

**Community Advisory Group on Agritourism Policy
Fourth Meeting
May 8, 2025**

**Community Advisory
Group Members:**

Amy Frye, Boldly Grown Farm
Darrin Morrison, Morrison Farms
Kristen Keltz, Skagit Tourism Bureau
Rob Ashby, Skagit Valley Tulip Festival
Audrey Matheson, Bow Hill Blueberries
Jessie Anderson, Maplehurst Farms
Matt Steinman, Foothill Farms
Jen Schuh, Schuh Farms (absent)
Tony Wisdom, Skagit Vally Farm (absent)
Kai Ottesen, Hedlin's Family Farms (absent)

Others (Public):

Lora Claus, Skagitonians to Preserve Farmland
Kim Rubenstein, Skagitonians to Preserve Farmland

Others (observers):

Tim Knue

Facilitator:

Meg Harris, Triangle Associates

County Staff:

Jack Moore, Planning Department Director
Tara Satushek, Senior Planner
Bryn Phillips, Events and Outreach Coordinator

Meg Harris: ...Padilla Bay this morning, hopefully. It's been a little detour. Good to see everyone. For those of you that are new, my name is Meg Harris. I'm a facilitator with Triangle Associates and I'm supporting the County in leading this advisory group. I'm going to just do a little orientation, some introductions. At this point, this is your fourth meeting of the advisory group, so congratulations. You're halfway through an eight-meeting series. Given that you know each other now, we'll still do the introductions for the audio recording, which is posted publicly after this, and especially for new members of the public. So I'll give the members of the advisory group a chance to introduce themselves, members of the public who are here joining us, and Skagit County staff. And it may be by then that we have Jack as well, so we'll see. Or he can introduce himself when he comes in.

For anyone that is new, there are a couple of nametags out here if you'd like to use one. Otherwise, just, you know, _____ and _____ to say hi. We'll have a couple chances to take a break and take breaks throughout today. You can do that.

Anything else before we dive into introductions?

Tara Satushek: No.

Ms. Harris: Okay, well, let's start with around the table introductions from the advisory group members. Your name, affiliation. I think you've shared at this point, like, if you're wearing two different hats, but if you'd like to remind the group or have that for the record you're welcome to say that again. And then I've just really been enjoying the spring, so if you're willing to share some small thing that's been bringing you joy recently, that would be a special way to kick us off.

Are you willing to start us?

Amy Frye: Sure. My name's Amy, Boldly Grown Farm in Bow. Primarily wholesale vegetables. We also have a farmstand. That's the only hat I wear. I'm thinking kind of I would say maybe the small- to mid-scale of new farming community.

Often bringing me joy. I planted my dahlia tubers yesterday, so that's a – things are getting in the ground!

Darrin Morrison: Good morning. I'm Darrin Morrison, Morrison Farms, representing, I guess, the larger-scale agriculture position in agritourism. Lots of background in that. Board member at Skagitians to Preserve Farmland and dike district commissioner and a few other things. I've been involved in agriculture all my life here. Things that bring me joy right now I guess is the weather. The weather's just been fabulous for farming and seems like lots of people have been getting lots of crops planted and seems like they're off to a good start, so yeah!

Kristen Keltz: Kristen Keltz with the Skagit Tourism Bureau. Also my husband is a partner of the Spinach Bus Venture Group, so we've got a couple ag-related businesses. I'm also on the Fair Board _____, the two of us _____ other things in the community. And I got called back in to work a couple weekends at Tulip Town and got to be a tourer for one of our crew ships that comes in, and there we are now the number one excursion on their boat tours. So we went from about 15 people to 90 people on the excursion so it's kind of fun to just talk to people from all over the country and talk to them about our valley. So kind of fun. And it's rodeo season. We have our first rodeo _____ so I'm excited about that.

Rob Ashby: Hey!

Ms. Harris: Did the cruises come up from Seattle or Everett?

Ms. Keltz: They – it's like a Pacific Northwest one but they dock in Anacortes and they go up and come around Port Townsend.

Audrey Matheson: Audrey Matheson. I'm co-owner of Bow Hill Blueberries. We're a small, organic blueberry farm. We also make a couple different blueberry value-added products. This is one of my favorite times on the farm, because the blueberries are blooming and I disappear for, like, as much as I can into the field and watch bumblebees. Like, that's my favorite thing to do.

Ms. Harris: okay, Rob?

Mr. Ashby: I'm Rob Ashby. Skagit Valley Tulip Festival's the hat that I'm wearing here. Pleasure to be here today. Two things: First of all, it's my wife's birthday today. She's off doing some yoga right now and a couple surprises at the yoga studio over there at Bow Sanctuary, so I'm super excited for her. And she doesn't know about them yet.

And then also a very favorable tulip season, so the weather couldn't have been better. Some really good changes happened this year to tell our story better and we're seeing some good excitement out there for a couple weeks. And yeah, it's coming about.

Jessie Anderson: So I'm Jessie Anderson with Maplehurst Farm. I work with my husband _____ our property and with my dad and daughters too to farm 10 acres around the venue. And it's an exciting time in our property as well. The strawberries are blooming and my kids have an elective school and so it's exciting to just kind of live vicariously through them and prepare for my eighth grader's graduation from Conway Middle School, and then I'll help them transition to harvesting and selling our berries at the family farmstand. So, yeah, it's bringing joy in my home.

Ms. Harris: Thanks for sharing.

Ms. Anderson: Yeah.

Ms. Harris: Let's go to the folks in the back of the room. Stay kind of ____ if you're willing to share.

Female (name is incomprehensible): I'm _____. _____ vegetables, beef, and I also _____. I love spring because all of my seed crops are currently _____ yellow fields out there. So I love to be working. But, yeah, _____.

Lora Claus: Hey, everybody. I'm Lora Claus. I'm the Executive Director of Skagitians to Preserve Farmland. Not a strong contingent today but thanks _____ you all. I expected the comments about the weather. It's glorious. _____.

Kim Rubenstein: I'm Kim Rubenstein. _____ 40 acres of our family homestead out on Fir Island, so we're fifth generation farmers and _____. Anyway, and I'm on the board of SPF.

Bryn Phillips: I'm Bryn Phillips and I'm just the newest staff member. I'm the Events and Outreach Coordinator. And _____ I've been involved with SPF for years. _____ campaign as a contractor/writer. I volunteer on the committee and also _____ the community. And this is my third day on the job and I'm just _____ be here and involved in this community and getting - _____ hands in the ground, so to speak. And I am most excited about the nice little _____ my son _____ and last night was a track meet in La Conner, where he goes to school and it was just – my whole family came up from Seattle and it was just really fun to sit in the stands and watch all those kids just pouring their hearts into running and jumping and all they do in track and field _____.

Tim Knue: I'm Tim Knue, spurring on Skagitonians _____. I'm currently the Executive Director for the Association. We're in technical education and _____.

Ms. Harris: Thank you. And there is a sign-up sheet going around, if you haven't seen it. If you could see that at some point during the break that would be good. Before Tara introduces herself, I'm just noting a couple of other advisory group members who are not present today. Jen Schuh had a conflicting meeting. And then the other two members, Matt Steinman of Foothill Farms and Kai Ottesen, Hedlin's Family Farms, may be here. Okay, want to share?

Tara Satushek: I'm Tara Satushek. I am a Senior Planner with the Planning and Development Services in Skagit County. I'm here to help _____ with my boss, who's not here right now, Jack Moore, Director of the Department. One of the things that's bringing me joy is just the sunshine. Nice to get out if it's, like, dark, gray. You know, I'm from Bellingham – been there all my life and I'm still not used to the weather. So I just – every year I'm surprised. So I'm really happy to enjoy the sunshine.

Ms. Harris: Okay, well, we have a full but flexible agenda today. So a couple items to note: We've got a standing agenda item that we put on at the last meeting, status of other activities and processes. We may move that around a little bit to see if we can catch Matt when he comes. Then we have about two hours with a floating break in there around 10:30 – the floating break – for discussion of remand topics. And specifically accessory uses and thresholds, definition of agritourism, and geography. And I also want to do kind of a quick pulse check on where you feel like you're at on all the remand topics and what – you know, there's a couple different paths we can take through these, so what makes sense to you now that we're in this process in terms of, like, weaving these topics together.

After we get into kind of the meat of it, I have 20 minutes set aside from 11:30 to 11:50 for a process for coming to recommendations. Specifically I'm considering how members would like to go about drafting some of these recommendations once you feel ready to

do so, and the County has a few thoughts on, like, what would be particularly helpful for them. This is more of like the list ___ administrative piece – what that process looks like. Just have a bigger picture note this is the first meeting in the topic calendar that we had recommendations starting to be, like, identified as deliverable. We won't get to specific recommendations today, I don't think, but I would like to start thinking about how that kind of language is being drafted between meeting and being reviewed by committee members. And then we have about ten minutes at the end for reviewing action items and next steps, confirming the next couple meeting dates, and then the following date.

Anything you would like to add to this agenda at this point?

(silence)

Ms. Harris: Okay. So for those of you at the table, you each have a meeting packet. There are a couple of agendas back on the side table if other folks didn't get one. In this meeting packet is your agenda for today. It's also the action items from the previous meeting, which is two pages and then page 3 of 4, which isn't stapled. It's the notes from our group brainstorming. So on the front side is what Tara captured from the white board and on the backside it actually has the whiteboard ___. It might be helpful for today's conversation. I'm going to ask you to spend a little time with that.

The other things that I printed for today are the stakeholder group notes that Lora shared from August 9th from Skagitonians. And I may have you sit down with – particularly page through it for your own accessory uses, and so I printed it just in case you didn't have a chance to take a look at it. I know there are a lot of materials that I've shared around in the emails, so I'll give you a little time to look at it before we really discuss.

And then the last thing I printed for today was the list of remand topics. You may have this already. As we think about kind of where we are on each of these topics and how to prioritize and order them, I feel like it might be helpful to have it in front of you. So that's what you see there.

Take a look at the meeting summary from last meeting. It's that action items table. It has the – a couple reminders that there's a link to the webpage where the meeting recording is, and all the meeting materials are posted there. Tara shared – pulled that up on the screen last time and showed us. If you have questions about that specifically or don't see materials that you're expecting, reach out to Tara and she can help you out with that.

We've also been capturing, like, meeting attendees and then – Rob, you look confused. Do you know –

(Mr. Ashby shakes head)

Ms. Harris: Oh, okay. Tara's going to give us some updates on some of the Skagit County action items from the last meeting. Advisory group action items really were to look at these Skagitonian materials, so, again, you may have had a chance to do that in the last couple

days. My apologies for getting those to you when it's so close to this meeting. I'll get things out earlier next time and I will give you some time – just a – I will give you some time to look through those today while you have them in front of you.

Tara, why don't you provide your updates on these kind of process updates from the action items? And then if folks have questions about the other action items we could take questions. Thanks..

Ms. Satushek: Okay, so I'm just going through the list here on the front page of the agenda. So Lora provided this information that – about what Skagitonians for the Preservation of Farmland have done in agritourism and we shared with the group. They have a lot of good resources there.

Female: _____ point of clarification: So this is a multistakeholder _____ and it's different than SPF's public position on agritourism.

Ms. Satushek: Okay.

Same Female: Just to make sure that's differentiated.

Ms. Satushek: Thank you.

Same Female: Sure.

Ms. Satushek: There's a lot there so I hope everyone has a chance – and I think a lot of folks here also participated in that – the stakeholder groups. The other request was the GIS – I was hoping to bring up a map here, a Skagit County zoning map, so we could show. But the request from the group was to see how much land in the county jurisdiction is in Ag-NRL. So out of about approximately one million acres there is about 88,000 – yeah, 88½ thousand acres in Ag-NRL, although significantly fewer acres are in full ag production in any given year. So those are just the zoning. It doesn't mean they're being actively farmed. It just has that zoning criteria.

