

SUMMARY

PDR Oversight Committee Meeting 5280 Northwest Rd Bellingham, WA

April 6, 2005

Members present: Rod Erickson, Jim Dykstra, Barbara Dykes; Staff: Kraig Olason, Jason Faith; Guests: John Gillies, USDA

1. Public Comments.

There were not public comments.

2. Review of Minutes.

The minutes for the 03/07/05 meeting were reviewed. In an e-mail sent to Kraig, Doug Dostal expressed some concerns he had regarding his comments in the section of the minutes titled "*Paul's letter and appraiser's response.*" Doug stated his concern is with the potential conflict of interest having comments from him to the PDR Committee regarding his in-laws' [the Pauls] application to sell a conservation easement. He asked whether his statements may have swayed the decision of the Committee to get another appraiser to review Follis' original appraisal of the Paul property and if his comments should be stricken from the minutes. The Committee discussed Doug's concerns. The Committee members expressed that they had agreed with Doug's comments, which resulted in the decision to have Follis' appraisal of the Paul property reviewed by another appraiser. Furthermore, the Committee stated that they did not think Doug's statements swayed their decision in any way and that his comments should remain in the minutes.

3. PDR 2005 grant application to FRPP.

Kraig stated that the grant application to USDA Farm and Ranch Land Protection Program (FRLPP) was sent in last week. The application included four of the five PDR applicants, Alamwala, Holz, T. Fenton, and Joneli. Ray Fenton was excluded because he did not get the Letter of Intent in on time to have it submitted with the rest of the applicants. Kraig stated that although Ray was not included in the grant application, he is in the queue for purchase in the event there is enough money left after purchasing easements for those who ranked higher than he did.

Kraig stated that there is \$1.3 million available for the Washington State from USDA this year and that word on the allotment of those funds should come within the next 60 days.

4. Paul appraisal.

Kraig stated that he has another appraiser, Kevin McAuliffe of the Columbia Valuation Group, who is willing to review Follis' appraisal of the Paul property. Kraig further stated that he is still waiting for a purchase order from the County before authorizing Kevin to start work. He stated that he expects the purchase order by the end of the week and that Kevin should be done with the review by the next PDR meeting.

5. Parks and Open Space (POS) Plan update.

Kraig stated that he will have to start attending the POS Plan meetings because, according to Troy Holbrook, the focus is mostly on recreation and that there is no participation from the anyone with agricultural interests. According to Troy, the community meetings are finished and the POS Plan committee is starting to compile the comments received during those meetings.

Kraig stated that the PDR Committee may want to talk with the Parks director later this summer as things move along with the POS Plan. Kraig stated that he would draft a letter for the PDR Committee to the Parks Director to voice the concern the committee has about the exclusion of the PDR Program's role in the POS Plan.

Kraig further stated that, as a committee, this could be a good time to elevate the discussion to the County Executive about the PDR Program and how it works with other programs. He stated that the Program is in a position to mix and match with other programs aimed at protecting land, such as the TDR Program and the POS Plan.

6. PDR program update.

Kraig provided a handout outlining the purchase process of the PDR Program. Regarding the purchase process, Kraig stated that he proposes moving #4 – *Values estimated for individual farm development rights*, and moving up #8 – *Individual property appraisals* and #9 – *Negotiations regarding price and CE conditions*. Doing this would provide a better chance of getting USDA funds and a better idea that the property owner wants to continue with the PDR Program and how much each will cost. Kraig further stated that these changes would be a more systematic approach and provide clearer knowledge for everyone involved, such as County Council, property owners, the public, etc. about what they are getting into. This may alleviate having to deal with potential sellers for over a year before any appraised values are known.

Next meeting will be June 1, 9:00am.

Signed,

**Rod Erickson, Chair
PDR Oversight Committee**