

**Skagit County Planning Commission**  
**Workshops: Guemes Ferry; Binding Site Plans; OSRSI; Sign Code**  
**July 30, 2019**

**Planning**

**Commissioners:**     **Tim Raschko, Chair**  
                                  **Kathy Mitchell, Vice Chair**  
                                  **Mark Lundsten**  
                                  **Annie Lohman**  
                                  **Amy Hughes**  
                                  **Josh Axthelm**  
                                  **Tammy Candler (absent)**  
                                  **Hollie Del Vecchio (absent)**  
                                  **Martha Rose**

**Staff:**                   **Hal Hart, Planning Director**  
                                  **Mike Cerbone, Senior Planner**

Chair Tim Raschko: (gavel) Good evening. The July 30<sup>th</sup>, 2019, meeting of the Skagit County Planning Commission is hereby called to order. No public – we will go right by the Public Remarks. Has anybody any changes for the agenda?

(silence)

Chair Raschko: All right. With that, we'll go right on to item 3, which is a Guemes Island Ferry Updates.

Mike Cerbone: If I could just go ahead and get my screen up there...you guys all have a hard copy of this. My name's Mike Cerbone. I'm the senior planner in long range planning here in Skagit County, just for the record. And so what we had done at the last meeting is we had reviewed several of these staff-initiated amendments and there were several questions that popped up. And so what we did is we tried to answer all those questions. I was not able to answer all of them, but I am close to getting the last couple of answers that we'll need to move forward.

And so the first one here is the Guemes Island Ferry Updates, so that was C-1. And so if you wanted to take a look at the supplemental memo we gave you, we tried to answer the questions that popped up so we could get a little more information about the ferry.

So a basic overview is that the ferry operations division manager provided us some more detail. The total project cost is currently estimated about 18.9 million, and that's for a 28-car, 150-passenger replacement ferry. They have secured 10.4 million in federal funds – federal, state, and local funding – and they still need 8.5 million for construction, and they are in the process of preparing some grant applications and lobbying some lawmakers as well for some additional funds for that ferry. So that's kind of basically where the Guemes Island Ferry, the new ferry, kind of is in the process.

The first question that we documented from the record was: Who are the key players for the electric ferry project? So from County staff perspective, Dan Berentson, who's our Public Works

director, is, you know, kind of the key person pushing that. The ferry is under Public Works. Paul Randall-Grutter is our Public Works engineer so he is also on that group that's managing this project. And then Rachel Rowe is our ferry operations division manager and also the captain. And so those are the three people internal that are involved, and they are currently working with a naval architecture firm, Gloston, that's helping them design the boat, and they're in the process of trying to find a contractor for the shore side terminal piece of the project, so that's where the improvements for the ferry will dock. But, more importantly, because they're looking at an electric ferry that is also how the ferry would be recharged if it were. So it's not necessarily like pulling a battery out of my electric lawn mower and putting a new one in. You know, it's a little more detailed than that. So those are the key players currently and that's where they're at with the actual ferry project.

And the last response that we got back from them was, again, they have the 10.4 million. They're looking for 8.5. So if you guys have 8.5 million lying around they'd be very happy to talk to you. But the next steps are finishing the preliminary design and then getting grant funding and/or earmarks for that additional 8.5 million.

Commissioner Martha Rose: So that amount of money covers the terminal as well as the boat. That's probably where the lion's share of it is. Probably.

Mr. Cerbone: That's my understanding.

Commissioner Rose: Yeah.

Mr. Cerbone: Yeah. And the original request is literally to update the numbers in the Comprehensive Plan to more accurately reflect the current cost and then the current funding sources that were secured. So that was the original Comp Plan amendment.

But there was more questions sought, or more answers sought, and I wasn't able to answer them at the last meeting. So does that get what you guys were looking for in terms of a better understanding of the project?

Chair Raschko: Are there any more questions?

Commissioner Rose: How much is the – how many vehicles does the current ferry carry?

Mr. Cerbone: I don't know.

Commissioner Rose: Yeah, just curious. It doesn't matter.

Mr. Cerbone: But I would imagine Josh is looking it up right now.

Commissioner Josh Axthelm: I was looking it up. I was curious too.

Mr. Cerbone: Thank you, Josh.

Chair Raschko: Anything else? I have one question. It says here at the bottom of the first page they're in the process of selecting the terminal location. So they're moving the terminals?

Mr. Cerbone: I'm not sure if they are moving it or not or if that is one of the considerations as to keeping it where it is or potentially moving it, but I can certainly follow up with Captain Rowe and get more information on that.

Chair Raschko: Okay.

Mr. Cerbone: No problem.

Chair Raschko: Anything else?

(silence)

Chair Raschko: Okay, we'll move on to number 4, Proposed Changes to Binding Site Plan Standards. That's C-3.

Mr. Cerbone: So docket item C-3. So this is for the Airport Environs Overlay. And I did actually meet with the Port today, which was good. So I went out and met with the Port and I actually have a little more of an update than what's in here. But in essence what we are looking at doing here was – the first question is: What's the jurisdiction behind the docket item? So this has to do with the binding site plan revisions. If you recall from last meeting, there is a provision in the binding site plan revisions that says whenever a building has more than two leases within that building a binding site plan must be recorded with the County. And so what we were finding is that this binding site plan issue was causing issues with economic development.

So I chatted with the – one of the developers in the region that has been having issues with this specific provision and what he shared with me was that by the time he can go out and get a tentative approval for a binding site plan – if you recall, we went through the specific steps of what a binding site plan is and it requires a tentative approval first and then a final binding site plan is then recorded. By the time he gets through the tentative approval for a binding site plan, another jurisdiction would be able to accommodate his user. And he pointed out that Anacortes doesn't have this requirement and nor does Whatcom County. In fact, I went to see if other jurisdictions had this requirement for requiring the binding site plan. I couldn't find another one where a lease – the desire to lease property would trigger the need to go through a land division process. And for me, the binding site plan issue is distilled down pretty simply: Binding site plans were created by the State of Washington as an option for jurisdictions, so jurisdictions could adopt provisions to implement a binding site plan if they wanted to make it *easier* to divide commercial and industrial property, and this provision in our code appears to make it more *difficult* to lease property. And I would distill it down to this sentence: In order to lease a building to more than two users, you must go through a land division process. And the only time you typically would need to go through a land division process is if you want to transfer property, and so it would seem counterintuitive to what we're trying to do. And when I met with the Port today, they said that, you know, they would prefer this language be removed because it is an impediment.

Commissioner Rose: It almost seems like a mistake that it's even there.

Mr. Cerbone: And so the one thing that I didn't find yet – and we're going to find it – is: Why was that provision put in place? And so we did talk with Grace, who's one of our planners that's been here for quite some time, so we were able to trace back. We started doing binding site plans at the County in the '80s, and so there's several ordinances that have been adopted, you know, since the '80s that affect our land use code. And so we're trying to dig in and find where that specific provision was. In 2000, there was a very large ordinance that was adopted which

essentially, I believe, implemented GMA for the County, and so that's a very large record and a very large ordinance. It adopted our code and had several provisions in it. We don't think that is when this provision was added. We think it was done sometime between 2000 and '84 and we just need a little more time to literally dig through the ordinances and find that information. So I will have that the next time I bring this back before you, but I don't have it this evening. Because that was one of the concerns that was raised at the last meeting was, Well, why did they do this? If they put this provision in place, there had to have been some rationale behind it, so we wanted to better understand what that rationale is. So I will find that but I don't have it for you right now.

Commissioner Rose: So conversely, if somebody was forced to go through this binding site plan because they had one too many tenants then it could be a year or five years later that one of those tenants would then leave and now they have this situation that would no longer apply. So that's –

Mr. Cerbone: And they would need to update that application.

Commissioner Rose: Yeah. It doesn't seem logical that it'd be in place for a rental, for a lease situation.

Mr. Cerbone: Yes, I'm with you, and especially since the actual provision that was enabled by state law was to grease the skids – as it were, right? – to make it easier to transfer land.

Commissioner Rose: To sell, yeah.

