

**Skagit County Planning Commission
Public Hearings: 2022 Docket; CFP Update
November 8, 2022**

Planning

Commissioners:

**Kathy Mitchell
Mark Knutzen
Vince Henley
Amy Hughes
Tim Raschko, Chair
Joe Woodmansee (absent)
Tammy Candler, Vice Chair
Martha Rose
Jen Hutchison**

Staff:

**Hal Hart, Planning Director
Sarah Ruether, Long Range Planning Manager
Jenn Rogers, Long Range Planner**

**Public
Hearing**

Commenters:

**Michael Brown, Guemes Island Planning Advisory Committee (C22-3)
John Ravnik, Proponents' Engineer (LR22-01)
Darylyn Phraner (LR22-01)
Steve Orsini (C22-3)
Val Mullen (C22-1)
Margaret Carol Lee (C22-1)
Susan Bergeson (C22-1)
Todd Bergeson (C22-1)
Jeff Lee (C22-1)
Raymond McCord (C22-1)
Connie Miller (C22-1)
Linnea McCord (C22-1)
Brian Lipscomb (C22-1)
Allen Bush (C22-3)
Suzanne Rohner (C22-1)
Mark Madden (C22-3)
Judy Billings (C22-1)
Ellen Bynum, Friends of Skagit County (LR22-01)
Kay Hall Friedrichs (LR22-01)
Ellen Gray (LR22-01)
Jaye Stover (LR22-01)**

Chair Tim Raschko: (gavel) Good evening, everybody, and welcome to the November 8th, 2022, meeting of the Skagit County Planning Commission. We'll start with our roll call. It appears everybody is here except Commissioner Woodmansee. Could it be noted, please, that Commissioner Woodmansee is absent? Is the mic on? Can you hear that?

(negative response from several people)

Jenn Rogers: Commissioners, the mics are on. They're just for online so that's why they're not – so you'll have to speak up.

Chair Raschko: All right. Thank you. I'm going to entertain a motion to approve the minutes of our last meeting.

Commissioner Vince Henley: I move to approve the minutes.

Commissioner Jen Hutchison: Second.

Chair Raschko: It's been moved and seconded to approve the minutes. Is there discussion?

(silence)

Chair Raschko: All right. If not, all those in favor, say "aye."

Multiple Commissioners: Aye.

Chair Raschko: Those opposed?

(silence)

Chair Raschko: No abstentions? Okay, thank you. So the minutes are approved, and we'll switch now to a Public Hearing on Skagit County's 2022 Docket of proposed policy, code, and map amendments.

The purpose of this hearing is to receive testimony on Skagit County's 2022 docket of proposed policy, code, and map amendments. The order of the hearing as is shown in the Notice of Availability. Actually that's a little bit awkward. We haven't got the sign-up sheet separated by what amendment is wished to be spoken of. So rather than do that, what we're going to do tonight is start with a staff report covering the entire docket, then we will allow those people who are proponents of the amendments to speak if they wish. And then as a third little thing we have one gentleman tonight who has to catch a ferry and has asked if he can speak first, so we will do that. Okay? But everybody will have an opportunity to speak unless the hearing goes beyond ten o'clock tonight. And if so, then we will postpone the rest of the hearing for a later time.

There is a sign-up sheet in the back still for those who wish to speak. You can still sign up. Those who have not signed in ahead of time will still be given the opportunity to speak following those who have signed in. Each person will have three minutes. We ask you to respect that. There will be people who will reach the end of their three minutes and wish to continue but will stop in spirit of the rules, and it's not fair to let a subsequent speaker carry on in that time to those people who have cooperated. So I would ask everybody's cooperation in that regard.

Are there people who still can't hear?

(several people in the audience respond in the negative)

Vice Chair Tammy Candler: There are six seats available in the front. We'd invite people to use them if they can't hear, as well.

Chair Raschko: All right. I'm going to go back and repeat a few things then. We are going to start with a staff report on the docket. After that we'll entertain any proponents of any docket items who wish to address the Commission. And then we will have a gentleman who has to catch a ferry go first and then we will go in the order that people signed up. Can you hear that?

(positive responses from the audience)

Chair Raschko: All right. Great. The other thing I'm going to repeat is that everybody has three minutes. And there will be people who, after their three minutes is up, will not be finished, but in the spirit of cooperation, will stop speaking. It is not fair to let a subsequent person go on after their three minutes because they haven't finished if others have refrained to do so. So we ask everybody's cooperation in that regard. Thank you in advance.

All right. Please go ahead with your presentation. Speak loudly!

Ms. Rogers: Thank you, Chair Raschko, and thank you to the Planning Commissioners. My name is Jenn Rogers. I'm a long range planner with Skagit County Planning and Development Services. And like Chair Raschko mentioned, we are here to host a public hearing on the petitions here tonight.

So first to review the process just a bit first: So the Board of County Commissioners created the docket of petitions in June of this year. Then staff created a staff report with recommendations on each petition for the Planning Commission. We performed a SEPA review on the petitions and we noticed a public comment period for the public.

So the Planning Commission tonight will take public testimony and review the comments that have been submitted either by email or by mail. At the next work session on November 22nd, the Planning Commission will review those public comments submitted and hear from staff any responses to those comments. During the first Planning Commission hearing in December, on December 13th, the Planning Commission will deliberate on recommendations for each petition to the Board of County Commissioners. Those recommendations will be passed to the Board in the winter, so probably January or February the Board will review those recommendations and formally adopt or decline to adopt each of the petitions in February or March. Those dates have not been set yet but we will announce them as they are scheduled.

So additional material the public can review include the petitioner applications, our staff reports and other memos that we have submitted previously, the Notice of Availability for public comment, and the SEPA designation, as well as public comments that are submitted will be posted online by this Friday. And all of those materials can be found on our project website at the URL on the screen, which is skagitcounty.net/2022cpa.

I mentioned previously the upcoming schedule, but the Planning Commission will review a supplementary report from staff on November 22nd. They will deliberate on December 13th and we are anticipating the Board to review those recommendations in January and February of next year.

So the public comment period is currently open for the docket and will close this Thursday, November 10th, at 4:30 p.m. There are three options for you to provide public comment. You may mail a letter to 1800 Continental Place with your full name and address. You may email us at pdcomments@co.skagit.wa.us. And you can provide verbal testimony during tonight's hearing.

As for any comments that are submitted, written or if you present tonight, please be sure to state your full name and address and the petition that you wish to comment on.

So the petitions that we will be taking comment on are up on the screen. Like Chair Raschko mentioned, what we will do is we will first have the gentleman who has a ferry to catch to provide testimony first, and then we will go to the proponent for LR22-01, the Small Scale Recreation and Tourism Rezone, and then we will go in order of those who have signed in on the sheet in the back. Once we have gotten through the sign-in sheet, we will open up comments from folks who are online over Zoom, so we will announce when we move over to Zoom. It does take a few minutes for our system to switch over, so when we call on you to speak from Zoom just give us a moment and make sure that we can hear you before speaking.

Thank you, Chair Raschko.

Chair Raschko: Thank *you*. Okay, we'll begin then. I understand there is a Mr. Ravnik to speak on behalf of Bertelsen.

Unidentified Voice: What?

Chair Raschko: Ravnik.

Ms. Rogers: Chair, we'll have Michael go first so he can catch his ferry.

Chair Raschko: All right.

Michael Brown: Thank you, Chair, for giving me that opportunity to catch a ferry. It's been a long day. My name is Michael Brown, 4366 Clark Point Road on Guemes Island. I am the chair of the Guemes Island Planning Advisory Committee. We are the committee that has been authorized by the County to speak on behalf of Guemes Island concerning our subarea plan and making sure it's monitored and implemented as written. I'd like to read our board statement, if you will. This is concerning the Guemes Island Overlay, which I believe is number 3 right there on your county proposals.

