

**Foothills Subarea Plan Advisory Committee
Meeting Summary, February 21, 2007**

Committee members in attendance:

Richard Banel
Jan Eskola
Amy Mower
Norma Otto
Cindy Purdy
Alan Seid

Phil Cloward, Vice-Chair
Gary Gehling, Chair
Bill Coleman
Sean Wilson

1) Determination of Quorum

Gary Gehling called the meeting to order; a determination of a quorum was made.

2) Public Comment – First Period

- Dennis Balcom of the Deming Water Association advised the Subarea Committee that the Deming Water Association approved a resolution for upgrading the water distribution system to meet Department of Health regulations. He submitted preliminary designs and engineer cost estimates for the project to the committee.
- Anne Baker read a letter asking the committee to consider putting in a skate park in the Kendall area. She has heard that there is a 6-acre parcel adjacent to the future site for the Maple Falls library and she proposed that this area become a community park with a world-class skate park. A copy of her letter was submitted to the committee members.
- Karen Reich asked a question on behalf of Larry Duncan: Is the committee planning on doing anything to limit growth like maybe setting limits for building permits? Is there anything else the committee could do to limit growth? Possibly recommending a policy which limits growth should be considered.
- Holly Koon- Questioned whether the committee was considering all the buildable lots that are already available, to accommodate the growth. Does part of that accommodation include the already identified buildable lots? She also voiced concern about a trend that she is seeing wherein there is a lot of time, trouble and taxpayer dollars spent on gathering information from the public and in those efforts it seems that the general consensus is to preserve the rural character of the area. But in looking at the minutes and the information coming out of the committee she doesn't see the decisions supporting the preservation of rural character.
- Richard Banel responded that the committee had voted to move the south boundary of the UGA north to exclude Kendall from the UGA to preserve its rural character.
- George Swanaset Jr. introduced himself to the subarea committee. He is the Cultural Department Director for the Nooksack Indian Tribe. He requested to be put on the contact list for the Foothills Subarea. He asked whether the subarea committee had considered any plans for cultural resource management. He would like the opportunity to review and comment on subarea sites.

- Rob Staveland asked whether the public would be able to comment during the policy portion of the meeting. Gary indicated that's a possibility not knowing how much time would be available at that point in the meeting.

3) Meeting Summary

The February 7, 2007 meeting summary was accepted with the following changes:

Richard Banel would like to change - When he added up the numbers he saw that a disproportionate amount of responses were collected from the smaller communities and rural areas and instead wants the record to read – **According to the survey results there was a very low number of respondents from the UGA in proportion to the population especially when compared to the respondents in Glacier and Maple Falls which shows a disproportionate high number of respondents and the commentary section of the survey seems to support this.**

Richard Banel would also like to strike - He also mentioned that Bill Grimes said the questionnaire was not statistically significant- from the record. He did not say that.

Richard Banel would like add the following: (In speaking to #6 on the 2-7-07 agenda- 2027 Population Projection discussion) **It was reasonable to conclude that residential permits would be issued at the same pace as shown by the data of the past 6 years.**

Phil commented that in order to provide full disclosure, when the committee sends emails regarding the review of the minutes that those emails should be sent to all the committee members.

The February 7, 2007 meeting summary was accepted with noted changes by consensus.

4) Non-agenda items

- Sean Wilson requested that the meeting summary notes reflect the name of the subarea committee member that makes a motion, the name of the committee member that seconds the motion and how each individual committee member votes on the motion. He suggested this in response to a concern from the public that the subcommittee members may not be representing their constituents. The goal here is to have total transparency in the minutes.
- Phil then suggested that we conduct a roll call for the votes.
- Jan commented that she did not think that the questionnaire was a flawed document just because it did not generate a large number of respondents from all areas. This was just one of many ways the committee has tried to gather information from the public and it would seem that the same request was voiced, to maintain the rural character of the area. Jan also voiced concern about the direction the committee is going in regard to the high density development of the UGA especially from those committee members that live in the area. With the lack of police protection and cleaning up of unsightly areas, density will only increase the problems already in existence.
- Alan brought up the point that by law the subarea committee must accommodate the population projections that they adopted. If the committee wants to limit population then they should submit a policy that states that decision, they can't just vote for low

population because they don't want growth. Just choosing a low number isn't going to limit the growth.

- Matt Aamot announced an upcoming class – “A Short Course on Local Planning”, to be held February 28th, 2007 in the County Council Chambers from 6:00 pm to 9:30 pm. He said informational flyers were available for those interested.

5) Committee Reconsideration of the 2027 Population Projection for the Columbia Valley Urban Growth Area

- Matt went over the handout he submitted to the subarea committee which outlined population projections for Low Growth Assumption, Baseline Growth Assumption, and High Growth Assumption. The handout also provided information for potential dwelling unit analysis should the 40-acre Holly Associates/S.C. Goshen Site be added to the Columbia Valley UGA. Committee then revisited discussion on the 2027 population projections and land supply needed in order to accommodate those population projections.
- Motion made by Sean Wilson, Seconded by Phil Cloward that the subarea committee adopt a projection that the population would increase by 3,200 people by 2027 in the Columbia Valley UGA.
Ayes: Bill Coleman, Sean Wilson, Norma Otto, Phil Cloward, Richard Banel, and Gary Gehling
Nays: Amy Mower, Cindy Purdy, Jan Eskola, and Alan Seid
Abstained: None.
Absent: Lou Piotrowski
The motion was approved 6-4.