Mr. Cerbone: They were trying to give an alternative process to the traditional platting process that would be easier for commercial-industrial users. And it seems like we took that and then made it more difficult to lease, which just catches me off guard. But again, before I change anything I like to know why they put it in place. And there was at least one or two folks up on the commission, too, that were interested in that as well. So we'll find that information and I'll definitely bring it back.

Commissioner Rose: I have one more comment about that. It seems like any concern that someone might have about the uses is going to be addressed through a use permit or building permit. In other words, in a zoning review of parking requirements and things like that. In other words, that's an independent review of anything that would be cared about. So it shouldn't be a – there shouldn't be a concern about well, what if it's a use that we don't want or too much parking or whatever the things are that people worry about. It shouldn't matter.

Mr. Cerbone: And we were pontificating at the last meeting about what could have been the impetus for this, and the thought was to make sure the development was coordinated.

Commissioner Rose: Right.

Mr. Cerbone: And, yeah, I think there probably is either a zoning review that happens at a building permit or, depending on what the specific use is, there may actually be a discretionary review required for that use before it goes into that building. But, again, I don't – I want to find out the real answer. I want to get you guys the right answer. I just wish it was a lot easier than digging for a needle in a haystack. But that is what we have our interns doing. It's good lessons for them to learn how to find stuff and learn more about legislative intent.

Chair Raschko: Any more questions or comments about C-3?

(silence)

Chair Raschko: Okay, so we'll move on to C-4.

Mr. Cerbone: Okay. So, let's see. C-4 is Proposed Changes to the Open Space of Regional/Statewide Importance. And I do want to pull that up. I apologize. I gave you a black and white map, but I'm going to pull this one up here which has a little more color. And we'll walk through this. So if you recall, C-4 was a proposal to make trails an outright permitted use within the OSRSI zone. And so the first question was: Why was this docket item put into the 2019 CPAs? So we did some research on that. It sounded like two years ago a similar long range work plan item was brought forward via a staff member regarding nonmotorized trails as an outright permitted use in the Industrial Forest Natural Resource-zoned lands. Does that sound familiar to folks who were here in 2017? And this is kind of a branch off of that. The docketed item branches off the 2017 work plan item to address trails in other zones in the county. So that's what we found.

The next question was: What have other jurisdictions done with the definition of "trails" in their code, and are some outright permitted and other types administrative special uses? So that was something we talked about at the last meeting – not having a definition of a trail – because a trail can be a lot of things to a lot of different people. It can be motorized, which has different impacts than maybe a hiking trail or, say, an equestrian trail or a mountain bike trail. And so we did look at some of the adjacent neighbors. We wanted to see what the other neighbors were doing and how they dealt with that. It looks like Whatcom County was the only jurisdiction that actually defined "trails" in their code, and they didn't make that distinction really between the different uses. It was an all-inclusive kind of definition of trails: It can be all of these things. And then Snohomish, Island, San Juan, King, and Kitsap did not define "trails." And the Whatcom County trail definition, like I said, it's pretty all-inclusive and doesn't really make that determination between one use and another and classifying them in a different permit process. But that's what we found.

Vice Chair Kathy Mitchell: So I understand that the – two years ago a long range planner brought forth the item to do that, but still the impetus behind that was what I was hoping we could find.

Mr. Cerbone: I can dig more into that one and see if I can find more information. It's hard because I wasn't here, but I *am* good at trying to find stuff. So I can dig more into that one and better understand that one as well.

Vice Chair Mitchell: So it's one of those things if – while I'm mulling this over in my mind I imagine other people would as well. They must have hit some sort of wall or some sort of reason that they wanted to do that and, you know, to override what's been done and been working all that time, we'd still like to know what the whys are.

Mr. Cerbone: Okay. Yeah, I can definitely dig in and try and find that.

Vice Chair Mitchell: Thank you.

Mr. Cerbone: I will make the best effort to do that.

Chair Raschko: Other questions or comments?

Commissioner Mark Lundsten: Do I remember right that it was Parks and Recreation that brought this forward?

Mr. Cerbone: So my understanding is that is where it came out of. Like I said, I don't have a paper trail. I just have conversations. And so I'll dig into the 2017 and see what I can find in there and then I'll sit down with Brian, who's the Parks director, and chat with him as well because he may have the answer as well.

Commissioner Axthelm: So what you're showing onscreen is where that – the –

Mr. Cerbone: Yeah, I'll get to there in a sec. It's Christmas colors too so it's kind of festive. So Whatcom County allows trails as an outright permitted use in most of their zones – not in all their zones – and then in some areas they have it listed as an administrative special use or it's just not allowed as a use. King County references trails in their zoning code and they do it with their Recreation Cultural Land Use section. Trails are permitted uses in their zone – in that zone. And then the other remaining counties don't mention trails in their zoning codes as either an outright permitted or an administrative special use. It's not identified as a use.

I thought this was a good question. I wasn't quite sure: How does Skagit County deal with trails in other zones? The Skagit County Code mentions two types of trails, non-motorized trails and trails. And depending on the zone, trails are either permitted outright or as an administrative special use. And so trails are permitted outright in the Small-Scale Recreation and Tourism zone, the Bayview Ridge Residential zone, and the Urban Reserve Public Open Space. And then they are listed as an administrative special use in all of the zones that are listed there. I'm not going to read through all of those. And then the map that's up on the screen in front of you goes with the last question. So folks wanted to know if all of the land that was in the OSRSI was publicly-owned or not, and it turns out that there are – the red properties are privately-owned, and so there are privately-owned properties. And then the areas that are shown with the black x's – you probably want to learn a little more about those – those are areas that we don't have tax information for so those properties are not currently being taxed. It's likely most of those are federal ownership and that's why we don't have tax on those, but one or two of those could be properties that are just not getting taxed because of an error. But most of the property – and I wish I had the actual summary for you, but when we bring this back before you I'll have the total acreage of what is in public ownership and what is in private ownership. My recollection was that it was less than 1% of the land in the OSRSI is in private ownership. So most of it is in public ownership whether that's with the State of Washington or the federal government or a City or County.

Chair Raschko: Okay, anything else?

(silence)

Chair Raschko: I have a question for you about the definition from Whatcom County.

Mr. Cerbone: Mm-hmm?

Chair Raschko: If you look at it from a legal standpoint, it mentions that if properly constructed they may be used for mountain biking and bicycling and other uses. Do we infer that with motorized recreation not listed that it would be an *illegal* use?

Mr. Cerbone: I will ask them. But typically when I read the code, if it's very specific in general – if codes are constructed to be very specific and they leave out specific uses then it typically would mean that that use is not included unless it's, like, a brand new use that didn't exist at the time the code was drafted. So, like, those one-wheel skateboard things that people ride around on now, you know, that's a motorized board. So if motorized uses aren't allowed, I would imagine

that, you know, you wouldn't be allowed to use one of these new motorized contraptions even though it's not specifically identified. But we'll follow up with Whatcom County and we'll see how they interpret their code. But general....

Chair Raschko: Or would it be a better idea just to create a definition that would be more specific?

Mr. Cerbone: Well, and we *do* make – elsewhere in the code we *do* make that distinction between motorized and non-motorized. So I believe that was in the Industrial Forestland where that is a – it was changed to outright use in Industrial Forestland but we do make a distinction between motorized and non-motorized elsewhere in the code.

Chair Raschko: My personal feeling is it's very important to have them separated. I don't mean from a use standpoint; I just mean from a resource protection standpoint because when – I've just seen terrible things when people are using RVs or small pickup trucks on trails that aren't properly constructed, and they create more mud than you can ever believe. Erosion and just a lot of problems. And the problem is that nobody knows that they're there and nobody sees the damage.

Mr. Cerbone: Yeah, yeah, and definitely trail construction techniques are different for different types of users, especially with larger, heavier users it's typically armoring and making sure the surface is capable of withstanding that. And if you don't do that then it can lead to erosion and things like that. I'll get you some more information on this and how they implement it. And what I think when I take something back before you I'll probably include a definition in there for your consideration and then you guys can change it how you see fit as part of your recommendation. But I think when I bring this back before you I'll have your questions answered and I probably will have a proposal for you guys to consider that looks at defining "trails" and addresses some of the other concerns you talked about at this meeting and the last.

Chair Raschko: Okay.

