

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25  
26  
27  
28  
29  
30  
31  
32  
33  
34  
35  
36  
37  
38  
39  
40  
41  
42  
43  
44  
45  
46  
47  
48  
49  
50  
51  
52  
53

WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL  
**Planning and Development Committee**

February 28, 2006

Committee Chair Seth Fleetwood called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. in the Council Chambers, 311 Grand Avenue, Bellingham, Washington.

Present:

Barbara Brenner  
Dan McShane

Absent:

None

Also Present:

Sam Crawford  
Carl Weimer  
Laurie Caskey-Schreiber

**COMMITTEE DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS TO COUNCIL**

**1. CONSIDERATION OF HEARING EXAMINER'S RECOMMENDATION REGARDING A PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT AND PRELIMINARY LONG SUBDIVISION, "PLAT OF BELMONT" (AB2006-108)**

Troy Holbrook, Assistant Director, stated the location is off Yew Street Road. The planned unit development (PUD) met all the conditions of approval, met all the development standards, worked with the City, has public sewer and water, and was approved by the City Council.

Fleetwood asked if any citizen groups have appealed. Holbrook stated none that he is aware of.

***McShane moved*** to recommend approval to the full Council.

***Motion carried 2-0 with Brenner out of the room.***

**2. RESOLUTION ADOPTING RECOMMENDATIONS FOR OPEN SPACE/TIMBER AND OPEN SPACE/FARM AND AGRICULTURAL CONSERVATION (AB2006-130)**

Elizabeth Olsen, Planner II, stated there are 13 applications. The Planning Commission recommended approval for all except the open space/open space application from Lois Van Winkle.

The open space/farm and agricultural conservation application is recommended for approval. It meets all the categories. It is in the agricultural zone. In the past, it was used for agriculture. Now, it is a horse pasture.

The Lois Van Winkle property has the attributes for approval, but the proposal for public access was too severe, so they sent it back to the applicant. The applicant's second proposal is also severe. The applicant proposes that people must request permission to go onto the land ten days in advance. They requested that parking for cars be on the edge of the road, not on the property. However, the road is a State highway, and parking on the edge isn't allowed. The gate to the property is normally locked at all times. The proposal is

1 only to allow access by foot, not vehicles. The County prerequisite is access by car so  
2 parking is off the road.  
3

4 Crawford asked if the applicant originally wanted to search everyone. Olsen stated  
5 that is correct. The Planning Commission felt that the applicant should allow access more  
6 freely if they want the public benefit. The attributes of the property, as rated by the public  
7 benefit rating system, were favorable. The application met the recommendations except for  
8 access.  
9

10 Fleetwood asked if denial can be based on insufficient access. Olsen stated it can.  
11

12 Richard Van Winkle, applicant, stated he received late notice of the recommendation  
13 of denial. The only thing he received from the Planning Commission is a recommendation  
14 for approval. He also received a request to change the rules to make the property more  
15 accessible to the public. He thought he had complied with the recommendations fully. He  
16 specifically removed his requirement for search. He has been talking with the Planning  
17 Department about parking access. The State highway would not normally be an acceptable  
18 parking alternative, except there are two designed pullouts that adjoin the area. Whether  
19 or not those are acceptable is a question. He agreed to provide off-street parking. At the  
20 moment, there is a gate to the property. If the designation is approved, he will provide an  
21 off-street parking area as required. He doesn't understand why this would be denied.  
22

23 Fleetwood asked if the negotiations with staff about public access came after the  
24 Planning Commission recommendation. Van Winkle stated the negotiations were prior to  
25 the recommendation.  
26

27 Brenner asked if open space/open space designations don't have to provide any  
28 public access if the public benefit is important. Olsen stated that if it is in a very sensitive  
29 area, such as a habitat area for certain at-risk species, then they request that there be no  
30 access. Staff makes sure the wildlife comes first in terms of access.  
31

32 Brenner asked if this property has anadromous fish habitat. She asked why this  
33 must have public access. Olsen stated California Creek has the anadromous fish. There is  
34 not creek running through the property with anadromous fish. The property is within the  
35 800 foot buffer.  
36

37 Van Winkle stated the rating system includes a criterion of public access. Out of the  
38 maximum of 40 percent, the property was given a 30 percent rating. The minimum number  
39 of points required for approval is 45. His application scored 112.8 points.  
40

