

**Board of County Commissioners
Public Hearing: 2018 CPAs
November 21, 2017**

Commissioners: Ron Wesen, Chair
Ken Dahlstedt
Lisa Janicki

Staff: Dale Pernula, Planning Director
Stacie Pratschner, Senior Planner

Public Hearing

Commenters: Liz Seume, Applicant (Quaker Cove)
Karl Seume, Applicant (Quaker Cove)
Dennis Littlefield
Carol Ehlers
Retha McCutchen
Mike Rauwolf
Aly Brooks
Jay Lewis
Linda Lewis
Earl Giessen
Susan Giessen
Patrick Mooney
Art Fournier
Lynn Keating
Steve McLean
Jim Anderson
Bob Carmichael, on Behalf of Applicant (Avalon)
Ron Hass
Oscar Lagerlund
Ron Extract, Garden Path Fermentation
Bill Sygitowicz, Applicant (Avalon)
Allen Rozema, Skagitonians to Preserve Farmland

Chair Ron Wesen: (gavel) Good afternoon. I'd like to call this session of the Skagit County Commissioners to order. It is November 21st, 2017, a little after 2:30 in the afternoon, and we are here for a public hearing considering testimony regarding the Skagit County 2018 proposed amendments to the Comprehensive Plan and Land Use and Zoning Map. Dale?

Dale Pernula: Okay, I'd like to turn it over to the Senior Long Range Planner, Stacie Pratschner, who has been working on this for some time.

Stacie Pratschner: Thank you, Director. Good afternoon to the Board of County Commissioners, to administration and staff, and also to members of the community here today. Thank you, Director, for the introduction. My name is Stacie Pratschner with the Planning and Development Services Department. Thank you for having me here today.

Today is the public hearing to determine which proposed Comprehensive Plan, Land Use Map, and Development Code amendments and text amendments merit inclusion in the 2018 docket. Under the Growth Management Act, the County may adopt a package of changes to the Comprehensive Plan and Development Regulations once per year through what's called the docketing process. The purpose of docketing is to ascertain the cumulative effect of various proposals on the community. Annual amendments included in the docket are meant to address major and minor land use changes, amendments to the text of the Comprehensive Plan, and then also allows for minor text changes to the Development Code. Skagit County has established a codified, comprehensive public participation program that articulates each component of public engagement throughout this approximately year-long process.

Today's hearing represents the initial step in the 2018 docketing process, beginning with today's public hearing where staff will give this presentation and also make recommendations to the Board on which items merit inclusion in the 2018 docket. This will then be followed by deliberations and potential adoption on December 19th. Once the Board has authorized staff on which items to further analyze and study for possible approval, staff will then go to the Planning Commission and do an introduction with them so that we can start working with the Commission and also with our community members on additional research and analysis.

Concurrent with this process will be the release of a SEPA threshold determination to determine the environmental impact cumulatively of these proposals. Also at this time we request review from the Department of Commerce, in compliance with the Growth Management Act.

After this work is done, that'll then be followed by a Planning Commission public hearing. After that public hearing, the Planning Commission will also deliberate and then make recommendations – which will lead us back to the Board – for which items to finally adopt for ordinance from the 2018 docket. Easy.

This year's proposals for possible inclusion on the docket include four citizen-initiated amendment requests, including an amendment that's been deferred from both the 2016 and the 2017 dockets. The Department has identified 18 text amendments, one in the Comprehensive Plan and 17 in the Development Code, for us to take a look at and also for inclusion on the docket. There's also additionally a deferred map amendment from last year that we'll be describing as well.

Today's presentation is going to include those descriptions, along with our analysis and recommendations. At the end of the presentation, I'll take questions directly from the Commissioners.

The first citizen-initiated map amendment for the Board's consideration is called the Quaker Cove Rezone. You can see that the subject parcels are located on the southeast corner of South Fidalgo Island, adjacent to Gibraltar Road. This is a proposal to redesignate 31 parcels totaling approximately 26 acres from the Rural Intermediate zone – the existing zoning – to the Small Scale Recreation and Tourism zoning. The purpose of the request is to support the current camp facilities that exist there right now and also support future improvements to the camp. Between the writing of this staff report and of today's hearing, the Department is in receipt of over 100 written comments in support for this amendment. Pursuant to the amendment criteria in both the Comprehensive Plan and the Development Code, staff recommends that the Board consider including the Quaker Cove Rezone in the 2018 docket.

The second amendment for the Board's consideration is the deferred amendment I referred to earlier – deferred from both the 2016 and 2017 dockets – called the Avalon Fully Contained Community. You can see that the parcels are located just north of Burlington and then adjacent to Butler Hill. This request would redesignate 70 parcels totaling approximately 1,200 acres, and it would take the existing zoning there, which is a combination of Rural Resource, some Natural Resource Industrial land, Rural Reserve, and also the Mineral Resource Overlay in ag, and this would eventually support a new mix of residential, commercial, public, and open space land uses in order to support this new fully contained community currently called Avalon. This request also includes modification to the Countywide or – requests also include modification to the Countywide Planning Policies, to the Comprehensive Plan, and also to the Development Code in order to support creation of fully contained communities within Skagit County. Between the writing of this staff report and today's hearing, the Department is in receipt of one written comment in support of this amendment, in addition to the five written comments that were an exhibit in the staff report and that were received prior to the required posting date of the report.

At this point I'll turn over the discussion to the Director to describe more thoroughly the history of the project and also to tell you staff's recommendation for this amendment.

Mr. Pernula: Okay, Stacie hasn't been here for the last three years or so. She's only been here about six months, so I'll make a recommendation. We're recommending *not* to docket it for a few reasons, mainly because it did not receive a positive recommendation from the GMA Steering Committee which eventually will have to approve portions of this project. And if docketed, it would take a lot of staff time, staff time that we don't have. Either we would have to have additional staff or we would have to drop some of the other projects for a project that may ultimately not be approved because it does have to have approval of the GMA Steering Committee and because this is something that's somewhat repetitive. This is the third year in a row that it's come up.