Commissioner Annie Lohman: Mr. Chair?

Chair Raschko: Yes?

Commissioner Lohman: What about snowmobiles? Are you thinking about the – you were thinking about the conflict with the land – the underlying land – and the trail not being constructed, but what about conflicts with users? And I was thinking of snowmobiles, you know, being a seasonal thing, maybe they wouldn't need a paved trail, but wouldn't that be considered motorized?

Mr. Cerbone: It would most certainly be considered motorized, yeah. Technically an electric bike would be considered motorized. It has a motor on it. Electric skateboard would be motorized.

Chair Raschko: That's an interesting point, though.

Commissioner Lohman: And then the other thing I've been thinking about since the last meeting and before the last meeting is, Who's responsible for the trail?

Mr. Cerbone: I guess it depends who's proposing it, right? So if it's a federal facility then the federal government would be responsible for it but those likely wouldn't come before the County for approval. They go through their own process. But if it's a State facility, you know, usually they don't spend money on building facilities like that without understanding who's going to maintain

it. Or if it was a County facility – if it was a Parks and Rec facility, I would imagine the County would be responsible for it, for the long term maintenance of it. In some instances you have programs in place where volunteers maintain. So if it's, like, an earthen trail, you may have volunteers who do a lot of that work. That's how some of the stuff up in Whatcom County is dealt with, and I've definitely volunteered, you know, in the forest – U.S. Forest Service, as well as on private forestland and maintained facilities. But usually money is not invested into, like, a capital facility like that without some understanding for the long term maintenance or how that's going to be maintained. So, like, you know, a 12-foot-wide paved bike path: usually there's some thought that goes into how that's going to be maintained by whatever jurisdiction is proposing it, or agency is proposing it. But if you were a private entity and you wanted to build some trails on your property, I would think that you'd be responsible for maintaining those trails on your property long term. Some people have fun doing it.

Chair Raschko: Okay, anything else on C-4?

(silence)

Chair Raschko: C-7.

Mr. Cerbone: All right. So C-7 was the signs. And so we did do – spent a fair amount of time talking with our building official about this. There was some confusion last time as to why we didn't adopt Appendix H, and I was able to clarify all that with our building official, and I think he's got a good explanation and reasoning behind everything. So I'll walk you through that.

So why was Appendix H not adopted under the 2016 International Building Code? So there's other sections that deal with structural improvements within the IBC that he relies upon in order to be able to review signs, and the building official is not recommending adoption of Appendix H at this time because he thinks there's additional information in there, additional requirements in there that he doesn't think are appropriate at this time. And so the easier way to deal with the structural components of signs is to rely on other parts of the IBC. And that was his response. I'm pretty comfortable with that.

There was a question as to why seven feet in height was the threshold between needing and not needing a building permit. And why is there no width dimension? So the building official said that the seven-foot threshold was decided based on the definition of a fence in one section of the International Building Code. And he said there's little to no risk for a sign up to seven feet and the risk is similar for a basic fence. So if you think about a fence, it typically will go several hundred feet and that'll be 700 feet of wind load that that several hundred feet may catch is probably going to be a lot less than the wind load that an actual sign would catch. And so that's why he was comfortable using that seven-foot cutoff, because that's structurally how most other things are dealt with by the International Building Code. Seemed pretty straightforward and keep things simple. Regulate what we need to regulate. Don't regulate the things we don't need to regulate.

This was the one that really perplexed us. Why is the general public not able to print out the IBC? Well, he gave us a link here so if you guys do want to go to that link he said that that is used by a lot of people. Certainly the International Building Code folks, you know, are not big fans of providing the ability to print things and then share them among other people. They want the individual jurisdictions to be able to join and pay for that, which we are a member and we do pay. But certainly smaller jurisdictions will look for the opportunity to photocopy things and use them, and so I think that's part of the reason.



And I think that was it. Are there any other questions on C-7?

Chair Raschko: Are you ladies good on C-7?

Vice Chair Mitchell: So far so good.

Commissioner Axthelm: Just a note on C-1 for that ferry.

Mr. Cerbone: Yeah?

Commissioner Axthelm: The existing one has 21 vehicles and 99 passengers.

Mr. Cerbone: So this would increase that by 7 vehicles and 51 passengers, so we'd be going to 28 cars and 150 passengers.

Vice Chair Mitchell: Could you repeat both, please?

Commissioner Axthelm: The existing capacity is 21 vehicles and 99 passengers.

Vice Chair Mitchell: Thank you. And –

Mr. Cerbone: And then it's proposed to be 28 vehicles and 150 passengers.

Vice Chair Mitchell: Thank you.

Commissioner Axthelm: That was on the Skagit County website. They have a thing on there for replacement of the ferry.

Mr. Cerbone: Thanks, Commissioner.

Chair Raschko: Okay. Go to item number 7, Upcoming Meetings: Discuss Tentative Schedule.

Mr. Cerbone: So I wanted to chat with you guys about the upcoming schedule and how I'd like to address the remaining items. I still have one more staff-initiated code amendment that I'll bring before you and I'll probably use a similar fashion that I've done here with the work session; present the option; and then go back and try and research any questions you have so to make sure you have the right information.

On some of these other items, though, I did want to chat with you, share my thoughts, and make sure that you are comfortable with how I want to proceed with it, because in my mind it's the right way, but sometimes my mind's not always correct.

So some of the remaining items that we have for you to review and make sure that we're getting all the information that you need to deliberate on: The first one is the removal of a Mineral Resource Overlay designation. And so that is a – a property owner is requesting that that MRO – Mineral Resource Overlay – designation be removed from their property and two adjacent properties. The MRO designation is an overlay that is placed over mining areas to be able to protect the ability to mine resources, so whether that's aggregate, sand, or rock. There's an MRO overlay that this property owner believes does not protect a valuable resource, and they've done some research. And what I wanted to do was pull in the property owner and allow them to give a presentation to the Planning Commission. That way you'll hear exactly why they've petitioned to

have this on the docket, and it will also give you the opportunity to ask that applicant questions. And then if there are any additional questions that pop up from that, I will certainly go back and research them. But I thought that that would best serve the applicant and their request rather than have me take their information and synthesize it. It's like the telephone game when we were little kids. By the time it gets around the circle the message is a little different. And I'd rather have – since they paid money to have this placed on the docket, I'd rather have them the ability to directly address you and answer your questions. Does that sound –

(positive sounds from Planning Commissioners)

Mr. Cerbone: And so along those same lines, we have two amendments that were requested by the Guemes Island Planning Advisory Committee, the GIPAC, and so I'd like to invite them to come to a meeting and, again, also present, you know, those two items, and then give you the opportunity to ask them questions. And, again, if there's other things that I would need to research, I'd be more than happy to go and research them, but they're going to be able to better answer your questions and advocate for their position than I am and so I'd like to do that.

Commissioner Rose: Is that the one that you have listed about rainwater catchment?

Mr. Cerbone: Yeah, so they requested – P-1 and P-2 came from the GIPAC, and so that was proposed amendments to the aquifer recharge areas of our code and then proposed amendments to the critical area ordinance to – I take that back. So that was proposed amendments to the aquifer recharge and proposed amendments to the rainwater catchment. And so we've done a fair amount of research internally on rainwater catchment, so after they come and talk to you we'll come through and provide you more information about what our process is. And then we've also done case studies on other jurisdictions as well to understand what their process is. And we're spending some time right now really trying to compare and contrast so that we understand the differences between those.

Commissioner Rose: So I was approached by two different people but on the same matter – about rainwater catchment – in the last, say, couple weeks. And so it's a slightly – it might be a slightly different angle of concern than what the Guemes people have, so are you aware of the one I'm talking about which has to do with –

Mr. Cerbone: Is it somewhere off Guemes Island?

Commissioner Rose: It's not on Guemes Island.

Mr. Cerbone: Okay.

Commissioner Rose: It's – but there's a couple of attorneys involved and they're proposing rainwater catchment not as a sole source of water but as a mitigating factor to be able to then justify putting a well in.

Mr. Cerbone: So I'm not familiar with that personally. I'm sure somebody at the County is.

Commissioner Rose: So my question is since the Guemes people are proposing some changes to – or some provisions for the stormwater catchment that –

Mr. Cerbone: Rainwater catchment.

