

## **Foothills Subarea Plan Advisory Committee Meeting Summary, February 7, 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  
Lou Piotrowski  
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**

- Jo Anne Harrison – Asked Matt Aamot as to whether the 1988 background inventory document has been updated. Matt responded that it was not going to be updated for the Subarea Plan. She stated that the best way to protect the subarea wetlands, creeks and rivers would be to specifically identify them. She also asked the committee to make a strong distinction between what can and should be done in the UGA verses what can and should be done in surrounding rural areas, specifically in terms of low density focus and lack of need for urban level service in the rural areas.
- Karen Reich – Asked Matt if the recently adopted Policy regarding light impact industrial would be an overlay or rezoning? Matt answered that it would be a Policy that would support a zoning change. Karen also asked if there would be a limit on how much acreage will be rezoned. Gary responded by asking if that would be revisited by the committee then indicated that the question would be addressed later on.
- Holly & Associates representative Jack Hovenier submitted to the committee members a handout which requests that the Foothills Advisory Committee recommend including a 40 acre site owned by Holly & Associates and S.C. Goshen into the Columbia Valley Urban Growth Area (UGA). He also asked that the UGA population projections be revisited. Holly and Associates owns 180 acres. The 40 acre site is located adjacent to the east boundary of the UGA. Gary Gehling advised the representative that the committee would review the information and add the request to the agenda at another meeting.
- Dennis Balcom, of the Deming Water Association, submitted a handout to the committee for two proposed implementation projects for the Deming community. Project 1 addressing the need for a replacement of the water distribution system. Project 2 is a request to study the long range need for wastewater treatment in Deming. Mr. Balcom was asked to notify the committee if the Deming Water Association board approved these implementation projects. Matt indicated the Growth Management Act (GMA)

does have restrictions on sewer outside of UGAs that would need to be considered.

- Rob Staveland asked that the committee revisit the issue of population projections. He stated that when the issue came up at the last meeting that people were tired and wanted to move on.
- Gary Gehling asked the audience if they had any comments relating to the items on the meeting agenda, specifically Implementation Projects.
- Joseph Heller raised several points. First, concerning fish habitat, he discussed the need for dredging High Creek and the need for opening the Kendall Creek dam at the Hatchery. Second, he discussed the need for forest fire prevention modifications to landscaping in densely populated areas in the UGA and Glacier. Third, he discussed traffic safety issues, regarding line of sight dangers and sharp curves, such as at his parents' house on Mt. Baker Highway.

### **3) Meeting Summary**

The January 17, 2007 meeting summary was accepted by consensus.

### **4) Non-agenda items**

- Gary Gehling asked the committee whether they wished to revisit the population issue for the UGA. Amy Mower suggested that the issue be addressed in a subcommittee to cut down on time. Sean Wilson said that every committee member that agrees to revisit the population issue has a stake in the outcome and that accommodation for discussion by the committee should be made. A motion was made and seconded to revisit the population projections for the Columbia Valley UGA on the Agenda for February 21, 2007. Motion carried by an 8 for, 2 against, 1 abstention vote. Matt pointed out that if the projections went higher the committee would need to ensure an adequate land supply to accommodate the population projection. This could either be through increasing the density in the existing UGA and/or expanding the UGA.
- Gary also discussed the need to revisit the UGA land use designations, both regarding Holly & Associates' request to add 40 acres to the UGA and regarding the acreage issue on light industrial. Lou Piotrowski wanted the light industrial reopened, and to review the North and East boundaries and limits. The committee decided to revisit the issue when it gets the draft chapter on Economics.
- Matt discussed the need to extend the committee's time-line for a couple more months, since Bill Grimes wants front loading on policies before he finishes the draft plan. Matt suggested that the Committee look at the existing comprehensive plan policies. Gary pointed out that the Committee could come up with additional policies.

### **5) Committee Discussion on the Draft Questionnaire Report**

- Richard Banel noted that in reviewing the questionnaire report that there was a limited number of questionnaires returned from the Columbia Valley UGA.

According to the survey results there were 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. To develop a policy based on this questionnaire will be difficult.

