

**Foothills Subarea Plan Advisory Committee
Meeting Summary, April 26, 2006**

Committee members in attendance:

Julie Baker
Richard Banel
Phil Cloward, Vice-Chair
Gary Gehling, Chair
Amy Mower
Norma Otto
Lou Piotrowski
Cindy Purdy
Alan Seid

1) Meeting Format, Subcommittees, Public Input Time

Gary started off by stating that he would like to have the Committee come to decisions by consensus. He proposed business rules and a copy of the Surface Mining Advisory Committee business rules was passed out as an example.

Lou suggested moving the public input to the beginning of the meeting. After much discussion it was decided to allow 7-8 minutes at the beginning and 7-8 minutes at the end of the meeting, still limiting each speaker to a maximum of three minutes.

Gary returned to the decision making section of the example business rules (section #7) and suggested operating under these rules until the Committee has had time to review and adopt their own rules.

Lou asked about agenda rules. It was decided that members should submit their agenda items to Gary and Phil, copying Matt. The agenda would be determined by the chair, vice chair & staff (Gary, Phil and Matt). Gary requested 8-9 days lead time for agenda items if possible. He also pointed out that each agenda will have an allotted time of 10 minutes for committee members to discuss anything not on the agenda.

After a discussion about email protocol, Gary requested copying him and Phil on emails, particularly emails sent to Bill and Matt, so he can stay abreast the issues.

Gary proposed that each chapter of the subarea plan be reviewed on a section-by-section basis by the Committee. This way Bill receives a document based on consensus and gives a clearer picture of the Committees intent.

Amy said that the Committee may not have time to go through the chapters line by line during the time allotted. She also pointed out that members may not come to a consensus on some issues. There may be several points of view, which may be relevant to the issue.

Alan asked what Bill's preference is for receiving Committee member's recommendations. Matt responded that initially comments could be sent to Bill from

each member, but said that the Committee will need consensus in the end. Matt suggested that emails to Bill with recommendations for the subarea plan be copied to everyone on the Committee.

2) Public Comment – First Period

- Jan Eskola asked why the minutes were not approved. She also said that she had supplied Lou with population information for Glacier.
- Joann Harrison agreed with Amy that it is premature to come to consensus now so early in the process. Input from the public is needed.
- Karen Reich wondered why she didn't get notification of the meetings when she has submitted her email address twice. Gary responded that public outreach is an agenda item for this meeting and is on-going.
- Holly Koon suggested a list of Committee members with bio information be available at each meeting. She said that the agenda needs to be set, not flexible. She brought up that not all people are on-line. She suggested a bulletin board.
- Heidi Doornenbal agreed that people are interested and want to participate. She likes the postcard idea.
- Max Duncan said it was important to develop a plan before any big projects are approved. Matt indicated that any projects in the works are vested under the rules that existed at the time of application. Alan shared that the Committee can only make recommendations in the end.

3) Review of Citizen Comment from the March 21, 2006 Meeting

- Julie pointed out that a sandwich board sign similar to Kendall Watch should be set up before the meeting. Matt said there will be signs for the 7 public meetings.
- Norma added that people have a responsibility to be proactive and make a phone call.
- Julie noted that there is no Recreation Open Space zoning in the Foothills.
- Alan pointed out that some of the points from the open house meeting have been accomplished such as changing the location and time of the meetings.
- Amy made two points about the community survey questionnaire: 1. substance of the questionnaire and 2. where does it fit on the calendar – before or after the workshops. Gary said that needs to be addressed at a future committee meeting.
- Richard said he is the business representative on the committee and he is interested in small town commercial zoning.
- Julie requested that the Slavic community not be forgotten.

4) Draft Public Participation and Question of Postcard Mailing

Matt discussed the possibilities of GIS and capturing rental addresses. He indicated that a recommendation from the committee might be helpful. A discussion ensued as to whether to mail to property owners only, property owners and postal boxes recognizing there would be overlap or try to capture renter information to include in a mailing. All agreed to reach as many people as possible within the financial and physical restraints. The question of the cost of bulk mailing came up. Matt agreed to find out what the County bulk mailing rate is and check on the methods of notification used for other subareas. Amy agreed to contact the post offices and try to determine the total number of mailings. The postcard will be discussed at the next meeting.

5) Review of Draft Introduction and Population Projections Chapter

The committee discussed concerns about accurate estimates of current population. Gary stated that Matt e-mailed him figures from the U.S. Census. These statistics indicate that the total population of the Glacier “census designated place” was 90 people in 2000. Lou indicated that the number is now about 305, based upon research by Jan Eskola. Jan indicated that she worked with Patty Davis of the Post Office when conducting this research. This population estimate is for the Glacier Fire District.

6) Committee Member Time for Items Not on the Agenda

- Alan cautioned that members shouldn't get too comfortable with the timeframe extension.
- Amy queried if the County has made a decision about using John McLaughlin's method of determining population figures. Matt indicated that Professor McLaughlin, Amy Mower and a group of citizens met with the County in January. A request for funds for a critical review and possible utilization of his methodology is on a larger list of requests, but was not selected to be forwarded to the Council at this time. Amy stated that ECONorthwest's historical County wide population figures were high and that actual population growth has been 43 percent lower than ECONorthwest's projections. Applying McLaughlin's methodology to historical population data results in a 90-95 percent correlation.

Matt said Professor McLaughlin's projected population numbers for Whatcom County for the next 17 years are much lower than the actual Whatcom County growth in the previous 15 years.

- It was decided to find out the cost to have ECONorthwest and John McLaughlin make a presentation to the Committee. Matt will bring this information to the next meeting.
- Lou asked that documents be sent out to committee members with sufficient time to review them before the meeting.

7) Public Comment – Second Period

- Patty stated that she would like sandwich boards in each community announcing the meetings and that this information should also be in the Foothills Gazette. She encouraged building a database and soliciting information.
- Rob Staveland says that the area has built in limits to growth – land and water. He says no more water rights will be issued, that at most 3,000 additional houses can be built in the foothills area. He stated that population projections may be irrelevant. He posed that since the state mandates a plan for growth, that the possibility of not enough land to meet GMA rules should be evaluated. Matt responded that the County does have to work within the mandates of GMA. The GMA mandates accommodating the population projection for the County as a whole and for urban growth areas. However, there is flexibility on allocating population between different subareas of the County.
- Larry Duncan asked how many meetings total were planned, which is not known, just that the Committee will wrap in March 2007. He asked about publicity, suggested putting summaries on the website and that the Committee members introduce themselves at each meeting. Planning will make up nametags.

- Max Duncan says that in his opinion population projections are the most important issue and that is where the most money should be spent.
- Karen Reich asked where copies of all handouts are located, which would be at the Planning Office, and stated she is interested in the process and offered to help where she can.
- Holly Koon observed that the public comes and goes, and that a level of formality will help such as nametags and posting the meeting times. She says the minutes should be approved.
- Cheri McKay attended the meeting representing her neighborhood, which is located in the Lynden/Nooksack subarea. The Foothills subarea boundary on Sumas Mountain has been proposed to be moved farther west so as not to divide ownership. She says that puts part of their watershed in the Foothills subarea. She and her neighbors will be doing more research on this and offer to report back to the Committee.

The meeting adjourned at 8:52p.m.

The next meeting will be May 3, 2006 at the Kendall School Library from 6:30p.m. to 8:30p.m.

Submitted by:

Sharon Digby