What I would recommend though, that the Board consider though, is working with PDS staff and establishing the criteria for determining when this or any other fully contained community could be ripe for docketing – things including acceptance by the Steering – the GMA Steering Committee; the county getting growth beyond what the current UGAs can accommodate; et cetera. We'd have to work those out. It'd be a considerable amount of work but it'd be well worthwhile. I think it's been very frustrating for the applicant, for the GMA Steering Committee, and for County – and County staff. So what I'd like to do, what I think should be done, is that it not be docketed and that the Board work with Planning and Development staff to establish some criteria for determining when it's docketed.

Go ahead.

Ms. Pratschner: Thank you, Director. The third map amendment for the Board's consideration is the South Fidalgo Island Rezone. This was referred to as item P-12 in last year's docket. This request was deferred from last year so that further analysis could be conducted on the impact of this rezone to existing businesses in the area of effect. This amendment would redesignate approximately 4,000 acres from the Rural Reserve to a new zone, the single – or pardon me, the South Fidalgo Island Rural Residential zone. You can see we've highlighted in blue the existing Rural Reserve and then highlighted on the other side of the map where that would change. Now the new zone would allow most of the same uses as the Rural Reserve zone, with the exception of the more high intensity land uses, which are included but not limited to things like anaerobic digesters, asphalt batching, manure lagoons, and recreational racetracks.

Additionally, there is proposed to be no density bonus for Conservation and Reserve Development subdivisions without a public water system.

Staff analysis indicates that there would be no effect to existing commercial or home-based businesses as a result of this rezone. This request also will require edits to the Comprehensive Plan and Development Regulations to support the creation of this new zone, the South Fidalgo Island Rural Residential.

I would like to note that between the publishing of this report and today's hearing it did come to my attention that the adopting ordinance from last year's docket showed a draft rezone map for item P-12 that included those lands that are zoned Rural Reserve that are east of Thompson Road. And over the past week I have been in conversation and working with Mr. Roger Robinson – he's from the community down there and was also one of the original petitioners – to develop a corrected map that excludes those properties. It's where I have my cursor and you can also see the red arrow pointing there. I do want to thank Mr. Robinson for his time on that and also helping me become familiar with a project that's been in the works for a few years.

The purpose of the South Fidalgo Island Rezone is to protect the island's rural character and also its aquifer. So pursuant to the amendment criteria in both the Comprehensive Plan and Development Code for deferred requests, staff recommends that the Board consider including the South Fidalgo Island Rezone in the 2018 docket.

Staff is in receipt this year of two requested text amendments to the Development Code. The first request, from Ms. Carol Ehlers, is a citizen-initiated request to prohibit the activities that are listed in Skagit County Code 14.24.320 – and those are items (1) through (6) – in all of unincorporated Skagit County and not just in the Category I aquifer recharge areas that are defined in that section of code. That's the critical areas ordinance that describes aquifer recharge areas.

Now this was a request that had also been submitted in 2015 for the 2016 docket. It was determined at that time to exclude it from the docket for two reasons: One was that these uses, though they may be allowed or permissible within the Category II aquifer areas, still have to meet all the performance standards of the zoning code as well as environmental protection to make sure that we're not harming the environment and that there's a public benefit to permitting them. We also find that the request is not consistent with Countywide Planning Policy 12.4, which requires that lands do be identified for public purposes and that includes landfills. Landfills is one of those uses that would be excluded, per this request, from the entire county.

Pursuant to the criteria in the Comprehensive Plan and the Development Code for analyzing requests for text amendments, staff would recommend that the Board consider excluding this request from the 2018 docket.

The second text amendment request that we are in receipt of this year is from Mr. Roger Wechsler of Samish Bay Cheese. This is a citizen-initiated request to permit limited food service as an accessory use to agriculture. This request would amend the definition of "Agricultural Accessory Uses" in 14.04.020 to now include limited food service – at this point the request is for 20 guests or less – as it would then be applied in the zoning code, chapter 14.16.

The Department does not currently anticipate additional amendments being required to existing policies or regulations in order to consider this particular amendment. Right now in the Development Code we do have regulations in place in Performance Standards that give

requirements for stormwater management, required public improvements, parking, landscaping and screening, et cetera, that could or would be applied to these new businesses.

Pursuant to the criteria in the Comprehensive Plan and the Development Code for analyzing an amendment request, staff would recommend that the Board consider including this request on the 2018 docket.

County staff has identified 17 different text amendments that we would like to work on over the next year as part of inclusion in the 2018 docket. One is in the Comprehensive Plan and then the other text amendments are listed as Attachment 5 in your staff report. They're all described, some of them very generally, because on some of them we will need additional time and analysis to determine exactly where we land in terms of language.

I'd like to note that the written comment period pursuant to this public hearing is going to be open until Monday, November 27th, at 4:30. Folks can submit written comments, ideally submitted to our e-mail address which is listed up there on the slide. We also accept hand-written comments if you'd like to come and drop those off or mail those to us.

Thank you so much, Board, and I would be happy to take any questions that you have prior to public comment.

Chair Wesen: Commissioner Dahlstedt, any questions?

Commissioner Ken Dahlstedt: No.

Chair Wesen: Commissioner Janicki?

Commissioner Lisa Janicki: Not at this time.

Chair Wesen: Thank you.

Ms. Pratschner: Thank you, Commissioners.

Chair Wesen: I have an opening statement here. The purpose of this public hearing is to receive testimony on the inclusion of proposed Comprehensive Plan, Map, or Code Amendments in the 2018 docket. This year the County received four public petitions and suggestions for the Comprehensive Plan, Policy, Map, or Code Amendments. Another 18 amendments have been proposed by the County. Skagit County Code 14.08.040(3) requires the Board to hold a public hearing and written comment period to establish the annual docket. There is a sign-up sheet at the back of the room for those who wish to testify. There will be an opportunity at the end of the hearing for those who wish to testify but did not sign in to speak. Please limit your comments to three minutes so that everyone will have a chance to speak. Before you testify, clearly state your name, spell your last name and your address. If you have written comments, please place them in the box located at the staff table up front. The written comment period will remain open until Thursday, November 27th, at 4:30 p.m. Written comments are encouraged and are not limited in length or on the number of issues that you may address. Written comments must be submitted to the Planning and Development Services Department, preferably to the e-mail address on the screen. The Board of Skagit County Commissioners is scheduled to meet on December 19th at 9:30 a.m. to decide which items to include in the 2018 docket. Thank you for taking the time to participate.