Ms. Frye: So there's about a million acres just in Skagit County.

Ms. Satushek: Correct.

Ms. Frye: Okay.

Ms. Satushek: Eighty-eight thousand five hundred in Ag-NRL.

Ms. Frye: Yeah.

Ms. Satushek: And I forgot – later on in the break, I want to bring up the map just – it's tough for me – I'm a visual person (and) it really helps to see the breakdown of the Ag-NRL with – east of I-5 and west of I-5, just to see how that is dispersed. That's a really

great visual. So I'll do that later. So there are right now 6,965 individual tax parcel numbers in the Ag-NRL. However, parcels are assigned for a taxable asset and not necessarily reflective of lots. We don't really have – the County doesn't have a specific lot count because a lot of the lots have to go through a lot certification process that's triggered whenever a development permit is applied. But that kind of can give you a rough estimate of how many single lots there are in Ag-NRL. But I think that acreage is the most helpful.

And then there was a question about the definition of “long term commercial significance” in context of current Skagit County code historic zoning. And so I did some research into where that came from and provided kind of like a – basically a Word document – just text. I'm bringing it up here...

(long silence)

Ms. Frye: ... characterize my understanding of what – just like, tell me if this – reading map – this is what I understood is that basically all Ag-NRL-zoned land in Skagit County has been considered lands of long-term commercial significance.

Ms. Harris: _____ the screen is broken. _____.

(unintelligible conversation)

Ms. Frye: _No, that's okay. I was just trying – my reading of it is that what you found – is that all ag lands – Ag-NRL land in Skagit County has been deemed of long-term commercial significance.

Ms. Satushek: Correct. Yeah, all resource lands. That includes forestry –

Ms. Frye: Okay.

Ms. Satushek: – and Rural Resource in Ag-NRL. And then other than that, it's for development. It's for residential development primarily.

Ms. Frye: Sure. And I think that was my question, because it basically gets back to the Supreme Court case – the 2c, Other Findings. Basically it was counties and cities have the authority to limit or exclude accessory uses otherwise authorized in this subsection in areas designated as agricultural lands of long-term commercial significance. So I think I was just trying to establish the through line, but yes, all ag lands in Skagit are considered long-term commercial significance so Skagit County has the ability to be more exclusionary or provide more limitations than what the state is allowing.

Ms. Satushek: Correct. Yeah. So there's the state requirements that is addressed in the Washington Administrative Code, and then Skagit County further develops its own designation criteria. So it's kind of like, yeah, a kind of a layer. Like this is what the state requires and this is how Skagit County further fine-tunes that.

Ms. Frye: Is that like _____ clarify all of our lands are long-term commercial significance?

Ms. Satushek: Yes.

Ms. Frye: We previously were unclear on that definition and just like how that court decision and GMA.

Ms. Harris: Any questions?

(silence)

Ms. Harris: Thanks for your summary. That's great work.

(incomprehensible female voices)

Ms. Harris: The other kind of administrative or process update and action item is some scheduling of our final meeting. Would you like to do that as a group now or would you like to wait till _____?

(several incomprehensible voices)

Ms. Frye: Unless you think other folks are coming later, in which case we may have to go through this. ____ Kai and Matthew.

Ms. Harris: That's a good question. Well, we can start with, like, an overview and you can think about it.

Ms. Satushek: Yeah.

Ms. Harris: Did everyone do the poll or –

Several Voices: Yeah.

Ms. Satushek: Most folks did. I believe everybody did.

Several Voices: Yes.

Ms. Satushek: So the winning dates were May 29th, June 17th, and June 26th.

Ms. Frye: In addition to – sorry.

Ms. Harris: Not the 5th and not the –

Ms. Frye: Correct.

Ms. Harris: Yeah. So we'll have a meeting the 22nd, which is the next meeting in two weeks from today. And then in _____, I guess kind of like a ___ today, you'll have a meeting on the 29th, which is just one week after the 22nd. The other, like, fully confirmed date that was very solid from the Doodle was the 26th of June, so that would be Meeting 8. Sorry, I jumped ahead. Because there is some question around that June 17th meeting, I think, with how this group would like to proceed with the Ag Advisory Board. Is that right?

Ms. Satushek: Yeah. We did – Jack and I did talk about it. So maybe just check in with the group what their thoughts are. So it's _____ to the Ag Advisory Board. They're obviously interested in this work. Folks have expressed desire to meet with the Ag Advisory Board. So we're thinking about doing – and again I want to run it by you all – is once we have final recommendations from both the Ag Board and this group, the staff will develop a draft code and check in back – do like a – you know, pulse beat or whatever. Just do, like, Do we hear you correctly? Is this captured correctly? So this would probably be in addition to the eight-meeting series. But we'll talk about it. Yeah, because we just brainstormed this yesterday. So that way there's not the appearance of diluting information from staff, that we're just – like, this is what we're – we heard _____ capture this correctly. And then ideally facilitated by a third party person, Triangle – and then flesh out that to finally get a recommendation before the Planning Commission.

Does that work with the group or do you all want to meet before you come to a recommendation?

Ms. Frye: Sorry, I'm just going to paraphrase.

Mr. Ashby (?): Yeah, and I need a paraphrase!

Ms. Frye: So we complete our meeting series. The Ag Advisory Board is also doing their thing. We each give our recommendations to the County. You, the County staff, will take both of those and try to meld them into something, which I think if they are vastly different that's, like, another question how that looks. And then you would put those back to us (and) say, Here's what we heard, here's what we put together based on this feedback. And so therefore, here are, like, the final recommendations that we would like to send the Planning committee – and that may or may not involve another meeting kind of after that – after the eight-meeting series to just kind of like look at the final –

Ms. Satushek: It would involve another meeting.

Ms. Frye: Yeah.

Ms. Satushek: Yeah, and one of the thoughts was because at the last Ag meeting – Ag Advisory Board meeting – there was discussion, I think with you and Terry just to get together so that we followed that meeting that the process happened or that discussions happened. But, again, if there was to be a more formal melding of the groups but just to keep the products moving ahead. Because the goal was to have communication between the two groups. And it appears it's happening, but that's the staff recommendation to move

forward with. But, again, we wanted to check with you all to see what your recommendation was before we ___ next step with the Ag Advisory Board.

Mr. Ashby: I think there's benefit – I get it now. I think what you're suggesting, if I can get in squared in my mind, is that both groups meet – the Ag Advisory Board and this community advisory board meet collectively as you're presenting. Is that your proposal?

Ms. Satushek: Yes.

Ms. Frye: So after eight meetings there is to be another meeting with this group and the AAB

Mr. Ashby: Yes.

Ms. Satushek: That's like the idea that – yeah, we _____.

Ms. Frye: My only thought is in some ways would that meeting be helpful earlier? Just so we don't get to the end and have these vastly different recommendations. I don't know. Just a thought. I mean, we can do some one-on-one, like I'm Tara and I feel like I've been talking forever. But, you know, if there's some of that that could happen _____.

Mr. Ashby: I like the idea of having one final shot with those groups together to debate or provide alternative opinions to what is drafted before it goes final. That seems like it makes a lot of sense. It's probably healthier because at least more diversity of opinion and thought will come into the room as a result of that, whether anybody agrees or not. We've already said that we're not a consensus-based opinion on this so, you know, alternative opinions could be welcome and written and put into record that way. But it may be really healthy to have those conversations happening all the time for *you*, specifically. Because once it's decided that it feels like the opportunity to discuss is rather less helpful. So at least the points of contention will be known and can be shared. Or perhaps even really kind of work on some getting to consensus, which would be ideal, I think. In a perfect world, the community advisory board and the Ag Advisory Board both agree on a shared opinion that goes to the Planning Commission. And while that seems possible – and I don't know the possibility of it – it's good to have a shot at trying to do it. That's my sense, Give a run at it and see if we can get to the line.

Ms. Frye: Do you think then – I guess, like, again, waiting till the very end when we both already have our consensus and recommendations maybe with whatever divergent opinions noted. Like, it just seems we're going to be a little late to be able to, like, actually kind of workshop with the AAB about –

Mr. Ashby: Yeah...

Ms. Frye: But I'd rather have the opportunity than not, so whenever it makes sense.

Mr. Ashby: And I'll raise my hand on this one again because I do think it's the thing that we're not talking about that I really wish that – I don't know if it's this board that decides it or it's a further conversation. But by having this conversation, we're really saying is that we don't have representation of agriculture and agritourism on any one. And so as we feel that this is a – if we feel that this is a one-shot-and-done ____ that would be one way to look at it, then having this community advisory board participate and then evaporate – would be one way to think about it. But I have a hard time feeling that the evolution of agritourism in the valley is a one-shot-and-done deal. It's going to continue to evolve.

So either one of two things has to happen. Either there is more representation of agritourism on the agritourism advisory board or there's an agritourism board that sits in adjunct to the Agriculture Advisory Board. Because I think that the problems that we're having and the issues that we're having require conversation and smart minds coming together to work on that, and I'm not sure struck early, from the County's standpoint. We're actually having both voices existing beyond this one conversation. So I don't know what that means, but I do think that fair representation should be present for you as a service as you're continuing to evolve what this means in the valley.

Ms. Satushek: Thank you for sharing that. Yeah, so what the goal is is to – also the recommendations provided by the AAB and this group would go to the Board directly and the Planning Commission, so there will not be any staff filtering up any of the recommendations provided. And a lot of this stuff too we're capturing. My goal is to create a final summary report to provide to the Planning Commission and the Board. Just say, These are the general findings. This is what the group mentioned. They identified a lack of agritourism representation at a formal County level. And so we can give that information to the Board for them to delegate or however they want to proceed next. But I think this feedback is super helpful in just at least summarizing the process that we've gone through and then also identifying things that fall outside of the remand topics but definitely influence these activities.

Ms. Keltz: I'm just trying to make sure I am clearly understanding. So when you say you're going to – the County will take that information and put something together for us to review. But then you also mention that you're taking all of the recommendations from both groups. So that will be in conjunction with what *you* put together as the County?

Ms. Satushek: Right.

Ms. Keltz: So that'll be like thousands accompany that document. I guess I'm trying to reconcile, like, as the County if I don't know – if the two groups have completely different recommendations that they're bringing back, how do you guys as a county then look at these two recommendations and try to put your plan together, and what is that going to look like? Sorry, I'm just –

Ms. Satushek: No, no, those are good questions.

Ms. Keltz: I'm just not – just trying to, like, reconcile that.

