



SKAGIT COUNTY AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY BOARD
1800 Continental Place
Mount Vernon, WA 98273
Phone (360) 416-1338

Skagit County Agriculture Advisory Board (AAB) Meeting Minutes
February 10, 2016 6 pm
Skagit County Administration Building

Members in Attendance

Murray Benjamin	Steve Bertelsen	Jim Carstens
Barbara Cleave	Sloan Johnson	Kraig Knutzen
Nels Lagerlund	Steve Omdal	Terry Sapp

Members Absent

Scott Hanseth	Michael Hughes	Greg Lee
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Proxy Designation

Murray Benjamin for Greg Lee

Others in Attendance

Linda Christensen, Skagit County Planning & Development Services
Dale Pernula, Skagit County Planning & Development Services
Kirk Johnson, Skagit County Planning & Development Services
Betsy Stevenson, Skagit County Planning & Development Services

Call to Order

Nels called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm

Agenda Review

Nels added the City of Sedro-Woolley UGA Proposal

Meeting Minutes

Murray moved to approve the January 13, 2016 meeting minutes and Jim seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

Shoreline Master Program (SMP) Update

Betsy informed the AAB that the SMP has been released in a draft form. She distributed the February 5, 2016 Staff Report and stated that the Notice of Availability was published on February 4, the public hearing before the Planning Commission is March 15, and written comments will be accepted through

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April 4, 4:30 p.m. Betsy said that the content of the current SMP draft has changed a lot from when it first was drafted. The Staff Report is a good place to read about the overall process, background, frequently asked questions and proposal summary. Additional information can be found on the website <http://www.skagitcounty.net/smp>.

Nels asked whether the Department of Ecology had made comments on the draft proposal. Betsy said they have commented a small amount, but they will also comment more.

2016 Comprehensive Plan Update

Kirk stated the update is a periodic review required by Washington State. Kirk distributed a handout that summarizes a few individual updates that the AAB may find interesting. Kirk recognized that the AAB is concerned and is closely watching the Sedro-Woolley UGA amendment. A brief discussion about this amendment ensued. The map on the handout illustrates the area docketed and not docketed.

Nels clarified the AAB concerns.

- Concerned about drainage for the proposal zoned as Rural Reserve being farmed
- Will there be a drainage plan north of the proposal for Sedro-Woolley

Nels asked where the water will go as the City of Sedro-Woolley expands. Will it flow into Drainage District 14 or Brickyard Creek? Kirk made note of these concerns and will speak with the city before the Plan goes out for public comment.

A discussion continued regarding the Avon development not docketed, but deferred. The AAB is concerned about drainage into Thomas Creek if the proposal goes back on a future docket. Steve Omdal asked staff what drives action by the Board of County Commissioners. Dale responded that population allocations drives it. Washington State issues a range to plan for population growth. Staff selected a range and calculated projections based on the cities and towns economy and population growth and how much land is needed to accommodate the growth. 20-year projections are updated every five years. Staff said the current assumption is the growth for the next 20 years will be accommodated within the county and cities. Skagit County will continue to monitor growth and make adjustments as needed.

Kirk summarized the Edison Granary proposal. Nels asked if the zoning change request from Rural Village Residential to Rural Village Commercial is approved will additional commercial building occur. He is concerned about sewer capacity in Edison. Kraig mentioned that large breweries will come into the area for development. There will be a continued concern about sewer capacity. Steve Bertelsen asked how a brewery is zoned. Staff said it would be zoned the same as winery businesses.

Kirk discussed the Rural Business Code Amendment. This change will permit additional expansion potential to natural resource-related businesses. There was a short discussion.

Last, Kirk spoke about the Home-Based Business code change proposal. 3C-10.7 will replace 3C-10.6.

3C-10.6 A Home-Based Business 2 is only allowed on land designated Ag-NRL if it is clearly secondary and incidental to an actively managed agricultural operation.

Proposal: Replace 3C-10.6 with the following

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- 3C-10.7** Within resource lands of long-term commercial significance, care must be paid to protection of the primary resource activity and code requirements may limit the use in a manner to avoid conversion of resource lands and promote the primary resource-based uses. On lands of long-term commercial significance (Ag-NRL, IF-NRL, SF-NRL and RRc-NRL), HBB2 and HBB3 may be conditionally permitted only if no conversion of resource land is required to accommodate the business activity. Limitations on new structures may also be conditions.

Kirk said the main idea is if an impact is on resource land, 10.7 will replace 10.6. Jim asked if new construction would occur. Kirk said possibly, i.e. an accessory (shop) building could be built. Terry asked Kirk about the term, 'farm family.' Kirk said a small home based business can be encouraged even though it's not agriculturally based. The code language will be completed the first week of March. Terry suggested this subject deserves future discussion at the next meeting.

Dale mentioned another code change proposal regarding title notifications. Every three years a notification would be sent to property owners living near Ag-NRL. The cost to send this notice could be up to \$6K. Staff is proposing to eliminate the expensive mailing. There are other options proposed, i.e., the buyer of land record the notification.

Farmworker Housing

Dale summarized the Skagit Housing Authority/Raspberry Ridge Development proposal which will cause a UGA expansion. Burlington City Council will discuss the proposal at their council meeting tomorrow evening. For public sewer to go in, the property must go into the UGA, including Raspberry Ridge Phase I and II. County staff recommends that the roads near the development be upgraded to handle the proposed project. Dale discussed several items the county is requesting.

Steve Omdal asked how the Housing Authority will monitor the development as farmworker housing. Dale said he felt confident that the Housing Authority will monitor the housing effectively. There was also a discussion of Phase IV for 31 additional units. Once the city approves the proposal, then it goes to the County for review. Road improvement funding contributors will be the Housing Authority, County Economic Development Funds, and Skagit County.

Voluntary Stewardship Program (VSP)

Nels read a statement update from Kara Symonds:

- Currently, the draft Skagit VSP work plan is out for local technical committee comment
- Skagit County and the Washington State Conservation Commission executed a contract (C20160016) in January 2016; WSCC is providing funds to implement requirements of the VSP
- County staff will update the draft work plan and reconvene the VSP watershed group in March (24th) to review contract requirements, feedback, and updates
- County staff are attending a state level VSP meeting on 2/17 to hear about the Thurston and Chelan County VSPs and to get some preliminary feedback on our draft work plan

Other Business

Nels distributed a draft letter to the Board of County Commissioners regarding the AAB's stand on farmworker housing. Nels said this letter shouldn't be sent yet, especially since the City of Burlington is

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meeting tomorrow to discuss the Raspberry Ridge proposal. More information will be available after the meeting.

There was a discussion about the La Paloma housing project in Mount Vernon. Kraig mentioned that it began as farmworker housing and is now used as non-farmworker housing rental units.

Nels discussed an idea about putting a few mobile units on farmland. Is it allowed?

Steve Omdal shared information via an e-mail from Rick Anderson, Washington Farm labor Association, regarding styles of migrant housing.

Terry noted that a recent article from the Capital Press stated wolf packs are in greater distribution and one has been sited on the west side. He said this is an interesting subject and worthy of a future discussion. Also, he said that the Department of Ecology and Agriculture are combining efforts regarding pollution rules and regulations.

Committee Assignments

Steve Omdal will serve as Chair for the Land Use Committee and Steve Bertelesen will also serve on the same committee.

The meeting adjourned at 8:00 p.m.

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