Based on the Guemes Island Subarea Plan approved in 2011 and the Guemes Island Overlay, approved in 2016 in the Skagit County Code, the Board requests that the current setbacks be maintained and the staff proposal of reduction be denied. Contrary to the claims of one island resident, the overlay is not intended to limit individual property owners' ability to build or remodel a house. Nor was the Subarea Plan the product of a small, elitist minority of Guemes residents. The overarching thrust of the Guemes Island Subarea Plan, which took many years to draft and very substantial input from the island community, was the need/imperative to preserve rural character. As we know, Guemes Island is not like the other areas of the county in that the vast majority of its residents depend on a sole source aquifer for their only source of potable ground water, and on a ferry to get to their properties from the rest of Skagit County. These realities of life make smart development a priority. The county agreed when it adopted the building overlay that rural character is best maintained when scope and scale of buildings on substandard lots are considered when development occurs. It was good policy then and it's good policy now. We ask you to maintain the current building overlay on Guemes Island. Thank you.

Chair Raschko: Thank you. Mr. Ravnik? And after Mr. Ravnik, we will have Darylyn Phraner. And if you would kindly wait to the side, and then each time we'll have the next person announced, too, and if they would wait to the side we can move more quickly. Thank you.

John Ravnik: Jenn, do you have video on? Can I –

Ms. Rogers: (inaudible)

Mr. Ravnik: Thank you, sir. Good evening. My name is John Ravnik, with Ravnik and Associates, representing the Bertelsen family for their petition LR22-01, which involves a rezoning of approximately 69 acres on Starbird Road from Rural Reserve to Small Scale Recreation and Tourism. Because we have quite a few new members here tonight that may not be privy to what's going on, we've got approximately 37 acres in the southerly red area south of Starbird Road and approximately 32 acres north of Starbird Road. At the present time there is a winery operating on the southerly side of Starbird Road and there is a building that exists on the north side of Starbird Road which has been permitted to be retrofitted for a brewery. Those are the two activities that are occurring right now. Both of those activities are served by state-approved water wells and the applicant clearly understands that the absolute first step in this proposal is to get consent for the uses. Second step is to pursue coordination with Skagit PUD to provide public water for any further activities that they may have on the property. The properties are in the PUD service area. PUD does not have water lines there but they are located in the service area, if that makes any difference to somebody.

And at this location, the red lines represent PUD. North is up and those red lines are future water lines. So you can see down in the bottom lefthand corner where the sites are located on the north and south side of Starbird Road for that. Out in this area there are no natural resource lands in the immediate vicinity or surrounding. There are natural resource lands, as represented here, that are approximately 0.9 miles to the northeast and approximately 1.3 miles to the east. As a comparison to how far is 0.9 miles, if you go out to the intersection of College Way and Continental Place and go west on College Way all the way to Freeway Drive, that's only 0.8 miles. So there is no natural resource land that is in the area that would have any negative influence upon this activity.

There's been some concerns expressed about these being agriculturally-supported soils, and I've previously presented information going back into the 1930s about the limited capacity to grow anything out there shy of pasture grass. A couple attempts of corn have been there, but not really fruitful at all. The only thing that actually works well in the area is the fact that wine grapes – all right? – do enjoy a rocky soil, and that's what they have with the south side of Starbird Road. But this activity will not be replacing, displacing, or obstructing any type of agricultural uses.

There's a concern about a stream nearby. There is no streams on (or) adjacent to the project area. Fisher Creek is located approximately a quarter-of-a-mile further north in this project. So, again, there will not be any influence on that stream.

The wine club members have been contacted and there's very strong support for these additional amenities that provide services to family, friends, guests, tourists, overnight campers, whatever the case may be.

The first goal here, however, is to get the consent from Skagit County, support from the community, so that the Rural Reserve can be transferred to the Small Scale Recreation and

Tourism. Second task will be to contact PUD and to work with them in getting water lines extended to serve this area.

I'll keep it short and that's all I have.

Chair Raschko: Great. Thank you very much.

Mr. Ravnik: Yes, sir.

Chair Raschko: Next we have Darylyn Phraner, followed by Ben Friedrichs.

Darylyn Phraner: Hi, I'm Darylyn Phraner. I am representing my parents, Al and Margaret McReynolds who live at 23594 Forest Hills Lane. We have been out in that area and neighbors of the Bertelsens – our property's right here – since 1975. We fully support the winery's expansion. We think that this is good for our area. We know that you can't grow anything out there so no agro going on. We think that this will be good for Skagit County. We've seen the winery grow and the interest in this kind of hybrid agro-tourism, I'm van-lifing it up the freeway and I want to stop somewhere and check out local things. I think that'll be great. I think their proposed store that's going to sell local things as well as their wine is wonderful. I think this could only be good for Skagit County. And they've always been good neighbors in the past and we believe that that will be continued going forward. Thank you.

Chair Raschko: Thank you. Ben Friedrichs?

Ben Friedrichs: (inaudible)

Chair Raschko: All right. Mary – excuse me – Kay Hall Friedrichs.

Kay Hall Friedrichs: I'll yield my time.

Chair Raschko: I apologize if I make mistakes on some names, but I think we have Chuck Manning. Is that it? After Chuck Manning will be Steve Orsini.

Chuck Manning: Chuck Manning just signed in to be here. He doesn't have any comments.

Chair Raschko: Okay, thank you. So after Mr. Orsini we will have Val Mullen.

Steve Orsini: Thank you, Commissioners, for the opportunity to comment. My name is Steve Orsini. I live at 4971 Guemes Island Road. It's on Guemes Island. And I am here to support the maintenance of the Guemes Island Overlay, which has been in effect since 2016. I've submitted my comments previously in writing, but the essence of it is that we have a lot of small lots, especially along the seashores, that were platted 125 years ago. These are 50-foot lots. And what the overlay tries to do is maintain a wider separation than eight feet from the property line. Our biggest problem as we see houses getting close together if there isn't the overlay, is that we have a volunteer fire department and water is a real difficult issue to get to fires. We have a tanker truck but that's it. So when we put houses very close together – more or less a municipal distance – we really exacerbate the problem of fire if it gets started in these condensed areas. We just don't have the resources that you might have in the rest of Skagit County to put out fires that get started in condensed neighborhoods. Thank you.

Chair Raschko: Thank you. Val Mullen, and next would be Margaret Carol Lee.

Val Mullen: I'm going to need some help turning this off and turning this on, so I already asked back there if they could help me.

(inaudible conversation)

Ms. Mullen: So my name is Val Mullen. I'm from 31262 Prevedell Road in Sedro-Woolley. I'm commenting on the petition for a wind turbine use amendment. I'm opposed to the idea of allowing residential windmills in Skagit County and I have some pictures to show just to prove my points.

Turbines are not clean energy. Carbon pollution is generated during the manufacture of these components, most of which are steel and concrete, which require coal mostly for raw materials and smelting. And this is an example of a residential wind turbine.

China supplies the rare earth minerals for the wind turbine magnets, and you can see here a picture of this toxic lake that's forming from the processing of all of the land around the area. This toxic lake is a pool of waste accumulating in a previous fertile farmland. The pool contains acids, heavy metals, carcinogens, radioactive materials with the radiation level being three times the background level. And this pastureland was turned into wasteland.

Turbine blades cannot be recycled so they end up in landfills. Here's a whole bunch of them in Casper, Wyoming landfill.

Wind turbines may leak oil and lubricants, which creates an environmental and fire hazard, as exemplified here. They may also fracture when they get older, as shown in this series of pictures.

Turbines are expensive and may decrease property values up to 23%. They kill 10 to 20 times more bats and birds than previously thought. And they are an eyesore in a beautiful environment like Skagit Valley. I oppose wind turbines in this county. This is a picture I took just before I came down here of my farm. I don't want to see wind turbines in an area like this. Thank you.