41 Olsen stated an area on the property allows public access. The off-street parking  
42 area is the issue.  
43

44 McShane stated the Planning Commission had two issues. One issue was parking  
45 access. Olsen stated that is correct. The area of the highway is dangerous, with a 45 mile  
46 per hour speed limit and a curve in the road. There is no way anyone can use the edge as a  
47 parking area.  
48

49 McShane stated the Department of Transportation has not looked at the public  
50 access driveway issue. It might be an issue they should resolve.  
51

52 Van Winkle stated the conservation easement was intended for the open space/open  
53 space designation. It seemed like a wildlife preservation area, although the Planning

Department didn't recommend exclusion of public access based on wildlife habitat. Clearly the fact it was designated as a conservation easement and a wetland zone makes that an appropriate designation. As the property owner, his concern was to meet the necessary requirements to qualify. Receiving a point score of 112, and then denial, is mystifying.

McShane asked if Mr. Van Winkle is willing to provide an area for parking. Van Winkle stated he is.

McShane asked if someone who parks is allowed to walk into the open space public access area. Van Winkle stated it is required.

***Fleetwood moved*** to recommend approval to the full Council.

McShane asked if the public must provide notification at this time. Van Winkle stated the current public access rules that he submitted have that requirement. He is willing to strike that request.

McShane stated that as long as a parking area is provided, he would be in favor of approval.

Crawford stated he recalls that the points can be adjusted. Ms. Olsen scores these applications. The Planning Commission, if it doesn't agree, can reassign the points. That gave the applicant some understanding about whether or not something can qualify. He asked if that is not happening now. The minutes of the Planning Commission meeting don't reflect an objective rationale for denial. Olsen stated this application was tabled to the next meeting. The Commission asked for more information, also.

29 Brenner stated they are supposed to stay focused on the public benefit. This  
30 property provides plenty of public benefit, without any public access. The point score is still  
31 really high. Olsen stated she preferred not to have the ten-day advance notice for access  
32 and to have the gate padlocked.

33 Van Winkle stated the advance notice is usual. Ten days is negotiable. The  
34 conservation easement area of the property is under a mitigation plan with Trillium  
35 Corporation. They are working on the site. It would be awkward to have the public visit the  
36 site. However, people come on the property anyway, and they are nice about it, so it's not  
37 a big deal.

38  
39 Brenner stated the application scored highly, even if there was no public access  
40 allowed. She asked if the recommendation for approval would have changed if there was no  
41 public access allowed. Olsen stated it would have changed. There is no endangered species  
42 or high priority species. It is a basic wetland being enhanced. The public benefit would be  
43 nonexistent.

44  
45 ***McShane moved*** to amend the ordinance so that the Van Winkle application be  
46 approved as long as public access is provided by a parking area and notification is not  
47 necessary. He can understand limited access during construction. A fundamental part of  
48 open space designations is public access.

49  
50 ***Motion to amend carried unanimously.***

51  
52 ***Motion to recommend approval as amended carried unanimously.***

53

1  
2 **COMMITTEE DISCUSSION ONLY**  
3

4 **1. RESOLUTION INITIATING COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AND ZONING**  
5 **AMENDMENTS FOR 2006 (AB2006-082)**  
6

7 Docket # 2006-A: Continuation of joint City/County review of the Urban Fringe Subarea  
8 Plan and Bellingham's UGA  
9

10 **McShane moved** to recommend docketing.

11  
12 Fleetwood asked if this is what they worked on last year.

13  
14 Troy Holbrook, Assistant Director, stated it is what they worked on last year and the  
15 year before.

16  
17 Fleetwood asked if they continue to work with the blessing of the State Department  
18 of Community, Trade, and Economic Development (CTED). Holbrook stated they do.

19  
20 **Motion carried unanimously.**

21  
22 Docket # 2006-D: Amend the Columbia Valley/Kendall UGA  
23

24 McShane stated this item was withdrawn by the applicant.

25  
26 Docket # 2006-E: Update the Foothills Subarea Plan  
27

28 **McShane moved** to recommend docketing.

29  
30 **Motion carried unanimously.**

31  
32 Docket # 2006-F: Extrapolate the adopted 2022 population projections to 2027  
33

34 Brenner stated concerns were raised about moving ahead with what they had instead  
35 of doing this. She asked if this is something they have to do at this point.

36  
37 Matt Aamot, Senior Planner, stated the Growth Management Act (GMA) requires that  
38 the County review urban growth areas every ten years. It is due again in 2007. When the  
39 County does that, it must make sure there is sufficient density and area to accommodate  
40 the 20-year population projection.

