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WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL
Special Committee Of The Whole

June 8, 2010

CALL TO ORDER

Council Chair Sam Crawford called the meeting to order at 11:45 a.m. in the Council Chambers, 311 Grand Avenue, Bellingham, Washington.

ROLL CALL

Present: Barbara Brenner, Sam Crawford, Kathy Kershner, Ken Mann, Bill Knutzen and Carl Weimer

Absent: L. Ward Nelson

COMMITTEE DISCUSSION

1. RURAL ELEMENT UPDATE - DISCUSSION OF GROWTH MANAGEMENT ACT REQUIREMENTS AND THE PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATIONS (AB2010-072) (11:46:32 AM)

Gary Davis, Planning and Development Services Department, submitted and read from a presentation (*on file*).

Discussion included how the County shows to the Hearings Board its analysis used for arriving at the limited areas of more intense rural development (LAMIRD) designation and maps; whether the State allows the boundaries to be set according to the roads; whether they have to change the LAMIRD boundaries or just better-define the reasons for the boundaries; water lines; whether the State allows consistency in the shape of LAMIRDs; Hearings Board decisions on allowing future growth versus growth restrictions in LAMIRDs; leaving the Guide Meridian as it is currently zoned, and just changing the Countywide Planning Policies and Comprehensive Plan; the change from general commercial to rural commercial; other options for rural general commercial; whether the entire Guide Meridian can be an urban growth area (UGA); the economic development goals of the Growth Management Act; why the general commercial designation wouldn't work within LAMIRDs, instead of having to use rural general commercial; why they would want to increase setbacks between businesses; making sweeping changes in the Council's approach that will require much staff support to justify legal challenges; properly analyzing the boundaries; next steps, and; possibly contracting with a consultant to get some of this work done.

The following person answered questions:

- Samya Lutz, Planning and Development Services Department

Wain Harrison, Planning and Development Services Department, stated the Planning Department can allocate time to modify the proposal for the rural element LAMIRD ordinance. The net affect would be that other items on the long range work plan would be affected. Also, staffing levels will need to be considered.

Davis asked for specific direction from the councilmembers.

1
2 Crawford stated he would like to see more consistency in rounding out the
3 intersections and information on water line analysis. He is okay with the rural general
4 commercial and rural light impact industrial zones, as long as there isn't a big negative
5 impact to existing business owners. Use every credible rationale they can use to achieve a
6 route that is least painful.
7

8 Knutzen asked if they can work through and finish some of the easier LAMIRDs.
9

10 Brenner stated she agrees with Councilmember Knutzen about getting a few of the
11 LAMIRDs done. Show the Council is working in good faith.
12

13 Kershner stated look at what is inside the LAMIRD boundaries and also the
14 downzoning proposal on the outside of the boundaries. She cannot support the downzone
15 proposal regarding rural, one unit per ten acres (R10A).
16

17 Weimer stated he is ready to pass the fall version, except the change regarding
18 R10A. They are stalling and wasting a lot of time. They are not going to get done with this
19 any time soon.
20

21 Brenner stated the choice is not between unlimited expansion or no expansion at all.
22 They can find something in between.
23

24
25 **OTHER BUSINESS**

26 There was no other business.
27
28

29
30 **ADJOURN**

31 The meeting adjourned at 1:33 p.m.
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36
37 Please contact the Council Office to obtain an
38 official, signed copy:
39
40 360-676-6690 or council@co.whatcom.wa.us
41
42
43
44

45 _____
46 Dana Brown-Davis, Council Clerk

Sam Crawford, Council Chair