

# Skagit County Agriculture Advisory Board

## Meeting Summary – October 13, 2021

### Skagit County Administration Building

#### Members in Attendance

Michael Hughes	Nels Lagerlund	Rachael Ward-Sparwasser	Tim Van Hofwegen
Justin Hayton	Kraig Knutzen	Steve Omdal	Michael Trafton
Terry Sapp			

#### Proxy Designations

#### Members Absent

Steve Wright	John Morrison
Murray Benjamin	

#### Others in Attendance

Peter Browning, Skagit County Commissioner  
Hal Hart, Director, Skagit County Planning & Development Services (PDS)  
Peter Gill, Skagit County Planning & Development Services (PDS)  
Kim Adams, Skagit County Planning & Development Services (PDS)  
Laura Han, Skagit County Communications Director  
Lisa Grueter, Berk Consulting  
Don Mc Moran, WSU Advisor  
Brandon Roozen- Western Washington AG  
Craig Macku, Community Member

#### Call to Order, Introductions

Michael Hughes called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm.

#### Approval of Meeting Summary

Steve Omdal moved to accept the September 8, 2021 Meeting Minutes. Tim Van Hofwegen seconded. Motion carried.

#### Guest Speaker

##### **Laura Han, Skagit County Communications Director**

Laura Han discussed the Redistricting Options

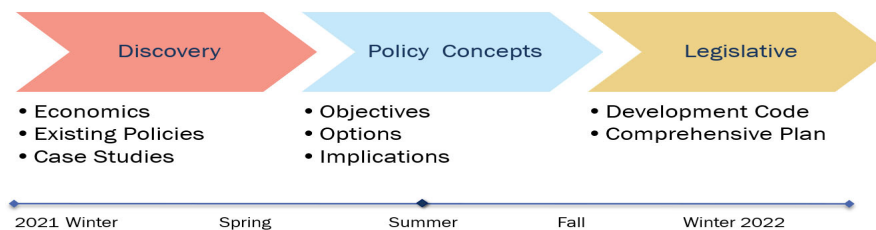
- So far, the Commissioners have held two public meetings on this topic to hear information about the process, results from the 2020 Census, and to accept public comments.
- *August 26 at 3:00 p.m. (hear and gather information)*
- *September 27 at 2:30 p.m. (hear and gather information)*
- October 25 at 2:30 p.m. (hear preliminary redistricting options, gather and provide feedback)
- November 22 at 2:30 p.m. (see final proposal, gather feedback, make final decision now or by December 31<sup>st</sup>)
- To watch a meeting: [Skagit21 Television \(skagitcounty.net\)](https://www.skagitcounty.net/television/)
- To remotely attend a meeting:  
<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87180001980?pwd=eEVGUGkxZ3NkQkhYSnhBMEo2RTQrdz09>

- We learned on September 27<sup>th</sup> that the population has slightly increased similarly in all three districts. Although the differences in population between the three districts is within an acceptable range (*they can be up to 10% off and we are currently at 3.3% off*) the next public meeting on October 25<sup>th</sup> will be to hear some preliminary options from the Skagit County/FLO Analytics team about redrawing districts in such a way that population is rebalanced, and communities of interest remain intact.
- Comments/suggestions about redistricting are being collected here (*and are also accepted during the public meetings*): [redistricting@co.skagit.wa.us](mailto:redistricting@co.skagit.wa.us)
- Additional helpful information about the process can be found here: [www.publicinput.com/SkagitCountyRedistricting](http://www.publicinput.com/SkagitCountyRedistricting)

**Peter Gill, Skagit County Planning & Development Services & Lise Grueter, Berk Consulting**

Peter and Lisa presented an Agritourism update

## Process



- Linking Engagement to Policy Options
  - Zones under review
    - Ag-NRL+ other rural/resource zones
  - Locations/Size
    - Identify suitable locations and types
    - Avoid impacting core agriculture
    - Avoid impacting village commercial
    - Help retain farms and farmland
    - What is accessory?
    - How do we measure and enforce accessory uses?
  - Consider Range of Activities
    - Identify suitable locations and types
    - Avoid impacting core agriculture
    - Avoid impacting village commercial
    - Help retain farms and farmland
    - What is accessory?
    - How do we measure and enforce accessory uses?
- Policy Goals
  - Identify suitable locations and types
  - Avoid impacting core agriculture
  - Avoid impacting village commercial
  - Help retain farms and farmland
  - What is accessory?
  - How do we measure and enforce accessory uses?
- Identify AGT Important to the Community
  - Identify suitable locations and types
  - Avoid impacting core agriculture
  - Avoid impacting village commercial
  - Help retain farms and farmland

