

RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS
SKAGIT COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Tuesday, August 17, 1993

9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m. Department of Planning and Community Development - Dave Hough,
Director.

- 1) Discussion - Land Use Fees Evaluation.
- 2) Code Enforcement Report.
- 3) Miscellaneous.

3:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. Work Session - 1994 Solid Waste Disposal Rates.

The Skagit County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Tuesday, August 17, 1993, with Commissioners Robert Hart, Harvey Wolden and Robby Robinson present.

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

- 1) Discussion - Land Use Fees Evaluation.

Mr. Hough stated that it has been over six years since the Planning Department has reviewed the fees charged for various land use permits. Recently Mr. Hough asked his staff to research the different components, such as publishing and staff time, which comprise the costs of processing permits.

The most significant differences in the present fee charged and the actual estimated costs were shorelines permits (\$253 current charge, costs estimated at \$806) rezoning (\$375 current charge, costs estimated at \$896) and comprehensive plan change petitions (\$375 current charge, costs estimated at \$1,246). Additionally, SEPA review is undercharged at \$75 when actual costs are estimated at \$214 per request. He stated that this is a significant loss, as the Department receives over 200 SEPA review requests per year. He stated that in addition, the Department has never charged for appeals of SEPA decisions, which occur about 20 to 30 times per year. Hearing Examiner appeals were calculated at the low end also. Mr. Hough stated that the Department found that variances, however, were overcharged. The estimates of current costs do not reflect pre-application meetings and over-the-counter consultations.

Mr. Hough stated that he brings this to the Board at this time to discuss whether the Board would like to modify some fees based on this current cost review.

Chairman Hart questioned whether the amount of time spent by staff on these land use permits is actually necessary. Mr. Hough felt that it was. He stated, by example, that it has been proven often that it is imperative to perform adequate research on each request. Mr. Hough explained that for major developments, the Department bills the applicant based on actual staff time spent.

Mr. Hough stated that the three biggest discrepancies in permit fees that were discovered concerned him. Those fees were for appeals, shorelines permits and environmental review on Determinations of Non-Significance. He felt that by raising permit fees to the level of actual costs his department would generate over \$300,000 in additional revenues in one year.

Chairman Hart noted that there are certain land uses that the County wishes to encourage. He suggested that perhaps it would be an appropriate policy to provide a certain amount of subsidy for land uses which the County wishes to promote.

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The Board discussed with Mr. Hough the possibility of being able to adopt fees which discern between applications that require a great amount of staff time and those which require very little staff time. Specifically, shorelines permits were discussed.

Mr. Hough suggested that some of the expense which is incurred in staff time could be eliminated by utilizing the policy of allowing "administrative decisions", or legislating the ability for the Planning Director to make decisions on routine requests instead of placing it before the Hearing Examiner at a public hearing.

Appeals were then discussed. Mr. Hough noted that the County has experienced a number of appeals which lack any grounds or basis. This is both time consuming for staff, who could be assigned to other duties, and wasteful of County resources.

Again, the Board discussed encouraging certain land uses through fee subsidies. Cluster housing was given as an example, and Mr. Hough agreed that cluster housing should be encouraged. He stated that the Planning Commission has been directed to review cluster housing as a tool for conserving critical lands and resource lands.

Commissioner Wolden noted that he would like to be informed about why a decision was made for some fees to drop below estimated costs. He felt that if there was a logical purpose in subsidizing some fees, he may wish to keep them at current levels.

Mr. Hough noted that on major developments, a computer system is being developed to allow other departments which contribute to review to charge for their time.

Mr. Hough suggested that he develop a recommendation for fee schedule adjustments based on today's discussion with the Board. He also suggested that this recommendation be made in conjunction with the Permit Center, whose fees may also require review.

2) Code Enforcement Report.

This report was provided for the Board's review and was briefly discussed.

3) Miscellaneous.

A. Mr. Hough reported that he received a Determination of Non-Significance (DNS) for the Swinomish gaming enterprise proposed by the Swinomish Tribal Community. He summarized issues that were not included in the DNS which were of concern to him. Neither were these issues included in the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Swinomish Marina which the County received over a month ago. Mr. Hough stated that a 15-day comment period is currently occurring. Those issues were:

- Traffic - off-site on Marches Point Road, SR 20 intersection
- Water quality - drainage and sewage standards
- Emergency services - fire and medical
- Aesthetic impact - landscaping mitigation
- Shorelines dependant use
- Special services, i.e., alcohol abuse, gambling anonymous

Chairman Hart felt that the County should respond. He agreed that at least some of these issues should be addressed, perhaps through a Mitigated DNS or a formal EIS.

Mr. Hough reported that he discussed this issue with Planning Directors from Anacortes and LaConner as well.

MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS.

- A. Roger Howard, Facilities Manager, produced a map of the Burlington Shop Property. He stated that the Burlington School Board meets tonight to discuss this property, and will question whether or not they will receive at least five acres of usable land, excluding wetlands, from the County for construction of their new bus maintenance facility.

The drawing provided by the County Engineer to Mr. Howard appeared to indicate that at least five acres would be available. The Board agreed that this appeared to be so.

- B. Vouchers audited and certified by the auditing officer as required by R.C.W. 42.24.080, and those expense reimbursement claims certified as required by R.C.W. 42.24.090, have been recorded on a listing which has been made available to the Board.

As of this date, August 17, 1993, the Board, by a majority vote, did approve for payment those vouchers included in the above-mentioned list and further described as follows:

- 1) Warrants #37094 through #37469 (Vouchers #PDRAWAU04106 through #PDRAWAU04281 in the amount of \$66,325.01. Transmittal EP-16-93.

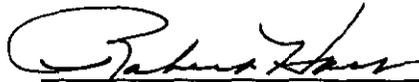
- C. In accordance with action taken yesterday, the Board approved for signature a resolution authorizing a call for public hearing to consider a supplemental budget in the amount of \$3,000 for the Senior Services Fund #118. (Resolution #14989)

ADJOURNMENT:

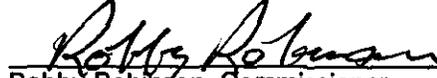
Commissioner Robinson motioned to adjourn the proceedings. Commissioner Wolden seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
SKAGIT COUNTY, WASHINGTON





Robert Hart, Chairman

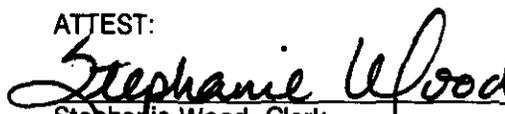


Robby Robinson, Commissioner



Harvey Wolden, Commissioner

ATTEST:



Stephanie Wood, Clerk
Skagit County Board of Commissioners