Commissioner Rose: Rainwater catchment. Wouldn't it be appropriate to get these other folks and hear their – ask at the same time or –

Mr. Cerbone: Well, they're proposing to change specific portions of the code that are tied to Guemes. So Guemes is a unique situation where it's a sole source aquifer.

Commissioner Rose: Right. I'm familiar.

Mr. Cerbone: And it has seawater intrusion.

Commissioner Rose: Sure. I understand.

Mr. Cerbone: And so those are the areas of the code that they're proposing so the amendment that was docketed was specific to that.

Commissioner Rose: I see.

Mr. Cerbone: And I think, if I'm understanding what you're describing, that would be the ability to use it potentially upriver and other areas in the county, and I think that that's something that is different from what was docketed.

Commissioner Rose: I see, I see.

Mr. Cerbone: But I do think that that is something that could be discussed more, but that is not what these folks were proposing.

Commissioner Rose: I see.

Mr. Cerbone: You as a group can make a different recommendation, and certainly if you want to pull other folks in I can do that. But this proposal was specifically tailored to be limited to Guemes.

Commissioner Rose: Okay.

Mr. Cerbone: For several reasons.

Commissioner Rose: Okay, so –

Mr. Cerbone: Is my understanding. But they could answer those questions better than I could.

Commissioner Rose: Is it appropriate – yeah, is it appropriate or not to – maybe this isn't the time to even bring this up. I guess that's what I'm wondering.

Mr. Cerbone: Let me see what I can figure out about what you described – if there's somebody at the County that I can chat with and get a better understanding of what that is. But my understanding was this was specifically proposed to be focused on the island and that specific situation with the sole source aquifer and the seawater intrusion specifically for that island.

Commissioner Rose: Okay, thank you.

Mr. Cerbone: It was a *really* good question, though.

Chair Raschko: Kathy?

Vice Chair Mitchell: Well, Part B to that is I think everybody knows what's going on for the Guemes situation but I think a lot of people – I shouldn't say 'a lot' – I *know* that there are other people that have been waiting for the same thing for the rest of the county, and in past meetings it had been indicated that this would be addressed as one issue for the whole county rather than just one small sector of it.

Mr. Cerbone: Okay.

Vice Chair Mitchell: So if – I understand that Guemes brought their piece forward, but the question begs: Well, what about the rest of the county?

Mr. Cerbone: Okay. I will go back and do some additional research. I mean, I was pretty careful about reading through the Guemes pieces and trying to understand what the request was and that's why I met with them. And so my understanding was it *was* focused on the island. But, again, they would be able to answer that better. That's part of the reason why I want to bring them before you. But I can definitely look into the other item that you guys have raised. And certainly, you know, you as a board are independent from me so you guys can make the recommendation that you believe is the right recommendation. I *am* going to try and keep you task-wise focused on the things that the Board docketed, but, you know, I can only keep you in line to the extent that the Chair allows me to. So if you do have a different recommendation, that's certainly something that is your purview to do.

Commissioner Rose: Can I say one more thing about this, Tim?

Chair Raschko: It's my turn first \_\_\_\_.

Commissioner Rose: Okay, go ahead.

Chair Raschko: I really would like to hear what these other people have because they may have a solution that's better than the one being proposed in the docket, and maybe it could be used in part or in whole to enhance what they're trying to accomplish.

Commissioner Rose: Okay. Are you done?

Chair Raschko: Yes.

Commissioner Rose: I actually think it's quite different and it isn't applicable to Guemes, the exact scenario that was presented to me. So the way I see it is there's the Guemes Island solution that can be applied to other places in the county as well – which, basically, they're asking for 100% rainwater catchment as an – in lieu of a well.

Mr. Cerbone: Mm-hmm.

Commissioner Rose: Where this other proposal is suggesting that it should be as viable and as good of an alternative to have a well with restrictions on it and a supplemental source of rainwater catchment to mitigate the dry summer months. Some group – a group of people believe that that's a more viable alternative to no well and a full rainwater catchment. I'm not saying I agree with that; I'm just saying that I told them that I would bring it up and go to bat for them. This is a solution that was used in Whatcom County before the *Hirst* decision was resolved with success. And it

withstood the legal system. And the concern is that they seem to think that their proposal is being run by all the tribes, which is going to be a method of killing it, and they're saying, Well, is that the right procedure? If we're mitigating the water extraction from the ground by putting it back in, why do we have to run this by the tribes?

Mr. Cerbone: Well, it is a – it's definitely interesting. It is definitely different than what was docketed. So, like I said, I will dig into it more.

Commissioner Rose: That's fine.

Mr. Cerbone: And I can understand the motivation for wanting to do that because I understand the situation that we're in in a lot of the county. But it is different from the decision the Board – what they made a decision to docket. What you're describing is a whole other different pathway that we would research, and I'm not saying we can't do that but we are limited in resources and, as I shared with the rest of the group, I am trying to move through the docket as expediently as possible, given that we are a couple of months behind. But I can look into that and I can get back to you and chat with you. Because I'm not – I want to give you more information before I give you any answers.

Chair Raschko: Kathy?

Vice Chair Mitchell: Mark first.

Chair Raschko: Go ahead, Mark.

Commissioner Lundsten: I would suggest that we are careful with the politics of these issues and the policies of the issues. Holding one group hostage to the politics of another region is basically a backdoor way of blocking politically whatever it is they're doing. On the other hand – and we should avoid that. It just – it's a common, you know, obstruction of any political process and we ought to just be aware that – and that could happen in this case. I think anyone can see that. But on the other hand, I agree with Tim that we can – in the course of reviewing what is on the docket, we would be remiss if we didn't just say, Well, are there simpler solutions? Are there ways to improve what you on Guemes have come up with? So I just – you know, so my point is just to keep the policy and the politics clear.

Mr. Cerbone: Yep.

Commissioner Lundsten: That's my advice.

Mr. Cerbone: I'm with you 100%. I really appreciate that statement. And, Commissioner Rose, if these folks that you are talking to are interested in getting their specific project on the docket, they have until tomorrow at 5 p.m. and they can submit a request, and that is free of charge and there're instructions on our webpage for how to do that. And what it is is recommending a text or policy change and that's something that the County considers free of charge. There's no filing fee for that. And so that is something – then the specific topic that you brought up would then come before the Board of County Commissioners and they could consider that in light of how that's being presented and whether they want to docket that. That would be my recommendation, but certainly I'll dig down the other path as well.

Commissioner Rose: Perfect. Thank you.

Mr. Cerbone: But they have until tomorrow. Yes, tomorrow's the last day to submit docketed items.

Commissioner Rose: I'm good at skidding in right under the wire!

Mr. Cerbone: It's not a difficult application. It's available online and they could fill it out and submit it.

Commissioner Lohman: But, for clarification, that would be for next year's docket.

Mr. Cerbone, That would be for 2020, yes, because then what would happen is that docket item along with the other three docket items that we received that I'll discuss with you a little bit before we close the meeting, then those would all go before the Board and the Board would review all of those in light of the resources that they had available to devote to those actions and decide which ones they wanted to docket. And if they wanted to explore that in more detail I imagine they would docket it, and if they didn't I would imagine they wouldn't. But that would be probably the cleanest pathway to getting where they would like to get to, in my mind.

Chair Raschko: Yes?

Commissioner Lohman: Were you going to then invite the last public proposed one, the Blue Heron one?

Mr. Cerbone: Yes. Thank you, Commissioner Lohman, for getting us back on track. Thank you. Yes, so my goal would be to also invite the Skagit Land Trust, who sponsored the Blue Heron project, to come and give you a presentation on that and, again, answer questions that you have. I met with them just last week. They have a very good presentation pulled together. In fact, some of you may have already seen it, but it's very good. Every time I asked a question – because the executive director said, Go ahead and ask questions while we're going through – every time I asked a question, she said, We'll get to that in a second, and two slides later my question was answered. Very – I thought it was very good and very thorough. And that is kind of where that got in my head that we should just be pulling these people in here to directly address you, so that way they can present their amendment in their own thoughts and they can answer any specific questions you have, and I can focus my time and effort on digging into the things that can't be answered by them.