Chair Raschko: Thank you. Margaret Carol Lee and next would be Susan Bergeson.

Margaret Carol Lee: I'm going on record here tonight to say no to wind turbines in Skagit County. From my accent you might detect that I'm not originally from here. Let's look at Texas last year in February of 2021. They had a failed power grid and their wind turbines froze. So when Texas needed the wind turbines the most they were frozen and of zero use. The wind turbines provided no help and they had a desperate situation on their hands. So I ask: What good are frozen wind turbines?

And from the *Austin American Statesman* newspaper, article dated February 17th of 2021, "Frozen wind turbines hamper Texas power output," State's electric grid operator says. Unusually moist winter conditions in west Texas brought on by the weekend's freezing rain and low temperatures have iced many of those wind turbines to a halt. They completely stopped working. More than half of Texas installed wind power have been offline because of frozen wind turbines in west Texas, according to Texas grid operators. A second article from the *Austin American Statesman* newspaper, and this one is dated this year, January 4th, 2022: "In the final tally, state officials say that 246 Texans died" because of the cold, because they froze due to hypothermia. And a lot of Texans in that area also lost limbs due to frostbite. So for this reason also, and the victims, it's saying that they ranged from age babies, young kids, to age 102.

So if our power grid fails here in Skagit County and we depend on those turbines that freeze in our snowy, cold region, are we prepared to claim responsibility for deaths of Skagit County residents for moms, dads, grandparents, kids, and babies due to freezing or death or loss of limbs due to frostbite? We do not want any wind turbines in Skagit County, period. Thank you very much.

Chair Raschko: Thank you. Susan Bergeson, and then Todd Bergeson, please.

Susan Bergeson: Hello, my name is Susan Bergeson. I live at 5714 Sugarloaf Street in Anacortes. Wind turbines are not renewable. They are not green and they are not cost-effective. Residential or small wind power installations are expensive. A typical residential system costs anywhere from three to six thousand dollars for every kilowatt of generating capacity. Most homes need a system that can generate in the range of three to seven kilowatts, so an installed system could cost anywhere between 10 to 40 thousand dollars. That's before you generate any electricity. According to **Energy Sage**, a Skagit County resident uses an average of 12,156 kilowatt hours per year, the average 1,428 spent on electricity per year in Skagit County. That means the return on investment would be seven years at best. If the wind turbines are working 24 hours a day, seven days a week, with Skagit County's low wind speeds the turbines would only be running six months per year. The amount of time to break even would be closer to 14 years in the best case scenario. That's a 14-year return on investment for three kilowatt hours generated. If a home, farm, or commercial site required more electricity, that return on investment could extend to decades. This does not include any maintenance costs. Estimated maintenance costs average two to three hundred dollars per year. Those costs may increase as unstable wind flow creates strain on machine parts. This is just an example of how wind turbines are not renewable, they are not green, and they are not cost-effective. Thank you.

Chair Raschko: Todd Bergeson and then Jeff Lee.

Todd Bergeson: Hello, my name is Todd Bergeson. I live at 5714 Sugarloaf Street in Anacortes. And I'm commenting on the wind turbines – are not renewable, they are not green, and they are not cost-effective. To make wind power economically viable, you must consider wind speed and the cost of purchasing electricity. Washington state has some of the lowest electricity rates in the country. Skagit County averages 12 cents per kilowatt hour. The U.S. average is 18 cents per kilowatt hour. Wind turbine installer **Energy** suggests a site should have an average wind speed of at least 10 to 12 miles per hour. According to the National Center for Environmental Information, Washington state only reaches a monthly mean wind speed of 10 miles per hour during six months each year. In order to generate electricity consistently, sustained winds of at least 10 miles per hour are needed. Monthly mean wind speed and sustained wind speeds are completely different. Most of installations of residential wind power generators have been in the northeast, west, and Midwest plains where average wind speeds are higher. Skagit County does not have enough high enough, sustainable, consistent winds to generate enough power to keep those wind turbines running. Again, wind turbines are not renewable, green, and they are not cost-effective. Thank you.

Chair Raschko: Thank you. Jeff Lee and then Raymond McCord.

Jeff Lee: My name's Jeff Lee. I live at 14119 Gibraltar Road, Anacortes. Wind turbines are not renewable, they are not green, and they are not cost-effective. Wind turbines are the opposite of green. The blades, made of resin and fiberglass, cannot be recycled. They contribute a huge amount of waste, end up in the landfills, which is completely counter to what environmentalists claim was renewable. Large blades may have to be cut into pieces with specialized equipment

before they can be trashed. Wind turbines and transformers may leak oil lubricants, creating environmental and fire hazards. Transformers may rupture and catch fire. Wind turbines kill a lot of bats, birds, despite what the manufacturers say. The blades and noise also disrupt wildlife patterns, even for wildlife on the ground. These are just a few examples of why wind turbines are not renewable, they are not green, and they are not cost-effective. Thank you.

Chair Raschko: Thank you. Mr. McCord, and then Connie Miller.

Raymond McCord: Good evening. My name is Ray McCord. I live at 6478 Bayview Street, Anacortes. Wind turbines should never be installed because they are far too noisy and hazardous to human and animal health. The proposed noise range of 50 to 60 decibels is about the sound of a normal conversation. While that may not sound very loud, here's what happened in Ohio, as reported by the National Wind Watch on January 22nd, 2022. Tom Hartke, president of Hartke Engineering and Surveying, Inc., drove from Illinois to Ohio to talk with those gathered at a church about whether wind turbines were a good idea for their area. Hartke said he was initially in favor until they were finally turned on as part of the California Ridge Wind Energy Project in Illinois. Those wind turbines went up January, 2013, and Hartke said it became immediately clear that these turbines should never have been installed because they were far too noisy. The company that installed them in Vermillion City, Illinois, [REDACTED] Energy, had said that the majority of windmill locations would experience turbine sound levels less than 40 decibels outdoors, which should have been sufficiently low enough to minimize or eliminate any potential for sleep interference and indoor or outdoor speech interference. In a 2009 health effects study, widespread noise complaints began at 33½ decibels. Between January and May of 2013, the turbines had to be turned off 51 nights to allow enough quiet time for people to sleep. Hartke said that the noise was so bad that his daughter, about six years old at the time, asked if she could sleep with her headphones on as a way to block out the noise. That didn't work and the Hartkes moved their bed – their daughter's bed and their son's bed into the living room, the innermost room in the house, to try to drown out the noise, but to no avail. In December, 2013, the Hartkes abandoned their home to live where their quality of life would be much better. In addition, in 2018 the World Health Organization recognized wind turbine noise as a health hazard. The wind industry has denied and ignored evidence directly linking wind turbines and sleep disruption leading to negative human and animal impacts worldwide. The burden of environmental noise with wind turbines is not episodic or random; the most part, its effects are constant and unrelenting. This is an undeniable health pressure of enormous magnitude. Wind turbines should never be installed because they are far too noisy and hazardous to human and animal health. Thank you.

Chair Raschko: Thank you. Connie Miller, and then Linnea McCord? Did I say that right?

Linnea McCord: Yes, Linnea.

Chair Raschko: Okay.

