

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

Wednesday, September 29, 1993

5:00 p.m. - 6:30 p.m. Public Hearing - Interim Urban Growth Boundaries.

PUBLIC HEARING - INTERIM URBAN GROWTH BOUNDARIES.

Chairman Hart opened the meeting by referring the audience to a packet of information available for their review which had been provided by the Planning Department. The packet included maps indicating the interim urban growth boundaries proposed by each city and town within Skagit County. Chairman Hart explained that "special study areas" were depicted in each proposed interim urban growth area (UGA). Chairman Hart then invited Dave Hough, Skagit County Planning Director, to explain.

Mr. Hough explained that Skagit County has issued a threshold determination of non-significance for this proposal, following the environmental review process. He stated that the original interim urban growth areas submitted by each of the cities were amended based on responses received during the environmental review process and new maps produced. Mr. Hough reminded the Board that the adoption of interim urban growth boundaries follows a requirement within the Growth Management Act which requires that interim boundaries be adopted by October 1, 1993, and that final urban growth boundaries be adopted concurrent with the adoption of the County's updated Comprehensive Land Use Plan. Mr. Hough pointed out that there has been two releases of the proposed interim urban growth boundary maps, the latest dated September 27, 1993, which includes comments received during the environmental review process.

Mr. Hough explained that areas including sensitive lands, agricultural areas and forestland property have been included in a category known as "special study areas", which designate areas which the County has determined require an intense review. He stated that some "special study areas" are located outside of the proposals of the cities to indicate areas which the County believes require study to determine whether these areas should also be included within the proposed interim Urban Growth Areas. Mr. Hough referred to three items of correspondence which have been received for the record of this hearing. They were: 1) Nancy Sundquist, who owns an 11 acre parcel on Highway 99, at the I-5 access ramp near Hickox Road. Ms. Sundquist would like to have her property included in the proposed UGA of the City of Mount Vernon; 2) Alf Christiansen Seed indicates concern about the City of Mount Vernon's Comprehensive Plan, in particular their plans to expand commercial property west of the railroad and south of Blackburn and Britt Slough Road and 3) Tom Holtcamp, Holtcamp Farms, whose concern was the City of Sedro Woolley's inclusion of land North of Highway 20 and South of Cook Road in their UGA.

Chairman Hart then opened the meeting for public comment. A sign-up sheet indicated who in the audience wished to give testimony.

Dianna Weppler, 2025 Highway 9, Mount Vernon, expressed her disagreement with the latest urban growth boundary map. She referred to the April, 1991, "Visions for the Future" publication produced by the Department of Planning and Community Development, which showed a map different from the most recently published proposal. She felt that the publication of today's meeting was not handled well, apparently feeling that the meeting had not been publicized thoroughly enough. She indicated opposition to "urban sprawl", and felt that the proposed UGA's encouraged "urban sprawl". The area around Mount Vernon was her particular concern, as she resides in Big Lake, a neighboring community. She finished by stating that the UGA's contained in the "Visions for the Future" were more agreeable. She also submitted a letter from Shirley Viscaya for the record.

Timothy Bates, Mayor of the Town of Hamilton, noted that the map provided by Planning Staff includes everything the town had requested. He stated that the town held a town meeting recently, and a number of residents expressed concern about critical areas that were included in the town's proposal.

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Robert McKinney, 3393 Highway 20, Hamilton, referred to an earlier petition which advocated the annexation of the "Carey Lake Addition" to the Town of Hamilton, which included his property. He wondered if after the adoption of the UGA's the annexation request, which was originally contested by the County, could be resubmitted and approved.

Chairman Hart indicated that the UGA's are proposals which indicate that the Town wishes to annex certain territories in the future. The County has marked the Carey's Lake Addition as a "special study areas", which indicates it is a contested area. Chairman Hart stated that these issues will be reconciled, and the Carey Lake Addition annexation may or may not be permitted when the final UGA's are adopted.

Carol Ehlers, 1356 Wind Crest, Anacortes, remarked on the timeliness of the environmental review and of the meeting. She felt that the amount of time the public was given for review of the documents was not adequate for public comment. Comprehensive Planning Policies 11.1, 11.2, and 11.5 were cited, which encourage citizen participation.

