

**RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS
SKAGIT COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS**

Tuesday, April 6, 1993

- 9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m. Department of Planning and Community Development - Dave Hough,
Acting Director:
- 1) Discussion - Comprehensive Plan Elements.
 - a) Transportation.
 - b) Parks & Recreation.
 - c) Economic Development.
 - 2) Code Enforcement Report.
 - 3) Miscellaneous.
- 10:00 a.m. - 10:30 a.m. Hearing Examiner Recommendation - Approval - Open Space Timber
Application #OST-92-005 for Marion Larkin, Hillside Property, Bulson and
Cedardale Roads, Mount Vernon.
- 10:30 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. Discussion - Regarding the Skagit County Clerk's Office Terminating
Passport Application Process.
- 1:30 p.m. - 2:00 p.m. Presentation - Chinook Enterprises.
- 2:00 p.m. - 2:30 p.m. Hearing Examiner Recommendation - Approval - Valley Farms, Inc.,
Agricultural Variance #AGV-93-004, 1771 Cook Road, Burlington.

The Skagit County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Tuesday, April 6, 1993, with Commissioners Robert Hart, Harvey Wolden and Robby Robinson present.

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT - DAVE HOUGH, DIRECTOR.

- 1) Discussion - Comprehensive Plan Elements.

Mr. Hough reported that at the behest of the Board, a Transportation planning element is being initiated. As well, the Parks Department Director has indicated an interest in having a separate Parks and Recreation element. Finally, the business community, through the Economic Development Association of Skagit County, has expressed interest in an Economic Development component of the Comprehensive Plan update. Since the Skagit Council of Governments will be updating their economic development plan this year, it is logical to combine these two planning efforts. The Port Districts have indicated an interest in financially contributing to this process, and it is likely that a consultant's services will be needed. Element development is performed through Citizen Advisory Committees similar to those formed for the Agriculture, Rural, Minerals, Utilities and Forestry elements required under the Growth Management Act.

Mr. Hough asked for the Board's comments regarding these plans.

Chairman Hart felt that the consideration of these elements is reasonable and prudent, and Commissioner Robinson agreed.

Mr. Hough stated that it is timely to begin new Citizen Advisory Committee's now, as the first committees formed are beginning the final stages their work.

Chairman Hart suggested that we might consider hiring staff with expertise to assist in the Economic Development component instead of hiring the services of a consultant.

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Mr. Hough understood that the Board wished to keep the administration of these Citizen Advisory Committees in-house, but indicated that some technical studies may require consultant services. He did state that the Department intends to take advantage of existing studies.

Dave Baltz, Transportation Planner, was also present and commented on studies involving transportation that relate to economic aspects, such as an Air, Rail and Water Transportation Study planned for Skagit County. Mr. Baltz agreed that at least a portion of the economic element will require outside assistance.

Chairman Hart again cautioned about limiting the use of consultant services to only those unavailable locally.

2) Code Enforcement Report.

The Code Enforcement Report was provided for review.

3) Miscellaneous.

There were no miscellaneous items from the Planning Department at this time.

HEARING EXAMINER RECOMMENDATION - APPROVAL - OPEN SPACE TIMBER APPLICATION #OST-92-005 FOR MARION LARKIN, HILLSIDE PROPERTY, BULSON AND CEDARDALE ROADS, MOUNT VERNON.

Grace Roeder, Senior Planner, used maps and photographs to identify the location of the Larkin property. The Larkin property is located on the hillside between Bulson and Cedardale Roads. It is located in a canyon surrounding Fisher Creek. The property accesses off of Cedardale Road, two miles south of the Starbird Road interchange. Because of the location in the canyon, the property is not suitable for any type of development.

The property contains one 11 acre stand of timber. A second stand is approximately 3 acres in size. The rest of the property is primarily a field of about 24 acres. The applicant proposes to include the 14 acres of timbered land within the open space program, excluding the remaining 24 acres to be used as pasture land and a homesite.

