

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

**Tuesday, November 30, 1993:**

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

- 1) Discussion - 1994 Land Use Fees.
- 2) Discussion - County-wide Carrying Capacity Analysis.
- 3) Code Enforcement Report.
- 4) Miscellaneous.

10:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. Hearing Examiner's Recommendations:

- 1) Approval - Agricultural Variance Request - #SPU-93-006 for William Blunt, 2860 Lyman Hamilton Road, Sedro Woolley.
- 2) Denial - Agricultural Variance - #VAR-93-028 for Leonard Lee, 1/4 Mile South of Intersection of Chuckanut Drive and State Route 237.

1:30 p.m. - 2:00 p.m. Follow-up Report - BUCKS Program Training - Judy Menish, Skagit County Treasurer.

The Skagit County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Tuesday, November 30, 1993, with Commissioners Robert Hart, Harvey Wolden and Robby Robinson present.

**PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT - Dave Hough, Director**

1) **Discussion - 1994 Land Use Fees.**

Dave Hough, Director, Planning and Community Development, discussed proposed 1994 Land Use Fees with the Board. He presented an outline of a suggested fee schedule, noting that it was not substantially out of line. It will require a public hearing before proceeding any further.

Currently, there is a fee charge of \$26.00 per lot for subdivisions. This fee schedule was adopted in 1983 by the County. Dave Brookings has suggested that \$35.00 per lot would more accurately reflect the amount of work involved.

Relative to certain other permits, there has been a charge of 1.1 cent per square foot of impervious surface. It is being proposed that this change to 1.5 cent per square foot of impervious surface. There does not appear to be any major change in subdivision fees.

Mr. Hough added that relative to administrative fees, a couple of other items have never had a charge. A fee schedule has been developed for administrative appeals and the cost of Hearing Examiner appeals has been raised.

Commissioner Hart said he had some major concerns and is not convinced there needs to be as much revision on minor items. There has to be some kind of threshold. There is no use spending a week of staff time going through a revision that if not ridiculous is close to it.

Mr. Hough said he agreed and they will be looking at this. They don't require an environmental checklist on everything but as soon as one is triggered there are some requirements that are causing costs to run over the \$75.00.

Mr. Hough explained some of the other proposed revisions, noting that there are a lot of things they will need to look at when there is a cluster provision in the ordinance. Shorelines is an application that requires

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a lot of revision because of state requirements and so many publications. They are hoping the legislature deals with Shorelines, because in the regulatory reform area, it has been a major item of discussion.

Commissioner Hart said that one of the other concerns expressed earlier was the need to discourage short plats in rural areas and encourage clustering. Clustering is going to be more expensive. In order to accomplish some of the things the County would like to see done, it may be necessary to subsidize some costs.

Bill Vaux said he thoroughly believes the Growth Management Act is pushing affordable housing away. What the Commissioners have an opportunity to do, in terms of the fee schedule, is to put out a fee schedule that encourages developers to develop subsidized affordable housing.

Relative to the split off of the Permit Center from the Planning Department, Commissioner Hart said that he has talked to people who are pleased as they are getting their permits sooner. Also, staff needs to be empowered to know when something is going to fly so they can give the applicant an answer.

Brian McGuiness of Skagit-Island Builders Association, said he would echo what Mr. Vaux said. Affordable housing is getting further and further away from reality. He added that he has lots of ideas about this.

Carol Ehlers talked about the Shorelines permit application process.

Mr. Hough said the Shorelines application process requires notice that you made application, a notice of hearing, notice of the decision and posting afterwards. Advertising costs are probably \$250.00 minimum just for a shorelines permit. That is a process they sincerely hope gets reviewed at the state level. Until that is done the County is stuck with the process.

Kraig Olason stated that relative to Shorelines, additional time goes into following up on neighbor's complaints, appeals to decisions, inquiries and visits, etc. Once that happens you can't recoup your costs.

Chairman Hart said that in the area of Shorelines there is an extremely high likelihood that there is going to be a major revision. A lot of those issues are going to be on the legislative agenda this January. It is a major problem throughout the state.

Mr. McGuiness said, the next segment of the Uniform Building Code, if the Commissioners choose to adopt it, has a schedule that will increase basic fees by 40%.

Chairman Hart said, one of the keys to the whole thing is to determine what review and supervision is necessary to protect the public good. Also, is there some way to modify the system so we can do the revision necessary but we don't do things that are really unnecessary.

Mr. Hough said that they are going to look seriously at these issues as soon as they get through the land use element. He also noted that Skagit County's process is more reasonable than many other counties. He said it would be his recommendation to wait for six months on this issue.

Commissioner Robinson said that as far as Shorelines goes, let's get our GMA processed and than take a real hard look at it.

Mr. Hough said there is no problem at all with the Planning Department. Next year's budget was predicated on existing fees, not new fees.

Chairman Hart agreed that the GMA process is the number one priority and needs to be completed.