41  
42 Brenner asked if the County did something a year or two ago with populations.  
43 Aamot stated there were projections done to 2022. In order to ensure that UGA's  
44 accommodate 20 years' worth of population from 2007 to 2027, they need a population  
45 projection for 2027. Staff can do that this year or next year. The State Office of Financial  
46 Management (OFM) will revise its population projections next year, too.

47  
48 Brenner asked if this is something the County must do. Aamot stated it is, either  
49 this year or next year.

50  
51 Fleetwood asked the value of doing it this year instead of next year. Aamot stated  
52 staff was just trying to get ahead of the work, given the urban growth area review next  
53 year. However, the State is coming out with new projections, so it may be better to wait.

1  
2 **Fleetwood moved** to recommend docketing.

3  
4 Brenner stated she would rather wait until next year.

5  
6 Dave Pros, 1466 Roy Road, stated he doesn't recall seeing the word "extrapolate"  
7 anywhere. He is in favor of reviewing the population numbers, but not extrapolating the  
8 projections.

9  
10 Aamot stated the County and City planners have relied upon the projections made in  
11 2004, which went out to 2022. If they want to go back to the beginning, it will require  
12 much involvement with the cities to reevaluate the amount of population they will take.

13  
14 Pros stated there was a presentation showing that the basis for the 2004 numbers  
15 were not necessarily reality. They need to look at all the different ways of projecting  
16 population, and find a better solution. The current projection is creating a problem for the  
17 City of Bellingham. There are different ways to determine population projections.

18  
19 Aamot stated the fundamental question is whether the Council wants to stick with  
20 the population projection to 2022 and project another five years to 2027 or throw all those  
21 projections away and start from the beginning.

22  
23 **Motion failed 1-2 with McShane in favor.**

24  
25 McShane stated that they are always guessing on the future based on known facts  
26 and their understanding of those known facts. No matter what, no one will be happy with  
27 the number. In the end, it's a wild guess. It all comes down to how they plan for the  
28 future. People get wound up about population numbers. They're not that critical. How  
29 growth happens is what matters.

30  
31 Jack Petree, citizen, stated the real problem is that the County Comprehensive Plan  
32 required a five-year review. People have been dragging their feet long enough that they are  
33 entering a new process before the last process is complete. The work done over the last  
34 few years is obsolete. The County is at least four years out of compliance. It should have  
35 been done in 2002. Some people would like them to start the process all over again, which  
36 is what this is all about. Starting over is not an option.

37  
38 Brenner stated she voted no because staff feels it's not a high priority. The Council  
39 has to reduce the 30 proposals down to ten or 12.

40  
41 *(Clerk's Note: Action on this item continued, below.)*

42  
43 Docket # 2006-X: Add a policy regarding UGA density

44  
45 Aamot stated this policy would say that urban growth areas would have a lower  
46 density, on average, than abutting incorporated land until annexed. Staff has concerns. It  
47 may hinder the effort to meet density goals in the Comprehensive Plan. It would cap the  
48 density of the urban growth area. Retain the policy of higher densities in the urban growth  
49 areas.

50  
51 *(Clerk's Note: The committee took a break for five minutes. Discussion of this item*  
52 *continued, below.)*

Docket # 2006-F: Extrapolate the adopted 2022 population projections to 2027

*(Clerk's Note: Discussion continued from above.)*

**Brenner** stated "extrapolate" does not prevent them from going in whatever direction they need to go. It just gives them the information that is already there. She **moved** to reconsider previous vote.

**Motion carried 2-0 with McShane out of the room.**

Brenner asked if the extrapolation will get done in one year and if it's something that they should start this year.

*(Clerk's Note: End of tape one, side A.)*

Brenner continued to ask if extrapolation may take a couple of years. Holbrook stated it is appropriate to begin this process next year when they get the 2007 OFM projections.

**Fleetwood moved** to recommend approval to the full Council.

**Motion failed 1-2 with McShane in favor.**

Docket # 2006-X: Add a policy regarding UGA density

*(Clerk's Note: Discussion continued from above.)*

29 Brenner stated this sounds like what they already talked about doing, which is  
30 requiring the urban growth areas stay rural until public services are available. The County  
31 just received a warning and will have to do a lot more stormwater services in areas that are  
32 more dense than a certain size. The County doesn't want to have much density areas that  
33 are not being annexed.