A Timber Management Plan has been prepared for the applicant, and the Planning staff recommends that the application be approved, with the condition that the applicant follow the Timber Management Plan. The Hearing Examiner has concurred and also recommends approval.

Commissioner Robinson motioned to approve the Open Space Timber Application of Marion Larkin. Commissioner Wolden seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. (Resolution #14801)

DISCUSSION - REGARDING THE SKAGIT COUNTY CLERK'S OFFICE TERMINATING PASSPORT APPLICATION PROCESS.

Phyllis Coole-McKeehen, Skagit County Clerk, explained that the U.S. Department of State is the Federal agency charged with issuing passports. For many years this agency has allowed agents to act on their behalf to issue passports. Court Clerks and the U.S. Post Offices are designated to serve as agents who may process passport applications. Mrs. Coole-McKeehen stated that of late Clerk's Offices have been getting out of the business of issuing passports. Although agents are allowed to charge \$10.00 per application, this amount does not cover the cost of passport processing. Because of this inequity, Mrs.

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Coole-McKeehen requested that the Clerk's Office be relieved of providing this service effective June 30, 1993.

She explained all of the steps her office must take to process passport applications, and indicated that the average time required for processing a new application is 45 minutes. Estimating the costs, Mrs. Coole-McKeehen felt that her office is losing \$1.95 on each passport application. Additionally, employee time spent on processing passports eliminates time that could be spent on court functions.

Mrs. Coole-McKeehen researched her request and found that in order to discontinue passport processing, the County must send a letter to the Seattle Regional Passport Agency indicating a wish to discontinue service. The Seattle Office in turn contacts the main passport administration center in Washington, D.C, which is under the administration of the Secretary of State. Other arrangements will then be made for other agencies to be certified in Skagit County to process passports. The contact Mrs. Coole-McKeehen spoke with in Seattle indicated that the volume of applications experienced in Skagit County is sufficient to require that two post offices be designated as passport agents. Mrs. Coole-McKeehen felt that this would provide better service for persons requiring passports.

The Board agreed that a good case has been presented for discontinuing the duties, and Mike Woodmansee, Budget/Finance Director, concurred.

Commissioner Wolden motioned to notify the Seattle Regional Passport Agency by letter of the Skagit County Clerk's intention to discontinue the processing of passport applications at a date negotiated with the Seattle Office. Commissioner Robinson seconded the motion, which passed unanimously.

PRESENTATION - CHINOOK ENTERPRISES.

Rob Martin, Executive Director, and Elizabeth Sheinkopf represented Chinook Enterprises, a program established to assist developmentally disabled persons in becoming employable. The Chinook Enterprises facilities are located on LaVenture Road, and have a staff of 33 employees.

Mr. Martin reported that Chinook Enterprises has seen a marked increase in demands for service. Many new requests are a result of young adults who have graduated from college without the necessary skills to become employed. New residents moving to Skagit County have also increased demands.

Grounds maintenance programs include contracting with Skagit County. Service to Skagit County has increased from control of litter to clean up of large illegal garbage dumps and removal of abandoned appliances from County right-of-ways.

The assembly division works under a contract with the Boeing Company to provide assembly of parts. This program also generates profits for the program. A contract with Sugiyu, U.S.A., located in Anacortes, is also a part of the program.

The largest program is the placement program. Seven Chinook employees provide job development and placement services for Chinook clients.

Elizabeth Sheinkopf stated that Chinook Enterprises is looking for ways to develop additional jobs for the program. She suggested that the microfilming function performed by Skagit County may be a place where Chinook employees could be employed. Snohomish County employs developmentally disabled workers in their microfilming department. She proposed that Chinook Enterprises investigate in each department

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for areas where Chinook clients might be utilized. Mr. Martin indicated that the intent of the suggestion was not to replace any current County employees.