So, yeah, that would be my goal. I would probably pull both Guemes items in on one meeting. And so my understanding is that there was discussion about not doing anything in August so folks could enjoy the County fair and maybe go on a vacation, do a little camping, do something, go catch some fish, do a little mountain biking maybe. And then we would pick back up in September. And what I'd like to do is reach out and try and get the Guemes folks scheduled for that first meeting so that they can come in and share that information with you, and then the next meeting I would probably pull the MRO and the Blue Heron project together for that briefing, where you could learn and ask questions.

And I will tell you I have one other item that I'm going to bring before you that is a very small minor amendment that somehow got slipped through the cracks. It is a minor amendment to our critical area ordinance and it just changes a threshold for when wetland delineations are required. And so that is a very minor thing that I'm going to slip in to one of these meetings and hopefully get your support so I can move that forward and get that addressed. That is the only deviation from the docket. I did see it as something that is very simple, easy. I figured I could have a half-hour

conversation with you about it and if you are comfortable making a recommendation we could then go ahead and move that item forward.

But that is what I was thinking for September, is that we would kind of close the loop on the work sessions so that you had your base knowledge of all these items. And then whatever additional information that you'd like me to go gather I will certainly go and gather for those items. We're already starting to do some, like I said, additional work on the rainwater catchment, and we're also looking at how blue herons are regulated elsewhere in the state. Sounds like there's two other examples for us to take a look at and so we'll be gathering that information.

Vice Chair Mitchell: Obviously you've seen a PowerPoint presentation then. Is there something we can look at ahead of time?

Mr. Cerbone: For the herons? Yeah, they have a PowerPoint presentation. I can see if I can get a copy of it ahead of time.

Vice Chair Mitchell: Thank you.

Mr. Cerbone: But certainly if they come and give it to you then it would be part of the record and you'd have a copy of it.

Vice Chair Mitchell: It's the old knowing a little bit ahead of time so you can focus on what they're saying instead of what you're trying to see.

Mr. Cerbone: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Yeah, no, I will definitely see if I can get that ahead of time.

Vice Chair Mitchell: Thank you.

Chair Raschko: Okay, so our first meeting in September would be on the 10<sup>th</sup>?

Mr. Cerbone: I believe so. Yeah, it would be the – it's the second and fourth. Because we deviated to have this meeting – thank you for accommodating me – one week later, so this is the fifth week. So yeah, it would be the second and fourth, and what I was hoping to do is because you had all gotten a schedule ahead of time and some of you probably relied upon that for the rest of your life, I wanted to try and stick to that schedule moving forward in terms of those meetings. And I think we'd be able to do that, but I just need to – I wanted to make sure that you are comfortable.

The last piece that I wanted to close the loop with you on, how I'd like to close out the docket this year, is what I'd like to do and what I'm planning on doing is going before the Ag Advisory Board – seeing if they're interested – and I will give them a presentation about the docket in an effort to try and solicit input from them for your consideration as part of the process. I'd like to do that with the Forest Advisory Board as well. So by the time you get to deliberations, if they have specific concerns on any of these items they can articulate those in a memo or potentially come before you and explain those to you. I don't know if you guys have done that in the past, but it seemed like it was good to plug in our two advisory committees into your decision-making process. But that's what I'd like to do, unless there's any objections.

Commissioner Lundsten: On the contrary. I'd *like* you to do that.

Mr. Cerbone: Okay. Yeah, and maybe they're comfortable with them and they may not say anything, but I think it's good to reach out and see what their thoughts are. And certainly when we

give you the Department Update here in a little bit, Hal's got some information for you and I've got just five minutes on what's come through the door so far on the docket. And I think some of those groups would be interested in some of the potential docket items for next year, if nothing else.

Chair Raschko: Yes?

Commissioner Lohman: Did we need to review C-5 and C-2?

Mr. Cerbone: I don't have updates for those yet.

Commissioner Lohman: Okay.

Mr. Cerbone: And so those are the ones that I am going to be bringing to you. The Habitat Restoration one was actually a lot of work to go through all the different areas where we have classified that in the code. So I'll be bringing that to you probably after the Guemes. And then the drainage districts, I'm still trying to coordinate with the drainage district and I certainly don't want to come – not with an individual but with the consortium of drainage districts – I don't want to come before you until I've had that conversation with them. And my understanding is also Shaun, who is our stormwater professional at the County right now, has also been indirectly coordinating with some of the districts so he may have come up with a process that actually works to address the concern that was identified in that Comp Plan policy. So I also want to make sure I meet with him. He is an army of one right now, where normally we have two-and-a-half people doing his job, so I'm trying to wait until we get some additional resources to assist him before I spend more time with him. So those are the outstanding County-initiated items. Yeah, those will be coming back to you.

Chair Raschko: Anything else?

(silence)

Chair Raschko: Okay. Department Update?

Hal Hart: Yeah, we'll go ahead and plug it in here.

Mr. Cerbone: So while I'm doing this...so far we've gotten three potential amendments submitted for the docket. One was a rezone for a portion of property from Rural Reserve to Rural Village Residential, and so that is in the Clear Lake area. So that's one item that we received. We received an item from Kiewit yesterday, who is a mining company that folks might be aware of. They're looking at mining some very large, heavy rocks upriver and they're requesting an amendment to the Mineral Resource Overlay to expand the Mineral Resource Overlay to cover a larger area where they would like to do some mining activity. I'm sure folks have read about that in the paper. Talk to folks about it. And then the third one I got is for an existing Ag-NRL property which is located just east of the intersection of Highway 9 and Highway 20. And that is an existing Ag-NRL piece of property that's been utilized in support of a logging business. And so it is a legal, non-conforming use. And so what that means in Skagit County is that they can't expand anything on that property, and so they're going to be requesting to be docketed so that they can change the Ag-NRL zone of their property to Natural Resource Industrial so that they can continue to support their logging operation.



And so those are the three that I've received so far and I believe we'll be getting a fourth, which would be a requested code amendment to have the County consider whether they want to adopt complete communities. And so that has previously come onto the docket as a specific complete community, the Avalon Community, in kind of the northern part of the county. But this amendment, as I understand it – I have not received it yet – would just be: County, do you want to consider adopting complete communities? And if you do want to adopt complete communities, please put the legislative framework in place under which somebody could apply for one. So it wouldn't be specific to an individual proposal. It would ask the County whether they wanted to enable state legislation that would allow those types of developments to occur at the county level. So it has not come in yet but I'm fairly certain it's going to because there's been some back and forth with the consultant that's helping them out with that.

So that's what I know for the docket potential next year, the four items, and then there'll also be a string of probably staff-initiated amendments as well. Okay?

Chair Raschko: Do you have something else?

Mr. Hart: Yeah, just some \_\_\_\_\_. So I'm just going to give you five quick updates. I'm going to tie a lot of things together. If you have questions, we can dig deeper in anything.

So let's do the first one. So the first one is housing. I'll kind of explain what I'm finding here. There's – I call it the "Big C" and "Little c" when I'm talking to our interns. What is the County's role in housing? So in the unincorporated area I call that the "Little c," because we're not doing – we're supposed to be doing 20% of the overall housing for the county, including our unincorporated territory that we're responsible for as a department. But really we're working with Cities at the regional level as well and we have a Big C level. It's not so much *our* department; it's really your *Health* Department, because what the Health Department does is they're working on low to moderate income housing and they are the central agency in the County that's doing that for everybody. So that's a really important role that is – that we're playing as a county and one of the things that's coming up is a housing summit. They did one of these before and they're going to have another one rolling out in October. So let me know if that's something that you want to be a part of.

There's really – if you could think of it as a continuum – from the far left here would be low to moderate income, things like Housing First models where the folks that are having a hard time with alcohol and other kinds of things. That's called "wet housing." And they dry out in those and they get their stuff together, and studies are showing that it's a pretty good return rate on the dollars versus Cities that have to work with homelessness and are always responding and medical EMTs, and all those costs are huge. And a lot of jurisdictions are finding, well, you know, that if we could somehow contain those costs and get those people into housing, into shelter, then the costs that are spread around all the other departments in cities are lessened. And we found that true when I did that kind of housing development up in Alaska. Anchorage was doing it and we did one in Juneau. Highly successful. The data's there in those places. We didn't come up with the idea. I think places like Duluth, Minnesota, that we went to to go check out this thing.