Connie Miller: Thank you, Planning Commissioners, for allowing me to speak. My name is Connie Miller and I live at 2606 Highland Drive in Anacortes. We already have ample, clean, and affordable renewable energy right here in Washington state. Our state leads the country in renewable energy source with hydroelectric power. According to the U.S. Energy Information Administration, in 2020 hydroelectric power accounted for about 66% of Washington's total electricity net generation from both utility scale and small scale facilities. Washington typically contributes between 1/5th and 1/3rd of all conventional hydroelectric generation in the nation annually. Most hydroelectric plants are located on the Columbia River and one of them, the Grand Coulee Dam, is the seventh largest hydroelectric plant in the world. Grand Coulee Dam's

hydroelectric plant typically produces more than 21 million megawatt hours of electricity each year and supplies power to eight western states and parts of Canada. In 2020, Washington was among the eight states in the nation with the lowest average electricity retail prices. The residential sector, where almost 60% of households use electricity as their primary heating source, account(ed) for about 40% of Washington's electricity retail sales in 2020. The commercial sector accounted for more than 30% and industrial sectors were slightly more than 25%. Washington's Energy Independence Act was enacted in 2006 and it established a renewable portfolio standard and an energy efficiency resource standard. That law requires that by 2045 100% of electricity sold to in-state customers must come from renewable or non-emitting sources. We already have ample renewable resources for generating more electricity than our state needs from the many dams already in existence in Washington state. There is no new environmental impact or long term storage problems to use our existing hydroelectric power. Residential wind turbines are not necessary in our county. Thank you.

Chair Raschko: Thank you, Ms. McCord. And then David Cherrick.

David Cherrick: We would yield. No comment.

Chair Raschko: Okay, I have David and Scherry. Does Scherry yield as well?

Scherry Cherrick: Yes.

Chair Raschko: Okay.

Ms. Cherrick: I thought that we were just signing up that we were here.

Chair Raschko: Oh, no problem. So next would be Steve and Ali Bertelsen.

Steve Bertelsen: Yield.

Chair Raschko: They yield. Okay. So after that would be – I apologize again. I believe it's Myron Sound.

Myron Sollid: Sollid. I'll reserve my comments.

Chair Raschko: Okay. Then we will have Brian Lipscomb. Okay, so please go ahead.

Ms. McCord: My name is Linnea McCord and I live at 6478 Bayview Street in Anacortes. And I moved up here because it's beautiful. I grew up in Hawaii and I'm used to being around beautiful. I spent 31 years in California and I'm here to warn you about what the New Green Deal can do very quickly. I lived there 31 years and they destroyed the place in that period of time. California this past summer when they instituted the New Green Deal – and by the way, this is a real thing and it comes from the World Economic Forum, and if you're not familiar with the World Economic Forum I suggest you get on their webpage and start reading about them because it *is* connected to them.

Now here's what was in an article in September 22nd. This came out of town hall. "In California, our most populous state where" our own nation – "were its own nation, would rank as the world's fifth largest economy and boast the highest average household income outside of a handful of countries like Monaco or Luxemburg." And yet the governor is begging its citizens to stop using their appliances, turn off their lights, and keep their thermostats at a stifling 78 – and before we

left the San Fernando Valley, it was 117 degrees – lest they suffer more rolling blackouts like some junior mandarin in a third world country. This was done very quickly and it's not even begun to be implemented. It's still going to take trillions and trillions of dollars. And even though people want to say it's climate change, the question you have to ask is, yes, the climate is changing, but manmade climate change? Well, that's odd. If you go back through centuries and centuries climate *has* been changing. And I think Americans haven't figured out we're broke. We got a 31-trillion-dollar national debt and everybody's counting on ___ printing presses. You're not paying attention to Saudi Arabia, India, Russia, and China moving off the petrodollar. We're not going to be able to use those printing presses. And when reality hit Germany, when they got off and used the green energy, that made them dependent on Russian oil. How's that working out for them? Not very well. They're having enormous problems, and even before the Ukrainian war their expenses were extremely high. Right? Their electricity.

And I don't know about you and how many people in this room have gotten their property tax bill or is watching the price of gasoline or is paying attention to the oil prices or our food prices. We can't withstand these prices continuing to go up. We have to be realistic. So then the question is: With all of these things that are going on – you know, they said go to electric vehicles and then they told them in California, You can't drive. You can't charge your cars. So this obviously isn't about energy. This is about power and control. Study the World Economic Forum. I have. And you will find out that Inslee thinks this is a great idea. Biden thinks it's a great idea. We're just going to shut down all of the oil drilling and we're going to shut down all the coal plants. How's that going to work out? Not very well.

So what Inslee wants to do is jam these wind turbines down people's throats.

(sound of ringing timer)

Ms. McCord: Last time I thought we're supposed to be – I'll quit – we're supposed to be a government where they work for us. Thank you very much.

Chair Raschko: Thank you. Brian?

Unidentified Male Voice: I wish we could yield some more time to you!

Ms. McCord: I'll be back!

Chair Raschko: Brian Lipscomb and then – let's see – Allen Bush.

Brian Lipscomb: Good evening, Commissioners. My name is Brian Lipscomb. I'm from 27765 West Gilligan Place. That's rural mile 26 and 27 on the Skagit, if you're into that stuff.

My comments today concern the wind turbines. I'm an electronics engineer. If I had more time I would love to talk. _____, IGBTs, ___, all that electrical stuff. But I'm just going to have, like, six quotes that I got from the – what is it? – C-22-1? Anyway, it appears that turbines can only be sited on residential properties. What about agricultural properties with buildings and utilities that don't have a residence? Will they be allowed? How many turbine permits have been applied for in the past 10 years? Net metering implies a connection to the utility grid for supplying excess power to it. This proposal would require the energy produced to be used for personal use by the property owner. It would seem that if you're supplying power to the grid you're not using it; others are. Does solar net metering have the same requirement?

So some quotes out of C-22 here. Quote: "To power an individual home or small farm, a turbine would need to generate between one and 20 kilowatts of power per day." One to 20 kilowatts per day is a meaningless metric. Metric use for power consumption is a kilowatt hour, not kilowatt. My average daily consumption is 63 kilowatt hours right now but I have a very large electronics lab. Turbines don't supply the energy stated on their nameplates. That is the maximum that could be generated under perfect conditions.

Another quote: "Skagit County is proposing to only allow monopole design with the wind turbines." It's interesting that Figure 7 and 8 here would not be allowed in the county! So Figure 7 is nonresidential property and it's likely larger than 25 kilowatts. Figure 8 doesn't meet the minimum blade height. Why are lattice and ____ marginalized in favor of pole towers?

Another quote: "During the 2013 Wind Power America Study, the average wind speed in Skagit County was found to be approximately four to five meters per second." That's nine to 11 miles an hour if you do the math. ____ publishes that the average wind speed here is 5.8 miles per hour in December and 2.7 in August. A 25-kilowatt turbine will need about six miles an hour to start the spinning. I don't know if you notice this, but in summertimes some crops here require winds and they actually have electric fans blowing wind over the crops.

Another quote: "Skagit County does not have many areas where wind turbines would produce enough energy to power grids in its entirety." Does it have *any* areas that could? I don't think so!

Another quote: "The most likely locations with the highest wind captured would be along the shorelines." These are also the areas that have the most severe restrictions for development and are the most sensitive to aesthetics!

_____ inspections. Typically they have a 20-year design life so let's not forget on Old 99 missing the one blade! I mean, where did it fly off to? Who knows.

So consistency review number 4, so, quote: "Wind turbines are a renewable energy resource which has a positive impact on the climate in Skagit County and overall health of its citizens." I would love to see the metrics to back up that statement. How do you measure that? But it's quoted in there and that's one of the reasons we're doing it.

In summary, the only benefit of small scale wind generation in the county is for _____.

(sound of ringing timer)

Mr. Lipscomb: The actual conditions in Skagit County does not support for the environment, for the _____ (becomes inaudible). Thank you. _____.

(laughter)

Chair Raschko: Thank you. Allen Bush, and after Allen Bush – is it Diane? Is there a Diane Devoe? From Anacortes?

(silence)

Vice Chair Tammy Candler: Does somebody know who it is?

(inaudible voice)

Vice Chair Candler: She was just signing in.

Chair Raschko: Oh, okay. Patrick Brown? Is there a Patrick Brown?

Patricia Brown: No, there's a Patricia Brown.

Chair Raschko: Okay, I apologize! Okay, please go ahead.