34 Crawford stated that if there were no zoning or urban growth areas in the county, he  
35 would say this is the most natural ways for growth to occur. However, it would clearly  
36 require the County to vastly expand its UGA's to meet the population projections. It's not  
37 necessarily a good idea for that reason. He asked the purpose of the application.

38  
39 Dave Pros, 1466 Roy Road, stated that putting high density areas far away from the  
40 city, it doesn't make sense for a transportation standpoint. The UGA's, at this density, will  
41 force new residents to the area who want room into the rural areas. The City of Burlington  
42 has a variety of densities in its UGA's, with an average of four units per acre.

43  
44 Given the UGA's they have and the other options they have, there is no way people  
45 will agree on how the county will grow. In many cases, the Planning Commission is asked  
46 to put higher densities next to lower densities in the UGA's. Communities should grow less  
47 dense as they get farther from the city. Don't allow urban densities in areas that aren't  
48 annexed.

49  
50 Crawford stated he is very concerned about lower densities in the certain  
51 neighborhoods in the city while there is a dense outer ring.

52

Brenner stated she is against dumping all the density in the urban growth areas. The people who live in the unincorporated UGA's have nothing to do politically with the City officials. They depend on the County Council, which has policies that bow to the City's wishes. She doesn't like that. Develop a policy to preclude urban levels of development in the UGA areas without annexation. They were warned how expensive it would be if the County takes over these areas that the City doesn't want to annex. The people in those areas are not represented. The wording in the summary is ambiguous. Make sure the summary says there will be a rural density in the UGA's on average less than the abutting incorporated land until annexed.

Lincoln Rutter, 8373 Semiahmoo Drive, stated this needs to be docketed. The northern point of Birch Point is still in the UGA. The Semiahmoo planned unit development (PUD) includes about 2,400 units of density that are approved residential lots. Of those, only 540 have houses. A strict interpretation of the Growth Management Act is clear that urban growth areas are suppose to remain rural until the adjacent urban area density is infilled. The infill has to take place before urban growth areas are expanded or developed. It costs a tremendous amount of money to extend services into rural areas. Prohibit urbanization of the UGA's before the neighboring urban areas are infilled. Lincoln Road costs \$7.5 million. All the PUD's that have been developed to date inside Semiahmoo have said there has been no significant impact to transportation, and therefore the County would not have to pay \$7.5 million.

Brenner stated that's different from what she recommends. She recommends leaving the UGA areas with a rural zone until public services are provided with annexation.

Rutter stated that Comprehensive Plan updates include recalculating the UGA's every seven years. The planners are responsible for calculating the infill number that is deducted from the population they are trying to accommodate.

29  
30 Aamot stated there are long-term planning areas and short-term planning areas in  
31 the UGA. The long-term planning area has to be a rural density. It is now zoned one  
32 dwelling unit per five acres. They are proposing that the density go to one unit per ten  
33 acres. The short-term planning areas are zoned at a density of one unit per five acres until  
34 public water and sewer is available. Many of the cities won't extend those services into the  
35 UGA, but if they do, the short-term planning areas can develop at urban densities.

36  
37 Brenner stated don't continue allowing urban levels of development in UGA without  
38 annexation because the County will have to provide all the stormwater services that will be  
39 required.

40  
41 Dana Quam, Association of Realtors Government Affairs, stated this is not a high  
42 priority in terms of all the Comprehensive Plan amendments, in terms of staff time and  
43 Council time. There are a lot of underlying issues. There may be land supply problems.  
44 They can't force people to build what they don't want. This is not as worthy as the other  
45 major issues that are coming up.

46  
47 Brenner asked if this is a high priority, considering what they heard from the Water  
48 Resources Division. She also asked if this can be done without declaring an emergency.  
49 Holbrook stated he hasn't had time to follow up on the last question. Most of the areas with  
50 urban levels of development is in the Bellingham urban growth area. Most of the other  
51 cities have policies to not extend utilities without annexation. Staff is bringing forward  
52 changes through the subarea plans and interlocal agreement to reinforce those policies.  
53 There are policies in place to not do urban development without extension of utilities. New

1 policies to require annexation will solve the problem. It's not the highest priority for staff  
2 right now. There are other processes that will help set the policy framework through  
3 subarea planning. If the Council docket this item, the staff will also have to look at Kendall  
4 and Birch Bay.  
5