Ms. Satushek: So the remand was to get – to refine the code recommendations from the Ag Advisory Board. And it said to have more community process. And so we are relying on the past community process and this to an addition, like a layer of inputs to, like – when we do code amendments, for example, we do a public comment period and we get comments from a wide range of things. We then distill that into topics or ___, and how those either fit inside Skagit County – the filter of which – you know, the main document for us is the Comprehensive Plan. Does this meet the County goals and desires based off of this established adopted plan, and then we see if it fits into state law and Skagit County law. So we work closely with our Prosecuting Attorney to develop a lot of this language. And then we get before the Planning Commission, which there's an opportunity for public hearing and public comment, and then again (it) goes through staff review and the attorney's review before it goes to the Board. So it's kind of like the technical backside of it, but again this is an additional layer too of the Ag Advisory Board and the previous work that was done. It just – ___ discount a lot of that really good work that was done with the County. It's just an additional layer to help filter – not filter, but help, I guess, make a more robust community feedback. Because the AAB – Agricultural Advisory Board – is sponsored by the County because of GMA, and it was required to by state law – they have a strong voice and the concern was that the community voice was lost in the last recommendation that the County provided to the Planning Commission. They just went ahead with one group's recommendation and – for lack of a better term – dismissed some of the community – a lot of the community work that was done. So that is why the Board was – again, responded with the remand in saying this proposing, which isn't sufficient to really meet Skagit County at this time. So that's where this comes in, is trying to get – again, the intent was to get a wide, diverse group of folks with different backgrounds – you know, tourism, small farms, medium farms, large farms – because, again, as staff we can – I can only go by what's done, what I can find, but the community voice is really helpful. And that was one of the things that was missing in the last recommendation that went to the Board. So this is just – the Commissioners said they want more community feedback and we felt this was the best way to go about it, in addition to our standard legislative public processes, which is, you know, public hearings, public comments and that till it gets to the end hopefully.

Ms. Harris: I'm hearing kind of, like, two parallel questions. One is around, like, the meeting series and when you'd like to connect with the Ag Board, which could happen – I think it's still on the table to happen before the end of the meeting series. At one point it was kind of proposed that Meeting 7 in some way be that joint meeting. And a proposal for a meeting after the meeting series, either in addition to or instead of. So there's one piece there.

The other piece is, like, the documents that come out of this group. I'm hearing kind of through all of you talking that there's recommendations specifically from this group. I would encourage that language to be written by advisory group members and in addition to that, the County producing a summary that you can review and make sure that it reflects what you're saying. When I hear, Rob, your recommendation around, like, major representation, I think that's a perfect piece that could be a blurb as a recommendation. It doesn't fit necessarily in the five remand topics, but advise – you know, you've been

given leeway to make kind of any sort of recommendations that you'd like. So I would suggest – you're going to hear me, like, start to give assignments or ask you to volunteer for things. I would suggest that you write up, like, one to three sentences, a short paragraph that you put to the committee for review. I saw a lot of heads nodding when you were saying that _____.

Mr. Ashby: I'm glad to do that. Again, I could have that by the next meeting since I won't be here for the meeting after.

Ms. Frye: I think that falls under number seven of the remand. It's kind of like, it's a ____ catchall, right? It'd be like, Here's other recommendations.

Ms. Harris: Other – yeah. And so as other things come up that are kind of in that bin too, I would just encourage and empower you each to, like, write up something. It's easier for the committee to, like, review something that's written. And we'll get down into that when we talk about, like, one through five as well. But I think I'm going to encourage you to each, like, take one of those or pair up and take one and kind of work on it, bring it back to the committee and have the committee have a chance to review it. Committee – I mean advisory group.

Ms. Frye: I think what I heard is, like, yes, meeting with the AAB would be a good thing, whenever it can manage to happen. Is it possible to just confirm the rest of our meeting dates, because I was getting a little unclear after the next two.

Ms. Harris: Yes. Yes, so May 22nd, May 29th, June 17th, and June 26th. The only question mark in my mind is that you have a meeting on June 17th and the Ag Board meets on June 18th, and if you wanted to merge those in some way and come up with a joint meeting, I think that would be your opportunity to do that – during that week of Juneteenth.

Ms. Matheson: Yeah, I remember from, I think it was, like, the first or second meeting that we kind of brought up this topic of, you know, the parallel sort of recommendations that were going to be happening. And it seemed like a – at that time, the AAB was pretty much planning on submitting, like, what they've already submitted. Is that still a thing or will we get more information from maybe Matt, like, tentatively on the 22nd? _____.

Ms. Frye: When's the meeting for AAB?

Ms. Satushek: The 18th. Oh, the next one – this month's – it's next week, right? Next – the 14th, which is doublechecked. I did get a mail from that, or –

Ms. Harris: This may be a good conversation to table until Matt's here, given that he's on that board. So I think that brings up a good point (and) is part of why I put this tentatively on the 22nd. They'll be able to meet on the 14th. He'll have a better sense of, like, whether they're going to have progress by the 18th or maybe it's a moot point.

Ms. Frye: So I know that the Land Use Committee of the AAB met but they have not had their May meeting yet, so they haven't, like, reported back. So there's no official word from the AAB, is my understanding.

Ms. Satushek: The Department hasn't received anything official yet.

Ms. Matheson: I mean, if we knew sort of, Oh, they're submitting something that's very similar to what they submitted before then we kind of have the information to, like, see where maybe we can have the opportunities or things that we're not going to agree on. So...

Ms. Harris: I don't think it needs to change our meeting series. If you'd like us to just like confirm dates and get them on the calendar, but the Ag Board could be an invitation for Ag Board members to come to that June 17th, which is the day prior to their 18th meeting.

Mr. Ashby: We've only mentioned your name about 30 times!

Ms. Harris: Yeah, _____!

Ms. Harris: So I'm hearing support for those three – those next four meeting dates.

Ms. Frye: We just seem to have a big gap between May 29th and June 17th, which could be fine but maybe that is a good time for some either subgroups or, like, homework – like we should be coming back to that June 17th meeting with some stuff to chew on.

Ms. Harris: Right. Yeah. And Tara, that was better – the 17th looks quite a bit better than the 12th. I mean, it was a bit –

Ms. Satushek: Yeah, there was just more – like one or two more votes for the 17th. And then July 3rd is still _____?

Ms. Harris: That's off.

Ms. Satushek: Off. Okay.

Ms. Harris: So the June 26th would be your last meeting until you hear back from the County.

Ms. Frye: Sure.

Ms. Harris: We'll get all those dates on your calendars. Matt, now that you've had 30 seconds to _____. Well, first, if you can introduce yourself for the recording _____ record.

Matt Steinman: Matt Steinman from Foothills Farm. I'm part of the AA – I'm on the AAB as well as a couple other bodies, but for this purpose I run a small farm _____.

Mr. Ashby: Beef?

(several inaudible voices)

Ms. Harris: We were talking a little bit about the kind of juncture between this group and the Ag Board in terms of providing recommendations. And then what I'll do is I'll just give you a chance during a break to chat and kind of catch up on the topic. But if there's anything – I know the Ag Board has – meets next week, so probably _____ updates that you'd like to share at this point.

Mr. Steinman: Let's see, so we talked about the letter that the Ag Board put out at the last meeting. And next week's meeting agenda is primarily going over – actually, _____ - conservation spaces. No, that's not it.

Several Voices: Critical areas.

Mr. Steinman: Critical areas is our main topic for next – for the next Board meeting. We do have a speaker, but that's not going to be released _____. We just got the initial agenda two days ago, and then there's going to be more _____ on the back side of that, is my guess. So it's mostly – _____ toward critical areas and I'll probably give an update on what we've been talking about here, as well. It's what I agreed to do at that board as well as here. Which there's a lot to catch up on with that! So I'm not sure how long – how far that will go in detail. That just depends on what the other members of that board are going to be requesting. But everybody there are still willing – would love to talk with other members of this board. Just try to get everybody on the same wavelength so we can figure this out for the county as a whole.

Ms. Harris: Questions for Matt?

Ms. Keltz: I think that's kind of – I just want to make sure that we're not doing all of this work and then getting back to where we were at a year ago or however long ago that was. Or are we just – are kind of in a stalemate and _____ everybody's kind of fighting with each other? So I – yeah, that's kind of how _____ figure out if the Ag Advisory Board brings the same thing. How is that going to be deciphered?

Mr. Morrison: That's my thoughts, too, because this isn't something that was just worked on in the last couple months. This has been years and years of deep study on different codes and different experiences. I mean, everybody's coming at it from a little different angle. I'm a little bit pessimistic that things are going to be a lot different. I think there're going to be some small changes. It's my own personal feelings but, you never know. Maybe they are just enough changes to make it all agreeable. I don't know.

Mr. Ashby: I think the best negotiations is when both sides give up some ground. And so that's just how negotiation works. So I'm anticipating that both sides will be mildly disappointed but we'll be able to move forward.

Mr. Morrison: (incomprehensible)

Mr. Ashby: Yeah.

Ms. Frye: I'll be the optimist to their pessimism. At this point, still I'm hopeful we can find something again that's palatable to all involved.

Mr. Ashby: Maybe not delicious, but palatable.

Mr. Steinman: I agree with that. And I hope that the fact that the 12 or 15 or however many enterprises that are already in motion can be given the opportunity to – and the timeframe – to upgrade to the standard that they need – the County needs. Hopefully, it'll relieve some of the tensions and then we can all look to the future versus saying, Oh well, what about all these other stakeholders that this is going to affect negatively? There *is* an opportunity for those stakeholders to get to compliance from whatever _____, from whatever directive that the County wants. And so hopefully we can all look at – we're looking to move forward to the future. How do we define going forward ____? Not trying to re-regulate or deregulate people that have already had businesses operating _____. Yeah, _____ associated with running a business. _____. Hopefully the _____ get us going to the next stage. _____. I'll be _____.

(laughter)

Ms. Harris: Thanks for sharing. The last kind of process update I want to give before we dive into content is around _____ activities and the opportunity to hear from any past questions of Jason D'Avignon, the County attorney. It looks like both of those – it looks like updates for both of those will happen at the next meeting. Jason's available on the 22nd to join us. Kristen, do you want to make a couple comments about _____ either on the 22nd or the 29th.

Ms. Keltz: Yeah, so we're working with _____. She is the consultant that was hired by Department of Commerce to do the statewide convening of folks. So they've held several different group meetings. And so she will have the final kind of recommendations that they're proposing to Department of Commerce. So that'll include a potential statewide definition to agritourism, a number on the dollar amount for farming per year on the Schedule F, I think it is, and then recommendations kind of just similar to what we've talked about with the accessory use and the special use permits and like that. So I think it would be helpful to hear.

Ms. Frye: I'm sorry – do you know when that will be available?

Ms. Keltz: So we're hoping to have her at the 22nd, at the next meeting.

Ms. Frye: And they'll have all that?

Ms. Keltz: She'll have that presentation. She's presenting that same day for the Southwest Planners, and so I can _____. _____ joining us by Zoom. She'll be _____ but....

Ms. Frye: Great. I worry about when you say "critical."

Ms. Harris: So those are kind of two things for the next agenda. And as you see other things like that that you'd like to either – you know, Kristen brought that to the group – or you say, I'd like to hear this but I'm not sure who to reach out to, definitely let Tara and I know and we're happy to pull these things on to the agenda.

Okay? Well, let's transition. We're into the discussion of remand topics section of the agenda. The intent today is really to come through the conversation from last meeting _____ Meeting Number 1, Accessory Uses and Definition, and see how much progress we could make on those. We'll spend about an hour on this – or let's start at a half-hour and we'll take a break and then we may come back to this. And I will get to some specific questions you might have on the rest of the topics.

Mr. Ashby: Can you put that – that was a very helpful table that you had up on the board around, I think there was four columns. Accessory use, and then when it needs to go for ____ and then when it needs to go to a hearing, and then not – not agritourism.

Ms. Harris: Like the graphic from the board?

(several members speaking at the same time)

Mr. Ashby: No. I think it was honestly on the other side of the board. _____, because that wasn't on this sheet but you turn the board around and then –

Ms. Harris: I do have that. Yeah. We'll pull that up. Here, while we're pulling that up, I'm going to challenge you guys to get into pairs. I know you like to work as a small – as a big group, but I'm going to – but bear with me for a second. So while we're pulling that up, what I'd like you to do is get into pairs and have both the group brainstorm as well as you'll have what's up onscreen. I would also suggest if you'd like to look at the Skagitonians' summary, which has on page 3 the accessory use – like the bottom half of page 3, the accessory –

(female speaking incomprehensively)

Ms. Harris: I'm sorry. Yeah. Okay.