Allen Bush: Yes. Thank you for the opportunity. My name is Allen Bush, 6628 West Shore Drive, Guemes Island, and I'm here to support the maintenance of the Guemes Island Overlay. Based on the Guemes Island Subarea Plan approved in 2011 and the Guemes Island Overlay codified in the 2016 Skagit County Code, I hope to maintain the current overlay setbacks to achieve rural character of Guemes Island. The Guemes Island Overlay is not intended to limit individual property owners' ability to build or remodel a home, but is a product of the subarea plan which took years of input from Guemes Island residents and independent architectural consultants. The Guemes Island Subarea Plan emphasizes the need to retain rural character and spacing between houses, especially on its older, crowded substandard lots. The vast majority of residents in this rural community depend on groundwater from aquifers for their only source of potable water. Larger homes tend to stress these aquifers to a greater extent. These realities of island life make rural development standards and setbacks a priority. The County agreed when it adopted the Guemes Island Overlay that rural character is best maintained when scope and scale of buildings on substandard lots are considered when development or redevelopment occurs. And that remains good policy.

I have – I'm not one to say no to folks, but there's – again, there's a lot of time and energy that went into the subarea plan and this overlay. And, yeah, I hope it's maintained. Thank you.

Chair Raschko: Thank you. Patricia Brown, and then Suzanne Rohner.

Vice Chair Candler: I think Patricia may have just been –

Chair Raschko: All right. You just signed in. Okay, Suzanne Rohner, and after that Mark Madden.

Suzanne Rohner: Suzanne Rohner, 1219 11th Street. The Planning Commission has stated – I'm here to talk about my opposition to C22-1 – the Planning Commission has stated on page 17 of the agenda for today's meeting that the wind turbine use proposal is consistent with the Growth Management Act Planning Goal 10, which is to protect the environment and enhance the state's high quality of life, including air and water quality and the availability of water.

While searching the Internet trying to find information about residential wind turbines, I found the following statement: "Wind turbines are environmentally friendly because no harmful chemicals are emitted into the environment when generating power." This made me wonder about the environmental friendliness of wind turbines on the front end. In other words, what environmental impact does the production, transportation, installation of wind turbines have? Has the Planning Commission calculated this into their assessment that this proposal is consistent with Goal 10 of the Growth Management Act? What is the friendliness of wind turbines on the back end? In other words, what is the environmental impact of the disposal of wind turbines when they have reached the end of their useful life? We already know that turbine blades from the industrial wind turbines are not biodegradable or recyclable and are currently being buried in landfills across our country.

Has the Planning Commission calculated this into their assessment that this proposal is consistent with Goal 10 of the Growth Management Act?

As stated by the Planning Commission on page 16 of the agenda for this meeting, Skagit County was found to have an average wind speed of approximately four to five meters per second, which is not fast enough to produce adequate energy to power a residential structure. In addition, Skagit County does not have many areas where wind turbines would produce enough energy to power a residence in its entirety. In these circumstances where wind power is inadequate to power home, storage batteries are often used. Do these storage batteries contain rare earth minerals which are mined from the earth at great environmental cost? In China the pollution resulting from rare earth mineral mining has created soil incapable of supporting crops, and water supplies have been contaminated. Has the Planning Commission calculated this into their assessment that this proposal is consistent with Goal 10 of the Growth Management Act? Wind turbines are a menace to birds, bats, insects, an eyesore, and are not cost-effective. Thank you.

Chair Raschko: Thank you. And Mr. Madden, followed by Judy Billings.

Mark Madden: My name is Mark Madden, 4910 North Indian Village Lane on Guemes Island. I'm part of a minority group that is opposed to the building envelope in the Guemes Overlay. The building envelope has a larger impact on us than most of the majority group that might never notice a difference. But to us, the building envelope impacts our homes, our lives, and our dreams. The building envelope forces all homes and all lots towards the center of the lot, reducing useful side yards large enough for decks, gardens, garages, or whatever. The building envelope has no consideration of steep terrain, large old-growth trees, or large boulders that impact building locations, nor does it consider alignment of garages with winding driveways or considerations of septic drain fields. It assumes that homeowners, their architects, and their builders are not capable of good designs on their own property.

The building envelope has a major impact on the Indian Village community where a large percentage of the building lots are 55 feet or less. That's 16 out of 22. These lots approach 300 feet deep and they heavy rural forests between the homes and the county road. Almost half of the homes are still four to five feet below the base flood level and they're susceptible to flooding. However, they can't be raised because side roof gables or lofts or high ceilings violate the 12-foot side wall requirement in the building envelope. Indian Village has a huge scale differential, with about half of the buildings larger than smaller cabins that are forced to stay small. Replacement homes for small cabins must all look alike and they must be smaller.

The Comprehensive Plan defines rural character very thoroughly. It describes nothing even close to building envelopes or side walls. I'm sure many others have dreams like I did to retire and replace my 1952 cabin with a real home. Those dreams are crushed by the building envelope. By limiting the size, shape, and location of homes on their lots, the building envelope restricts personal property rights for no valid reason that makes properties less useful and less valuable. Thank you.

Chair Raschko: Thank you. So Judy Billings and then Heather Jackson.

Judy Billings: Judy Billings, 14455 Gibraltar Road, Anacortes. I discovered this article. "The North American Platform Against Wind Power" is an organization that works with over 370 groups, tens of thousands of individuals in North America, as well as gleaning and sharing current energy and environmental information from our European colleagues numbering several thousand additional groups. With about 268,000 massive turbines worldwide, we yet only produce .2 of 1% of the

world's electricity. Net zero. Industrial wind does not produce meaningful electricity and will never save the planet, but it will and is contributing to the demise in cases of entire species. It is the most unimaginable series of misconceptions and outright lies that have been led to this destruction. We use the word "pillage" with deep purpose. It can similarly be called illegal robbery, plunder, and taking. Wind power is not clean, green, or free. It is the most egregious taking from our planet and pocketbooks as we have seen in this century. It is difficult to say which taking is larger, that of human health or our environment – birds, bats, wildlife. No matter how you parse it, we are simultaneously included, man and animal, in environmental considerations. The industry tells us its numbers of wildlife takes and kills, which does its own mortality counting in a bizarre allowance and we assure you these numbers are false. They are often ten or even hundreds if times, thousands of times beyond what is reported. It is our belief that the final tally of the slaughter and devastation will not be known for generations. Industrial wind requires 100% backup, 100% of the time. Goodbye to the falsehood of reducing fossil fuels. Entire economies are being ruined. Net jobs lost. Spain, UK, Italy is example and people are often referred to as "refugees," unable to sell worthless homes and properties and lacking the resources to relocate. Wind turbines are a disaster. They cannot come to Skagit County. Thank you.

Chair Raschko: Thank you. Is Heather Jackson here?

(inaudible voice from the audience)

Chair Raschko: Okay, thank you. And then Art Fournier. Art Fournier? I apologize if I got that wrong.

(inaudible voice from the audience)

Chair Raschko: All right, then Ellen Bynum, please.

Ellen Bynum: Thank you, Commissioners. Ellen Bynum, Friends of Skagit County, 419 South Main Street, Suite Number 207, in Mount Vernon. I want to address – I've sent an email addressing all of the proposals. I haven't addressed the capital planning section yet. But I want to speak about LR22-01.

Limited Areas of More Intense Rural Development, or LAMIRDs, were included in the GMA to recognize existing areas of rural businesses and more dense development in rural areas. The designation required the boundaries to be fixed to those that existed July 1st, 1990, to prevent rural sprawl outside of cities, towns, and urban growth areas. So LAMIRDs are intended to be a one-time recognition of existing, more intensively developed areas and uses and are not intended to be used continuously to meet the needs, real or perceived, for additional commercial and industrial lands. And that's from Growth Management Hearings Board Case *People for a Livable Community v. Jefferson County*. I urge you to look at the Hearings Board decisions that have to do with LAMIRDs. You can search that using the word "LAMIRD" and you'll see the rest of the cases – quite a few examples.