6 Pros stated how the UGA's are rezoned will come to the County Council. This  
7 proposal was meant to address that decision. When the Council is asked to okay a zoning  
8 proposal for ten to 24 units at the furthest end of the UGA area, it's not a wise approval.  
9 Anything over eight units is going to be multi-family housing. Transfer of development  
10 rights (TDR) areas in the UGA must densify to the highest level. That means apartments or  
11 condominiums next to less dense areas. Don't have high density areas at the edge of the  
12 UGA's.  
13

14 Brenner stated the County does not want any more urban density development in  
15 areas that aren't annexed because of the stormwater requirements. She asked if the  
16 stormwater requirements will be a high priority. Holbrook stated the County doesn't have  
17 to allow the extension of urban levels of utilities into the UGA. The County is bringing  
18 forward policies and mechanisms to prevent that. Annexation occurs through the Boundary  
19 Review Board, which the County reviews. The interlocal agreement has to be revised.  
20 There are other ways to enforce it.  
21

22 **Brenner moved** to recommend approval to the full Council, but will vote against it  
23 because of the wishes of staff.  
24

25 **Motion failed unanimously.**  
26

27 Docket # 2006-AA: Add a goal regarding the creation of a one-mile or greater buffer  
28 around cities  
29

30 Pros stated everyone wants to keep the cities from bumping into each other. The  
31 only way to do that is to require some kind of buffer between the cities. His application is  
32 an effort to do that. If docketed, the Planning Department will determine how to do that, if  
33 it can be done. At this point in time, create some kind of a buffering process.  
34

35 Brenner asked if the Comprehensive Plan already requires buffers between cities.  
36 Holbrook stated he believes so. It is also a requirement of the Growth Management Act.  
37

38 Brenner stated she doesn't want to designate a specific distance. Holbrook stated  
39 the open space maps shows open space areas. There may also be a policy that is not as  
40 strong as this. The major area of concern is the area between Bellingham and Ferndale.  
41

42 Rutter stated it's one thing to say the GMA has a clear principal for establishing a  
43 rural buffer between cities. The GMA also has a clear principal for establishing a buffer  
44 between urban growth areas. However, Whatcom County has been so out of compliance  
45 with the GMA for so long that people don't understand what that means. There is no  
46 separation between the Blaine UGA and the Birch Bay UGA. If they don't docket this item, it  
47 may never get codified. It's nice to say it's in the GMA, but in reality, it isn't enforced and  
48 adopted in Whatcom County. This amendment merits staff time and review. The fastest-  
49 growing area of the county is in an unincorporated area. The short- and long-term planning  
50 areas aren't found in the GMA either. They are a result of the adjudication that took place  
51 when Whatcom County was out of compliance with the GMA. Docket this item. It has  
52 everything to do with sizing Blaine's UGA appropriately, which is noncompliant.  
53

McShane stated the Comprehensive Plan does say something similar to this already. In many areas, the Comprehensive Plan defines certain action items. Some action items have had no action for several years. There isn't necessarily the need for a Comprehensive Plan amendment, but a need for acting on the action items already in the Comprehensive Plan. Review of the agricultural zone is an example. The County could take action to pull apart the Blaine and Birch Bay UGA's without a Comprehensive Plan amendment.

Brenner asked if Mr. Pros would be willing to add a goal to create an adequate buffer around cities. Pros stated he would be willing to do that.

Brenner stated she would like to docket this item. The staff could find the language is already there and they won't have to do anything.

Caskey-Schreiber stated she remembered this being in the Comprehensive Plan already when the Council dealt with another issue. There was a clear mandate that there must be a buffer between UGA's to keep them from hitting each other. She is leery of this item. Mr. Pros's intentions are good, but mandating this buffer would be very tricky. Instead, look at what we have and see if that can work better.

**Brenner moved** to add a goal regarding the creation of adequate buffers around cities. If they already have that goal, then it won't take the staff any time.

Fleetwood stated he is in favor of docketing this item. However, if he finds specific language before the final vote on all the docket items, he may vote against it. Cities must not grow forever and ever until they bump into each other. Consideration of this item would stimulate discussion of how they can ensure the buffers exist. He is skeptical of this particular proposal. Future Councils may have the authority to jump over buffers. There may not be anything sacred about a strip of buffer. However, he would like to look at methods by which they can guarantee that cities don't expand until they run into other cities.