(female still speaking incomprehensively)

Ms. Harris: Thank you for that. So this Final Agritourism Stakeholder Group Notes is the title.

Female: And can I just clarify? Because I feel like there was several meetings after this date.

Ms. Keltz: And there were still. I only provided this document because I have incorporated that Amy was looking for the risk of, like, events or the types of activities occurring in agritourism, which is a section of that minutes. So that's the only thing that I provided because I _____.

Female: _____ because I remember we met through –

Ms. Keltz: _____ all publicly available on our website.

Ms. Frye: I just thought basically it's this spot on page 3 here, but it felt like we were trying to do the same exercise last time. And so I thought let's look at this as a good starting point. But, yeah, this is just an example.

Ms. Harris: Yeah, and thanks for that clarification. I read that the first time too. But these are final notes from the August 9th meeting, not our final _____.

Female: Oh.

Ms. Harris: So you may want to have this page 3 up in front of you. What I'd like you to do with your pairs is take a look at the accessory uses from the brainstorm and the page 3. Do they line up for you? Are there places where they've – where you feel like there's differences? And then I want to ask the question, Where is the grayest area to you right now?

(Tape goes silent for about 20½ minutes.)

Ms. Harris: Amy and Darrin, are you willing to start us out with a kind of summary of what you talked about? I think the two pieces that I'm looking for the most – and then feel free to add whatever you feel like is useful for what the context is – like, as you _____ last week and my apologies. I recreated it here because we're having issues with the projector. But, yeah, So as you think about, like, what you had raised around what you see and notes, where do these resources or ideas line up with one another? Maybe where do they differ? And what do you think is still the grayest area or that you're confused here?

Mr. Morrison: Go ahead.

Ms. Frye: I guess we talked – yeah, we were going to figure out a conceptual framework for how all this fits together, because it really seems it's like kind of this accessory uses and agritourism. I was trying to make a Venn diagram to figure out, like, how it all fits together. Because that's kind of really the crux of the issue. It seems like what – so this framework I had thought of is like, What is – there's accessory uses and there's agritourism. And, like, there's agriculturally-related accessory and then *not* ag accessory. And I guess, like, we can kind of talk about where different uses fall, and then it seems

like the grayest areas could be some things like restaurants or tasting rooms because those pretty much either *could* be related to the agriculture onsite or very much not. And then events and event venues – yeah, those all seem the grayest area.

And I think really we talked about, like, How do you – a lot of it is about impact. Like whether it's an ag accessory use or non-ag accessory, you could be going through this process of, like, certain levels of size, scale, and frequency, even for ag-related events might still be to get, say, a Hearing Examiner permit. But it seemed like the bar should be higher for non-ag accessory or the peripheral uses. Is that a fair summary? Did that mostly make sense?

Ms. Harris: Can you share your Venn diagram, whether the three –

Ms. Frye: Let me work on it more and maybe I'll share it for next time. It's in progress.

Ms. Harris: What I'm hearing when you say is that some accessory uses are also agritourism. Not all agritourism is accessory uses.

Ms. Frye: Yeah. Yeah.

Ms. Harris: I encourage you to, like, put out _____ or, you know, could __ PowerPoint _____ something, but yeah. Yeah.

Anything else from – burning questions to –

Ms. Frye: I don't know if that was helpful or –

Mr. Morrison: I think you captured it. There's no way to define black and white on every issue, so that I think there needs – the process is what we're trying to develop – right? – so that if something's just not outright allowed then how is it – what's the process that it goes through?

Ms. Frye: Yeah. Oh, and that – it's been __. This chart _____ and this flow chart is a link that we were talking about sharing. It's from Boulder County. It was in the SPF notes, and this seems like a helpful – with _____ – multi-stakeholder notes. _____. It's from Boulder County, Colorado, that is kind of like how they have dealt with – like, Here's what I want to do with my property, and then like all these subsequent flow charts of how to assess it and then some of the guardrails that they've put in place. I haven't digested it all yet but I think that would be a helpful resource to share.

Ms. Harris: Thanks for finding that, and we'll put that document in the __ materials folder and we'll share it. _____ like a meeting material.

(incomprehensible comments from several people)

Mr. Ashby: So we started off principally – so saying – rather than trying to card-sort what's here – which, by the way, is a good starting set; there's a much larger ___ set to choose from, I think – but if you could start off with principle then you could say, Well, if it meets the principles of each bucket then the function of card-sorting – when I say “card-sorting” I just mean, like, the label of what you're trying to do follows pretty neatly in those, _____ what you want. And so on the further side – let's start on the further side. I'm not aligned. Since our goal here, as we've talked about, is to keep farmland in production, any activity that takes it into farmland out of production is not allowed. That's just the first remand. If you take an inch of farmland out of production, then it's not allowed. Period. Simple. If you want to take a piece of farmland and turn it into an RV park, not allowed. Camping site? Not allowed. A concert venue that takes over 20 acres perpetually? Not allowed. Easy, right? That hits the goals that we were talking about and that's a line in the sand.

Then you get over to Ag Accessories, which is on the furthest side on the upper side. You'd say okay. First of all, by definition it not be allowed. This is an activity that keeps farmland in production. First criteria. Second criteria is that the activity is soil-dependent, and we talked about that previously as well. Most of the things, I'd say, we see on page 3 of 3, as SPF provided in their multiuse group meeting thing, would all be kind of, I think, in the bucket of things that would be soil-dependent. And the third criteria under ag accessory is that the farmer benefits, that this is a – to him, the old-fashioned definition of agritourism. It's an activity that helps a farmer as an additional revenue stream of what they're trying to do. And so three things on ag accessory use: Farmland stays in production _____; the activity is soil-dependent; and the farmer benefits. They should be able to do that without government intervention, permitting, or anything else. It's just like any other activity on the farm. It just so happens to be a revenue stream supporting agritourism accessories.

Then you start to –

Ms. Harris: Can I pause there?

Mr. Ashby: Sure.

Ms. Harris: Because we're working on kind of like understanding where we're in agreement and maybe we're not. What Rob just described, do you have questions? Does anyone disagree? Is there more ___ there?

Ms. Frye: I guess a question, and I'm processing still. So, like, keeping farmland in production in itself takes an inch out. I think currently – and ___ Jack and Tara, I'm wrong – like, farmland – again it's been in support of farming, like you could build a processing facility or you could build a – so, again, I just wondered – but there are existing guardrails on that. Is that correct? Is that tru-ish?

Director Moore: Not when it comes to processing. That's an outright allowed use.

Ms. Frye: So I can cover my entire farm in a processing facility? I'm just trying to understand. Like, I don't want to do that, obviously.

Director Moore: Yes. Currently.

Ms. Frye: Is that something that you see? Take issue with? Or that's not like – that's –

Director Moore: That's not part of this conversation. It is a question I had and I've asked when I've seen it done – that you don't want to lose one inch to anything else, but you can take an industrial plant and drop it on tilled soil.

Ms. Frye: If you're processing vegetables, essentially.

Director Moore: Yeah, yeah. But that's separate, I think, from tourism.

Ms. Frye: Yes.

Director Moore: Yeah, or events.

Ms. Frye: But it is currently. That's – is that part of ag accessory?

Director Moore: That's simply outright allowed use on ag land. No question, nothing to be –

Ms. Frye: So for the purposes of tourism as ag accessory, then we get into that no ag land. Is that –

Director Moore: True.

Mr. Ashby: I think that just goes back to when we were saying we're probably trying to solve, and the problem being that there's a risk for land being taken out of production, which impacts the maintenance of ___ services and _____. So it's one box. Then you get into special use. In special use we'd say, Look, the difference in special use it is still soil-dependent. What you're trying to do is still soil-dependent _____. But the farmer doesn't _____. Somebody else is _____. So mine's not getting ____, for example, but it's still soil-dependent and the land stays in production. That's where the special use comes in. We had - really the conversation's to whether that counts. I know there's probably a conversation for that to happen. What does that mean in terms of counts of number of times that's in a long or short period of time, whatever it is. We didn't get to consensus on any of that. We didn't get time to solve that! And so the – but that's where the special use comes in. And then the Examiner comes in if it's – if the land stays in production but it's not soil-dependent and there's no farmer _____. That's when it goes to an Examiner.

Director Moore: And the farmer doesn't get the money they're collecting for renting out?

Mr. Ashby: Does it show that on the schedule? Does the scope show up on the schedule? That's, I think, that would be economy. It's benefitting in terms of revenue and revenue's showing up in the schedule.

Director Moore: Okay. _____.

Ms. Harris: Any thoughts on that?

(silence)

Ms. Harris: _____ . _____ while you think about these. You were talking about thresholds, right? And what we're trying to do is essentially give some –

(recording goes silent for several seconds)

Mr. Ashby: I think the key really here to the Examiner is when you're saying, Look, the land was in production but it's not soil-dependent. That should be a red flag. And so that's where you have to have – that's when the conversation comes. We assume with the administrative special use these are more automatic engagements. There's obviously some boundaries to what that needs to be provided with, but that – a Hearing Examiner means that there's risk that it may become a bigger issue because it has nothing to do with the soil dependency.

Ms. Harris: And just to sort of clarify for myself, the admin special uses are soil-dependent or are not?

Mr. Ashby: The admins are soil-dependent.

Ms. Harris: Are soil-dependent.

Mr. Ashby: Yep, soil-dependent.

Mr. Steinman: And is a motorcross track soil-dependent?

Mr. Ashby: Well, I will say I have come up with acid tests with other unacceptable things that get a little closer. These are really _____ things that you would want. But there would be – Oregon actually has a really great compendium of all agritourism possibilities. It'd be great to consult there and figure out what was on there. _____ it –

Ms. Frye: _____ to that? Or do you know where that –

Mr. Ashby: I can share a link at the next meeting.

Ms. Frye: Or if you can send it – yeah, if you want to send it to Meg and then we can share it.

Mr. Ashby: _____ it's not allowed.

Ms. Harris: Everyone's brain works differently. You have a flow chart of some sort. You have a Venn diagram. So as we start I'll think of things, I think! Or I guess you didn't describe it as a flow chart but I'm almost envisioning what you have as a –

Mr. Ashby: Criteria.

Ms. Harris: Yeah.

Mr. Ashby: Yeah, principles to know what fits under each box. I can write it up there, if you'd like.

Ms. Harris: Any thoughts on what Rob's group shared? Audrey and Kristen, do you want to add anything?

Ms. Keltz: No, I think we got it all.

Ms. Harris: what do you think is the grayest area in here?

Mr. Ashby: How many – what is the boundaries on the special use? That's the elephant in the room, frankly. Is 24, 12 – these numbers are, I think, a red herring. _____. If the activity allows – ensures that the land stays in production, the concept of a number of times it can be exercised is irrelevant. Just like farming. So you don't have to file a special permit because you're going to crop. You don't count the number of times you take the tractor out. So what does it matter if there's a number of times on this thing? The farmer benefits, it's keeping land in production, and it's soil-dependent. Yeah, that'd be – obviously that's everything. But if it's the farmer doesn't benefit, then it is a conversation to say, like, What's the harm? What problem are we creating? I think, rather, we're creating opportunity that keeps the farmland in production, which is what we're trying to do.

Mr. Steinman: Did that answer your question?

Mr. Ashby: Sure.

(inaudible comments)

Ms. Frye: _____. We _____ on the farm issue by keeping the ability that _____ needs to keep historical barns up and not just _____. _____.