Barbee Andrews, Mayor of the Town of Lyman, felt that since the Town's proposed UGA was submitted in September of 1992, the County should have let them know that these boundaries were contested at that time instead of asking for them again in September of 1993. Mayor Andrews enumerated each area that the Town wished to include in their UGA. She attacked the map provided, indicating that it is inaccurate. On questioning by Chairman Hart, Mayor Andrews stated that the UGA depicted on the map provided by the Planning Department were not those that the Town wanted.

Mr. Hough noted a letter from Mary Beth Cherberg, Lyman Town Planner, dated September 23, 1993, which provided a proposed UGA on an enclosed map, which Mr. Hough used to make his packet for tonight's meeting.

Mary Beth Cherberg, Lyman's Town Planner, rose to speak, and indicated that she sent two maps, and that Mr. Hough should have used the one dated September 13, 1993.

Mayor Andrews continued to argue that the County ignored the September, 1992, submittal by the Town. She submitted a map containing the areas the Town would like included.

Marie Tingley, 2075 Mountain View Road, Mount Vernon, strongly opposed the annexation of Big Lake into the City of Mount Vernon.

Glen Morrow, 1228 Del Mar Place, Anacortes, stated that the Community of Del Mar and the City of Anacortes have worked together to develop an appropriate UGA, which is correctly depicted on the map provided. He did, however, address the "special study area" which includes the Pointe, the undeveloped Mid-90's, and the McCorkle property. Mr. Morrow remarked on the fact that the County is in the process of creating a Drainage Utility. He stated that the Pointe is one of the greatest contributors to drainage and erosion problems in his area. The Mid-90's poses a similar problem. He stated that any development in these two areas could further exacerbate the drainage problems already being experienced in his neighborhood.

Martin Corin, 101 Biz Point Road, Anacortes, reiterated Mr. Morrow's comments. He, too, pointed out the drainage problems in his area, blaming the developer and the County for the drainage problems. He warned that the Del Mar Community intends to be vocal as the UGA's are developed.

Lloyd Brown, 2113 Hollywood Court, Mount Vernon, addressed his comments to the eastern boundaries of Mount Vernon's UGA. He felt that the eastern extension of the boundary is unneeded. He stated that Mount

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Vernon's population projections were erroneous, indicating a higher population projection than is correct, and that Mount Vernon will not need the amount of territory it has claimed for future population growth. He felt that the amount of residential growth planned is not affordable, as it does not support itself in taxes. He criticized the Mount Vernon City Council's business recruitment and economic development policies. He stated that Big Lake residents prefer a rural lifestyle, preferring large acreage lots to the smaller lots which characterize city residential areas. He beseeched the Board not to approve the City's proposal.

Kay Rundgren asked what differences the UGA's will make during the year that it is interim, before it becomes final.

Chairman Hart stated that there is a long process ahead before the final boundaries are adopted. The proposal being considered tonight simply sets a line from which to start.

Mr. Hough stated that the Board of Commissioners adopted an interim control setting a minimum lot size at 5 acres for all unincorporated properties with zoning of less than 5 acre lot size until the Comprehensive Plan is adopted. Adoption of the proposed UGA's would not change that control.

Andrea Xavier, 1976 Highway 9, Mount Vernon, also felt that there was inadequate public notice of the meeting. Ms. Xavier read a large list of questions she has regarding the process and its outcome. Being a Big Lake resident, she opposed the extension of the UGA of the City of Mount Vernon to include Big Lake. She pointed out the steep slopes and unstable soils included within the proposed territory. Ms. Xavier had statistics relative to the size of the proposed boundaries as compared to the planned population increases. She compared the City's proposed boundaries with other existing cities of greater size.

Elsa Gruber, Box 21, LaConner, also remarked on the need to extend the length of the meeting to allow all to testify and to improve the notification process. She pointed out the need for "early and continuous" public involvement in this process. Mrs. Gruber read from a letter from Mike McCormick of the State Department of Community Development which indicates that if a compromise cannot be reached between the Cities and the County, the County "should justify in writing" its reason for the location of the boundary it has chosen. *Another directive from Mr. McCormick required that the County "develop regulations" by October 1, and she asked if those had been completed.* Continuing to read from the Department of Community Development directive, she asked a number of questions about whether the County had complied with the directive, all of which Mr. Hough answered affirmatively.