- What is accessory?
- How do we measure and enforce accessory uses?
- Policy Options- Preliminary Explorations
  - Option A – Accessory Agritourism
    - Targeted Changes
      - Current system with a bit more flexibility provided there is a connection to the onsite farm.
      - Only in AG-NRL
    - Clean-up/add definitions for desired uses
    - AG/Resource Zones:
      - “Permanent” Agritourism Uses should be Accessory/connected to farms.
      - Short-term Rentals:
      - Structures meet B&B. Allow Temporary Harvest Hosts.
      - Food Service:
      - Limited in size/volume, Accessory permit,
      - Farm to Table, Limited Events programmatic permit.
      - Weddings: Seasonal, limited events programmatic permit.
      - Connection to agriculture = working farm?
      - Size to limit disturbance.
  - Option B – Agritourism Overlay
    - Define core and overlay areas for AG
      - More AGt in overlay than in “core”
      - Includes Resource and Rural zones
      - Accessory focus-difference in Resource v Rural
    - Clean-up/add definitions
    - AG/Resource Zones
      - Short-term Rentals: More allowance in overlay
      - Food Services: in overlay, Accessory
      - Weddings: In overlay, year-round
      - Rural/LAMIRD: Proximity
    - Option B Overlay
      - Overlay Criteria could include:
        - Major Collector and higher
        - Lot size 10 acres or less
        - Spacing from LAMIRDS
        - Spacing from other larger Agritourism
        - Some uses that require water: Group A Public Water Systems
  - Option C – Rezone: Small Scale Recreation and Tourism
    - Option C: Rezone SRT
      - Small Scale Recreation and Tourism (SRT)
        - Meant for: small scale recreational and tourist uses
        - A zone that is considered a “Limited Area of More Intensive Rural Development” Zone
          - GMA allows Type 2 LAMIRD to support recreational or tourist uses (new residential not allowed)
          - Allows restaurants and small retail and service businesses
  - Sub-option - Central Agritourism hub/AG park
    - Sub-option with A or B: Food Hub
      - Central Agritourism “Park” - Policy Initiative: food hub/ag park with cities and Port
      - Establish in unincorporated UGAs, linked to chambers of commerce and Tourism Promotion Area Advisory Board

- Evaluation of Policy Options
  - For each option:
    - Intent/Description
      - Tie to on-site agriculture
      - Footprint size, capacity, and nature based on business models
      - Infrastructure needed (e.g., septic, parking)
      - Relationship to Health Standards (e.g., septic, food service)
  - Location/Zones
  - Example Policies/Code
  - Peer Counties
  - Evaluation
    - Comparison to Agritourism Exploration Goals/Objectives
    - Implications for Comprehensive Plan
    - Land Use Allowances/Permits
    - Benefits and Concerns
- Next Steps/Discussion
  - Agritourism uses:
    - Is our list of AGt uses the right list to review?
  - Options A, B, C + Sub-options
    - What is AAB initial feedback?
    - Are we on the right track to show a distinct range of possibilities?
  - What type of analysis would you like to see on Options?
    - To help make a recommendation, what information do you need?
      - E.g., parcels, water systems, etc.
  - How do you want to be involved?
  - Drawing Option B Overlay ideas
    - Definition of programmatic permit
    - Other

### **Hal Hart, Director, Planning & Development Services**

Hal gave his update from the Planning Department

- Key Efforts Update
  - Permit Efforts/Coordination Underway
  - Improving Permit Process – which are slow
  - We continue to lose key staff – COVID taking a toll.
  - We are working through many building permits.
  - New Permit Software Selection Process Underway – will take four months to get to a decision point and a year to implement (at best).
  - Shoreline Master Program Update Underway – submit to DOE by end of year.
  - FCC Process Update
  - Ag. Tourism Update
- Update of Farm Operations
  - County Roles Now
    - Bow Hill Blueberry Farm- Fire- on-going investigation
    - Allow for rapid rebuilding & rapid permitting
- Additional Rack Houses are under construction
- Additional Potato Sheds being constructed this year – new storage capacity in being created in the process.
- Multiple Project Reviews this year.

- The potato is a major staple food, ranked fourth in terms of global production after wheat, rice, and maize. It is consumed either as fresh potatoes or processed potatoes on a commercial and residential scale. Allied Market Research.com
- Clear Lake Business Park – redevelopment and job creation opportunities Proposed new offices... potentially new employment opportunities.
- Current Project List
  - Amazon
  - Sakata Seed Expansion
  - Distillery Expansion
  - Brewery Expansion
  - Heritage Flight Museum
  - Expansion of Hangers (commercial-multiple projects and hanger types)
  - Vanderyaught Propane Rail Spur Expansion
  - Pac Car Testing Facility Expansion
  - Vikima Seed Expansion
- Single family residential housing being developed in the City of MV this week. Montreaux Subdivision \$764,440 this week on Rainier Loop. Eight homes under construction one lot sold but no home construction commenced yet.
- Additional multi-family housing along College Way in two different projects is planned at this time.

## New Business

Don McMoran- WWU Update

- Same grants as usual
  - Water and Irrigation sustainability Grant
  - Agribility
  - Farm Stress and Suicide Prevention
  - 2022 Potato Research Study Starting-needing survey
- Doing a commercial on Farm Stress/Suicide
- Workshops
  - Seed Western Washington-January
  - Skagit Ag Summit- January
  - Potato- February
  - Berry-February

## Committee Reports

### **Economic Development- Don McMoran**

Amazon near the Port, Island Grown Food Cooperative, Hay press for grass (approx. 3 million), maybe looking at a pelleting facility instead.

### **Critical Areas – Nels Lagerlund**

Nothing at this time

### **Land Use –Vacant (Chair), Michael Hughes, John Morrison, Steve Wright**

Agritourism Discussion meeting to follow. Michael will contact committee to meet and discuss.

### **Flood, Drainage & Irrigation – Kraig Knutzen (Chair), Nels Lagerlund, Steve Wright**

Nothing at this time

## Old Business

Next Month: Redistricting, Damn Relicensing, Agritourism

## Adjourn

Kraig Knutzen moved to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 9:11pm

Next meeting is November 10<sup>th</sup>, 2021 at 6 pm.