Ms. Harris: Anyone want to play devil's advocate?

Ms. Frye: Can I just get some clarification from Lora? So you keep trying to separate the two things. But Skagitonians signed on to the letter that was submitted, so do you guys now have a different opinion on this?

Ms. Claus: We forever want what's right _____ as a separate Skagitonians to Preserve Farmland position on agritourism. We asked Skagitonians if their farmland was one of the 15 groups that participated in the stakeholder meetings to form that joint stakeholder opinion. So that's the difference.

Ms. Keltz: _____ I recently read a little bit different than what is on the letter.

Ms. Claus: Yes. Yes.

Ms. Keltz: You guys signed the letter supporting one thing, but then wrote another letter _____ organization to support something else? I just want to make sure I'm fully _____ on that.

Ms. Claus: I joined the organization _____. This was done in 2023. And as I read this letter that's been submitted to the County staff received, I see the group – about 15 groups listed on there. Skagitonians to Preserve Farmland is one. And, yes, that's _____. Both of these things are published _____. I don't see any _____ letter, but that's just _____.

Ms. Harris: Did both of them make it into the public comment period?

Ms. Claus: Yes.

Ms. Harris: So both of you can access if you have the link.

Ms. Claus: Yes.

Director Moore: May I ask a question about some of your comments? So I know we have conflict with adjacent uses. So _____ the Hearing Examiner. Is an unlimited number of events on one property where it doesn't impede their farming. If it's abutting or adjacent to another operation, would that be considered a conflict, or how would that be determined? An unlimited number of events?

Ms. Harris: I think you're asking your question to Rob.

Director Moore: Yes, thank you.

(several people speaking at the same time)

Ms. Harris: We're testing out hypotheses here, right?

Mr. Ashby: Right.. And by the way, we're all learning here. Yeah. No, I'm just throwing out questions. We're tossing rocks in the water and we're seeing if it's _____. I think we got a good conversation about your Venn _____.

Ms. Matheson: Yeah, I guess that it's possible that this gets into some sort of like mitigations that we were talking about before. Like at last meeting with the number 2 defining what constitutes interference, use of the property or neighboring properties. And just in the case of our organic farm, if we have someone that's a neighbor of ours that is doing nonorganic production, then it is incumbent on us to create buffers necessary for our organic certification. But the other party also has to make sure that they're not spraying things on a day that's super windy that could come into our field and – with impacts on what we're doing. So I guess how I'm seeing it is like that's another layer of – on top of this where we're getting to talk about certain mitigations that could help neighbors work with this agritourism or _____.

Ms. Harris: I'm going to ask you a question because when you describe, like, the three criteria – soil-dependency, farmer benefits, and _____ and production – you were on the accessory use and admin special use side of this. And what you're looking at, Jack, is the conflict with adjacent uses is over on here _____. I was just wondering if there's a conflict there. Could you give an example?

Director Moore: Sure. Say there's an existing barn or a building that someone wants to use for some type of ag tourism use. It just so happens to be 50 feet from the property line. So now they'll have some type of events happening there on an ongoing basis, potentially every weekend. Fifty feet away, someone's trying to run fertilizer and kill crops and harvest and do all their stuff. I heard maybe a meeting or two ago that that inherently, potentially could impede the production or working of the soil. It's not the person's property who's having the ag tourism event but it's the abutting property. So maybe just having mitigation standards within each category would help offset that, but I just wanted to throw it out there that, you know, keeping the soil in production on the property that the tourism is happening is one thing. That's important, no doubt. But could it have a leadover to the abutting or adjacent property? I'm not sure how we make sure that is limited or mitigated.

Mr. Ashby: How do you do that with land that has boundaries where there's two different crops being planted on either property? How do you mitigate in those circumstances?

Ms. Anderson: I think neighbors have to learn to work together, and agritourism, tourism, farmers. It should be partners sharing work together. I think that's the reality.

Ms. Frye: I mean, I see what you're saying but you could have something in your definition that ticks the boxes, like "ag accessory allowed." Like, it keeps land in production and benefits the farmer. Whatever _____. But if there's no limits, anything can still have a huge impact on a neighboring land use. So then you get into these, like, we've got to talk about size, scale, frequency because there needs still to be guardrails, like, around those. Like, even if it ticks those boxes, if I want to have a big farm party event every weekend – I don't know. Like, I think there's still some impact, like intensity consideration.

Ms. Anderson: I think with the Right to Farm, though, the farmer has the right to farm regardless of what's happening on – as long as you _____.

Ms. Frye: No, I mean I – oh, I totally agree.

Ms. Anderson: I mean you have to take account of the boundaries and definitely pesticides or – you know, have to be handled very carefully regardless of _____ close to a property.

Mr. Steinman: You can also put that – the category big _____ so you know, like, you have the right to farm, so the tourism understands that you might be spraying or you might be doing this on any day, which is dependent on the operation and the weather. That really counts. I mean, like you said, I don't want to –

(recording goes silent for about 1 minute)

Mr. Morrison: ...and under the ____ is there's nothing to say that someone can't file a lawsuit or you can't endanger somebody despite – and, I mean, your mind kind of goes wild with this, but when we're farming – and we have the right to farm but we're up against a day care or some event or there's public – there's lots of people, the risk is elevated – whether or not we have the right to farm or not, there's added risk to it.

Mr. Ashby: So this is something I've thought about because you mentioned it. I think it's very – the nuisance of a lawsuit is a real issue, because it takes you away from farming and it's almost like it's – it risks farmland making production if you have these all the time, right? This takes you away from your job. Do we have the potential to – say, rather than having these go to a legal framework that they go to arbitration? That any escalations from these go to arbitration first before they go to a lawsuit? Meaning that the act of having to hire a lawyer and move through the court system and all that's really expensive, but if the County had arbitration available these could be managed at a much lower fidelity rate and take the risk out of the lawsuit.

Mr. Morrison: I don't know. I don't think so.

Ms. Harris: Jack?

Director Moore: Not sure if that's a possibility. I'd have to talk to our attorney on that.

Mr. Morrison: There's no perfect rule or no perfect setting, but if I was irrigating what we call a big gun. It's not – it has the ability to be set and has stops on each side, but those can eventually vibrate or run loose or someone could incorrectly set it – just human error. And for the first hour of irrigation it's running perfectly, and then maybe the second hour and the wind comes up and the wind could come from one direction or another. It happens all the time. And somebody's painting their house but, you know, it's got the most expensive house and the best painting crew they've hired. They're almost done and I've got some rusty irrigation water out of the pipe, because it usually contains a lot of high iron in this area – and I stain their whole paint job.

Mr. Ashby: What happens to that?

Mr. Morrison: That hasn't anything to do with agritourism – but, I mean, it could if they were fixing it up for that. But I'm just saying that we can – it's hard to mitigate risks. The best way to mitigate risks is to hang – stand by the zoning that we have and to fall into that zoning. Zoning has been our best friend in agriculture. And when we start to fiddle and mix other uses into the zoning is where we're getting in trouble. And that's where we're operating right here. We're trying to maintain agriculture, maintain its viability, enhance it by providing the opportunity for some of us to have other events and activities on the farm and it's really tricky. It's very difficult, complex, and – I see – I', sorry. I kind of have a bent towards, you know, being a little bit on the negative side as far as seeing that. I guess that's part of my life experiences have been – as a younger man, now as an older man – how I've gotten to where I'm at is there's been some things happen, right? At one time, I was invincible. How, of course, I see I'm not, and there's been a lot of forces at work in this area, and I don't want agriculture to be like it was in 1970. It needs to be what it needs to be today to satisfy the needs of everybody. But it's important that we get this all right somehow so that we can maintain what we have without – so many counties and other states have done wrong; we need to really be figuring out what they did wrong ____, and I appreciate the County's carefulness or whatever, you know, moving slow on this because it is – we get one chance to get it right. We don't get to go back after we made those mistakes. A little bit of an editorial, Megan. I'm sorry.

Mr. Ashby: I think you represent your area very, very well. SPF has a beautiful article series on the value of large meeting small farms in the valley, and they represent the diaspora extremely well. They say large farms are here for stability. That's what they bring to the valley. And that stability provides both an efficiency in terms of support services for everybody else, as well as, you know, just a strong anger for the things that happen. On the other hand, when I read the article _____ how they've been defining the purpose of small farms, and that they're the dynamic incubators on trying a bunch of different things to see what ____. And so to that extent find things that can work, that could actually then also benefit the large farms as well ____ they could consider. And that whole diaspora itself, it's what makes the valley really, really strong. And so when you play it to this space, what I think is probably very likely is the smaller farms are the ones that are probably more akin to trying agritourism than the larger farms as just another function of being dynamic in trying to find new ways to ensure that the farmland could stay in production. That, by regulating the role, is something that then the large one says, Hey, is this something that can last? Is this something that allows us to ____ forward? And I think both of those – that is what I truly consider to be healthy friction, because often those opinions help ensure we're kind of building for the future. And I say that only because I think this is just new. I believe – I do strongly believe that a lot of this is going to be seen in small farms first before it's going to show in large farms.

Ms. Frye: That's funny because I feel like the Roozengarde, Washington Bulb, like – I mean, those are the big farms in the valley and they're doing agritourism possibly the longest. Wouldn't you say?

Mr. Ashby: You know, it's funny. When you talk to Roozengarde they say they're not agritourism.

Ms. Frye: Right.

Mr. Ashby: They say that – you know, and certainly if you go to their greenhouses that's kind of by definition an agricultural product.

Ms. Frye: Well, they do both. I mean, they're not mutually ____.

Mr. Ashby: Well, they *do* both, but they would say that they're not agritourism. And Leo will give you –

Ms. Frye: Oh, I know!

Mr. Ashby: – plenty of details to why he's not for agritourism and that it really does benefit his agricultural side of his business.

Ms. Frye: Because I think we talked about what agritourism does. _____ benefits the farm business.

Mr. Ashby: Yes. Leo has perhaps one of the more mature agritourism and agriculture combined sort of benefits. I'd say Garden Roseland is probably more an example of the tourism-focused experience. But, you know, they are using that land too in production. Really kind of a classic example of – in that case, they are keeping land in production. It is supported by the support services around the valley. And to that extent, it really does fit the goal that we're trying to accomplish here, which is to keep this land growing crops. And so to that extent so _____ is the farmer. He keeps land in production. You know, Garden Rose'll be a classic example of saying keep on doing what you're doing. You don't need to apply for a special permit for it. That's, I think, the more classic example. If Garden Rose was in a different model where the farmer wasn't benefitting, then it'd be time to start them with permits.

Ms. Frye: We heard from the last group and then maybe take a break.

Ms. Harris: Yes.

(several members speaking inaudibly or at the same time as others)

Ms. Harris: Before we do, I want to do both those things. Before we do, I want to come back to this idea of an arbitration clause. Is that something that the group is – I saw a lot of shrugs and maybe I have to check with an attorney. Is that something that the group is interested in? Should Jack ask or, like, explore that or is this not the time for it?

Mr. Morrison: I don't believe it'll help or is necessary, I guess. It seems like we have enough – well, it's already in our laws and statutes that you should be able to make that a go, I guess. I mean, I don't know if it would have any teeth or not. That's something the Prosecuting Attorney or someone would have to ask, I guess. I mean, I'd be for it if it had

a way to keep people out of court, but I don't know that – just because we put it in the code does it have meaning? I don't know.

Ms. Frye: I think that's a question for you guys.

Director Moore: I would definitely have to ask our attorney on that. I mean, we do put conditions on different developments, especially when we do special use permits. There are ____ conditions that the proponent has to accept as part of operation and being approved. So I just don't know. If it leads into limiting people's legal options, I don't know where the line is on that. I told the attorney we've got to figure those out if that's something you're interested in asking.

