

MEETING SUMMARY

PDR Oversight Committee

December 12, 2008, 8 AM

Agricultural Service Center
6975 Hannegan Road

Members present: Rod Erickson, Veronica Wisniewski, John Gilles, Paul Schissler, Allison Aurand, Barbara Dykes (phone-in); Staff: Samya Lutz & Dean Martin, PDS

1. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

2. Review of Minutes

The November 14, 2008 meeting minutes were reviewed and approved.

3. Ag Policy Follow-up

Staff reported the committee's letter had been sent to the Planning Commissioners, Council Members, and Executive's office, with copies to PDS Dept Head and Ag Advisory Committee members. No known comments have been received.

Dean reported on the Density Workshop that took place on Dec. 2nd, which John and Allison also attended. Representatives from county PDS, Bellingham staff (Tim Stewart and Greg Aucutt), and Nooksack/Everson/Sumas (Rollin Harper) attended, along with CTED's Heather Ballash and Cascade Land Conservancy staff Jeremy Eckert and Skip Swensen. John commented that he left sensing TDR programs are so complex and expensive that the PDR may actually be able to do more than we think. Other tools are needed to draw the bright line between Ag and development that people have been asking for (housing as accessory, Ag mitigation, more stringent aggregation rules, etc.)

4. Discussion of Round VII PDR

Ranking process –

Allison discussed Skagit County's points-based appraisal process for PDR applications, which takes a base value (which is adjusted periodically to correspond w/market changes), and uses points to adjust that base value up or down depending on specific criteria. Committee members discussed whether or not this type of system may make the PDR process faster, less expensive and more predictable. Allison will send out this point system to all committee members for reference. Samya will use Skagit's approach to rank past purchases and compare the results to the actual appraised values, and the committee will discuss further at the January meeting.

Another issue discussed was whether or not to include the Rural Study Areas and all Ag-zoned land in the definition of “Target areas” as used in the current Whatcom County PDR ranking process. **Allison made a motion to include the Rural Study Areas and Ag zone in addition to the current PDR Target Areas as comprising the “Target” areas for purposes of ranking. (John seconded.) All in favor.**

Committee members also discussed the value of including immediately adjacent lands to the targeted areas listed above in the definition of “Target” areas in the ranking. This issue will be discussed further along w/the Skagit materials in January.

5. Other Business

John gave a brief update on the Farm Friends TRC process. They have focused somewhat on accommodating existing development rights, as opposed to trying to move them out of Ag areas. It is difficult to balance this in the face of increased services demands of development in these outlying areas, especially in this economy when tax dollars are quite short of what is needed.

6. Next committee meeting

The committee will meet again on Friday, January 9th, 8 AM, at the same location.

Signed,

Rod Erickson, Chair PDR Oversight Committee