Coupeville – Past, Present and Future: Historic Preservation Plan" (1998) and "How Coupeville Grew: A Short History of Town Development: Excerpts from the Town's Historic Preservation Plan" (1998).

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## Goals and Policies

**Goal HC-1: Historic Resources.** Protect, preserve, and celebrate Coupeville’s historic and cultural resources.

HC-1.1 Jointly conduct a major update of the Ebey’s Landing National Historical Reserve Design Guidelines with Island County and the Reserve. At a minimum, the guidelines should continue to ensure that new construction is compatible with surrounding development in terms of building scale, historical context, architectural character and building, siting and massing intensity.



*Figure 22 – The home of Captain Thomas Coupe and Maria Coupe, circa 1933*



HC-1.2 Update and maintain zoning provisions to accommodate modest and compatible infill development in the Historic Commercial Center and other areas featuring historic structures, while encouraging the restoration, rehabilitation, reconstruction, and preservation of historic structures. Adaptive reuse or re-purposing of all existing structures is encouraged where practical.

HC-1.3 Provide zoning incentives to preserve, restore, and rehabilitate historic and/or cultural resources in Coupeville.



HC-1.4 The Town will encourage the purchase of development rights through conservation easements by other entities (such as the National Park Service and the Whidbey Camano Land Trust) for structures, agricultural fields, woodlands, wetlands, shorelines, forests and other features and landscapes that represent the most enduring and character-defining characteristics of Coupeville and the Reserve.



*Figure 23 – The prairie, farm, and forest environment surrounding Coupeville (credit: Allison Gubata)*

HC-1.5 Maintain and enhance the Town design review process in a manner that supports the historic preservation goal in a fair, equitable, and predictable process. Ensure non-historic areas are not over-regulated.

HC-1.6 Emphasize the Town’s historic context and preservation efforts in tourism efforts and make it highly visible throughout the Town.

- HC-1.7 Support the Coupeville Historic Waterfront Association, Historic Whidbey, and other partners in efforts to improve the structural integrity and appearance of historic buildings in the historic business core.
- HC-1.8 Continue to cooperate with the Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve Trust Board to increase public awareness and appreciation of the Reserve, and continue partnerships between the Reserve and Town.
- HC-1.9 Coordinate with the County and the Reserve to provide ongoing staff support, training, and guidance to the Historic Preservation Commission.
- HC-1.10 In partnership with Island County, continue to support the Reserve in maintaining a database of historic structures in Coupeville and in the Reserve that is compatible with statewide standards developed by the Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation.



*Figure 24 – The Coupeville Cash Store Building, built 1886, and newly renovated and renamed to Salty Vons Waterfront Inn (credit: Von and Barbara Summers)*



*Figure 25 – Front Street, circa 1920*

**Goal HC-2: Quality Development.** Promote compatible, high-quality, and pedestrian-friendly development that reinforces Coupeville’s small-town identity within Ebey’s Landing National Historical Reserve.



- HC-2.1 Update zoning provisions to implement Coupeville’s community design goals. Specifically:
- A. While respecting the historical Town plat and grid system, integrate flexibility in the design of subdivisions to accommodate greater lot/housing type diversity, take advantage of unique site amenities and/or context adjacencies, maximize opportunities for common open space, and help meet the Town’s environmental goals and policies. Avoid suburban design trends including cul-de-sacs.
  - B. Incentivize the development of smaller compatible homes and dwelling units.
  - C. Update sign regulations that balances visibility and identity needs of businesses with compatibility with the site, building, and neighborhood context.
- HC-2.2 Re-evaluate and update the adopted design guidelines every ten years or more often to achieve contemporary community goals and objectives and make adjustments as necessary to improve effectiveness.
- A. Employ site and building design techniques that promote safe and inviting pedestrian access and connections.
  - B. Provide building massing and articulation standards that respect the character and scale of Coupeville’s historic business district , other commercial areas and neighborhoods.
  - C. Place an emphasis on human-scaled design details that contribute to the Town’s character and identity.



Figure 26 – The Frain-Engle House

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Small homes are important for both the preservation of Coupeville’s historic charm and to provide starter homes and affordable options for current day residents. Zoning incentives could, for example, count small homes as ½ a dwelling unit for the purposes of density calculations in areas designated for medium and high density residential development.

See Housing Element policy H-1.7 for related ideas to explore in a housing action plan.

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Figure 27 – Example of small homes that are consistent with the Ebey’s Landing National Historical Reserve Design Guidelines for new construction

- D. Promote the use of high-quality, durable, and sustainable materials that respect the site's context and enhance the Town's character.
- E. Promote design that takes advantage of special vistas, particularly prominent views from public streets and places.
- F. Employ site and building design techniques that promote safe and inviting pedestrian access and connections.
- G. Review standards for accommodating parking in both residential and commercial areas with minimal impact on character, such as minimizing the required amount of parking, screening standards, and location standards.
- H. Emphasize protection of native vegetation, particularly forests, as an enduring and character-defining feature of Coupeville and the Reserve, especially those visible from points of entry and primary roads.
- I. Strive for a balance of predictability and flexibility in the design guidelines. This can be accomplished by emphasizing clear minimum standards while integrating strategic opportunities for flexibility.



*Figure 28 - A mixed-use office and lodging building with significant modulation and parking located in the rear*

HC-2.3 Design streets and public facilities to support and strengthen Coupeville's character, identity, and economic vitality. Specifically:

- A. Maintain and enhance the Town's historic waterfront through the use of common landscaping and gateway design elements and educational and directional signage.
- B. Encourage pedestrian movement through the historic waterfront by means of thematic signage and parking management.



*Figure 29 - A town gateway sign decorated for the holiday season*



## Town of Coupeville

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### STAFF REPORT

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**DATE:** October 1, 2024

**TO:** Coupeville Planning Commission

**FROM:** Joshua Engelbrecht, Community Planning Director

**RE:** Discussion – Hand Delivered Packets

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Planning Commission,

Most of you are receiving hand delivered physical copies of the Planning Commission packets. Starting in November, we will no longer be providing those physical copies. We will continue to have the packet available on the Town's website and sent via email the week before the meeting.

If there is interest from the Commission, we can provide a Chromebook with the electronic packet at the meeting for reference.