Ms. Harris: Sounds like there's at least a minimum of interest in asking the question.

Mr. Steinman: Mm-hmm. I'm interested to find out at least from, you know, _____. My concern would be on the other side of that. What if that leads to more altercations? And someone's like, Oh, I have an opportunity. Now I have ____ that I wouldn't. It wasn't a big deal to me because I didn't want to get a lawyer, but now I can just go to the court of arbitration (and) just make a complaint. I'm like that, too!

(a couple of incomprehensible comments)

Mr. Steinman: I'm just curious to see what your Prosecutor would say at least, though.

(sounds of agreement)

Ms. Anderson: And also if there's, you know, a record of commenting, like lawsuits or arbitration processes that come from, you know, local agritourism. Is this something that's happening a lot right now?

Mr. Ashby: That would be real interesting. How many lawsuits have been filed in the valley around this particular issue?

Ms. Frye: Either by the County or by private –

Mr. _____: Yeah, by farmers, by County, by somebody that's trying to do the thing. How many of those has Skagit seen in the last 30 years, 40 years?

Director Moore: We don't even know how to search for that. _____!

Ms. Harris: Jason'll be here next meeting, so we can get all these questions together and ask those questions. And just a reminder: Jason was also the one who organized that summary of the Sammamish case, so if you have other questions related to that that you want to make sure to get those to Jason before the next meeting, send them to Tara and she'll compile those questions.

Okay, let's hear from ___ and then let's take a break.

Ms. Anderson: Well, I've got – we did talk some about first just an action agritourism definition that is, like, nationally accepted. The USDA, which says agritourism is “a form of commercial enterprise that links agricultural production and/or processing with tourism to attract visitors onto a farm, ranch, or other agricultural business for the purpose of entertaining or educating the visitors while generating income for the farm, ranch, or business.” It's much shorter than the state definition. I mean, that's just something we kind of used when we looked at the stakeholder group acceptable, potentially, and unacceptable activities.

Ms. Harris: And if that one of the definitions isn't working, _____ document. _____. Okay. Okay.

Ms. Anderson: Yeah. And we also discussed how we were interested to hear Kristen, mention that in the presentation of the next meeting that there may be an update on the state agritourism definition, which would be useful.

Ms. Harris: Just checking in on the definition thing because you're the first group that's brought it up.

Ms. Anderson: Yeah.

Ms. Harris: You have this list of, like, nine definitions now. Maybe there's a tenth one coming! What's your take – do you have a sense now maybe you might need to go back and spend a little time with these definitions? What's your gut tell you? Like, do you feel like you can take one of these definitions and recommend it? Would you want to do some tweaking to it, like binding definitions? You don't have to answer that yet.

Ms. Frye: Yeah, I've been working on _____ but kind of _____.

Ms. Harris: Okay.

Mr. Steinman: Yeah. I'm still processing. I think there's a couple words that could change in this USDA definition that would _____. Again, still working through that reality, ___ definition _____. My perspective with it.

Ms. Harris: That might be really nice to pair with the presentation that happens next week. So _____ feel like you can commit to and wanting to provide a definition and share with the group ahead of next meeting. And if we have – at most we have nine, but we may have, like, three or four of them to workshop. Okay.

Mr. Steinman: We were also talking about this. But in terms of the gray area, I think we've all been talking about this in the last _____ and it's just how do you define the scale of that operation _____. Or _____ define the points personally.

Ms. Anderson: Benchmark.

Mr. Steinman: Benchmark. Exactly.

Ms. Harris: (incomprehensible)

Mr. Steinman: Well, Rob's defined the benchmarks. Personally for me from my perspective I thought that's – I agree with that. But I don't want to sit here and speak for _____.

Ms. Anderson: Yeah, I think that's helpful as well.

Ms. Harris: Anything else that your group discussed that you'd like to add?

Mr. Steinman: _____. We were working around the edges and moving towards the center and then ran out of time.

Ms. Anderson: Yeah, I think – I mean, we did discuss the educational component, was not boring. I mean, at least for me. I don't want to speak for you as well. But with these acceptable – potentially acceptable activities, if there was a way to – while the visitors are, you know, attending and participating in these actions that they would have a direct educational link and come away with something besides just the entertainment. But some new knowledge about our area and farming and past, present, and future needs.

Ms. Harris: Okay. Let's take a break. Let's take a full 10 minutes. Use the time as you want. but _____, a breath of air. We'll come back at 11.

(break)

Ms. Harris: Okay, so I'd like to spend the last 40 minutes that we have in two ways, and I think they go hand in hand. Well, first I'd like to ask the group – so as you think about what comes next, really good, like we've been in this process of, like, opening, brainstorming for the last four meetings, getting everything on the table. And we're going to continue to do that over time, and there's _____. Like we're finding and scoping down and coming to agreement and recommendations that I see already starting to happen and will start to happen more formally through recommendations.

With that mindset, I want to ask you a question specifically around remand topic 1, which is this accessory uses and definitions. But then I'm going to ask you the same question kind of for each of the remand topics. So what do you feel like the group needs moving forward from here, like, say, between now and the next meeting to start coming to agreement and drafting language around an agritourism definition and accessory?

Mr. Ashby: Well, I think we'll put Amy on our task for being the first driver _____.

Ms. Harris: So there are a couple people who identified they have – they're working on specific definitions. And I think we can say ____ share with the group, either sent out to the group or sent to Tara to send out to the group before the next meeting, We can do some workshopping.

Mr. Ashby: I don't think we have capacity. We don't have _____. For reasons we've already stated, we don't have a capacity to email the group.

Ms. Harris: Right. Okay, yeah, you're right. Yes, so those should come through Tara. The rest of the remand topics, if you'll pull this list out, this list of five. Six ____.

Ms. Anderson: Is the sixth group ____ or is this a different topic?

Ms. Harris: Oh, let's see. It looks like this has purple at the top and it has, like, _____ line through there.

Ms. Anderson: Oh, okay.

Ms. Harris: There are – we've already recognized that these topics weave together and they're hard to tease apart. And there are five of them above that horizontal line that are actually – like, came from the official remand. The sixth one was identified pretty early in this process: Determine whether small property should be allowed additional flexibility. And then 7 is ____ other and capture some of what we've already talked about a little bit, like representation of agritourism and anything else that you – you know, possibly this is where, like, a recommendation on arbitration clause would go if that was something ____ – was feasible and you decided to forward it on our recommendation. So that's why that line is there.

I would like to do two things with you today. I would like to get kind of a pulse check on where you feel like you're at with some of these recommendations. And then that will lead us into a conversation about, like, physically or logistically how to start working there. I do think we've talked a little bit about those logistics in terms of – you know, we're starting to shape out something where at least for a while, like, individual members are going to work on pieces of it, bring it back to the committee for review and discussion. And I think that could be a good approach for all of these, either individually or in, like, pairs or small groups. But I'd like to hear from you about how you'd like to do that.

What feels most relevant to the group? Do you want to talk about the specific topics individually – like, actually the topics first? Or would you like to talk about the process on commenting on recommendations?

Ms. Frye: I thought I'd be curious to talk about more about number 2, ____ Rob, that you are here for this meeting and the next meeting and then you're not.

Mr. Ashby: Yeah, and so we sidebarred between it being – so to kind of bring it back to the group.

Ms. Frye: Okay. Yes.

Mr. Ashby: If you're open to it. The Tulip Festival in draft, strong, and so if you're up to it we would love to comment at the next meeting of what we think the answer is to this. And as we can – and pick it apart, please. If – and I think like every other topic, maybe as some of these continue to evolve that means we could come back and take a look at _____ and feel if it still holds water or needs modification. But just for the purposes of kind of putting an opinion out there, we're glad to draft that and have your consideration now.

Ms. Harris: I see 11 nodding heads. Are there any concerns with them – when we vote on them?

Ms. Frye: Can I just ask to clarify a question of – the way that the remand is written for number 2 – yeah, clarify how code may allow for full and lawful participation in the Tulip Festival. Is that basically indicating that it's *not* compliant with code currently? Is that how you read that or... how do you interpret that?

Director Moore: Well, so my take on that meeting involved in long conversations is that in the previous recommendation there was a lot of discussion about number of days that people could do agritourism, and whether that should be 24 or 12. There was a lot of conversation about that. And then it was brought up that if someone simply participated for the month of May in the Tulip Festival, are they therefore exceeding any limitation that was established. So that was not the intent.

Ms. Frye: Yes.

Director Moore: So do you think just a flat-out carveout for the month of April? How best –

Ms. Frye: How do we speak to that?

Director Moore: How best do we ensure the continuation of the Tulip Festival and then allow them to do their tourism stuff _____ are okay with the rest of the time but not have that credit against them?

Ms. Frye: Yeah. Okay.

Director Moore: That was the conversation.

Mr. Ashby: Jack got our attention pretty quickly when he _____!

Director Moore: We're thinking about shutting down the Tulip Festival! _____.

(much laughter)

Director Moore: No, no, it's totally the opposite! It was to ensure that _____.

Ms. Frye: That's what I figured. I was just trying to clarify ___ kind of – ___, the language would have been problematic. So, yeah, ___ draft language _____.

Director Moore: Yeah. If you applied it literally, then would that impact the Tulip Festival or participation? If you applied it literally, then it would.

Ms. Frye: Yeah.

Ms. Harris: Rob, you shared a little bit with me what folks might see in this _____. Do you want to share that with the group now or would you want to wait till –

Mr. Ashby: I think I'll pay Amy \$20 after this meeting because she kind of put ___ on exactly what the issue was. It would be having a restriction on the number of calendar days for a soil-based activity that could be longer or shorter than that? Really does put us in a bit of a bind in terms of meeting to have a tulip festival. So we're going to try to draft language that suggests as a soil-based activity what we're really seeking in terms of exemption *should* be fine. We have 100 days _____. For those that are part of it, it would – they would frankly stop participating if they do _____ time in April to do activities that they do all the way across the year. So it doesn't –

Ms. Frye: So say that last part again.

Mr. Ashby: So if – sorry. In the case of a Tulip Festival sponsor or participant that is held to a number of days to do their activity, we would find – we believe it would put them at risk of participating in the festival if they would burn their time on calendar days exclusively in the festival.

Ms. Keltz: Yeah. So is there going to be – because I just want to – because, like, are the farms separate than the other people? Are the farms not considered just an allowed use? Are they going to be – or is _____ question.

Mr. Ashby: I want to draft it in a way that it's all considered. And then it gets revisited. I mean, this is the problem, I think, and where we're at right now is we haven't put in any real stakes in the ground so it's unclear to me whether they're at risk until we get stakes in the ground, so – Kristen, if you're okay with it, I could like it – in that case so that we're hopefully can just line-item things out of it if it's not – no longer germane to how things are redefined. I hope that they're all allowed by the fact that they're growing from crops. But once again, we haven't gotten down to put anything on paper yet so I don't know.

Mr. Steinman: See, I like that. It seems like if there's a – if you're going to look at it at, _____ activities, that would be agritourism or soil-based, like you're growing something in the soil like that that's at the most allowable and should be given the most rank _____ stuff that was in three years ago. Was it '22 when it was a really, really, really cold, late, wet fall – or spring – and the Tulip Festival _____ was like release _____. Last year was, like, two, though. This year, you know, _____. And then they came on really strong. So they – you never

know how the weather, how _____ are going to go _____ back them into a corner if you get 12 days and that's it. You don't know if it's going to be the five-day bloom, or it's like a 25-day bloom or _____.