Commissioner Janicki: Can we get clarification on – Thursday is not the 27th, and Stacie said Monday is the date, Monday the 27th. Is it Monday or is it Thursday? Monday the 27th is the closing period for written comment.

Ms. Pratschner: Thank you, Commissioner. Yes, Monday.

Commissioner Janicki: So really they can't mail them. They need to e-mail them or drop them off in writing for Monday.

Ms. Pratschner: That's a good point – with the holidays.

Chair Wesen: So Monday, November 27th, at 4:30 is when the written comments need to be in and you may e-mail them anytime. Any more questions, comments?

(silence)

Chair Wesen: So we do have a sign-up sheet here. Starting at the top, Liz –

Liz Seume: Seume.

Chair Wesen: Okay! And the lights will turn green when you start, yellow with a minute left, and red at the end.

Ms. Seume: Elizabeth Seume, S-e-u-m-e, and my address is 14694 Gibraltar Road. My husband and I are the Directors at Quaker Cove Retreat on Fidalgo Island and I'm the registered agent for the Quaker Cove properties, which are owned by the Puget Sound Area Friends Churches of Northwest Yearly Meeting. I'm also acting as the agent for all the other properties that are included in this proposal to rezone our 26 acres into SRT zoning.

Last fall we fundraised \$15,000 towards replacing a cabin whose roof was not structurally sound. In looking at the cost to repair versus replacing the cabin and the income the cabin generates, we decided it was better to replace the cabin with one that was 12 feet longer so we could include bathrooms and make it more accessible, and also maintaining proper supervision of two adults in a cabin of eight. So our standards for abuse prevention say that it's better to have two adults with a cabin of youth.

When we approached the County with our plans, we were told that under our zoning we couldn't build any new buildings unless they were residential, and we also couldn't extend the footprint of existing buildings. This was a surprise to us as small extensions had been given permits in the past and our zoning hadn't been mentioned. We expected to be able to maintain and grow our camp in the same way that similar organizations do. The County suggested rezoning because the current and historical use of our property had somehow been overlooked when the original zoning took place. Quaker Cove was first – was used for a camp first in 1930 when we purchased the property. And I don't know if this is working, but that's our first camp brochure that says "1930" on the bottom. It's a little difficult to read. And we have records like this from that date up to current times of camps throughout the years and other groups that have used the camp, as well as secular nonprofits and schools and other organizations. The property was purchased with the intention of using it for camps and

(sound of timer)

Ms. Seuma: – retreats, which matched this purpose of SRT zoning. And you can see in the 1930 dedication of our camp, which names it as a conference site and says it is for, among other things, “religious inspiration of our children, spiritual and social welfare of our young people for the preservation and strengthening of family ties, the guidance of our youth, the training of conscience, aggression against evil, the development of body, mind, and spirit.”

We are the only camp on Fidalgo Island and we are good stewards of our property, which is used to educate children and adults, provide an outdoor, hands-on experience of nature, and allow people to escape the busyness of modern life for the peacefulness and stillness found at Quaker Cove. We are currently allowed to operate as a camp, as our usage is grandfathered in, but our camp should have the right to maintain and grow in a healthy way, not just to be an exception.

Thank you for considering our proposal. I’ll also be submitting letters from our board members and the pastors of our churches that represent the actual owners of the camp –

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Ms. Seuma: – in support.

Commissioner Janicki: Thank you.

Chair Wesen: Thank you. Next we have Karl –

Ms. Seume: Seume.

Chair Wesen: Seume. And after that we have Derris (sic) Littlefield.

Karl Seume: So I’m Karl Seume, S-e-u-m-e, also at 14694 Gibraltar Road, Anacortes. My wife and I are the Directors at Quaker Cove Retreat on Fidalgo Island. My wife grew up attending Quaker Cove as her family were members of one of the owning churches, and through that connection we felt called to move to the camp and restore and improve it.

When we came to the camp two-and-a-half years ago we knew that it needed some major work to bring it up to its potential. We looked at the 11 cabins, three small maintenance sheds, dining hall, chapel, and central restroom building and got to work. In that time, along with fundraising for our own salary because the camp didn’t have funds to pay us, we have worked building by building to make cabins and facilities better so that more groups could rent the camp. We have repaired foundations, replaced siding, installed flooring, sheetrocked, painted, built new bunk beds, bought new mattresses, sewed curtains, created signage for the grounds, and much more.

In 2015, the year before we arrived, the camp had about 30 total volunteers. We have grown to over 300 volunteers in 2017, including local church members and several Navy squadrons from Whidbey Island who have done amazing work.

I’m also submitting a letter from Edwin Handley, the Wing 10 Command Chaplain at Whidbey Island Naval Air Station, in support of our rezoning as he could not be here today.

The next projects that are crucial to our success, extending our dining hall and replacing a cabin – which my wife mentioned – will require for Quaker Cove to rezone. We have several large

donations which we are – which are designated towards these projects, and we are excited to begin work on them. We are trying to grow as naturally and sustainably as we can without taking out any loans or debts, preserving historical structures and the spirit of the camp, while replacing or remodeling things that just don't meet current campers' needs.

We need to be able to arrange future cabin replacements –

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Mr. Seume: – and additions on our grounds so that we can create more pedestrian areas in the middle of the camp and more car traffic to other areas to make it safer for campers. We need to be rezoned to do this kind of work and master planning so that we can commit to changes that will preserve the nature and beauty of the land and increase camper safety, as well as making cabins more accessible to people with different needs.

Thank you for considering our proposal.

Chair Wesen: Thank you. Derris Littlefield.

Dennis Littlefield: Dennis.

Chair Wesen: Dennis? Okay, excuse me. And after that, Carol Ehlers.

Mr. Littlefield: My name is Dennis Littlefield, L-i-t-t-l-e-f-i-e-l-d. I'm the Executive Director at Camp Tillicum. My address is 15325 Northeast North Valley Road, Newberg, Oregon. For the past two years I've served as Chairman of the Board for Quaker Cove Ministries.