- Responding to Richard's comments about the lack of response from the Columbia Valley, Norma Otto said that, according to a disc that had been given to her with information from the Assessor's office, there are about 606 properties in the Paradise area that are owned by people who list their address as outside of the area. While she had no way of knowing how many of those are being used as vacation properties there are about 152 of that number that are owned by people or companies who own multiple properties. A number of those owned as multiples and many of the names are known to Norma to be landlords. This could be a reason that there was so little response to the questionnaire since many times renters and absent landlords or owners have little interest or commitment to the area.
- Matt stated that these questionnaires are one of many ways to collect data for public comment, public meetings were another means.
- Cindy Purdy stated that she had spoken with several Canadians who had not received the questionnaire despite mailings.
- Phil Cloward voiced concern with the questions that were selected for the questionnaire. He feels that the questionnaire was probably skewed from the beginning and that they now have a flawed document. How do we work with this document?
- Sean stated that the questionnaire gave him lots of information and that realistic needs of the communities were addressed in the questionnaire results. Needs such as EMT, fire, and police substations require money to support them. How will the community support that?
- Lou Piotrowski stated that the responses were only indicative of those who responded.

#### **6) Committee Discussions on 2027 Population Projections**

The issue of population projections for the "Remaining Subarea" was considered. This is the area outside of Deming, the UGA, Maple Falls and Glacier. Gary Gehling in regard to the GMA asks how the committee could realistically accommodate the population that has been assigned to the area. Would the GMA require lowering the density if the population wasn't produced?

The committee then began a discussion on the past 6 years of population increase and the number of building permits issued during that period. Matt indicated that between 2000 and August 2006, the County received 158 residential building permit applications. If they were all constructed, this would equate to about 359 more year-round residents. However, the Building Services

Division of County Planning estimated that 90-95% of homes applied for are actually constructed. It was also noted that building permit applications have been submitted at a rapid pace the last several years. There was discussion about the large volume of vacant land and potential future growth of population. Richard Banel commented that 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. The committee reviewed the 2027 population projections provided by ECONorthwest for a low, baseline, and high growth projection. After some discussion the committee voted (7 for-3 against, 1 abstention) to accept the high growth 2027 population projections supplied by ECONorthwest, which would mean that the “remaining subarea” would grow from 2,152 year-round residents in 2006 to 3,004 year-round residents in 2027 (an increase of 852).

Lou stated that the committee has a responsibility regarding density in the Remaining Subarea, in that the other lots left are more visible from the roads and other areas, and then brought up the idea of visual buffers.

#### **7) Committee Discussion to Identify Potential Implementation Projects**

The Committee then spent time identifying potential implementation projects for the Foothills Subarea. Matt listed the committee recommendations on large poster paper around the room. Due to time constraints the committee was unable to prioritize the projects as planned; therefore the information will be collected and posted to the website. There was discussion about possibly having a subcommittee to address the implementation projects, but the committee concluded that it was important for all members to participate at this time in identifying possible projects. Amy stated that these projects are very important and that the committee should spend more time on identifying the projects. Project identification and prioritization will be discussed again at the next meeting.

#### **8) Change to Business Rules**

The Committee decided, by consensus, to amend section 5 of the Business Rules and Procedures to change the start time of the regular meetings from 6:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

#### **9) Public Comment Period**

The committee invited comments from the public.

- Rob Staveland agreed that the implementation projects are very important for the Plan, as well as policies. He mentioned that Birch Bay spent 5 years on its plan. Policies for the non UGA areas are to protect rural areas and rural qualities. Gary suggested those points be put into Policies.
- Leif Swanson voiced support for Joseph Heller’s comments and concern for salmon habitat in the area. Leif also requested that committee members not make generalizations from the questionnaire about people because they live in a certain areas.
- Larry Duncan addressed questions to the committee as to population numbers, that if the growth all occurs up front and attain projections

prematurely, what difference does it actually make? Second, he also voiced concerns as to whether committee members are truly representing the people in the areas they have agreed to serve. Last, Larry asks that the questionnaire not be disregarded just because the majority of people didn't participate and the weight should be given to those questionnaires that have been returned. Larry stated that the questionnaire is like an election, it can't be ignored even if not all residents vote.

- Dennis Balcom asked if the Implementation Projects could be available electronically. Discussion was had about email or on the website. It was decided to post the draft Implementation Projects on the PDS website.

Submitted by:  
Pam Brown