Mr. Ashby: The – you're nailing it right on the head. It's a soil-based activity, so the ground will tell us how it's doing. The weather will tell us how it's doing. ____ trouble with them. _____.

Ms. Frye: So you're going to drop something. The Tulip – _____.

Mr. Ashby: The Tulip Festival subcommittee on agritourism will draft something. And we get our operators to make sure _____.

Ms. Harris: And if we have that before the 22nd, we'll give you time to share it with the group and take a few questions.

Mr. Ashby: Right. Then I leave and Nicole gets to answer all the questions.

Ms. Harris: Yeah. And if we don't have it by the 22nd, we'll do it on the 29th.

Mr. Ashby: The 29th? Yes. We will endeavor to have things ready for the 22nd.

Ms. Frye: And then could we touch on 3 real quick? _____.

(several voices speaking quickly at the same time)

Ms. Harris: Before we do that, could we go back to – I'm kind of keeping a look on the time.

Ms. Frye: Yeah, yeah.

Ms. Harris: I have Amy and Matt, who has nodded their heads as thinking about definitions they wanted to share with the group. This doesn't commit you to it but is anyone else, like, actively working on a definition ____?

Mr. Morrison: Yeah.

Ms. Harris: You're working on one? Kristen, are you?

Mr. Morrison: I'm just working on a word that needs to be clarified. "Agritourism" means agriculture so I think it needs to be agriculturally based or some – that's what we're trying to define, I guess.

Ms. Frye: I'm working on trying to clarify the relationship between agritourism and ag accessory and non-ag accessory and how they fit together. So I feel like a definition of

agritourism is part of that but it's kind of like the conceptual framework for how they all fit together.

Mr. Steinman: That makes sense.

Ms. Harris: That's just helpful for me as I kind of keep track of who I – I'll send things out to the whole group but if I need a few people for...

And then the County has also identified, like, a couple other definitions that would be helpful to them, so we may put together a list of, like, additional definitions –

Ms. Frye: That are needed.

Ms. Harris: – that are ____, yeah. Could I work with you on that one for the next meeting?

Ms. Satushek: Yes. That'd be good.

Ms. Harris: Okay.

Ms. Satushek: Let me see if I can get the – for number 3, get their zoning map up. Because I wanted to bring a big copy so we could all see but a breakdown of ag.

Ms. Frye: Yeah, I think she said we only have a half-an-hour left but just an introduction to Topic 3 a little bit more to start chewing on that a bit might be –

Ms. Harris: No, I think that's great. And really –

(several people speaking at once)

Ms. Harris: No, that's good. I was just going to say this, like, idea of the process we've built this into our conversation today so we can take this to the end. I guess I'll just say before we do, as we talk about, like, who's taking what, there's a couple things that the County has identified as, like, ultimately needing at the end of this: Our written recommendations, which is the direction we're headed; they don't need to be formal. They could be – like, they're not going to be code language, right? So they could be bullet list, they could be buckets. It's like – but they do need to be written down and then the idea would be once something's been proposed to the group, there's kind of like a majority, agreed-on opinion. And then if anyone would like to write, like, a minority or a nuanced opinion then you're invited to do that. Does that seem like (a) good, kind of big picture how this is going to go?

(sounds of agreement)

Ms. Harris: Great. Number 3, The **term under agritourism** should be treated the same east of Sedro-Woolley as in the Skagit and Samish delta area and ____ approach for each scenario.

(several people speaking at once)

Ms. Satushek: Yeah, Jack and I – we talked about it actually the other day, and I’m so sorry I couldn’t – here’s like – you can’t see it but I’m going to show it anyways. Just this is the zone and if you’ll see on the west side of I-5 it’s like a light beige. And then you start going – first, as the Ag-NRL lots tend to get smaller as you start heading east, as far as not as much a large conglomerate of land. And so when we discussed this – Jack, please hop in if I’m missing something – we worked with – it was identified that west of I-5 tends to be _____ and _____. And I think there was _____, unfortunately.

Director Moore: Also who lives onsite _____ doesn’t live onsite. Sometimes that’s different. Large scale, small scale, east and west.

Ms. Satushek: And in the ‘70s were – 70s and 80s _____ east of I-5 were all secondary ag so _____ and a different type of building. I can look into that some more but they were actually _____ differently. But what we’re trying to identify is what are the differences, so it’s – a general size of type of soil _____ properties because of the soil types because they are different, although there are different _____ plans of long-term commercial significance for ag there. _____ site, east of I-5, as opposed to the larger industrial ones. And that may or may not be a consideration for _____. it was brought on for consideration. And if there’s anything else, you know, you all as operators, you know, have to add to that conversation – why you think there might be a difference or if that’s not an appropriate categorization of it.

Mr. Morrison: East of I-5 or east of Sedro-Woolley?

(several inaudible comments)

Ms. Satushek: Oh, sorry. I apologize. East of Sedro – yes. Correct. And so –

Director Moore: And then that’s not a bright line either.

Mr. Morrison: Right.

Director Moore: That was just pick a line east and west.

Mr. Morrison: Yeah.

Director Moore: So it could be – when you look at that – I started looking at it closer and then I just over the weekend spent some time between Sedro-Woolley and Lyman and looking at properties, and maybe – if there were differences, maybe the line actually shifts farther east because there’s a lot of stuff right on the east edge of Sedro-Woolley that’s being tilled.

Mr. Steinman: Yeah, the Skiyou Basin is – like it's – after the Skiyou Basin – I'd say almost like after Minkler Lake, that's when everything really changes drastically from there further. Yeah.

Male: Yeah, yeah. Minkler is –

(inaudible male voices)

Male: Of the river. Exactly.

(inaudible male voices)

Mr. Morrison: These aren't new discussions. I mean, when we talk about ag zoning and where development should go and how hard should we defend agriculture as far as preserving agriculture. And east of Sedro-Woolley's been kind of an area that's been ignored in some ways. I wish Terry Sapp was here because he lives east of Sedro-Woolley and he has a wonderful farm and there's – as noted, there's been a lot of agriculture activity east of Sedro-Woolley. So it's not just a bright line. It's also what's east all the way to _____. I have no experience farming in that area so I don't really know, but I know there are crops that if you grow them in that area that can grow there because of the climate, and not grow down in the – let's say west of all of the cities. There's a number of days that are warmer up there that produce better temperatures and all the rest. So....

But in the last ten years or so there's been – this is just my opinion – but what's happened or why it's reduced the value of that area is because there hasn't been high value crops being grown in the – you go way up to Concrete or somewhere where there're some orchards. But some of the cropland has been abandoned because of the wildlife activity _____. That's the lack of control, in other words, and at the same time it's _____ food safety standards. The risk is too high to afford to grow high value crops. Tony Wisdom needs to be here. He was supposed to be on this. He has firsthand knowledge. So do several others. But the risk in dividing any area, even if it's in close to Mount Vernon or Burlington or Sedro-Woolley – La Conner, for instance – we've talked about that – is it's just another, you know, out of a house of cards it's just another ___ to people. It makes things more and more fragile _____ those.

The other thing is there is – I've heard this a lot. We're a large-scale farm but where will the new farmers come and where will they grow or where will they be located? And there's evidently a large barrier in that available land or finding land that's available to them. That's what I hear. I don't know if that's necessarily true or not.

Female: Yes.

Mr. Morrison: Everybody has to pay money to buy land and whether that's the barrier or if it's just actually something for sale. So some of these smaller pieces are becoming, I think, more and more important. Personal feeling and all that. But I think I've heard this

from _ farms people and read about it in national magazines even that the number one barrier for new farmers is land availability. So I would say we run the risk, if anything, on some of this land that's maybe not as desirable for a guy that grows 800 acres of potatoes or a thousand acres of beet. It's a lot more valuable to someone who wants to first start out in some greenhouse operation or an operation in vegetables and stuff. Similar to _____.

Ms. Frye: So you're saying – just to clarify, that you're saying you would not necessarily treat it differently or, like, a lot more flexibility – again, depending on what that looks like. We wouldn't want to risk losing it.

Mr. Morrison: I don't want to downzone it from Ag-NRL.

Ms. Frye: Yes. Definitely.

Mr. Morrison: I would maybe be willing to discuss personally because I – there's no one-size-fits-all, okay? There has to be big broad rules but there's no way to define everything. So I would maybe be open to the one-offs and the for-instance type situations that could work to benefit all of agriculture. But – and I don't know, and I have to listen to that. When you start downsizing – downzoning, not downsizing; sorry – or taking parts of our county and making them into different zones, then that starts – that maybe opens the door for other things to happen. That would be the risk I think we need to be watching for.

Director Moore: Can I give it just a point of technical clarification?

Mr. Morrison: Sure.

Director Moore: So I don't think there's any – there's not a proposal on the table and there's no – I don't anticipate an outcome of modifying the zoning designation. I just want to be clear on that. I think the only – in my understanding the context of this question was should there be different allowances based on either location or size of property, or is it – can people that are still in the Ag-NRL zone, are they going to be able to get off the ground on a small operation without some other kind of peripheral benefit or income. But the County, I don't believe, is proposing at all changing the zoning designation itself. Just *possibly* the allowed uses within certain types of properties.

Ms. Frye: And in some ways, that's more of a size thing than a location thing.

Director Moore: That's, yeah, why we tacked that on the end, I think.

Ms. Frye: Yeah.

(inaudible male voice)

Director Moore: I don't think there's any idea about that right now. That's the question at-hand. Because there have been some people, you know, during the past discussions,

saying, Hey, I only own – I own a five-acre lot up in – you know, near Marblemount or somewhere. And, you know, as much as I like doing some farming and I have – whatever I'm doing; some pasture and whatnot, you know, I really can't make a full living at that. I mean, I'd like to keep doing what I'm doing on a limited basis, but I would like to be able to do other things to help supplement that and keep me doing partial ag activity. So, you know, the validity of that I don't know. I'm not going to voice any opinion on that. It'd just be – people have talked about that, that Hey, if I had a hundred acres no problem. Yeah, I'd buy a big tractor and _____. But I don't. I only have five. So, you know, could you let me do a few things up there? So that's what we get, you know.

Mr. Steinman: It's a bad slippery slope.

Mr. Morrison: That's not limited to people that own five acres.

Director Moore: No. I knew that!

Mr. Morrison: Go to the coffee shop where I go and there's farmers that own hundreds of acres that could almost make the same claim, especially in today's world. And so I'm not discounting it. I know exactly what you mean and I think we need to overall have answers for that. And if we develop the right process we should be able to get there. But I totally get what you're saying. And I'm not – yeah. But just because I own five acres and I can't make a living, I mean, that's all over the board. That opens the doorway to big –

Director Moore: Yeah. No, I just want to throw it out a little bit – the background as I know, because that's some of the conversation. Should there be slightly more allowance for that Ag-NRL or not? I've heard other people say absolutely not, there should be no differentiation. Sorry. End of story. I mean, I've heard –

Mr. Morrison: And I'm not saying that, like, no. But I – man, I'm just cautioning this, is what I'm saying.

Ms. Frye: The hope would be that if we can come up with good definitions and good – flexible against guardrails, the assessment of impacts that it will work for kind of all areas in the valley and all sizes.