We have 70,740 acres zoned Rural Reserve identified in the first Comp Plan that were not considered LAMIRDs because of the low density development. The Bertelsen Farm's properties are all zoned Rural Reserve and therefore ineligible for consideration as a LAMIRD. The concurrency requirements of the GMA specifically noted in the 2022 changes to the LAMIRD section are not met by the Bertelsen proposal because you have to have your septic, your water, and your stormwater plan concurrently available and funded before you can permit development of new LAMIRDs. There are 673 acres of rural, commercial, industrial lands in various zones. Two

of them are Small Scale Recreation and Tourism zones, for a total of 21 acres. The original Clark's Cabin was also included but it was rezoned later. The SSRT zone requires small scale; 69 acres is not small scale. I won't go through the three types of LAMIRDs. You can read that for yourself. The SSRT zone considers all of the parcels as a whole project. When you change the zoning to SSRT, you have to consider existing structures, scale of the property, all of the infrastructure that's going to be needed for that property. And the existing structure that's now on the winery property is over 4,000 square feet. For new SSRTs –

(sound of ringing timer)

Ms. Bynum: – the structures are limited to 3,000 square feet. So take a look at that, and we request that they do not approve. Thanks.

Chair Raschko: Thank *you*. That concludes the sign-up list. Is there anybody who wishes to speak? Yes?

Unidentified Voice: May I?

Chair Raschko: You may. And we have another?

Kay Hall Friedrichs: Well, I'm 83 and having a first tonight. It's the first time I've ever been to a council meeting so I, like this other couple, didn't realize when I was signing up that I was really signing up to speak, not just the fact that I was an attendee. So I came to *not* support the windmill cause. And I want to say thank you to so many of the people that have diligently dug in to find out about all of this. I never knew it all, and at this age I didn't think I needed to, but obviously I did. Take home what they have informed us of, think about it, share it with your friends or your family. Because we have received tonight a wealth of knowledge given to us by people who have really dug in from their heart to protect our valley. It is so beautiful. It is so priceless. Where else can you go in this world or even in this area and find the beauty and the peace and the nature that we have? Excuse me, those windmills do not even begin to suggest the peace and quiet of our beautiful land. So thank you for letting me flap my jaws.

Chair Raschko: Okay, before you go, I didn't get your name. Are you Mrs. –

Ms. Friedrichs: I'm Kay Hall Friedrichs.

Chair Raschko: All right. We have your address here. Is there anybody else? Yes?

Ms. Lee: I found out this microphone works. The other one doesn't. Just by a show of hand, for these people who are here tonight on the proposal of the wind turbines, who here – so they can see – is against wind turbines – by a show of hands?

Chair Raschko: No, wait a minute. Excuse me. You can state your opinion but we do not wish to have participation from the others.

Ms. Lee: Oh. Thank you.

Chair Raschko: Thank you. Is there anybody else who would like to speak?

Unidentified Voice: May I speak twice?

Chair Raschko: No. Jenn, do we have anybody online?

Ms. Rogers: We do have participants on Zoom, so if anyone would like to speak, please unmute to signal that you would like to speak. I see an Ellen Gray has unmuted.

Ellen Gray: Hi. Thank you. I'm very concerned about the Bertelsen ____ (sound disappears) primarily because I think it's a significant change in the use for that area. And I was looking through the staff recommendation and the SEPA determination and I'm just concerned about the multiple uses that are being proposed for that rezone. And one of them I believe is a store with a fueling station, so that would be – I'm assuming that would be gasoline so there'd be a gas station on that site. And I just – in addition to the expansion of the winery and the campgrounds and the dog park, and the restaurant. So that's quite a significant amount of change on the 69 acres. And so I will be submitting a written – my written letter, but I just wanted to, I guess, take the opportunity to let you know of my concern. Thank you.

Chair Raschko: Thank you. Anybody else?

Ms. Rogers: I see a Jaye is unmuted. Would you wish to speak? I believe they've been unmuted for the entire meeting so I'm not sure if they just unmuted or not.

Jaye Stover: Okay. You can hear me okay?

Chair Raschko: Yes, we can hear you now.

Ms. Stover: Thank you. I also am concerned about such a change in 69 acres that Bertelsen is proposing to have moved into a land use category that it doesn't qualify for. And I would like to see the Planning Commission closely look at definitions for the LAMIRDS and properties that in 1990 or older were used for agriculture and public services. And I think you'll find that the Bertelsen property is improperly classified. I would oppose the development of those 69 acres into basically a commercial operation *much* larger than small scale rural enterprise. Thank you.

Chair Raschko: Thank you. Could you please give your name and address for the record?

Ms. Stover: Oh, yes. Sorry. Jaye Stover, s,t,o,v,e,r. Address is 12213 Pulver Road, Burlington, Washington. Thank you.

Chair Raschko: Thank you. Is that everybody?

Ms. Rogers: Yes, it is, Chair Raschko.

Chair Raschko: Okay, last chance. Anybody else wish to speak?

(silence)

Chair Raschko: Okay, thank you all for your testimony. Do any of the Commissioners have any questions for anybody?

Kathy Mitchell: It's not necessarily a question, but most everybody knows that they can do written comments. You may also leave the written comments that you brought, if you want, and then also do something online, if anybody has things with them. And Jenn Rogers would take those from you. Thank you.

Unidentified Voice: What is the deadline for turning in the written comments?

Chair Raschko: November 10th at 4:30.

Same Unidentified Voice: November 10th, 4:30?

Chair Raschko: Right. We'll close the public hearing, but as a reminder the written comments will be accepted through November 10th at 4:30. The Planning Commission will meet to consider the comments and deliberate on a recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners on December 6th. Okay. So with that, this public hearing is adjourned and we'll move on to a second public hearing but we will take – we have another public hearing following, so those who plan to leave, kindly do so so we can move on. We will take a five-minute break and come back at 7:16.

(break)

Chair Raschko: Okay, the Planning Commission is back in order. We'll move now to a public hearing on the Capital Facilities Plan. The purpose of this hearing is to receive testimony on the 2023 to 2028 Capital Facilities Plan and Transportation Improvement Program. Before we begin, we'll hear a brief presentation from the staff. Please go ahead.

Sarah Ruether: Good evening. I'm Sarah Ruether, long range planning manager, and this is the Capital Facilities Plan annual update. And I will just do a brief overview of what is the purpose of the Capital Facility Plan. The County must ensure that public facilities and services necessary to support development are adequate to serve the development at the time that the development is available for occupancy and use without decreasing the current service levels below locally established minimum standards. And we have a picture of the Mount Vernon Library here because it was part of our Capital – our Facilities sold that parking lot to the City of Mount Vernon for that proposed facility.

Just to do a quick summary of what has been updated in the plan: There's been updates to the County facilities. As I just spoke, the transfer of the Kincaid Street parking lot, establishing a courthouse that meets space and security needs and eliminating leased office space downtown. The District and Superior Courts have had an update of their space and staffing needs. The Bayview UGA Stormwater section was updated. There's no other changes needed to other stormwater facilities. And with housing, there was an update of funding. In Parks, there was an update of a new park facility added. The external changes were updated: School district enrollment numbers. The fire district updated their facility needs and existing facilities. The Skagit County Dike and Drainage Districts updated their existing facilities and facility needs. And Edison updated the maintenance required for them and they are currently funding a capacity study and drain field evaluation to look towards the future. And the recommendation, based on the update with the projects, locations, and levels of service described in the Capital Facilities Plan: Our reassessment of the Land Use Element for (the) Skagit County Comprehensive Plan is not required.