Every profession has a certain complexity and running a youth camp is no exception. My undergraduate and graduate degrees are in business administration with an emphasis on nonprofits. I've been an administrator at organizational youth camps since 1984 and it's been a privilege to be involved at Warm Beach Camp and Conference Center in Stanwood, Washington – not too far from here; Camp Tillicum in Newberg, Oregon; and Twin Rocks Friends Camp in Rockaway Beach, Oregon, down on the north Oregon coast. My expertise in camping involves being an accreditation visitor for at least one camp a year with American Camp Association. I'm a Professor of Camping Ministry at George Fox University. I've been a consultant with approximately 30 camps in the northwest and I just completed a 10-year position with the Health Department where we helped rewrite the rules – the statutes and the administrative rules for organized camps in Oregon.

Karl and Elizabeth Seuma are doing an outstanding job as camp Directors at Quaker Cove. It's been very exciting and rewarding to serve the last two years on the Quaker Cove board. The organization was underutilized for many years and we have made significant progress in staffing, facilities, grounds, and programming. The annual operating budget has grown from approximately 10,000 in 2014 to a projected 93,000 in 2017. In my experience, Quaker Cove is now positioned for success. Local Anacortes children have been coming to camp the last two years. Our goal is the success of the camp –

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Mr. Littlefield: – so that we can provide health, safety, and welfare for current and future campers. Our application to rezone the camp is indicative of the hope to be in an appropriate

zoning which reflects the current and historical use of the property, allowing us to update our facilities. Thank you.

Chair Wesen: Thank you. Carol Ehlers and then Retha McCutchen.

Carol Ehlers: Carol Ehlers, E-h-l-e-r-s, 3998 Wind Crest Lane, West Fidalgo Island. If any of you understand the reference to Sisyphus you can use it in this case. For 20 years I've been on the – off and on – I've been on the board of a Group A water system, forced to spend a lot of time and effort making sure that the water we got out of the ground was completely safe for those who used it. One time we were accused of polluting and we had to send it off to an Oregon lab so it wouldn't be treated for 183 chemicals. Everyone thinks of fecal coliform in water. They forget the chemicals.

Now back in 2007 Skagit County accepted code for aquifer – we have Aquifer Recharge Areas. That's .310. We have aquifer recharge areas where you are not supposed to accept applications for things like cesspools, industrial waste, radioactive materials, wood treatment chemicals, PCE – all kinds of – a whole list of dangerous chemicals which are to be accepted by this county from outside the county and injected into areas designated under .320. There is a map I could show you that designates the whole county with Category 1, which is protected from all these horrors. The County is correct. There has never been a map designated to show where Category 2 is. That includes the Samish River valley north of Field Road; South Fidalgo Island. Those areas you're going to protect –

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Ms. Ehlers: – includes it. There's a whole list of places. No one has ever been told that their area is vulnerable to these applications. There's been no notice. The application I got the other day is a critical areas application. It's concerned about wetlands and vegetation. There isn't a single reference to a well. I know from the experience of **Harkess** that SEPA does not pay any attention to the protection of an *individual's* well. It pays protection for two or more parties on a well. You've got legal protection for that, but not for an individual's well. In the '80s, there were lots of efforts made by the Department of Ecology to deal with hazardous waste. I've given you the RCW –

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Ms. Ehlers: – and the other that illustrate it. This is the document done by the Public Works Department. Planning has never paid attention to it. It's a couple of hundred pages and it essentially says you don't have landfills in Skagit County. The Public Works code, 12.18, designates where landfills can be and by and large you can't have them. What you have done all these 10 years since this was put in is pretend that injecting chemicals into the groundwater in areas where people have to use wells because there are no pipelines, that that has no impact whatsoever on the environment, on the people who live there, or any other part of the process.

Chair Wesen: Thank you, Carol. You're over three minutes.

Ms. Ehlers: Please include it. I'd be glad to help with the evidence I have.

Chair Wesen: Thank you. The next one is Mike Rauwolf after her.

Retha McCutchen: My name is Retha McCutchen, M-c-capital C-u-t-c-h-e-n, and I'm the Superintendent of Northwest Yearly Meeting at 200 North Meridian, Newberg, Oregon. Quaker Cove Camp is a part of Northwest Yearly Meeting, the denomination. The bylaws of Quaker Cove provide that in the event of dissolution or sale of the property the funds would go to Northwest Yearly Meeting and they would be held in trust for areas – churches in the Puget Sound area. I just want to assure you that Northwest Yearly Meeting has no long- or short-term plans that would include the sale of Quaker Cove Ministries.

Several years ago it came to the attention of the denomination that the camp was deteriorating. A task force of qualified individuals was appointed to visit the camp, evaluate the facilities, and to make recommendations. Next Liz and Karl Seuma became Directors of the property and Dennis Littlefield became Chairman of the Quaker Cove Board of Directors. Since that time, we have observed a visible improvement in the grounds and buildings. There has been an increase in camp usage and a marked increase in financial stability due to the increased camping rental and contributions. Northwest Yearly Meetings supports the vision and mission of Quaker Cove to continue to grow and improve facilities in order to provide safe and quality camping and retreat experiences in the future. While there have been significant improvements in the camp, the buildings are old and in poor condition. Several cabins do not have restrooms. The dining hall and kitchen is inadequate to meet current needs. In order to accomplish these goals the camp must repair or replace current buildings and build cabins for housing of campers and retreat facilities. Without a change in zoning, Quaker Cove will not be able to make the necessary repairs so that the camp –

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Ms. McCutchen: – can continue to serve those who desire to use the facilities. Limitations of the current zoning hamper the growth of Quaker Cove. In addition to denominational uses, Quaker Cove is used by the community living here for children and youth each summer. Local organizations rent the camp for retreats for children, youth, and adults, and Quaker Cove is the only Friends camp located to best serve our Washington constituency. We plan to provide camping here for many years to come so we support the rezoning of Quaker Cove.

Chair Wesen: Thank you. And next after Mike is Aly Brooks.

Mike Rauwolf: Hello. Thank you. My name is Michael Rauwolf, and it's R-a-u-w-o-l-f. My address is 2308 31st Street in Anacortes, Washington. I'm currently the lead pastor in Anacortes Christian Church. It's a church of about 250 people and we happen to be the church that Karl and Liz attend. There are no Quaker churches on Fidalgo Island so I suppose we might be the next best thing.

