

SKAGIT COUNTY AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY BOARD (AAB)
MINUTES
October 8, 2008

Members in Attendance

Murray Benjamin
Randy Good
Bob Hughes
Nels Lagerlund
Annie Lohman (+proxy for John V)
Bill McMoran
Kim Mower
Lyle Wesen

Members Not in Attendance

Mike Hulbert
Roger Knutzen
Greg Lee
John Vendeland

Others in Attendance

Carolyn Kelly, Skagit Conservation District
John Lombard, Consultant, Alternative Futures
Mike Shelby, Western WA AG
Carly Ruacho, Planning & Development Services
Ryan Walters, Skagit County Prosecutor's Office
Jim Voetberg, Director of Public Works

Kendra Smith, Staff

Call to Order and Introductions

The meeting was called to order. Carolyn Kelly from the Skagit Conservation District, Mike Shelby with Western WA AG, and Jim Voetberg Director of Public Works were introduced.

Jim Voetberg, Director of Public Works, was asked to give a brief summary of his background. Jim has an extensive background in resource development. The discussion included early flood warnings, tape, roads and culverts.

Minutes

There was a motion by Murray Benjamin to approve the August minutes. Lyle Wesen seconded the motion. They were approved.

Lyle Wesen made a motion to approve the September minutes as amended. Randy Good seconded the motion and they were approved as amended.

Old Business

I. White Papers

Discussion continued on the various white papers.

Murray brought to the group's attention, the lack of a statement concerning properties that are staying in AG from AG and those staying in AG should be streamlined.

II. Flood

Lyle Wesen stated that dike breaking is to help cities; funds should be available to help affected farmers and landowners.

III. CAO

Murray discussed that BMPs aren't included.

Committees need to select chairs before the November meeting. Randy to chair the CAO.

IV..Heritage Program

Carolyn Kelly with the Skagit Conservation District gave an update on the Heritage program. She suggested that Rone Brewer speak to the AAB on concerns regarding easements, taxes, and interest. Rone will be invited to speak at the November meeting.

New Business

I. Bed and Breakfast Zoning Request

Kendra reported on Allen Elliott's request for an expansion of the code for 'Bed and Breakfasts' from 5 to 12 bedrooms. Discussion included concern over any expansions in the agricultural zone, especially those that take up impervious surfaces. Annie Lohman made a motion to reject changes in definitions. Bill McMoran seconded the motion which was unanimously passed.

II. Alternative Futures

Ryan Walters spoke on 'Alternative Futures' and a \$625,000 grant received by the County. A steering committee has been established and has had a first meeting. John Lombard wrote the grant and gave his history concerning his work at the University of Washington to:

- Preserve quality

- Meet GMA requirements
- Save the Ecosystem
- Save AG land

A stakeholder committee will be formed – hopefully in approximately one year with the goal of developing and approving a preferred alternative vision. One of the alternatives will be on agricultural protection.

III. Snohomish County Agriculture Advisory Board

Bill McMoran and Mike Hulbert will attend the Snohomish County Agriculture Advisory Board in November.

IV. Enforcement Actions

Kendra Smith discussed enforcement actions concerning the AG CAO/buffers. The AG community wanted to self-enforce the current ordinance. The question is whether or not this is still desired. If not, the AG Advisory Board needs to make a recommendation to the County Commissioners on what should be done to resolve this issue. It was determined to task the CAO subcommittee to come up with a recommendation.

Mike Hulbert referred to a meeting he attended where they discussed rural housing and buffers in other parts of the state. Goals were stated and funding discussed to assess specific areas to improve rather than having a blanket policy.

Next Meeting

The next meeting will be November 12 from 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm

Adjourn

The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 pm

Great thanks to Murray Benjamin for taking minutes.

ACTIONS

- White Paper committees are to select chairs before the November Meeting. (Randy Good chair of CAO)
- Rone Brewer with the Heritage Project to be invited to speak at November AAB meeting to speak on easements, taxes, and interest.
- Bill McMoran and Mike Hulbert to attend November meeting of Snohomish county Agriculture Advisory Board.
- CAO committee to develop recommendation regarding ‘Enforcement Actions’ to be presented to County Commissioners.