So the timeline for the next steps: The draft is online. Tonight is the public hearing with the Planning Commission. Comments to the Planning Commission can be accepted via email or via hard mail at 1800 Continental. And the deliberations will be November 22nd. It will go to the Board of County Commissioners on December 5th for a hearing, and it's anticipated it will be adopted concurrent with budget – that's the typical way things are done – and that is scheduled for December 12th, 2022.

Any questions or any comments?

Vice Chair Candler: What's the deadline for the – sorry.

Chair Raschko: Go ahead.

Vice Chair Candler: What's the deadline for the comment period?

Ms. Ruether: For the public hearing for the Planning Commission it's the 10th of November. I have all the dates on there since this one's pretty – it's pretty routine.

Vice Chair Candler: Okay. Thank you.

Ms. Ruether: Mm-hmm.

Chair Raschko: Any other questions?

(silence)

Chair Raschko: Okay. Well, thank you. So I believe we have nobody signed up to speak. Does anybody wish to speak?

Mr. Lipscomb: I didn't realize that we signed up separately for the different things.

Chair Raschko: Please go ahead.

Mr. Lipscomb: Brian Lipscomb, 27765 West Gilligan Place, Sedro-Woolley, River Mile 26 through 27, if you follow the Skagit.

I didn't realize the capital improvements was part of this and so I'll direct my comments strictly to capital improvements.

Did you say there was a park going in in the South Skagit? Where is that? I've never heard of it. I'm all for it. Because if you look at the South Skagit, there is no parks or facilities on that. Everything is on the north side of the Skagit. So I don't know where you'd be putting this park in but I'd love to know more about it. Thank you.

Chair Raschko: Thank you.

Mr. Lipscomb: (indecipherable)

Chair Raschko: And I understand there's nobody online.

Ms. Rogers: There are a few attendees on the Zoom, so if anyone would like to speak on this topic please unmute so that you can speak.

(silence)

Ms. Rogers: No one has unmuted as of this point.

Chair Raschko: I'm sorry?

Ms. Rogers: No one has unmuted.

Chair Raschko: Okay, nobody. So nobody else to ask if they wish to speak so I guess we are finished. Does anybody have questions for the speaker?

Unidentified Commissioner: No.

Chair Raschko: Okay. Well, thank you. Written comments on this proposal will be accepted through this Thursday, November 10th, at 4:30 p.m. The Planning Commission will meet to consider the comments and deliberate on a recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners on Tuesday, November 22nd. So thank you for your testimony and we will adjourn the public hearing and move to the Director's Update. Mr. Hart?

Hal Hart: Yep. Thank you, Commissioners. Good evening. Hal Hart. This evening one of the accomplishments I would like to have is just a quick discussion of where we are year-to-date on housing numbers. And here we are. To the left is new single-family home permits issued – 85 for the year. We still have 62 in the queue that we're processing, and we're still talking to folks each day about additional housing, especially ADUs, accessory dwelling units. So that seems to be very popular and continues on. I think in the data that you can see year to year down in the bottom. We don't have the last two months in there because we haven't done that for this year. But we were trailing – we were following along – excuse me – very much like the previous year, and I do think we're going to trail off and maybe not hit the same number as last year, and I would tie that probably to interest rates. That's what people are telling us at the counter – that, you know, it's more expensive to accomplish their project, higher interest rates and – so that's the first thing.

Let's move to the next slide. One of the things that I wanted to make sure I did was take up Joe Woodmansee on his offer to visit a project, BYK. So this is – there's actually three pictures there. The first picture to the left is of the nearly 500 units that the City of Arlington – and you would say, Well, why does Hal talk about the City of Arlington? And I'm not saying that this is a great project or anything, but they are getting density on 20 acres of over 500 units. They are also getting three pads for separate – so they're not stacked on top – but they're doing separate retail there as well. And Arlington has seen just a tremendous amount of growth for a number of reasons.

Let's go to the next slide. So that's 500-plus units under construction. Can you go to the next slide? Oh, yeah, go ahead. So there's the next unit. There're two of them, mostly put together pretty well now and there's more coming on. This is the next one. So, you know, what's driving it in that area is a need for – there's a rapidly expanding work force in that area. On the corridors there we are seeing a lot of aviation-related business. We're seeing healthcare offices opening up. We're seeing over – I believe there's ten million square feet of logistic centers that are opening up there. And so there's just a – you know, that's a tremendous change in land uses. That's 17 minutes from College Way to the Smokey Point exit and it's another six minutes to the site.

So each day people come to me and they say, Hey, Hal, it's pretty expensive to live in our valley. This is an interesting case study because this one they're offering studio, one and two bedrooms. A lot of other folks are offering that here in the valley as well. One of the problems, though, is if you – and I'll just take starting salary in our office as an example. Starting salary in our office would need to pay for, let's say, a studio or a one-bedroom in something like this would be about 40% of your income. So housing is expensive relative to incomes, and that's the issue. So, you know, I did an exit interview with somebody and they're moving to eastern Washington and they were able to get a higher salary to pay for the housing that they can afford. But I asked them, you

know, what was the housing price, and it wasn't all that much different. But the salary made the difference so that they could save for the future and do other things.

So it's a big issue. It's a big issue for the valley and it would be a big issue to – we'll be looking at it from a regional standpoint in our Comprehensive Plan as it comes up, but it's also interesting too because the County's role in this is twofold. One is we have unincorporated county that we're seeing ADUs that I mentioned at the start of this, and just regular houses going on there. But we also fund low to moderate income housing through the Health Department – is our housing provider – and they're funding, at least partially funding, affordable housing projects both in Mount Vernon and elsewhere. So I think – and Anacortes, as well. So I just want to kind of give you that lay of the land and how immediate it is to people starting out in their careers and other – and just the – the think the biggest thing is just the income that people have to spend for housing. The more housing that we are – I'll conjecture on this one because I don't have data on this, but typically what I've seen is that the more housing that's going up – especially if there's new housing going up – a lot of times then the old housing also decides to improve because they know that the market is – it's a little bit more competitive and they want to get people too. So the acreage market we would see that all the time. When we had new housing come in, the old housing would start improving. And I've seen that elsewhere too. So there are some interesting market effects that go on. And we currently are seeing additional housing in Burlington, additional housing in Mount Vernon coming on. So let's hope that that's improving our overall situation, Commissioners.

There is one more slide. The other trend, I think – I will have to see if it's really a trend, but I've been out in the field looking, and this is in the Bayview area. And a lot of times you'll see very large, kind of overhaul of the old house with a house that's really two times bigger than the old house but we're still calling it a remodel. So what's hidden in those remodel stats sometimes is basically a new house. So that's – you know, it's an investment and that's good. And I just wanted to point out that one trend. So if you were coming in to an existing property you may want to come in and remodel that and add a two-car garage and other things as well.

Okay, that's it. Thank you.

Chair Raschko: Any questions for staff?

(silence)

Chair Raschko: I'd just make a comment –

Mr. Hart: Yes.

Chair Raschko: – based on your presentation. It just seems to me that – I mean, you're talking about a problem for people finding housing, but I see it as a much bigger problem that we have a lot of young people who may – my generation benefit – I mean, I bought my first house for 22,000 and I thought I'd be in hock for the rest of my life. And two years later I sold it for 54. And a lot of us kind of were able to get ahead based on cheap, affordable housing. Now you've got somebody coming out of school, with \$30,000 in college debt and then you need to – 8% mortgage, you need to make a down payment of 20%. It's just unbelievable. And I think it's going to cause a lot of our younger people to lose faith in our entire capitalist system because it doesn't work for them. And I think that's a problem for our country. But that's just my own thoughts.

Mr. Hart: Thank you.

Chair Raschko: I appreciate your highlighting the problem. Somebody else?

Commissioner Mark Knutzen: Director comments? Yeah, I do have a comment.

Chair Raschko: Sure, of course.

Commissioner Knutzen: A request from staff. Agritourism: I know we're just going through the process. Do you have some more to present on it?