**Motion carried 2-1 with McShane opposed.**

Docket # 2006-BB: Add a policy regarding the establishment of a Design and Review Board

Pros stated that if things aren't being accomplished under the current situation, then the situation ought to be modified. Many of his proposals are already implied in the Comprehensive Plan, but aren't happening. He hoped the Council would be willing to take action. This county appeals to geo-tourists who want to be in nature. When driving around Whatcom County, a coordinated design for shopping centers and strip malls may look better than regular shopping centers and strip malls. Those things won't happen without a design review board to decide on and enforce designs.

Brenner stated this would be better done as an incentive for good design. She doesn't know that a design and review board could regulate anything. Holbrook stated he's worked with several design and review boards. The first thing they need is criteria and locations where the designs would apply. That would require a lengthy process. If they don't allow development in UGA's without annexation, then the UGA's would not be areas where the designs would apply. The County just got a grant to develop design guidelines for Birch Bay. As that moves forward, a review board would be appropriate. Kendall has a different flavor. Regulation would depend on the guidelines and code. Exact regulations usually apply only in small cities or small core areas. Usually they are just guidelines.

Brenner suggested a friendly amendment to add a policy to establish a design and review board to help create design guidelines. Holbrook stated the application only references setting up a board, not guidelines.

Brenner stated she is not interested in setting up a board that regulates, only one that sets guidelines. Pros stated he hoped there would be different recommendations for the subareas. If this is a better way to get started, he is open to that. Create something that doesn't allow a 7-11 to look like a 7-11 if it is not in an urban environment. It should be something they are all happy to see.

*(Clerk's Note: End of tape one, side B.)*

Caskey-Schreiber stated this would be a huge workload for staff. The concept is a good idea, but it needs to be flushed out more. This is so big, the staff won't get this done in a year. It's asking too much right now. Pros stated his concept is to establish a design review board that determines how all of that gets put together. It's not a job for the Planning Department. It's about establishing a review board that operates separately from the Planning Department and the Council.

Caskey-Schreiber stated that every County board created seems to want County staff to facilitate the board. Pros stated it doesn't get easier from this point on. When they do the rezoning of the UGA areas, they will see everything change. If the Council wants consistent design in the county, it needs to be done.

Caskey-Schreiber asked if they could also work with the Planning and Development Department on incentives instead of mandates. Pros stated that communities that look nice usually have mandates. Guidelines, hopes, and wishes don't have the same weight as standardized costs for building a store.

29  
30  
31  
32  
33  
34  
35  
36  
37  
38  
39  
40  
41  
42  
43  
44  
45  
46  
47  
48  
49  
50  
51  
52  
53

Mary Dickinson, Building Industry Association Government Affairs Director, stated she agrees with Councilmember Caskey-Schreiber. She was peripherally involved with the City's design review process. It took them two and a half years to work on an eight block radius around the city core. They worked with designers, architects, and volunteers. They also had a full-time staff person.

Because the county areas are very different from each other, it would be a lot of work for staff to do in one year. These are things the County is working on anyway. There doesn't need to be a separate process.

Brenner asked the first step the City of Bellingham did. Dickinson stated she didn't remember. Once the neighborhood plans were updated, they began working in those neighborhood areas. Their design review was for bigger projects, not every structure that was built.

McShane stated there is a design chapter in the Comprehensive Plan. A design committee was established in 1993. He read the process for creating that chapter. One adopted policy led to the cultural preservation work at Point Roberts. It led to a lot of controversy. People had trouble saving ancient cultural artifacts in this county. In 1996, the County Council at that time decided not to go down that path. It adopted the goal, but no policies. Someone will have to find those policies and bring forth those policies they want to adopt at this time. There was probably a lot of good work done back then. He is not in favor of this docket item because it is too broad. Instead, they could be very specific.

1 They already have the goals. They have all the background information, evaluation, and a  
2 design committee has already met.

3  
4 This issue came up in the rural areas his first year on the County Council. Someone  
5 wanted propane tanks screened in rural areas. He wasn't willing to do that because rural  
6 areas are meant to be kind of rough. There are areas where they need to look at specific  
7 design policies.

8  
9 The proposal is good, but work has been done already. It may be easier to go  
10 through that work and see if a councilmember or planning commissioner is willing to  
11 advocate for it. Pros stated he is thankful that many of the people on the Council in 1996  
12 are not here now. He agrees the staff has a big workload. The citizenry is different now.  
13 There are good people who would be happy to serve on a design review board so the staff  
14 doesn't have to work on it.