Bob Hosford, 1174 Rocky Road, Anacortes, Del Mar Community, just below the Pointe, stated that his area submitted a petition requesting that their area be excluded from the UGA of the City of Anacortes. He stated that there are others who did not sign the petition who wish to be included in the petition now as well. Mr. Hosford submitted an additional petition.

Margaret Yeoman, 1620 11th Street, Anacortes, stated that the proposed UGA of the City of Anacortes is completely contrary to the wishes of the public in the southern Fidalgo Island area.

Doyle Geer, Mayor of the City of Anacortes, provided a letter from the City of Anacortes, which he read into the record. The letter stated that the City is concerned about the inclusion of the Whistle Lake Road and Havekost Road areas in their UGA, and noted a wish to continue to work toward an agreement on this. Mayor Geer noted that the Big Lake area was not originally proposed by the City of Mount Vernon, nor were the darker areas depicted on the maps provided by Mr. Hough originally within the City of Anacortes' proposed UGA. He encouraged the Board to obey the wishes of those citizens living in the areas and remove them from the UGA.

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Brian Hill, a resident of Big Lake at 1680 Lake View, represented his parents, who were unable to attend. He indicated that the meeting was very "messed up" because of the lack of notice, the short time period for comment, and a variety of unstated reasons. It was unclear what Mr. Hill's point was. He apparently felt that the Big Lake resident's taxes would be submitted to the City of Mount Vernon for no additional gain over what they currently receive.

Barbara Rudge, 1471 Rosario Road, Anacortes, pointed out the vast amount of review and public comment that had gone into the proposal for the City of Anacortes' UGA, which originally did not include her area. She indicated that a letter from an unnamed developer unfairly influenced the decision by Planning staff which caused her area to be included.

Beth Rosensteel, 1886 A Sulphur Springs Road, Big Lake, also complained about the time for the hearing, as she was unable to find a babysitter for her children. She felt that her voice was not heard at earlier meetings when her community opposed the inclusion of their area in the City of Mount Vernon's UGA. She did not want her community to be included in the City's UGA.

Gary Johnson, 1692 Lake View Blvd., Big Lake, opposed the inclusion of the Big Lake area in the UGA of the City of Mount Vernon. North and South of Lot 27 and everything east should be deleted from the UGA, he proposed. He confirmed that the Board may deny the City portions of the requested area they have included in their UGA.

Carolyn Kelly represented the Skagit Conservation District. She asked who designated the special study areas, and received a response that it was done by County staff. She stated that the Skagit Conservation District appreciates the County's decision to study some of the areas around the Sedro Woolley and Mount Vernon proposals, as some of the proposed areas are flood prone or prime agricultural areas.

Claudia Reed, 1809 Peter Burns Road, Big Lake, opposed the inclusion of Big Lake in the Mount Vernon UGA. She intimated that previous plans and promises tricked the public and permitted a "city density development" in Big Lake across from the single market in Big Lake. Clearly, during the review of that proposal, she stated, the community made it clear that the Big Lake area wished to remain rural.

Ruhamah Pemberton declined to speak.

Stan Olsen, 1684 Britt Road, Mount Vernon, supported the letter submitted by Christiansen Seed Company. He supported farmland preservation, which he felt was threatened by the encroachment by Mount Vernon's UGA.

Linda Fleming, 2260 W. Darvic Place, Oak Harbor, attended on behalf of Hamilton resident Alice Sutton, 1783 Hamilton Cemetery Road. She asked if there were any resolutions or agreements currently in place between the Town of Hamilton and the County relating to the Town's UGA. The response was negative. She asked if a SEPA review had been performed on the Hamilton proposal, and Mr. Hough responded that SEPA is being performed as part of the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan.

Sandra Stauffer, 1522 Barrel Springs Road, Mount Vernon, asked for a clarification on special study areas. She wondered if there were any other special study areas that were not represented on the maps provided this evening. She referred to a map she had seen featured in the Skagit Valley Herald.