Mr. Hart: I think what you – sorry. I glossed over it on the other issues. So I just want to make sure that you have the calendar for agritourism. So I have November 10th – is that correct?

Ms. Ruether: Yeah, this Thursday.

Mr. Hart: This Thursday at the city library – the Senior Center, Sedro-Woolley Senior Center.

Commissioner Knutzen: Senior Center – next – just two days – day after tomorrow, right?

Mr. Hart: Yes. Then we go to La Conner November 16th, 6:30 to 7:30 p.m., and the location (is) Maple Hall. And then December 6th is a wrap-up and it's here in this room. And that will be from 6 to 8. December 6th, 6 to 8.

Commissioner Knutzen: And the process is going to take a few months for us to get through it.

Mr. Hart: That's correct.

Commissioner Knutzen: I've been looking at some of the proposals. I'm not real clear on what's in the code and what fits where in the code. We talked about wedding venues and special events – the 24 events. I try and find it in there but unfortunately when I took foreign language I took Spanish. I didn't take code.

(laughter)

Commissioner Knutzen: I know it's all in there.

Mr. Hart: We get that a lot.

Commissioner Knutzen: What I request is – I go back to when we were doing ADUs. There was confusion on my part and I know other Commissioners. I call ADUs the “mother-in-law apartments” and then staff at the time said, No, those are two different issues. One is temporary, one is permanent. One is in this section of the code and one is over here. It has different requirements. And staff sent out some stuff to, I think, all the Planning Commission. And also there was a couple rulings, I think, that were from a hearing examiner where a proposal had been brought to the hearing examiner and he ruled on them. And that was written in English and I understood that. And I was wondering if it wouldn't be too much trouble for staff to give us some guidance as to where we will find code regarding agritourism events, how that may relate to events – music events, musical events, wedding venues. And you've heard me say this before. I don't think wedding venues belong in agritourism. The only thing that has to do with agritourism is it's on a farm, but it's not related to any farm activity. But it might be covered under some of these other things. And then if there's been any rulings that have been made that you could send out, and I would love that information. I'm assuming maybe some other Planning Commissioners

might like that too. And I know we have a ways to go in this process, but the sooner we can start studying this stuff I think the better job we'll be able to do.

Mr. Hart: Great. Those are great comments. We appreciate them and we'll do what we can do to find that information.

Commissioner Knutzen: I promise to read it.

Mr. Hart: We'll make it really easy to find that code – right? – and put it in English.

Commissioner Knutzen: Good. 4th grade.

Mr. Hart: Yep.

Commissioner Knutzen: Thank you.

Mr. Hart: With the Chair's permission, can I add one more item?

Chair Raschko: Please do.

Mr. Hart: Thank you, Chair. We are also exploring the idea with FEMA as to what "resiliency" means. We had a couple of meetings on that – or we've had one meeting on that in this room last week. We're meeting online this week. Who's meeting? FEMA, other federal agencies, the County, tribal agencies, Cities – and I'm trying to think – did I forget anybody else on that list of – so I think we're exploring what everybody else is currently saying about resiliency. And so we'll bring that back to you as we do that exploration about resiliency means for our county. It could mean a lot of different things. But we've had a mapping exercise. We've had some other exercises where we've asked people to – there were two things. One was resiliency and then what was the other thing that we were mapping?

Ms. Ruether: Vulnerabilities.

Mr. Hart: Yeah, vulnerabilities. So knowing your vulnerabilities will help us understand where we need to also be resilient. So we're looking at both the map exercise as well as who in our community in terms of populations would be most vulnerable after an event or through an event. And so, you know, this latest windstorm is a good reminder. What does that mean? People still don't have electricity days after the event. Snohomish County was hit pretty hard as well. Camano Island was hit pretty hard. Some of the other places were hit hard. And so they're coping without power. And so I know a lot of staff this week that have had generators going. And so they're dealing with it as well. So it's just – you know, we cope. And people in rural areas have a lot of experience with that, I think. Yes?

Commissioner Mitchell: When you're meeting with the FEMA, I'm assuming that you've involved – this also involves the DEEM, or is that at a later stage?

Mr. Hart: They're there.

Commissioner Mitchell: Okay. Because one of the things that they had brought up three or four directors ago – I've forgotten – was don't forget the animals.

Mr. Hart: That's a great point and we've heard that.

Commissioner Mitchell: Yeah, between the livestock and the pets and other kinds of things, that was a huge deal that people really did care about but didn't know what to do, and good citizens do come together hard and fast when they can, but the animals can starve.

Mr. Hart: Yes, and you need to get them out of harm's way and sometimes very quickly. And that didn't happen, even in the last flood. We lost some animals. So, yes.

Chair Raschko: Any other questions? Yes?

Commissioner Mitchell: I've got a general question for you – Jenn, Sarah, Hal. We just went through two public hearings and you said that the comments are going to be due 4:30 on November 10th. And you were expecting to have those posted the following Friday?

Ms. Rogers: I'm hoping to have them online by this upcoming Friday.

Commissioner Mitchell: Super. So with that, there was an awful lot of questions that came to my mind. I can't think of what might come to other people's minds. But when and how do you want questions from us about those kinds of things that brought to our mind so we can get them to you where you've got enough time to react before whenever? What kind of deadline do you need?

Mr. Rogers: If you could send your questions to me by the end of this week – by Sunday – that would be great, and I can include responses in the supplementary report to you next week. Is that doable?

Commissioner Mitchell: Well, it is for me. I don't know about other people. But, yeah, that would help.

Ms. Rogers: And I have your questions from the previous hearing written down. We'll have those answered, too. So if you have anything extra –

Commissioner Mitchell: Super. And like you did with Commissioner Hutchison's things recently, you made sure that all of us saw what the questions were. That was *extremely* helpful. So it gets our minds rolling too. If you would repeat that pattern for whomever might send you something, that'd be great.

Ms. Rogers: So if someone sends something individually, you would like us just to forward it and make sure everyone sees it?

Commissioner Mitchell: Yes, please.

Ms. Rogers: Okay, I can do that.

Commissioner Mitchell: Thank you.

Chair Raschko: Okay, thank you. We'll move on to the Planning Commissioner Comments and Announcements. Mark, have you anything?

Commissioner Knutzen: I have nothing, no.

Chair Raschko: Okay.

Commissioner Martha Rose: I have nothing.

Commissioner Hutchison: No, thank you.

Commissioner Henley: Nope, I'm good.

Vice Chair Candler: I have something. I just really want to thank everybody – the people who spoke at the public hearing tonight. I know most of the people are gone. We still have one person hanging around and helping out and spoke twice, and I really appreciate it. But I really think that it's a great way to get opinions expressed to us. It's only one of the ways, but I really appreciate when people come and speak. It helps me a lot. So that's all.

Chair Raschko: Thank you. Kathy?

Commissioner Mitchell: I'll co-sign that for our guest in the audience and anybody that's still watching. It makes a huge bit of difference. We learn a lot of extra information. There's different viewpoints, aspects, information, articles, things like that we would have no way of knowing otherwise. So (I) really encourage that, and especially anything that they brought up to come in writing so we can read it more in detail. That would be really appreciated. Thank you.

Commissioner Amy Hughes: My thoughts online is happy second Tuesday in November, and I am proud to be in Skagit County where public process is working and it's civil and people have a say and they're willing to come out on a cold day and be part of it. So it feels really good to be a Planning Commissioner member. So thank you for your time.

Unidentified Voice in the Audience: And I've been told that we have – the Commissioners have allowed this public comment _____. If you go to Seattle or something like that, they're playing on their phones! You just don't know how important that is _____. I'm very thankful to live in Skagit County.

Chair Raschko: Thank you. Okay. Well, with that, I thank everybody for being here and wish you all a good night, and we are adjourned (gavel).