

Skagit County Agricultural Advisory Board (AAB)
Minutes – June 16, 2004

Members in attendance:

Dave Boon
Larry Jensen
Rose Merritt
Oscar Lagerlund
Randy Good
Lyle Wesen
Bob Hughes
Kim Mower
Annie Lohman

Members not in attendance:

Murray Benjamin
Mike Hulbert
Roger Knutzen

Others in attendance

Kay Haaland
Bob Rose
Gary Christensen
Dyvon Havens
Allison Deets

1. Call to order & introductions:

Dave Boon, Chair, called the meeting to order shortly after 7pm and welcomed members and guests Bob Rose and Kay Haaland to the June meeting. Chair Dave Boon welcomed new AAB members Kim Mower and Annie Lohman. He gave the new members a brief introduction to the purpose and work of the AAB and expressed, on behalf of the Board, his warmest welcome to the new members.

2. Minutes:

Dave Boon called for a motion to review and approve the minutes and agenda. Lyle Wesen moved that the minutes be approved as presented. Rose Merritt seconded the motion. Motion carried.

3. Discussion Items:

a. Strategic Plan “Check-up” – Kay Haaland

Kay Haaland, facilitator for the strategic planning process the AAB went through in January, provided some background into the process for the new AAB members. She then went through the Strategic Plan with the Board to update her notes, goals, and objectives from the previous review meeting, which she will return to the AAB with amendments, additions, and corrections. (see attached updated notes)

b. Critical Areas Ordinance amendment – Gary Christensen

Ex-officio member Gary Christensen brought up the amendment recommendation made by the Planning Commission, which amended the Critical Areas Ordinance language submitted by staff to eliminate the phrase “upon complaint” from the lead paragraph of Skagit County Code 14.24.120(4). The Planning Commission, after some discussion, voted 9-1 in favor of amending the language from:

“...Failure to comply with these mandatory Watercourse Protection Measures for Ongoing Agriculture shall result in enforcement upon complaint. Enforcement of these provisions shall be as provided in SCC 14.44.085.”

to the following:

“...Failure to comply with these mandatory Watercourse Protection Measures for Ongoing Agriculture shall result in enforcement as provided in SCC 14.44.085.”

Planning Commission member Harry Ota voted against the amendment as recommended by the Commission. AAB member Lyle Wesen asked Gary Christensen if he knew the reason for Mr. Ota’s vote in opposition, and Gary responded that Mr. Ota had desired a more detailed description of process prior to enforcement. Gary noted that the code already requires the County to take certain steps and go through a process of confirming the credibility of a complaint, identifying the problem if there is one, and working with the landowner to correct the problem, prior to reaching the stage of “enforcement.” The next stage of the process will be review and approval of the amended language by the Board of County Commissioners, after which the Western Washington Growth Management Hearings Board will review the amendment. The WWGMHB will then render a decision as to whether the amendment brings the County into compliance with its previous order.

c. Bayview Subarea Plan – Gary Christensen

Gary Christensen gave an update on the Bayview Subarea Plan, and will continue to monitor the progress of the plan and provide updates. He reported that mitigation will need to be done in conjunction with further development at Bayview, that the County will need to develop interlocal agreements with districts, and that joint capital facility projects will need to be developed and implemented. Rose Merritt reported that farmers and landowners were meeting to discuss the issues, and that the conclusion of the various stakeholders had been that a plan needs to be developed to address drainage and other development-related issues prior to moving forward. Oscar Lagerlund noted that the AAB has been discussing for some time the impact of upland development on agriculture in the Valley. Gary Christensen stated that the County Public Works Department has a contract with an engineering firm to do drainage and retention pond planning at Bayview, and recommended that representatives from Public Works attend a meeting to discuss the Bayview Watershed Plan. Chair Dave Boon directed staff to request the attendance of Public Works staff to provide an update.

d. Burlington UGA – Bob Rose

Bob Rose, Executive Director of the Skagitonians to Preserve Farmland, provided an update on the proposal by Burlington to expand its UGA. Bob provided some background on the process and explained the implications of the map developed by planner Margaret Fleek for the City Council following her work with a Burlington UGA Task Force. Ms. Fleek recommended area #1, a small piece of #4, and consideration for area #2. Area 1 includes 142 acres on the east side of Pulver Road stretching from the proposed dike setback area north; Area 2 continues north from Area 1 to State Highway 20 and includes 144 acres on the east side of Pulver Road. Area 4 includes 29 acres on the east side of Pulver Road, just north of the intersection with Peterson Road. The City Council approved the proposal, which would expand the UGA by 315 acres if Area 2 is included in the expansion.

e. Miscellaneous

Lyle Wesen reported that the HB 1418 Task Force continues to meet, and that the Western Washington Agricultural Association is monitoring its progress and will continue to take the lead on the legislative front.

Adjourn regular session.