6) Committee Discussions on Preferred Land Use Alternative for the Columbia Valley Urban Growth Area if the Existing Land Supply & Densities will not Accommodate the Projected 2027 Population

- Alan questioned Matt - The population projections that the committee adopted can be accommodated by either adding more land or increasing density in some part of the existing UGA. It's not that the subarea committee had to do either one or the other; it can in fact be a combination of the two correct? Matt answered in the affirmative.
- Discussion as to exactly what the GMA dictates in accommodating the population growth. Amy reminds the committee that there is a balancing act between accommodating the growth and maintaining open spaces as the GMA also addresses.
- Richard stated that one of the trade-offs was that the committee chose to try and preserve the rural character of the area by excluding the R5A area from the UGA. Now the rest of the UGA has to absorb the growth.
- Sean reminded the subarea committee that we have a land owner that has made a request to have their property included in the UGA and that would help in the accommodation of growth. It doesn't totally accommodate the 2027 population projections that the committee has just adopted and the committee may need to

make the point that densification may be used to accommodate the remaining population.

- Motion made by Jan Eskola, Seconded by Alan Seid to leave the UGA as it is now. Sean Wilson asked Jan Eskola to speak to the land owners' request in her motion. Jan Eskola declined, wanting to keep the land owners' request a separate issue. Alan Seid reconsidered and asked to pull his second of the motion.
- Phil Cloward advised the subarea committee as to what the 40-acre Holly & Associates parcel looked like. Phil feels as though this parcel can be added into the UGA with minimum visual impact to surrounding areas.
- The committee then discussed how many acres were recommended to be taken out the UGA by the committee. Approximately 140 acres were previously taken out of the UGA. Adding in the Holly & Associates 40-acre parcel would still cause a net reduction in the size of the UGA of 100 acres. Adding this 40-acre parcel would, based upon current density assumptions, leave the land capacity in the UGA about 47 people short of accommodating the projected growth of 3,200 people and would still allow the area to retain its rural character.
- Jan Eskola withdrew her motion.
- Motion made by Sean Wilson, Seconded by Phil Cloward to include the 40-acre Holly and Associates parcel in the UGA with a caveat to include a consideration by this committee to make a policy when that issue comes up that would encourage or allow County planning to consider densification as a means of accommodating projected population over the 20 year planning period if necessary. Amy suggested that Sean break the motion into 2 motions. One to address the 40-acre parcel and the other to address policy. Sean agreed to start with the motion to add the 40-acre Holly & Associates parcel into the Columbia Valley urban growth area. Seconded by Phil Cloward.
Ayes: Bill Coleman, Alan Seid, Sean Wilson, Phil Cloward, Gary Gehling, Richard Banel, and Norma Otto
Nays: Amy Mower, Jan Eskola, and Cindy Purdy
Abstained: None
Absent: Lou Piotrowski
The motion was approved 7-3.

7) Committee Discussion to Identify Potential Implementation Projects

The Committee then spent time identifying and reviewing more potential implementation projects for the Foothills Subarea. Additional projects were listed. Matt advised the subarea committee that the draft Implementation Project List would be posted on the website and that the committee would be prioritizing these projects at the March 7th meeting.

- Amy asked if additional projects could be added later in the Committee process, as the Committee proceeded with policies and drafting the Subarea Plan. Matt said yes, this was an ongoing process and other projects could be added.

8) Committee Consideration of Existing & Potential Goals & Policies for the Subarea Plan

The Committee agreed to put together 2 subcommittees. One subcommittee will review the 1988 Subarea Plan and the other committee will review those existing Whatcom County Comprehensive Plan policies that specifically relate to the Foothills. The 1988 Subarea Plan committee consists of Amy Mower, Cindy Purdy, and Jan Eskola. The Whatcom County Comprehensive Plan subcommittee exists of Sean Wilson, Norma Otto, Phil Cloward, and Richard Banel. The subcommittees will bring their recommendations to the full committee at the March 21, 2007 meeting. The subcommittee meeting dates, places and times will be posted to the Foothills webpage.

- Matt said that after talking with Gary Gehling they thought it was best that the complete committee review the Policy Matrix document submitted by Bill Grimes and that this review was planned for the next regular meeting.

9) Public Comment Period- Second Period

The committee invited comments from the public.

- Jack Hovenier representing Holly Associates & S.C. Goshen thanked the Subarea Committee for placing their item on the agenda. Their consideration was appreciated.
- Rob Staveland asked the Subarea Committee whether there would be a place for public comment on polices not yet addressed by the committee. Phil suggested that Rob put those comments in writing and submit them to the committee to facilitate review of those public comments. Rob also notified the committee that Ellen Barton has completed the Chain of Trails document and it is very well done.
- Carolyn Ferrer stated that she is pleased to see the Interfaith Community Health Center satellite clinic on the Projects list.

Meeting adjourned 8:23 p.m.

Submitted by:
Pam Brown