Chairman Hart remarked on the Board's policy to permit department heads and elected officials to have the major responsibility for determining staffing levels. He cautioned that the Board would not compel any department to participate, and Commissioner Robinson agreed that each department head or elected official would make their own decision about whether or not they wished to participate.

The Board preferred to work through Bob Taylor, Administrative Officer, to arrange any contact with department heads or elected officials, and Mr. Martin and Ms. Sheinkopf agreed to contact Mr. Taylor.

HEARING EXAMINER RECOMMENDATION - APPROVAL - VALLEY FARMS, INC., AGRICULTURAL VARIANCE #AGV-93-004, 1771 COOK ROAD, BURLINGTON.

Jeff Morgan, Associate Planner, referred to a site plan and Assessor's map to locate the Valley Farms property at 1771 Cook Road near Burlington. It is approximately 25 acres in size, and is zoned Agricultural. The applicant is proposing to subdivide the property into a 2.75 acre parcel containing a home and outbuildings, and a remaining parcel to be used for agricultural purposes. The purpose of the request is to sell the home and outbuildings to its current tenant. Staff has recommended denial of the application; however, the Hearing Examiner recommends approval.

Chairman Hart referred to Section 14.04.223 of the Skagit County Code which sets forth criteria for variances. He stated that he has difficulty relating the recommendation for approval to the criteria set forth.

Mr. Morgan referred to Staff Findings #9, #10 and #11, which indicate that no conditions or circumstances that are peculiar to the subject property exist which would merit the approval of the variance. The land is flat and contains no topographical hardship such as a large ditch or creek that would physically separate the property.

Mr. Dale Visser, the home's tenant, was invited to explain.

Mr. Visser stated that Valley Farms, Inc., made up of a father and two sons of the Visser family, has owned the property for a number of years. He stated that he has now chosen to leave the family business, and would like to purchase the home in which he has lived for several years. The elder Mr. Visser complained that through historical purchases, the Valley Farms property has been aggregated and the option to build on the separate properties has been lost. Dale Visser argued that the request is not intended to remove productive land from agricultural production. The Vissers own approximately 140 acres total that is contiguous except for one small parcel owned by Norm Brann.

Chairman Hart continued to maintain that it defeats the purpose of zoning ordinances to allow a variance based on these reasons. Commissioner Robinson agreed that he could not find any unusual circumstance involving the land that would support the variance. Other than wishing to separate from the business, which Commissioner Robinson confirmed with Dale Visser to be true, there is no other supportive reason.

The Board suggested a testamentary division of the property, but noted that a pending bill in the Legislature may soon abolish the testamentary exemption contained in State Law.

Mr. Morgan reiterated the three options available to the Board. They were:

- 1) To approve the recommendation of the Hearing Examiner.

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- 2) To remand the matter back to the Hearing Examiner for further consideration.
- 3) To hold an independent public hearing of the Board of Commissioners to consider the facts of the application.

Commissioner Robinson motioned that the Board hold its own public hearing to consider the facts of the application. Chairman Hart seconded the motion.

Mr. Visser understood that his request did not conform to the criteria for variances, and he felt that there would be no additional facts that could be added to those that had been presented today, with the exception of the favorable testimony of a couple of neighbors.

Chairman Hart indicated, however, that a public hearing is required in order to deny the variance.

Commissioner Robinson's motion to hold a public hearing passed unanimously. A hearing date was set for Tuesday, May 11, 1993, at 10:00 a.m.

ADJOURNMENT:

Commissioner Robinson motioned to adjourn the proceedings. Commissioner Wolden seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.

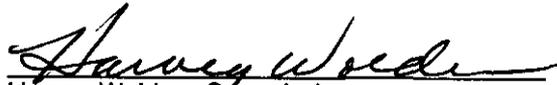
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
SKAGIT COUNTY, WASHINGTON



Robert Hart, Chairman



Robby Robinson, Commissioner



Harvey Wolden, Commissioner

ATTEST:



Stephanie Wood, Clerk
Skagit County Board of Commissioners