That's really – in this arena, it's really your health department that's working in that area because it's a public health issue. But it is part of the overall continuum of housing problems that we're seeing and also a connection to the opioid issue as well here. So there's going to be some emphasis on that kind of housing in the housing summit. But that is a Big C role for our low to moderate income and these other kinds of housing, plus you're working and coordinating with all the nonprofits. You're working and coordinating with one of the best housing finance commissions

in the United States is the Washington State Housing Finance Commission. The guy that's there is named Kim Herman. I ran into him recently and he wants to help our county. And I was at the state housing conference down in Bellevue representing the County down there, and the economist from the University of Washington asked me, What the heck is going on in Skagit County? We're the number five – we've seen the – among all counties in the United States, we're number five fastest increase in housing affordability. It's getting out of what we have for incomes rapidly. And they don't know. He's looking at the data and he goes, What is going on? And I think there's a lot of things going on. We're on that I-5 corridor and there wasn't a lot of housing flak already, and so it didn't take much to move that dial and spike that dial up. So we are feeling it now in terms of increased costs to get into apartments for the folks compared to what their incomes are here. And so that's something we should talk about as a community. How does that fit with the Housing Element of the Comprehensive Plan? How's that fit with the Growth Management goals? There's talk at the state level helping cities. And in the housing bills that came up this last time what happened was they left out counties, except for specific counties that got in there and put some riders on stuff and got themselves written in.

So to give you an example of how that might hurt us: What if the County owned some property and the County wanted to say, Hey, our number one goal is to start getting housing going here and we want to do some of that. The County actually wouldn't be eligible for all – they put 5,800,000 into a new account to help do this. Cities are the only ones that can apply with the exception of a couple of Counties, like Thurston County, I think maybe – Pierce County or something. So there's things that we have to fix because our County's role is to provide that kind of housing in this place.

And so anyway, just kind of digressing. Housing's super important, but really think about it this way. And on my continuum I only gave you the far left kind of side of housing first and low to moderate income, but there's this whole private sector huge effort that should be, you know, the big portion of what's being built. And then the question is, to ask everybody, is: Why aren't we building more? Is it the land? Is it the cost of doing things? Is it because we need to have – redevelop in places like downtown Mount Vernon is complex and there's brown fields and there's all sorts of issues that you have to get through first before you can do anything. And then once you've set the table – that's his term; I love it – you set the table then you can put the housing in there. So it's kind of all those things and it takes a lot more sophistication, it takes a different financing background so the banks have to increase their sophistication in that case. And then if you're talking mixed use housing so maybe you have a 7-Eleven that's part of a larger housing project, so floor 1, and then you might have parking garages and things like that. Anything like that in downtown Mount Vernon, it's just complex. It's harder to build and get through the financing and to get that approved, and then also to manage it forward. Those are all lessons that are – I've seen and I've been involved with further to the south.

And so that's probably enough right there but the big news is that we want to talk to everybody. We want to engage the economic development groups, we want to engage the housing developers, and continue to ask that question: How can we do a better job in providing housing? And builders as well. So we're wanting to reengage with that group – get the latest data. And I reported last year, or earlier this year, that last year in 2018 out in the county we did 225 or so housing permits. I think 18 of those were ADUs. Through the first six months of this year we were actually off a bit. I think part of that was because we got a later start with – just people came in later this year than they had the previous year. So it seems to be that July has been very busy, so I'll report back with – the next report you'll see, probably in September, will be a six-month report, and then an update of where we are through the beginning of September. So we kind of have – hopefully we're at around, you know, at least beyond the halfway point of where we were

the previous year and that we're producing some houses out there. What I'm hearing from the developers is it's the ground. We need more ground. And that's both in the cities and in the county, and I expect you always would hear that pretty much. But we're going to stay in contact with those folks and make sure we understand what's going on.

Now both counties – it's interesting. We're the only county on this corridor north of Seattle that doesn't have to do something called "buildable lands." So with a buildable lands approach they start counting and really evaluating how much land is being utilized for housing and other kinds of development, and whether or not your City is doing the kind of job that they set their minds to in their comprehensive plan and their goals and objectives. So if you set out all the land in the city of Mount Vernon and you said, Okay, we're going to have four houses to a unit. Are you getting four houses to a unit – or to an acre – or are you getting something less or are you getting something more? How well are you doing on that goal? And that's part of what buildable lands is accounting for. So that effort is going on both to the county to the north for the first time and to the county to the south. They've done it before. But it also reminds me of we are not an island. That's why we're seeing the increase in housing costs. And people drive to qualify. So I'll leave that alone, but just if you're interested either send me an email or I could say, Hey, just set aside nine spots and we'll keep in contact. My role is to get sponsors for that. It's not free to put that on. So one of the things that I've been doing is calling around and getting some sponsorships to help put that housing summit on.

Next. So that was Big C, Little c – kind of what our role is. Okay, so state coordination. So part of this is engage the Washington State Housing Finance Commission, the Washington State Department of Commerce, because they give out funding, primarily – there's new tools out there for Cities. I think all our Cities are engaged here locally and are reaching for the new tools, and hopefully they'll build more housing. But the other thing that we've done, Mike and I have reached out to WSDOT and just are starting to coordinate with WSDOT on transportation. And what's going on in that slide I think is important. Actually I saw that go by today. That goes from Portland to Vancouver, the – what's it called? The Cascades? Yeah.

But what we also know is happening, and more and more money and time and folks are looking at it, is as the Puget Sound trough grows – right? – we're stuck right in the middle, all sides of us. They want to put a high speed something or other – I'm not exactly sure if it's going to be a train or a hyperloop or something. They want something going from Portland to Vancouver. And if you step back and just go, What is going on here? This area is growing tremendously fast. We all know it. We all see it. I was just – you know, as I went on my way down to Vashon Island, I went over one of the bridges and I was watching them put the new rails in. So soon they'll have a rail that goes from downtown Seattle and it's going to go into Bellevue. Bellevue's going to get 23,000 more folks in Bellevue just working down there with Amazon, and there's tens of thousands of others on the way to that area. So it's Redmond by 2022, 23 will have rail as well. They're pushing it north right now, and so what this means, I believe, is that you're still going to have the drive to qualify. It might even push the drive to qualify our way. So as the area grows, the pressure will grow upon us as well. So our Cities have to get it together to make sure that they're attractive, great places for investment, for housing, and those kind of things. It's not too early to start doing that now with our Cities and to reach out, start the coordination now, with the funders for basic infrastructure and play the Big C and the Little c role. So how that's also being done is the State legislature also gave us over a million dollars to the PUD. And what's that project? That project is looking at putting more water out in the valley and putting more PUD lines out in the valley. And where would they go? So there is that as well, and that's going on at the same time with all these other things, and how does it all fit together is going to be a good question.

So let's do the next one. This is one of my favorite shots. That's Clear Lake in the day. That's a mixed use development in Clear Lake at one point that existed. And that was a hotel. That was a boarding house. That was a general store/dry goods store, and a number of other offices in the area. So we've done a lot of these things before. It's kind of back to the future on some of it.

Commissioner Lohman: But I don't think – excuse me, Mr. Chair. I don't think you have to look that far back. I mean, when I first moved here my family lived right above Tracy's Furniture in Anacortes. There were several apartments in that – where Tracy's Furniture is now. I mean, now there aren't. I mean they've since remodeled the building and now the whole thing is a furniture store. So I don't think you have to look to the last century, as in the 1800s, to see mixed use models.

Mr. Hart: That's true. You really don't. I came across that one and I just love the photo.

Commissioner Rose: I think Anacortes, though, is fully commercialized where Clear Lake has gone backwards.

(sounds of agreement)

Commissioner Rose: A lot of people would probably be jarred if you made a proposal to put this in today.

Mr. Hart: Oh, they would be. Yeah, definitely.

Commissioner Rose: They would probably stomp their feet and say, No way.

Mr. Hart: And I think part of it is understanding what was there before. Over a thousand jobs in that area at one point. Yes, sir?