15  
16 Brenner asked if Mr. Pros would be willing to amend his application to say, "The  
17 County shall work through the Planning Commission to review existing architectural goals  
18 and policies from 1996, and bring forward recommendations of those they'd like to see  
19 evaluated further." Pros stated he doesn't object, if that's the way to get it started.

20  
21 Brenner stated she doesn't envision the work being done through a Comprehensive  
22 Plan amendment, but as a review through the Planning Commission. She would like to see  
23 that, and some recommendations. Pros stated this would be very beneficial to the whole  
24 community.

25  
26 McShane stated he will vote against docketing. Mr. Pros has done something that  
27 many more individual citizens should think about doing, which is bringing forward proposed  
28 Comprehensive Plan amendments. It has been done in the past, but rarely. A volunteer  
29 group could get together on its own and find that information. It doesn't have to be a  
30 County activity. The information is there. Those and additional policies can be brought  
31 forward at that time as Comprehensive Plan amendments. He would like the individual  
32 communities and neighborhoods to come forward with recommendations for their own  
33 neighborhoods. Mr. Pros shouldn't feel discouraged. His idea needs to be more specific.  
34 Pros stated the concept was for the County to put together a design and review board.  
35 People from the subareas would go to the design review board. It will take work off the  
36 County's workload. The County would be more coordinated.

37  
38 **Brenner moved** to recommend docketing, but she will vote against the motion.  
39 This item doesn't belong as a Comprehensive Plan amendment.

40  
41 Fleetwood stated this application illustrates the difficulty of docketing. There are so  
42 many things to consider. He is sensitive to the benefit. There is already a provision in the  
43 Comprehensive Plan that urges the County to consider this. It is a matter of finding the will  
44 to implement it and move forward.

45  
46 McShane stated they could establish a design review board that would recommend  
47 policies to accomplish the goals in Comprehensive Plan chapter ten. He doesn't know who  
48 has looked closely at the design chapter since it was adopted. It may need revisiting. He  
49 asked if and when it must be updated. Holbrook stated the County can review chapter ten  
50 whenever it is docketed.

51  
52 McShane stated it's hard to get the administration to act on current policies,  
53 particularly with the rural areas. There hasn't been adequate staff to take on those actions.

Pros stated that all of his proposed amendments are elements of the Legacy Plan, where the community would help determine designs, buffers, and how to control growth. In many cases, there have been good intentions in the past, but things have not been adopted. This is the County Council that will step forward to get a handle on how the people of the county really want the county to grow. These individual pieces may not seem to be worth docketing. However, as a whole, many people want to have a say in how the county grows, but they aren't being heard.

Brenner stated issues are not black or white. Everyone can come to agreement and they can get more done if issues aren't so divided.

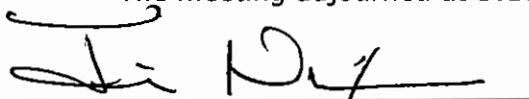
***Motion failed unanimously.***

**OTHER BUSINESS**

There was no other business.

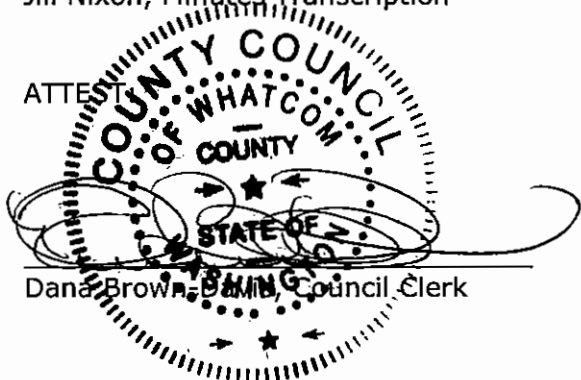
**ADJOURN**

The meeting adjourned at 5:10 p.m.



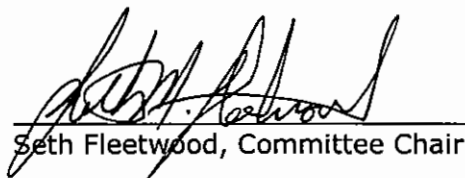
Jill Nixon, Minutes Transcription

ATTEST



Dana Brown, Council Clerk

WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL  
WHATCOM COUNTY, WASHINGTON



Seth Fleetwood, Committee Chair

29  
30  
31  
32  
33  
34  
35  
36  
37