

Whatcom County Comprehensive Plan Policy Review

Sub committee Work Session summary

March 14, 2007

IN ATTENDANCE: Phil Cloward, Richard Banel, Norma Otto, Sean Wilson and approximately 26 members of the public.

CALL TO ORDER: The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by CLOWARD. It was announced that the work session would be conducted as an open public meeting to allow the attendance of other's from the sub-area group as members of the public.

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION: The sub-committee introduced themselves and welcomed the public. A worksheet was distributed to solicit input on key policy points under consideration by the sub-committee. OTTO noted that educational materials relating to various planning models including "Smart Growth" and "Low Impact Development" were available for free next to the sign in sheet

POLICY REVIEW: The sub-committee addressed the following areas of the comprehensive plan. Proposed policy recommendations were reviewed in the worksheet, including revised language, applicability, and additional language to address areas previously neglected by the current comprehensive plan regarding the Foothills Sub-area:

- **Land Use**
- **Housing**
- **Capital Facilities**
- **Utilities**
- **Natural Resource Lands**
- **Transportation**
- **Economics**
- **Design**
- **Environment**

The sub-committee noted that the data collected in the worksheet would be used by the sub-committee to assist them in determining the direction of policy recommendations as presented in each section and thanked the public for their participation in the process. WILSON noted that no decisions would be made at this meeting regarding final recommendations to be brought to the sub-area planning process and encouraged the public to attend the advisory committee meetings.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

- A. LEE asked the sub-committee if there were clearly defined guidelines on constitutes Light Impact Industrial. WILSON responded, stating that he thought the guidelines for this definition were overseen by county planning ordinance.
- B. ISENHART noted that the entire Columbia Valley burned in 1903 and that fire is a very real hazard in the foothills.
- J. LEVIEN stated that he builds houses and is concerned about potential public safety risks caused by trees in residential areas. He suggested a landscaping plan for residential developments.
- A. LEE wanted to know if there was a maximum density for land use noted in the comprehensive plan. WILSON noted that the section under review contemplates 4-12 units per net acre in various suggested levels of density depending on the nature of the area. The current recommendation in the UGA is 4 units per net acres with lesser degrees of density in the outlying areas (R5A, R10A, etc.) and greater degrees of density for areas like Ferndale.
- J. HATFIELD noted that it is important to encourage and support responsible development proposals when they come along to prevent losing control over what kind of development occurs in the Foothills
- A. MAGEE wanted to let everyone know to keep an eye on the Bellingham Herald and current development occurring in the Cordata area. She is concerned that D.R. Horton might want to develop in the East County next.
- B. BEZANSON wanted to know if there was any ordinance that would limit building height. CLOWARD stated that this type of restriction would be contemplated in code.

CLOSING: CLOWARD thanked the public for their comments and participation in the process and encouraged their continued participation through the Sub-Area Committee's regular meetings at 6pm, on the first and third Wednesdays at the Kendall Elementary School

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 p.m. following public comment