Chair Raschko: The largest inland sawmill in the world was at Clear Lake.

Mr. Hart: That's incredible. I'll make a note of that. I hadn't seen that comparison, but by looking at all the old photos it was huge.

Commissioner Rose: And isn't the lake still full of tons of logs that they sunk?

Chair Raschko: And other stuff.

Mr. Hart: So what the Ruckelshaus – what this slide is really showing is that Ruckelshaus had a road show. They went around to all the counties. They've now done a report. And they asked everybody, What's going right with the Growth Management Act and what needs to be improved on the Growth Management Act? So that report just came out about 15 days ago, so I'll send you all a link and even if you just – like I did today. I just read through the executive summary and you get a pretty good overview. So one of the things they said was going good is the critical areas are being protected. We know that's going on, but Commissioner Wesen came into my office yesterday and said, How many have we protected? I had no idea. And so part of our job when we ask people to protect these areas and set aside these areas, it's really important that we see the big picture. What's happening across the landscape? And when we've set these aside – and in some cases when they're really special we've put an easement on them – and so it's good to go back and know what we've done over the last 17, 18 years and just have that inventory so that when someone says, Well, has it been a good thing or a bad thing? What's the evaluation, Mr.

Hart? And I said, Wow, I need to do one. So I started talking with the staff for the last four or five months. And for us it's all about capacity. But I think whether it's through interns or we're doing it in the down part of the year when we're not under the permit crunch like we are right now, we'll get there. One way or another, we're going to count and we're going to map these places. So that's my promise to you guys just so that – so we can see – anytime you do a regulation or a policy and it's in play for a while, you need to have the feedback mechanism back to the Planning Commission to say, Well, you know, now is the time to evaluate. And then you correct course and do what you have to do. So it's time to evaluate that again, I think, and the Commissioner made a good point. He goes, I had to go through this process. So I want to know what you did with all the information that *you* collected about my property, and how's that fit in to the big mosaic of all the other permits that are coming in? Great question. It shows some vision about data and what we *could* be doing. So Ruckelshaus again is just overall looking across all counties, and they visited 26 places and we were one of them early in 2018.

So okay, the next one. Yeah, go ahead. So this is really key. One of the things – I think it was – I want to say it was Sedro-Woolley, but I could be off on that one. It was either Sedro-Woolley or – I want to say Sedro-Woolley. They're kicking around this concept of an urban village. They have some people that are interested in an urban village. Now the urban village in that photo is one that I helped set up and it's really fun. I go there all the time because I'm checking in to see – so what we had to do to see – that was a 20-acre crack-ridden, drug-ridden place. In '65 it was a farm and in '66 it became a mobile home park, but by 2006 it had declined considerably. There were really good people in there but there were a few tough ones too that were doing things that weren't legal. And so what happened was they were all bought out and a developer came in and then we were – I think one developer had to drop it and I was there for the next developer to come in and played a really significant role in writing a downtown plan, number one, saying what we wanted. What was our vision for our downtown? And so the reason why we could do that village there – this was the city of Woodinville – the reason why we could do that was because none of the neighborhoods wanted any density at all. So the County – or the City, in this case, said, Okay, we'll dump that density in the downtown where it was all one-story pretty much at that point. So the big battle in that picture was: Do you go one, two, three, four, or five stories? And neighboring Bothell was just putting their downtown together and they were looking at six stories.

So the way that we worked it out was we compromised and each story you go up above two – so three, four, and five – the more you do good things on the street for city planning – it's a big thing – the more you can do on the street for pets and walking and parking, you got more height. And what that translated was more development opportunity for the developer. In this case, all 20 acres is Weidner Apartment Homes. And so they're also interested in downtown Mount Vernon, so they're one of the interested parties there. So anytime this commission wants to do it – I took, when I was at Whatcom County from 2000 to 2007, I took them on trips all the time. And it was really important to say in Whatcom County in that era, We don't want your growth on our ag lands. We want your growth like that in the cities, and we're on board. We'll help you do that master planning, in fact. Because it is that important to protect our, you know, open space – what makes Whatcom County Whatcom County we believe, in the County, was these beautiful open space vistas and, you know, berry farming and things like that up there. So I think it's a – it's really a work together concept, not we're not in separate camps. We should all be in the Skagit camp, which is we want successful cities that are doing attractive development in our downtowns and in any of our communities that will take them. And so where I would go with this is working with – in partnership with them. I think what we will be seeing is – and you saw some of this last year and the year before – is if the County – this is a common strategy – if the County has something, like they're doing planning around their campus, then how can we also look at planning around the campus that also goes back to housing? So you can see I have a housing theme in my head here.

But so if you have just parking garages that are really needed if you – in the future you're going to have more shopping. People are going to come in. They're probably going to need the parking garage. So every building you see in that picture is actually a donut. So they've got these blocks and in the middle of those blocks there's actually a parking garage. The first thing Weidner did was build the parking garage and then they built the housing all the way around it, and then on the top floor you have all sorts of amenities up there that you can go from the first floor to the fifth floor, you can just go out and you have outdoor facilities and all sorts of fun things that you can do up there. And so that's the way that it's laid out and that wasn't a new concept. That was borrowed from other places too. So that's where it can go. Those developers have to be brought in because of the level of sophistication, the amount of money that it takes, that – let me just talk about financing. We agreed – and this is a small city but it's a very wealthy city, Woodinville – we agreed to coordinate our capital infrastructure with them for the next 15 years. So we're building roundabouts, we're building walkways, we're putting double rows of trees in to make the walkways really great and you can walk your dog through that. It's all about the pedestrian amenity features and at the linkage to bike trails and to other things.

During this time, the Woodinville economy completely collapsed. It went from wood and construction products and things like that and changed to wine. It changed to other things that took the place. So that's a really important thing. But they stayed the course. Everybody kept the vision despite the ups and downs, and they kept the investment. The investment was projected at about 200 million, which seemed like a lot back in 2008 or 9. The first part of this now is seen as over \$600 million in worth now. So the world has changed, right? The value of what they put in has changed and that has only made the City wealthier for making that kind of investment. So it's a really amazing thing, and it's so successful that – I talked to Dean Weidner, who at the time he was the 55<sup>th</sup> largest developer in the United States. Today he's number 5. Because what did he get right? He got these villages right. Right? He's doing them in other places and he also – he's very good with demographics. And so what he also caught was people on both ends of the spectrum – young professionals moving to these – some of these key cities for jobs. And he said, Looking at the income data, they're not making enough income to go right into housing. So he will have the housing for them. But he was also looking at the other end of it, which is the baby boomers, and he got that. And so it's a real mix. And they came out with an article and it shows you you've got both ends of that spectrum living in there, and it's dog walkers' paradise \_\_\_\_\_.

So anyway, could we do something like that? Absolutely. I took a developer that I had worked with before and he thought that the down – he has not been up here. They're so – they are so busy doing what they're doing where they are. I just said, Hey, I worked with you for 20 years. What do you see here? He goes, This is the greatest opportunity on the I-5 corridor. And when he was looking at downtown Mount Vernon, he couldn't believe it. Right? He goes, Wow, the downtown's really dead, though. And so, that, you know – and so when I come here and I see that I see the same thing. I see a tremendous opportunity. But who's it going to – when will it happen? How will it happen? So it's got to be a coordinated effort – the City and the County. Everybody needs to know what we're doing and working together. Countywide planning policies are key. All those things are. When we did that, we had to have a strong downtown plan with simple regulations to follow, and then we had to do a development agreement too. And so you want all your attorneys there that are tough but still have a workable plan in the end. And it's an investment plan for the City, but really it's an investment plan for everybody in that area, and it would be for the County.

So I went on way too long. And then finally, what's our biggest permit this year? Well, it was supposed to be Paccar. And so they did put it on hold but they had assured us that they'll be back. And it reminds me of the kind of jobs that we need that we have an opportunity to get here.