For the last two years in a row our church has coordinated a summer camp called "Amplify" for middle school students. 2016 was the first year that we had ever attempted to pull something like that off. It was hugely successful. In the initial planning stages we were considering various camps throughout the area like Orkila and many others, all of which require a fair bit of travel. At the time we did not even know if Quaker Cove was even functional. And literally the same week that we began talking about the possibility of doing a camp, Liz and Karl walked into our church doors for the first time. The benefits of using Quaker Cove for the camp were numerous, aside from the fact that it's a beautiful spot and just what a treasure to have right there on the island. Having the camp close by allowed us to reach out to students who might not have otherwise attended because at their age group their parents may have been unwilling to send them off to a long distance. It also allowed our church members to volunteer and kind of rally around this

place in a totally unprecedented way because it was so close to home. Most camps have a fully-staffed program. You send people off and they take care of the rest. We were able to get well over, I think, 70 people involved with putting this camp on, which really brought people together in a huge way, both within our community and then also in the greater community as we were able to reach out to students and their families who attended the camp.

(sound of timer)

Mr. Rauwolf: The result has been a deepened love for this place, and we have a lot of people in the church who continue to go out and do volunteer work to help spruce the place up. It has a lot of potential and, as you've heard, it has a lot of needs. And when you're a cabin counselor waking up multiple times in the middle of the night because a student has to use the restroom and you have to walk them over to the restroom facility in the dark, you start to see the benefits and the needs. The meeting hall – the dining hall – definitely maxes out at about 30 people, and I don't think anything there is newer in terms of structure than the '50s or something like that. And so there's definitely a need and a huge potential there.

Liz and Karl are passionate about teaching kids about taking care of God's creation as they see it. And they have a garden that they teach them how to garden and all these neat things, which tells me that I believe it would be a –

(sound of timer)

Mr. Rauwolf: – valuable stewardship of the place that they're in and not just a place people use. So I hope you'll consider it. Yeah.

Chair Wesen: Thank you. Aly and then Jay and Linda Lew?

Voice from the audience: Lewis.

Chair Wesen: Lewis? Okay.

Aly Brooks: I'm Aly Brooks, B-r-o-o-k-s, the Quaker Cove intern at 14694 Gibraltar Road, Anacortes. For three summers prior I worked at Camp Tillicum in Newberg, Oregon. First I was a camp counselor and later as a summer camp office manager. I staffed Quaker Cove's first year of day camp programming in 2016 and last summer I served as the day camp Director. At Quaker Cove, I assist with programming, event planning, administration, housekeeping, and food service during our day camp program. Kids from the area spend the day outside. They play on the beach and in the forest. They learn about gardens, local plants, and animals. Day camp offers time for young campers going into grades first through six to gain confidence by learning skills, and fosters community with other kids from nearby areas or social circles they may not have otherwise encountered.

Camp gives people a place apart from their daily life for an intentional time of rest and rejuvenation. Guests and volunteers build memories there that form and sustain lifelong bonds. Locals find a place nearby that feels remote enough to get away, while guests from further locations enjoy exploring the wider Skagit Valley area. I've seen tremendous community involvement and enthusiasm surrounding the camp, from volunteering to attendance at programs and financial giving to support the camp.

The camp functions currently, but as a resident staff member I can affirm that significant progress could be made to enhance the functionality and quality of Quaker Cove. The Board and the camp Directors, the Seumas, are faithful to continue the mission to which the grounds were dedicated originally. They are capable of carrying it out in a responsible way with careful stewardship of the resources and land. Therefore, I support the rezoning, which will allow Quaker Cove to reach its full potential. Thank you.

Chair Wesen: Thank you. Jay and Linda Lewis, and then Susan and Carl – yeah. Go ahead, Jay.

Jay Lewis: My name is Jay Lewis, L-e-w-i-s. My wife Linda and I live at 15178 Gibraltar Road in Anacortes. We are very close neighbors of the Seumas and have known them ever since they began working at Quaker Cove. We are also Directors of the Amplify Camp that has been spoken about earlier. We have been doing that for three years now and our enthusiasm for that camp is obvious, I think, because of the support from Anacortes Christian Church here today.

But we are most interested in the safety and health of the kids that come to Amplify. They are middle schoolers and we have enjoyed very much working with them, but we feel that the proposal before you for changing the requirements for Quaker Cove to operate will be a big help in the future.

Linda Lewis: And I would just like to say also as neighbors, with the increase of activity at the camp I haven't noticed any negative effect in terms of our property. And also my – I am a physical therapist, and since I help out at the camp I hope with the new changes they will be able to be more friendly for people with disabilities. Right now it's very difficult and we're starting to get children of interest with disabilities as well as older adults that may have difficulty getting around, which the new bathrooms and stuff would be a huge improvement. So we support the amendments to the Quaker Cove rezoning.

Mr. Lewis: Thank you.

Chair Wesen: Thank you. So Susan and Carl from – in Bow. Earl? Susan and *Earl*? Then after that is Patrick Mooney.

Earl Giessen: I'll speak up so everybody can hear me. My wife and I attended Quaker Cove for a long time. We had a small ministry there. It got shut down by the people in Oregon some time ago prior to Dean's time at the camp. We go clear back to when Lloyd Hedburg was the caretaker at the Cove. He did everything. He gave his life's fortune to that camp. It was wonderful. Following him was Dean Jackson and he was a chemist at the Texaco Refinery. I also worked at the Texaco Refinery and I had many, many, many times when I overlooked the camp around the holidays when things like fireworks were going off. I am a forty-year fireman and I enjoyed my time there to protect the camp. It still needs protection. Fireworks are not a funny thing. They cause forest fires and personal injuries.

And anyway, that's what that's about. I'm quite retired right now but I spent a lot of time at Quaker Cove and it was wonderful.

