

SUMMARY

PDR Oversight Committee Meeting 6975 Hannegan Rd. Bellingham, WA

January 11, 2006

Members present: Rod Erickson, Doug Dostal, Barbara Dykes, Veronica Wisniewski; **Staff:** Kraig Olason, PDS; **Guests:** John Gillies, USDA, Rick Alexander, John Vanderhoef.

1. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

2. Review of Minutes

The minutes for the 12/07/05 meeting were reviewed. Doug motioned to approve the minutes. Rod seconded the motion. The minutes were approved as written.

3. PDR Program Review by AAC

The committee discussed the AAC review of the PDR program. The AAC reviewed the PDR program at their January 4, 2006 meeting. Rod was invited to the January 4th meeting and asked to provide his perspectives on the PDR program's problems/challenges. Kraig was also at the AAC meeting and participated with Rod and the AAC members in the discussion.

Kraig stated that AAC chair Chuck Anholt is preparing a series of reports for County Council and Executive regarding an overview of the PDR program, problems and suggested solutions. Kraig stated that the AAC members expressed concern regarding the cost, time required and overall effectiveness of the program in light of the development pressures and escalating prices of real estate in Whatcom County.

Rod acknowledged the validity of the AAC member's concerns but reminded them that the PDR program is only one of a series of actions needed to protect farmland in Whatcom County. Rod informed the AAC about the PDR committee's upcoming "Open Space Forum" where many issues brought forward by the AAC would be addressed.

4. Round Three and Four Project Updates

Kraig provided a review of the applications received during Round IV, which concluded 12/31/05.

Kraig stated that Steve Groen submitted an application. Steve is a dairy farmer located on Barnhart Road. The property consists of three parcels for a total of 124.74 acres. The property is located in upland soils in the ag zone.

Kraig stated that Ebie Farms submitted an application for a 40 acre parcel located in the North Ferndale target area. The property is comprised of 2 tax parcels for a total of 40.38 acres. There are no residences on site.

Kraig informed the committee that Roger Bajema has expressed some interest in considering the PDR program. Kraig contacted Roger after seeing a for sale a sign on one of the 80 acre parcels owned by Roger along East Badger Road. Kraig stated that he would follow up with Roger.

The committee expressed interest in all of the Round IV applications. The committee was particularly interested in the possibility of working with Roger in the land under consideration. Several ideas were discussed as potential methods to address the residential lots included on the two 80 acre parcels.

5. Open Space “Working Landscape” Forum

Kraig provided a brief overview of the draft Parks & Recreation Open Space Plan. Committee members requested Kraig to draft a letter for review at the next meeting. The letter would address the focus of the Parks plan and stress the need for a broader view and plan to guide the non-park/public “open space” programs.

Kraig stated that the PDR committee had been awaiting the Parks Plan. The committee had deferred the review and update of the PDR program so that the revised program could be incorporated into the overall Open Space Plan.

The committee expressed their concerns regarding the fact that the issues raised in a letter to the Parks Director, Michael McFarlan, do not appear to have been incorporated into the Parks Plan.

The next meeting will be February 1, 2006 at 8:30 a.m. at the Conservation District Office.

Signed,

Rod Erickson, Chair

PDR Oversight Committee