And so I will be watching that. I'll keep you guys updated. I believe they'll start in January again. They have been growing phenomenally all over the globe. So not just in the United States or not just in the Seattle-Bellevue area, but in a lot of different places. I sent an email with an attached picture of a Texas facility as well. So they're growing. And trucking: What's the future of trucking? It's a really important thing. We're in this amazing time when if you're a transportation planner you're not sure what technology's going to win out right now. There's a lot of different transportation technologies that could make a huge difference in the way our cities are formed and the way land use spreads out too. But what they're working on is also pretty amazing and the things that are going on inside their testing facility. We got a tour and I think I mentioned it before – it's just really incredible. So whatever we can do. We busted really hard to get the building permits and all the permits set up for them and they said, Oop, hold. It's corporate. But we're sure that they'll come back and it'll be a new emergency when they do. But we'll be back.

That's a long update. I apologize for all that information but I hope it's a little bit helpful that we're shooting for the future. There's a lot of basic things around housing the Commissioners are very concerned about.

Vice Chair Mitchell: Some fascinating stuff.

Mr. Hart: Yeah.

Commissioner Lohman: Could I ask you a question?

Mr. Hart: Yeah.

Commissioner Lohman: When you were talking about the Woodinville – I don't know that area at all. Who was the instigator? Was it the City or was it the County or did they co-instigate the redevelopment within the city? How did that coordination – because you have to be mindful of jurisdiction and you don't want to accidentally kind of come in like a big club.

Mr. Hart: Yep. In 1978 the King County spent 68 – I think it was \$68 million, which was a lot back in 1978. And they were able to purchase the development rights to a lot of the Sammamish Valley. And it was farming. And this was kind of still an ag backwater and they still in 1978 and still the tallest structure in town was a grain elevator. Right? And there was a rodeo ground and a lot of marsh that **wasn't** incorporated. So one of the things that limited kind of the area for the future for development was that they had purchased those development rights. And so there's a farm right across the street from that, in fact. It is just behind me, I think, in that case. I can't tell from that picture, but at the end of that road there's a farm. It's \_\_\_ Farm. And so they are doing berries. They do a lot of different things. Next to that is something called 21 Acres – another farm – and it's actually kind of a coalition that teaches food and culinary arts to everybody in the area. And it's become a much bigger thing since the crash of 2007 or 8 and we had to find a new economy. Right? So they said, Hey, we're going to become foodies surrounded with wine, and we have 130 wineries in the area now and King County is right across the street from us. So we go from ag to that – 6 stories, 5 stories. So it's a really intense UGA. And I think that's really instructional. So I think that's part of my long-winded approach to answer your question, that that made the value of this land even more valuable because you get to view all across agricultural land. And it's like – I said to everybody, It's our lake. Right? It's not really a lake, but it's that greenery. It's that beautiful greenery that you have in the valley, and that adds value to what you build next to it. So that's what we based it on.

Chair Raschko: Okay.

Vice Chair Mitchell: So with the farms right next door, did they do fencing to, you know, keep farm separate from urban? Or what did they do so there's not –

Mr. Hart: King County had built a bypass. So they built a four-lane road and then these guys just – they just \_\_\_ it down to two lanes. And so – and they put buses on it. So there really isn't a – there are some fences in some places, of course, but – I'm looking at the next – yeah, \_\_\_ Farm does not have a fence. It's just a lot of property back there and there's a lot of Keep Out signs.

Mr. Cerbone: But the road is essentially a buffer.

Mr. Hart: The road is a buffer and they built nice sidewalks so that you're still 50 feet from where the farm starts even when you're on the sidewalk. So there is some buffer there. But they are still looking for a role because the real agricultural base of that was there in the '40s has moved on. But there is something else that has replaced it and it's a lot of specialized small farms.

Chair Raschko: Amy?

Commissioner Amy Hughes: This is the Woodinville area you're talking about?

Mr. Hart: Absolutely.

Commissioner Hughes: One of the things I've seen that was really magical in that area is a trail along the shoreline.

Mr. Hart: Oh, yes, and I have the background on that too!

Commissioner Hughes: Yeah, but, you know, that has been just kind of the solid thing through all these decades that the communities have enjoyed. And it goes from Redmond to Bothell or something?

Mr. Hart: Yep. There's a Metro line on that trail and that's why they – someone – I talked to the guy – he must have been in his 80s and he was an engineer on that. He was the project engineer and he said he took that up to the top of Metro. He said, Let's put a trail on this. And they were going, Why? No one's going to want to walk out there. That's way out in the middle of nowhere. He goes, No, let's put a trail on this. We're going to have a road for maintenance on top of – so there's a gigantic pipe underneath that that runs the region that they did in a forward thrust era of the '60s and late '70s – or in the '70s, I guess. And so they just – they did. And it's really proven out that tract, and that's how they market this. If you go onto the Woodin Creek they market it by "You can commute to Redmond on your bike." Right? And so that's the marketing campaign – that you don't have to get in the car – and lots of people do it. That's the second busiest unit on the entire trail system through there. So from here – from Woodinville to Redmond, just going back and forth. So I've walked it a lot, and you kind of have to – walkers are at a disadvantage there! It's busy. It's definitely busy.

Chair Raschko: Anybody else?

Commissioner Axthelm: I appreciate the enthusiasm on the whole deal. I think that – you know, I'm an architect. I like the growth but I like it in the right direction in the right way. One of the things that I've noticed being on the Planning Commission, is it seems like the County and the Cities are disconnected. They've got their own goals. And there're some Cities that are very resistant to



multifamily housing, and they go to single-family housing and they'd rather sprawl out farther, and we have other issues like the floodplain where building in the floodplain may not be appropriate. So where it seems like it would be a good location the floodplain restricts us and there's other locations that the Cities are resistant to either allow the growth or have some of the developments like you have on the screen where they're higher densities. And I think getting the Cities onboard and connecting with the County is good. It's important.

The other thing is you mentioned the 20%. The 20% isn't a goal; it's a limitation. Really we are supposed to be *under* that amount, and I think there's an understanding like we have to get up there and meet that 20% and I really don't think that that's appropriate. I think that pushing too much into the county encourages that sprawl. And, you know, I like the little communities we're talking about, but one of the hesitations I have with them is I've seen them. In Idaho, when I lived there, there's some communities out that they tried doing that way and they ended up being just people – they failed. People ended up commuting to the cities back and forth, and that's my fear is that having – those really have to be planned correctly, but not only planned, they have to be supported and if they aren't supported they fail and you end up with a sprawl or a subdivision out in the middle of nowhere on a country road.

But, you know, great ideas. I think it could really work if we got the Cities onboard and that the Cities really opened up to it. You know, we talk about the housing like for – let me see, you called it \_\_\_ housing for people, and I know that Whatcom County's done a good job of that in some of their areas. And, you know, I have some kids with disabilities and for me that's important as well, is that I noticed that a lot of the housing – you can't get them into the housing. I have a daughter that's 24. She's been on the list for four years and she cannot get housing. And any housing that does come up and available are housing that you don't want her to be in. So some of those things need to become more available for people to get into. And I think that that's part of the problem is the high end homes are up here available but – and places, but having affordable housing for people that really don't want the property but they need somewhere to live. Thank you.

Mr. Hart: Great comments. The one thing I would say in response is that what I've learned in doing a lot of planning both in Woodinville, Alaska, Whatcom County probably, too – but I started incorporating architects from the get-go because they – we have to speak the same language as well as the architect, and so having them to listen to the community about what the community needs – we did that in Juneau and we got a much better product in the end and a vision based on that discussion. So we could then incorporate that vision into the regulation.

Commissioner Axthelm: I appreciate that.

Mr. Hart: Yeah.

Chair Raschko: Anything else?

(silence)

Chair Raschko: Well, that was extremely interesting. I appreciate your effort.

Mr. Hart: You bet.

Chair Raschko: So turn to Planning Commissioner Comments and Announcements. Annie, do you have anything? No?

Commissioner Rose: Not today.

Vice Chair Mitchell: Something real short. I've just got to tell you. This is so refreshing to see you take this approach. It's been a very, very long time since we've seen people really get in there and dig and come up with some good ideas.

Mr. Hart: I couldn't do it without you guys and I certainly couldn't do it without Mike here. So he gives me the time to dig in and help the Commissioners see what's changing around them.

Chair Raschko: Josh? Nobody? Okay. Well, that concludes our business for tonight so, with that (gavel), we'll stand adjourned. Thank you.