Chairman Hart explained that three different proposals that were published in the Skagit Valley Herald which depicted other facets of growth management planning were not being considered at this time.

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Carol Johnson, Sedro Woolley Planner, encouraged those who were concerned about areas within the proposed Sedro Woolley UGA should contact the Sedro Woolley Planning office to review the City's plans for how the property will be zoned once it has been annexed.

Ian Munce, Anacortes Planning Director, commended the County staff for putting all of the issues "on the table", as they have been done tonight.

Wendy Brown, a Big Lake resident and a member of the Sedro Woolley School District staff, submitted a letter from Sedro Woolley School Superintendent Pam Carnahan to Mayor Ray Reep of the City of Mount Vernon regarding her concern about the effect of a transfer of a portion of Sedro Woolley School District territory in Sea Van area to the Mount Vernon School District under the proposed UGA. Ms. Carnahan's letter opposes this plan.

Bill Vaux remarked on the fact that the Board is being attacked as they present proposals compiled by the cities and towns. Mr. Vaux pointed out that the inclusion of the Marches Point refineries in the City of Anacortes UGA will severely impact the amount of tax benefit received by the County. He indicated that during his eight years as a County Commissioner he received very few inquiries regarding the annexation of areas into the cities, and more calls from those who did not wish to be included.

Sandra Russell, a resident of The Pointe, remarked on the short notice for the meeting. She asked if 95% of those present oppose the inclusion of their area in the UGA, will it influence the Board's decision prior to the deadline on October 1.

Bruce Bowen, an owner of 20 acres of forested land near the south side of Little Mount Road, stated that he intends to keep his land in forested use. He was disturbed about the inclusion of his area in the City of Mount Vernon's UGA. His land, he stated, is wet and steep, and includes beaver ponds and streams, and would not support residential development.

Marilyn Pineda, Hanson Creek Road, North of Sedro Woolley, commended the City of Sedro Woolley for listening to the people in their area. Her point, apparently, was that the citizens are "watching" to see what the County will do.

Sylvia Hosford, Rocky Road, Anacortes, wanted to reinforce the comments of Barbara Rudge and Sandra Russell. She harkened to the supposition that a single letter can change the wishes of a number of opposing views.

Chairman Hart remarked that the only UGA he is confident of is that of the Town of Laconner. All others, he stated, he remains skeptical of.

Mr. Hough agreed with Chairman Hart.

The discussion developed into a general discussion between individual audience members and Chairman Hart. Gary Johnson suggested that perhaps within the Comprehensive Plan Big Lake could be left alone and not designated "urban" at all. There was also some notice of an October 7 meeting sponsored by the Planning Department which sets in motion the scoping process for the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan.

Dennis Pratt, a candidate for Mount Vernon City Council, stated that both the City Council and City Planning Commission have voted against including Big Lake in the Mount Vernon UGA. Mr. Pratt then proceeded to argue with various members of the audience.

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An unidentified man gave some suggestions for improving the public notice procedures.

Brian Hill spoke again to remark that the crime rate in the City of Mount Vernon is greater than that in Big Lake.

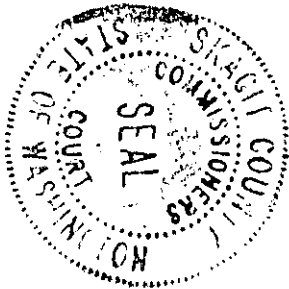
Chuck Bussiere, a Concrete resident, stated that the Town of Concrete wishes to maintain its rural nature and not become more urbanized.

The time was now approaching 8:00 p.m., and Chairman Hart and Commissioner Robinson closed the public hearing, inviting any who wished to stay and talk individually with Chairman Hart.

ADJOURNMENT:

A motion was made to adjourn the proceedings, which was seconded and motion was carried.

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
SKAGIT COUNTY, WASHINGTON





Robert Hart, Chairman

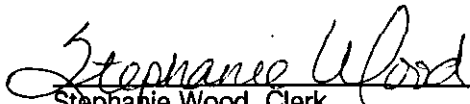


Robby Robinson, Commissioner



Harvey Walden, Commissioner

ATTEST:



Stephanie Wood, Clerk
Skagit County Board of Commissioners