Susan Giessen: Okay, mine'll be short and sweet. But we had a really wonderful time with a group of kids that came in and they were all so enthusiastic because they really didn't have that much contact with the natural sort of things that are there at Quaker Cove. And they just got so excited and it was –

(sound of timer)

Ms. Giessen: – exciting for us to be with them. And they had God on their side and they were just absolutely doing the most wonderful things, and then all of a sudden they got out in this great big field and they all sat down and they grabbed hands and they started to pray to God, thanking God for letting them come because, Oh, this is so beautiful and we really miss something like this. And so later on we went on up and the kids went up to the very edge of the cliff and they were just oohing and aahing and just so excited about the beauty of the cove. And then this couple standing there said, They're so disciplined! Where are those kids from? And I said, They're from all over the world and they're just so excited about being here. And at Quaker Cove they have a place where you go up under the road and as you go through it a lot of people like to scream because, whooh boy, what a sound it is when you're there! But all I can say is that with the young folk in this world today, they really need a place to go and get away from the ideology and all of the other fast-going things that are happening in the world. And when those kids were there at the cove you just could not believe the beauty on their faces. And more than anything else, I just really enjoyed it, and it was fun watching the good Lord flowing through all those kids.

Chair Wesen: Thank you. Patrick Mooney, and then Art Fournier.

Patrick Mooney: Patrick Mooney, 1918 41st Street, Anacortes. I am here in support of the rezoning of the lands for Quaker Cove. I am one of the volunteers that has helped with the kids. I have a great love of the outdoors and I enjoy canoeing, and one of the things that I do for that camp is I bring a bunch of canoes and one afternoon the kids come down to the beachfront and we talk about safety, and then we go out there and it's like herding cats in water. But it's great fun and these kids, like has just been stated, are blessed beyond measure with the resources that are at Quaker Cove. And I would just love to see it to continue to be a viable and sustainable camp for the youth. To have something like this on Fidalgo Island is just immense. It's a real rich thing. And I – well, I just want to go on record as stating as one of the volunteers from our church – I go to Mike's church, too – that there was a huge amount of people that invested, just giving of their time and what they can to help make this thing go, and we would just appreciate the support of a zoning change. Thank you.

Chair Wesen: Thank you. So, Art? And next is Lynn Keating.

Art Fournier: Hello. Do you hear me?

Chair Wesen: Yeah.

Mr. Fournier: Okay. My name is Art Fournier. My – it's F-o-u-r-n-i-e-r. My residence is adjacent to the Quaker Cove. I've been – I've lived at this address for the last 30 years. I made friends with the old Quakers. Okay, what else? What else do I need? I give you my address. It's 14785 Gibraltar Road, Anacortes.

This is a very short – this is the tip of the iceberg. By reading the Quaker Cove rezone application I noticed the proposed rezone for Small Scale Recreation and Tourist is in direct opposition to the peaceful, rural character of our neighborhood. The rezone at Quaker Cove Retreat would have detrimental effects on South Fidalgo Island. In addition, the proposed zoning is in conflict with the original intent of the Quaker Cove dedication established on the original sign displayed until it was removed in the spring of 2016. The original sign reads

“Quaker Cove Retreat.” The original dedication states clearly that the use for the Quaker Cove Retreat will be a conference site for prayer and song for the preservation of family ties. There is no written implication other than establishing a place for worship. That is all. Thank you.

Chair Wesen: Thank you. Lynn Keating and then Steve McLean.

Lynn Keating: Hi. Lynn Keating, K-e-a-t-i-n-g, 14715 Gibraltar Road. So my house, my driveway is directly across the street from Quaker Cove parking lot and office. I have two sides of my property that border with Quaker Cove and my deck faces directly onto their beachfront property. My grandparents bought this home and lived in it starting in 1966, so I have 51 years – my family has 51 years of history living across the street, and the relationship between our family and Quaker Cove has always been friendly. I remember as a kid walking on the trails and even through the tunnel, which was really cool for a four-year-old. One of the border lines is unclear, but whenever a tree needed to be chopped or something they would just discuss it – you know, my grandpa and the caretaker – and take care of it. I moved into the home three years ago, living there fulltime. And Liz and Karl moved in about a year-and-a-half later and they were immediately invested in Quaker Cove, improving Quaker Cove and being part of the neighborhood. We immediately saw an increase in the number of families and groups that were using Quaker Cove and it made the neighborhood feel friendlier, safer. Cars slow down now, you know, if they see people along the road. And despite there being more visitors there’s less trash that I notice around. Also as a result of Liz and Karl’s work, they’ve welcomed us onto their land and so I’ve met many of the campers that go there. I’ve even been invited to dinner by a couple. I’ve stayed in one of their cabins. I’ve done a little bit of volunteering. I’ve attended events like –

(sound of timer)

Ms. Keating: – campfire, open house, dessert banquet, and I’ve benefitted from their garden. So my understanding is their goal is to rezone so that they can support the camp and allow it to continue. And maybe there’s some concern that they’re going to sell – rezone to sell it – but I know that Liz and Karl are dedicated to their mission of improving Quaker Cove and helping people through that. They specifically came here from Germany. They moved here with two toddlers and an infant in order to work at Quaker Cove, and since then they’ve (has) fund raisers, recruited volunteers, improved the facilities. They’ve just made it a nice place to gather. I always feel welcome at Quaker Cove events and at the Seuma’s house. The land to me feels spiritual and I really believe that it’s always going to be used for spiritual purposes. So I hope that you will consider and allow the rezoning to proceed.

(sound of timer)

Ms. Keating: If not, they may have to sell and I think that would be sad for many people. Thank you.

Chair Wesen: Thank you. Steve McLean? And then Earl Giessen next.

Steve McLean: My name is Steve McLean. I live at 15109 North Dewey Beach Drive. I am in favor of the rezone for a very selfish reason. I like to see activities succeed that give positive experience to youth and families. My family lived in Anacortes since the ‘70s, with a short break. My kids went to Fidalgo School, which is about three miles north of the Quaker Cove. I presently live about three miles west of Quaker Cove.

I'd like to give you a couple reasons why I support their rezoning and why I think it's appropriate.

Health and safety: When you have a facility, updates, modernization, and improvements are essential for its success. Without the ability to do that, the facility cannot be successful.

The value of youth camp cannot be overstated. No one can make a successful argument against this value of youth camps. This is a unique and irreplaceable piece of property that, as mentioned earlier, is the only camp in Fidalgo Island. It's under very good stewardship. The Quakers have owned it since the '30s. That gives me some feeling that they are going to be around for a while and they're going to continue to love this property.

As a volunteer, I've seen firsthand many physical improvements made to this camp in the last few years. I'm impressed. I've seen firsthand the positive impact the camp has had on our church youth.