Mr. Steinman: Yeah, I would definitely caution us from changing – or offering an opportunity to change that because, like you said, Darrin, that's a fantastic place for a lot of the small farms. It's the only place there to have a piece of land that's small enough that it's actually affordable. And so there's – I've been begging in a lot of ways to get more, you know, Viva farmers to, like, Come up here. Look at the place and work 20 minutes east of the highway. But I think it's very – it's fantastic land to grow on and there's a lot of it. But there's also a lot of people that are sitting on it waiting and hoping that it can be their bank account or their ATM at some point, and –

Ms. Frye: Because they're waiting for the rules to be more flexible or –

Mr. Steinman: Either the rules be more flexible or – you know, Skiyou’s very pastoral. It’s different than low county in that you are right up against the ____ and so it feels a little bit different. The valley feels a lot smaller up there and so it’s ripe for McMansions, to be quite honest. It’s absolutely ripe for a McMansion zone because you can just walk right out of your door and hear the doves and, like, the ____ are right there. And you can see the river and you have the elk running through. So it’s – but it’s perfect land for, you know, ____ a start and to move in to add that smaller _____. You know, there’s all these different scales of farms and to increase our young farmer opportunities, that’s, I think, worth _____.

Mr. Ashby: I keep on feeling that as we think about our problem that we’re trying to solve, just keeping farmland in production, extending that protection into east of Sedro aligns well with our purpose that we’re trying to serve _____. And yet I feel as we’re still trying to put stakes in the ground what that means: Revisiting this at the point that a couple more stakes are in the ground allows us to answer _____. It feels too early to answer that because we haven’t really – I think which is giving the problems and challenges of that area _____. We don’t know if this is a viable solution for that part of the world or otherwise. I’m _____ keeping everything the same. It’s simple with - like a simple plan. And the other thing is that this is all just a moment in time. We don’t – time is changing. Technology changes. The federal protections are changing. The guidelines change all the time. So we don’t know if that’s going to influence survival of that land for – we would hope it proves the value in that land, the farmland, in the future. So having the term “McMansions” just sounds like an absolute disaster.

Ms. Anderson: Well, Jack and I did discuss that most farmers, regardless of scale, do depend on some income outside of their ag income, so should farms be allowed to, you know, generate more income through agritourism on their own property versus leaving the farm and possibly abandoning their farming operation for, you know, in search of earning, you know, needed income.

Mr. Ashby: Yeah,

Ms. Anderson: Regardless of scale, that’s a question you have to think about, and all of the changing factors that Rob just mentioned, you know, they’re going to play into those opportunities as well.

Ms. Keltz: And we just _____ the data – the Airbnb – we get Airbnb data or short term rental data. And east county is by far the highest growing area for Airbnb rentals. When you keep saying McMansions, I’m thinking there’s a lot of Airbnbs popping up all through eastern Skagit County.

Ms. Frye: And do we know what those are on?

Ms. Keltz: (incomprehensible)

Ms. Frye: I'm curious if those are generally covered by the – like for BNB, they're allowed on an Ag-NRL.

Ms. Satushek: Airbnb there's a pathway for, but the County doesn't regulate short-term rentals.

Several Voices: Currently.

Director Moore: We have no regulations on short-term rentals, no way to track them as a county.

Mr. Steinman: I would think that, from the people I know that had Airbnbs, a lot of them up there – and I can't speak for everybody in this county, but it seems like a lot are either ____ opportunity or an accessory dwelling. I can't think of any full house that's there just as an Airbnb house.

Ms. Anderson: I don't think people are building mansions for Airbnbs. I mean –

Mr. Steinman: No, not at all.

Ms. Anderson: _____ a person.

Mr. Steinman: Yeah, exactly. But a lot of – I think – a lot of – there's a lot of _____ out there _____, that type of thing – that's occurring, which are needed. If you have an operation that's working and you have a, you know, a hunting camp over there in the corner, you might get a couple of hundred dollars a day off of it. That's a great opportunity to educate people.

Ms. Frye: I kind of agree with Rob. We had initial discussion. We've got to get a few more stakes in the ground and then, like, run some scenarios kind of through whatever filter or flow chart we come up with to see how it plays out.

Mr. Ashby: Again, I can take the other side of it and figure out what breaks it if it's not within the parameters.

Ms. Frye: Yeah, we've got to figure out our system and then see how we break it or, you know, where do we run into issues.

Ms. Harris: Use this as a test later. Is there any information you feel like you would want at this point? Like, Kristen, you mentioned Airbnb, like, overlaid with that. ____ data or – is there anything you feel like would start helping you make those –

Mr. Ashby: Representation would be great. I mean _ mentioned a couple websites _____.

Ms. Frye: Yeah, so I'm curious to know – sorry, go ahead. Or just like, yeah, have there been any strong proponents of – from the area who are, like, I want more flexibility or like – yeah.

Mr. Ashby: Yeah, this is coming here for a reason. Someone's raised their head and says there's a thing.

Ms. Satushek: _____. Like, yeah.

(several incomprehensible comments)

Director Moore: So how that got in there was I relayed some of the input that the Planning Department has received. So I relayed some of that, so that ended up getting converted to this in the remand.

Ms. Frye: That's not in the public comments, right?

Director Moore: We might have to check to see if it's in the public comments.

Mr. Steinman: Does that have anything going back to Frontera and _____ and creating more housing in the Hamilton area?

(several incomprehensible comments)

Male: No!

Director Moore: Not from my perspective it doesn't. That's separate things.

Mr. Steinman: Those are the rumors, you know. Now we're talking _____, but that _____ that there's been a desire from certain entities within the county that's where the next place for urban growth development or growth development would occur because the county's kind of running out of residential growth development, correct?

Ms. Frye: Like in the delta?

Mr. Steinman: From the – from the – I'm sorry.

Director Moore: Growth – well, in the unincorporated county, yeah, we're running out of places to put housing and so that is a thing. And so in our – we're actually going through that conversation right now with our Comprehensive Plan Update, and, really, we're being squeezed from all sides, where GMA is limiting the amount of housing and development that's not served by urban-style services, and then zoning limitations – you know, the sprawl, reducing sprawl, reducing greenhouse gases, vehicle miles travelled, et cetera. So ultimately what that's likely – I mean, at least in our conversations internally, we think that that's going to just – we're going to have to renegotiate the cities and have more housing happening nearer the existing developed areas. I don't think the county's going

to be able to accommodate. We already in this cycle had to renegotiate the number of housing developments that we all agreed to take, because we do it on a regional level. We get together with the cities through the Skagit Council of Governments and discuss this. So we looked at the lower income bands and said, You can't do that in an unincorporated county. You can't go way out of town, buy a piece of property, put in all of your own utilities, and build a house for 50% AMI. You know, if you're in that income band. We're already doing that. Likely we're at an 80/20 right now, 80/20 split has been our agreement. I don't see that happening much longer.

Ms. Frye: 80/20 _____

Director Moore: Eighty percent of the housing would be happening in the Urban Growth Areas, which is in the cities or immediately adjacent to the cities in the Urban Growth Area – unincorporated Urban Growth Area. So right now we say 80 there and 20 outside. That's our target for the whole of Skagit County. But we don't see that being feasible to continue.

Ms. Frye: The 80 will have to increase.

Director Moore: Yeah, I think the 80's going to have to increase. If it's going to be 90/10 – some jurisdictions are at 95/5 or 97/3 already. We're still 80/20 and it's just not looking feasible. This is sort of peripherally about development in the county is all. So I think there's going to be fewer houses out in the rural county, which is – they're going to make the property value go down, I guess.

Ms. Harris: Rob, you mentioned voices, like not having the voices in the room. Tony's name has come up and he's offered to kind of consult and advise. I'm not sure – he's just one voice. Sorry. Are there many members that would like to volunteer to, like, __? Do you have contacts with any county that you'd like to talk with before the next meeting or before the 29th?

Ms. Frye: I'll talk with one farmer friend in Concrete.

Ms. Harris: Okay. Anything else on geography?

(silence)

Ms. Harris: Okay. We've got five minutes. I think we've pretty well, like, set ourselves up for number 5 at the next meeting, hearing from a consultant to the commission and Jason, the County attorney, on revisiting the *Friends of Sammamish* case. Anything you want to talk about on number 4 right now – temporary events? We've touched on it. We haven't really spent a lot of time on it yet. I think this – Tara, Jack, am I correct with this – is, like, one of the definitions you'll be looking to the group to help provide, in addition to agritourism?

Director Moore: Yes.

Ms. Frye: I mean, I'd like to **pull** our ties very closely with one, beings as they're all mixed up together – agritourism, accessory use, events.

Ms. Harris: Okay.

Director Moore: Yeah. Yes.

Mr. Morrison: Mm, I disagree.

Director Moore: I think they're – I mean, they're mislabeled in our code. I think I shared that before. But we have a subsection of temporary events and it says "Temporary events on Ag-NRL land." But in practice, those, as they're processed and if they get approved, those are temporary _____. They're intermittent. They're permanent approval. So I guess that's a little bit of a code rewrite that we're going to handle, but we definitely want some input on that because that's where the number of events are included. I do not think that it's currently called temporary events but it's not. It's – the two that we've approved to be in that are more agritourism is what they are. They're permanent agritourism operations, or maybe not agritourism ____.

Ms. Frye: Are you allowed to share what those are?

Director Moore: Yeah. Yeah, absolutely. One is Stepping Stones, on Cook Road, and one is Santucci. And those are very different operations, at least in my trained eye, on what they do at each of those.

Ms. Frye: And they have been approved for that special use –

Director Moore: They have – both have special use permits under that program.

Ms. Frye: Right. And they only need to do it once and then it's –

Director Moore: They do it once and that's permanent.

Ms. Frye: _____ 24 a year.

Director Moore: Yes, they could get it. Absolutely. And so that's – yeah. So it's not temporary, it's _____ number of events. It's kind of all tied – it's all sort of tied together, it's just this and some weird – the way the code was written is also problematic, and the way it's labelled.

Ms. Frye: Yeah.

Mr. Morrison: No, I guess I don't think it's hard to define agritourism, that's all. But here's – I know there's a whole bunch of different kinds of temporary events and I don't pretend to know them all. If someone wants to have a wedding or a concert even one time and on an Ag-NRL piece of property, would that be a temporary and they'd have to get a permit

for that one time and then that would be over, right? Wouldn't be able to do it again until they got another permit.

Director Moore: Right. Yes, so that- should that be allowed? For one? I guess we should find out about that. But there is a pathway to make true temporary events work, primarily via the fire code and some other things. So you could do true temporary events so if in this conversation it helps to inform how should *true* temporary events be allowed on Ag-NRL and, if so, what the upper end of that was. That would be helpful to know. Because I do really, really hope to rewrite that code and make it better, using a lot of this information. That's not the permanent, ongoing events like _____. You know, one a year? I mean, so far that's our interpretation of the loose way the code is written. Because it says *events* require special use permits. So we tell people, well, one event per year doesn't require a special use. You don't get regulated by the code. You have to follow the safety and health stuff. So that's the way we've interpreted it, but it's sort of like the Tulip Festival's unwritten alarm. We don't count the Tulip Festival for any of that stuff. It's not written down anywhere. It says – exactly.

Ms. Frye: Right. We're trying to write code in check with reality.

Director Moore: Yeah. Yeah, in a lot of ways. Yes.

Ms. Harris: It feels like a potentially stickier one. I think we won't have a lot of time at the next meeting to discuss it but we'll definitely flag it for the meeting after that. And you can agree to get another. You described this a few times so we'll find a way to _____ for folks.

Director Moore: Okay.

Ms. Harris: Thank you, everyone. I will get actions out to you quickly so that you have time to do some of these things that you've agreed to do. And I have a number of action items for the County as well, sharing and performing services and looking at some questions that you have. We'll meet here again two Thursdays from today and we'll have a couple of guests, one virtual, and an _____.

Ms. Satushek: I think he'll be here for _____.

Male: I think so.

Ms. Harris: Okay. Thank you.

END OF RECORDING