2) **Discussion - County-wide Carrying Capacity Analysis**

Gary Christensen, Senior Planner, reported, explaining that the carrying capacity analysis provides an estimate of the developable land area needed to accommodate projected new growth in Skagit County through 2010.

Mr. Christensen discussed the goals and objectives of the analysis. They want to identify the minimum amount of developable residential land that would be needed in Skagit County during the twenty year planning period.

The land carrying capacity analysis was based on the assumption the average household size in Skagit County is 2.5 persons. The average vacancy rate is 5% for all types of housing. In rural areas 5% of rural land is needed for public rights of ways. It is assumed, in urban areas, that 10% of developable land would be needed for those uses also. Fifteen percent of developable land in this analysis will remain undeveloped. The analysis also established a minimum and a maximum.

Mr. Christensen reviewed three alternative growth scenarios to be considered in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the Land Use Designation Element for the Skagit County Comprehensive Plan. He then reviewed the methodology and approach that provide a detailed description of the assumptions and steps that were involved in developing the carrying capacity estimates as well as the limits to the study.

Mr. Christensen reviewed some of the statistics with the Board. He pointed out that this does not take into account the ability to build on resource lands.

Mr. Olason added that there are a lot of available lots in the County that are in excess of what is anticipated over the next 20 years. There is a tremendous potential volume of buildable lots in the forestry district.

Mr. Christensen explained that what these numbers are indicating is if the intent or goal is to meet the 80-20 split we will likely see significant areas in rural zones of Skagit County that will be down zoned.

Chairman Hart asked about the transferral of development rights. Mr. Christensen said there has been a lot of talk about Bayview Hill. There is a possibility they may assess that and see if there can be some higher densities up there.

Commissioner Robinson said he is concerned about people who have bought land in the last fifteen years and the land is zoned one way and then down zoned. How is the County going to address this?

Mr. Hough talked about the previous zoning and some of the changes that have occurred. Mr. Olason added that the 2 1/2 acre designation has come up more times than anything. The fact is, zoning is what it is until it is changed. Individuals have some responsibility on their own for not having taken advantage of an opportunity.

There was extensive discussion about development rights and the cost of development rights as well as rising property taxes.

Chairman Hart said there is something happening right now that is intended to address property taxes.

Mr. Olason talked about the affordable housing situation. Now land costs too much money. To have 2 1/2 to 5 or 10 acres for one house is a luxury. They could go in a hurry if we were a wide open community. The question would be if there was to be affordable housing, finding those sites that would be easily surfaced and maximizing those densities with some open space options for people.

After further discussion, Chairman Hart stated that he felt some good points had been put on the table and suggested continuing the discussion later on.

Mr. Hough said they would be bringing these types of issues to the Board every week for the next 6 months.

Mr Christensen concluded that the Carrying Capacity Analysis will be an addendum to the Environmental impact Statement. This information will be made available to the public upon the draft EIS being released.

3) Code Enforcement Report.

The Code Enforcement Report was presented to the Board.

4) Miscellaneous.

There were no miscellaneous items.

**HEARING EXAMINER'S RECOMMENDATIONS**

1) Approval - Agricultural Variance Request - #SPU-93-006 for William Blunt, 2860 Lyman Hamilton Road, Sedro Woolley.

Grace Roeder, Associate Planner reported. She explained that the applicant is requesting an Agricultural Variance to allow construction of a second single family residence on a 20 acre parcel in conjunction with an existing farming operation.

The Variance Request is to allow construction of a proposed single family residence within 300 ft. of the front property line instead of the maximum 200. The applicant is proposing to construct a new single family residence for himself and utilize an older existing farmhouse for the employee.

After discussion Commissioner Robinson motioned to approve the Hearing Examiner's recommendation to approve the Agricultural Variance Request #SPU-93-006 for William Blunt. Commissioner Wolden seconded the motion, which passed unanimously. (**Resolution #15138**)

2) Denial - Agricultural Variance - #VAR-93-028 for Leonard Lee, 1/4Mile South of Intersection of Chuckanut Drive and State Route 237.

Ms. Roeder advised that a continuance has been requested by Mr. Lee. The new date is set for December 15 at 10:30 a.m.

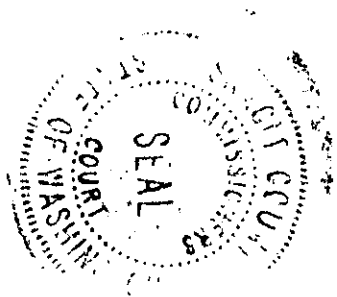
FOLLOW-UP REPORT - BUCKS PROGRAM TRAINING - JUDY MENISH, SKAGIT COUNTY  
TREASURER.

Judy Menish, Skagit County Treasurer, and members of the BUCKS (Better Understanding of Cash Kontrols) training team, gave a wrap up of the successful effort to educate County employees about the careful handling and stewardship of County receipts.

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:

  
Jean Terry, Clerk  
Skagit County Board of Commissioners