(sound of timer)

Mr. McLean: I'm impressed. I've seen the increase firsthand in the support – the community support – to Quaker Cove in the forms of volunteer labor, materials, and services donated, and I'm impressed. This is a success story that's starting to blossom again. Many neighbors want to be part of it and I invite you to approve the zoning and be part of it also. Thank you.

Chair Wesen: Thank you. Earl Giessen.

Commissioner Janicki: I think he already spoke.

Mr. Giessen: I already spoke. I'll speak again!

Chair Wesen: You already did? Okay. Jim Anderson? Next is Bob Carmichael.

Jim Anderson: My name is Jim Anderson. I live at 20780 Kelleher Road. I'm here to comment on the Avalon project.

I think Planning has rejected the docketing of this project and I think that's the right decision here and that the fully contained community really needs to be studied further as a separate issue. To go forward as a combined project is not fair to the citizens of the county and it's really an unknown entity in the county. I've asked a lot of people in the last week or two, What's a fully contained community? And nobody knows. Nobody knows what it is. So we need to study that issue, and I hope it'd become better known and better understood by the citizens of this county by moving forward as the Planning suggests.

The applicants have reached out to policy makers and business owners, but they've kept it out of the reach of the citizens in this county. This development is outsized for the Skagit County. It's 1,244 acres, 8,500 homes. In comparison, the population of Burlington is about 8,768, so it's way out of scale. It's been knocking on this door since 2015. It's time that we move forward in a better direction. Thank you.

Chair Wesen: Thank you. After Bob is Ron Hess.

Commissioner Dahlstedt: Hass.

Chair Wesen: Hass.

Bob Carmichael: Bob Carmichael on behalf of Avalon. I'd like to remind the Commissioners of the report that was done by ECONorthwest on the housing inventory in August of this year. Some of the findings from that report:

There's a tight housing market of for-sale homes in the county.

Secondly, homes are currently often selling above their asking price.

There's a lack of homes affordable to younger and first-time buyers.

There's a lack of easily developable sites within the county's urban growth area.

And according to a news article, the county is on track this decade to produce the fewest new housing units than any other decade in the past 40 years.

These are more or less the realities that everyone's living with in Skagit County and it's going to become more and more of a crisis unless something's done about it. We are asking and only asking for consideration. As you know, this is a proposal to study and consider the issue. It's not asking for approval of the project. That's farther down the line – probably many years down the line. We would like to get started.

What are some of the benefits? Housing availability and housing prices. Avalon will have to have an affordable housing component. That's necessary and mandated under the law. More housing is going to equal more supply, which will tamp down prices and make a difference for people in the community. Another benefit is going to be to the economy. Obviously it will help the building and construction industry and give people a shot in the arm. Second, it will attract and allow you to be more competitive in attracting new businesses and expanding existing businesses. Businesses need housing for employees and if you want to be competitive in Skagit County –

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Mr. Carmichael: – why not look at this? Am I out of time already?

Chair Wesen: One more minute.

Mr. Carmichael: One more minute. Why not look at this? That's all we're asking. As to the thought about let's look at what a new fully contained community criteria should be, that's part of our proposal. We have put in our proposal as a beginning point. Let's look at the development regulations. We proposed new development regulations for fully contained communities in Skagit County. We support going forward with that. I would caution you against putting in docketing criteria. You want to maintain flexibility as elected officials. I love planners. They're great. But *you* make the decisions. The planners don't. You have criteria typically for quasi-judicial processes when you have to make a decision on a legal basis. Docketing is your legislative decision-making. Don't give it up lightly. Don't cede –

(sound of timer)

Mr. Carmichael: – your authority away. I would be careful on docketing criteria. Thank you very much.

Chair Wesen: Thank you. Ron? And –

Ron Hass: I'm Ron – excuse me, Ron Hass, H-a-double s. I reside at 9100 Marshall Road in Bow. Here to kind of cover two things a little bit. We started this project back in 2006. It got derailed by the recession but it's been an ongoing thing and I think all of you are aware of the uniqueness of the property. It's served by water, sewer. It's near I-5. Out of the floodplain. Out of the ag land. Located on resource land that has already been tapped out, and that being the sand and gravel and timber. It's a unique opportunity that if the county has a need for housing it's one area that they should look. And before they can look there, they have to look at the process to get there.

And this process, you know, I've been following it, I know, for 10 or 12 years. We started with – obviously, Mike Crawford was our initiator – we started with Gary Christensen, who was the head of the Planning Department. And those are the two that encouraged us to move forward initially. But the process, you know, I'm going through that you have set up through the Cities. You end up with a situation where you have the Mayors of these Cities determining the course of the county. So you've got people that are elected – say you take a smaller city. We'll take Hamilton – 600 citizens. They elect their mayor to represent their interests, yet they have a deciding vote that actually influences the ability for you, as Commissioners, to service the 120,000 people that you're elected to represent in the county. And it's frustrating from our standpoint that the way this thing is funneled where – I just – I would encourage the Commissioners – this is a problem that you'll have to solve for the county. This is not one that you can ask the Mayors in these remote cities to take the flak. They're not elected to represent those views. They don't share any interests. They don't share any outcome. You're the ones that have to secure housing so that we can secure employment so that our kids can –

(sound of timer)

Mr. Hass: – stay here, as opposed to being farmed out to Snohomish County, King County, Whatcom County, Pierce County – all the counties around us that are growing while we sit idle. We're all aware of it. We're all aware of it. We're all aware that we are kind of stuck in the mud, yet I just would try to encourage you three to look at it and be reasonable with it and see where – I noticed you – in the paper today, there were two things I noticed. We sent two mayors to Washington, D.C. to protect jobs in the boat building industry in Anacortes. I'm all for that. The other thing I noticed is that you have a housing analyst that you're going to put on staff. I'm all for that – a financial analyst to put on staff to look into the next 5, 10, 20 years forward. That's what we need. And we've been at this process for quite some time. And Bob is one of the property owners over here. Look at the two of us. We're not getting any younger, are we, ___? And I would encourage you to act now, not continue to kick this thing –

(sound of timer)

Mr. Hass: – down the road. Thank you for your time. I appreciate it.

Chair Wesen: Thank you. That's all who signed up that I have. There may be some more in the back. Does anybody else want to speak on any issue? Go ahead and go to the mic. We've got another 45 minutes here so –

Commissioner Dahlstedt: But you don't get it all!

Commissioner Janicki: You're not giving him –

Chair Wesen: You don't get them all, no. You only get three minutes at a time.

Oscar Lagerlund: My name is Oscar Lagerlund, and Ken gets a big kick out of this: I live on 19501 Dahlstedt Road, Burlington. I'm a ditching and drainage commissioner. That's about as low as you can get. I'm sure been on a lot of boards – school boards and everything else – and I appreciate the testimony I heard on the rezone. I served on a bible camp board too.

But my concern here today is drainage. And we had the Bayview project, which was to be an enclosed town and everything, and we prepared for that by enlarging the Joe Leary Slough, and the County spent a lot of money on that. And right below Avalon – I live right – I've been there – I walked around on that hill since I was old enough to walk. I'm not going to tell you how old I am. But anyway, that water runs downhill, and I was on the Planning Commission back in the '80s and we had a Canadian group that was developing along I-5 from Bow Hill, and the lawyer kept going and kept going and kept going and finally after we got to ask questions after we closed the public hearing I said, What's your expertise on hydrology? He says, I don't have any. I says, Fine, you answered my question. He didn't want to be quiet. So the Chairman said, You've answered his question. So the thing of it was water runs downhill, so if you're going to put in something like this you've got to allow for it because we've got Thomas Creek coming through, which has been re-dug. It used to go out through the valley and it's a ditch now, whether you want to call it that or not – a waterway. It's got all the water it can handle because we drain it all the way from Sedro-Woolley clear out to the Samish River. So my –

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Mr. Lagerlund: – big fear – my big fear was really exaggerated ___ just sitting here because I picked up in the whole procedure here, and I don't know __. It says the "County-initiated proposals" and on the top one it says "C-1." This is page 26. And it says "Delete Comprehensive Plan Policy 4A-5.6. Remove policy that states 'Drainage plans for minimizing impacts of development shall be circulated to the affected Drainage District for comment prior to issuance of permits by Public Works.'" What's that tell you? Where did it come from? It makes me dang nervous about the honesty of government. And so that proposal – who initiated it? Who put it in? I don't know. But to me, for us not to be notified of proposals and subjects coming up, I would say that shoots down the whole thing for me. I wouldn't docket this son of a gun for nobody. Thank you.

Chair Wesen: Thank you. Next?

Ron Extract: Hi, my name is Ron Extract, E-x-t-r-a-c-t. I live at 231 South Anacortes Street in Burlington, and I moved to Skagit – to the Skagit Valley, along with my partner Amber Watts, in August of last year to start Garden Path Fermentation, which is a project that incorporates a brewery/winery/cidery/meadery. You can make all sorts of fermented beverages using exclusively local products including yeast that we've captured from the air and from flowers and plants around the valley.

We came to this region because of all the abundant agricultural resources that are available here to us and because of that unique availability of those resources. And when we came here we looked at properties for our brewery. And the reason that I want to speak to you is in favor of

the proposal for the allowance of food on agricultural land. This is something that we struggled with when we came here. We were looking at various properties for our site and we had looked at a property that was zoned Ag-NRL. We had a pre-development meeting on that property, and what we were told was that we could open a tasting room as long as it wasn't a tavern and that we could serve food as long as people didn't have to sit down to eat it. And those restrictions struck us as somewhat arbitrary.

There is a definition in the County code already for "agricultural accessory use," which is allowed on ag land, and that definition includes activities that promote tourism and agriculture within the county. And what's going to promote tourism and agriculture in the county more than serving locally grown food at places where it's grown? This is what we came here to do. We came here to be able to bring people to places where they could see their food being grown, where they could eat things that are actually growing right around them. And it makes sense to us that this is something that should certainly be allowed on agricultural land. And what's more is that we feel that it's something that is already allowed under the existing code with that definition of "agricultural accessory use" that includes activities promoting tourism and local agriculture. We are currently building out at the Port of Skagit at an industrial property that we are leasing from the Port of Skagit, but it's still our long-term ambition to find some agricultural land where we can create –

(sound of timer)

Mr. Extract: – a destination brewery/winery/meadery/cidery where we can serve products made from local ingredients, and we want that to be not just alcoholic beverages but also food. We want to be able to use local resources to be able to present something that's absolutely unique that will draw people to this county from Seattle, from Vancouver, from New York, from Tokyo, from all over the world. We came from a place in Texas where we built something like that. Skagit Valley is a much better place to be able to grow agricultural ingredients than central Texas. We have a lot more food resources here. We want to be able to show the world what we've got. Thank you.

Chair Wesen: Thank you. Is there anybody else who'd like to comment?

Bill Sygitowicz: Hi, I'm Bill Sygitowicz. That's S-y-g-i-t-o-w-i-c-z. Regarding the Avalon, Mr. Lagerlund talked about stormwater. That's a very, very big result of a large – or I should say a very big factor as it – during a large residential construction project, stormwater is huge. I've initiated a couple conversations with the Skagitonians to Preserve Farmland, specifically Allen Rozema. His initial reaction was residential development and farmland are kind of like oil and water. They're not necessarily good for one another. But in that discussion (he) determined that only through a docketing process can that group take a look at how to perhaps encompass stormwater into drainage districts and irrigation. It can't happen in a three-minute conversation like this. That's why we request that this application be docketed. Thank you.

Chair Wesen: Thank you. Is there anybody else?

Allen Rozema: Allen Rozema, Executive Director of Skagitonians to Preserve Farmland, 414A Snoqualmie Street, Mount Vernon. It's true we had a conversation. It's not true that we are supporting docketing it at this time. Thank you.

Chair Wesen: Anybody else want to comment?

(silence)

Chair Wesen: Commissioners, do you have any comments?

(silence)

Chair Wesen: Staff, anything else?

(silence)

Chair Wesen: Just a reminder to everybody: Written comments must be received at the Planning Department here by Monday, the 27th, at 4:30. The e-mails can be sent in by that time too. That's the closing date – 4:30 on the 27th on Monday. And the Commissioners will make a decision on what will be docketed at 9:30 in the morning on December 19th. Anything else?

(silence)

Chair Wesen: So with that, thank you very much for coming in. We appreciate all your time (gavel).