

Agricultural Advisory Committee Meeting

Draft meeting notes for May 12, 2011

MEETING HIGHLIGHTS

- ◆ There were 11 people in attendance (8 of the 13 voting members; and 3 ex-officio, contributing, or staff members).
- ◆ The Committee unanimously endorsed the Agricultural Strategic Plan, and voted to send a letter to the County Executive and the County Council asking them to do the same.
- ◆ The Committee voted to recommend adding 25 foot setbacks that would apply in Rural and Rural Residential zones where they are adjacent to an Agriculture designation or use.
- ◆ The next meeting was set for **November 3, 2011**, 3-5 PM, Whatcom County PDS, Northwest Annex Conference Room, 5280 Northwest Drive.

MEETING NOTES

Quorum

A quorum was present at 3:25 PM with 8 of the 13 voting members in attendance (see sign in sheet at the end of the meeting notes). Lesa Boxx called to the meeting order at 3:09 P.M., with Dave Buys, Vicki Hawley, Todd Jones, and Debbie VanderVeen in attendance, at the county Planning and Development Services Department, Northwest Annex Conference Room at 5280 Northwest Road. No motions began until a quorum was present after Brian Cieslar, Mike Finger, and Leroy Plagerman also joined the group.

Open Session for Public Comments

There were no members of the public in attendance.

Meeting Notes Approved

Debbie VanderVeen moved to approve the meeting notes from April 14; the meeting notes were approved by all voting.

Reports, Presentations, and Deliberations

Agricultural setback issues – Rural Element / LAMIRD process

Committee members received in their packets a copy of the letter sent from the AAC to the Planning Commission and County Council reflecting the vote taken at the last meeting about setbacks within commercial and industrial zones when adjacent to agriculture. Staff provided an update of the process that has taken place over the past month (included in packet). The committee discussed whether or not they wish to recommend setbacks within residential (Rural and Rural Residential) zones when adjacent to agriculture. The current code allows down to five foot setbacks, though setbacks on the agricultural portion can be as much as 300 feet from residences. Committee members voiced that it is the homes that are of concern being close to ag uses, not sheds, garages, or shop type buildings where no people live. A setback should only concern residential structures, not all buildings as is typically the case with setbacks. Other committee members suggested the AAC recommend that the agricultural setbacks be reduced, instead of requiring greater setbacks on the residential side. **Todd motioned that the AAC recommend side and rear yard setbacks from residential structures be increased to 25 feet when the**

district adjoins an agriculture zoning district or an adjacent agricultural use. (Mike second.) **The motion was approved, with Debbie VanderVeen voting against it.** The committee intends this recommendation to be incorporated into any future revisions to the Rural Element ordinance if required as it makes its way through the Growth Management Hearings Board process. If no revisions are made to the current ordinance, the committee will consider taking up this residential setback recommendation as a separate process, or as part of the tasks outlined in the Strategic Plan.

Staff Presentation/Report

Planning staff walked through the three Agricultural Strategic Plan pages that show changes made based on discussions at the last AAC meeting and subsequent input. Both Samya Lutz and Peter Gill provided details about the changes to the plan.

Discussion

Debbie asked that in Appendix E of the Plan, the “Commissions and Federations” bullet be changed to “Commissions” and that an additional bullet be added that states “WA State Dairy Federation and Whatcom County Dairy Federation.” The committee agreed that all other changes as noted accurately reflect the discussions of the committee or have no objections. **Brian made a motion that the AAC endorse the strategic plan with Debbie’s suggested changes to Appendix E included. (Todd second.) Motion passed unanimously.**

The committee reviewed the draft letter of endorsement included with the meeting materials. Lesa suggested a change to the wording of the first sentence in the last paragraph: “We recommend that you endorse this plan, and work with...” **Debbie moved to approve the letter with Lesa’s changes and the current date.** (Vicki second.) Todd and Leroy echoed the motion. **The motion passed unanimously.**

Next Meeting

The Agricultural Advisory Committee will meet again on November 3rd at 3 PM at the Planning & Development Services, Northwest Annex Conference Room

The meeting was adjourned at 3:55 P.M.

Lesla Boxx, Chair, Agricultural Advisory Committee

Date

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| <p><u>Included in the meeting packet for May 12, 2011 (or provided at the meeting):</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ AAC May 12, 2011 Agenda ◆ Draft meeting notes from April 14, 2011 meeting ◆ Draft (dated 5/6) of Whatcom County Agricultural Strategic Plan – tracked changes version ◆ Letter from AAC to Planning Commission dated 4/18/11 ◆ Staff update on Rural Element – LAMIRD process regarding setback issues ◆ Draft strategic plan endorsement letter |
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Agricultural Advisory Committee - Sign in Sheet - May 12, 2011

NAME			Voting Members SIGNATURE	Affiliation
Bayer	John			Farmer
Blok	Ed			Whatcom Farm Friends
Boxx	Lesa		<i>Lesla Boxx</i>	Consumer
Buys	Dave		<i>Dave Buys</i>	Farmer
Cieslar	Brian		<i>Brian Cieslar</i>	Expertise in Farm Programs
Hawley	Vicki		<i>Vicki Hawley</i>	Processor
Helm	Larry			Farmer
Finger	Mike		<i>Mike Finger</i>	Farmer
Kentch	Wesley			Farmer
Jones	Todd		<i>Todd Jones</i>	Farmer
Plagerman	Leroy		<i>Leroy Plagerman</i>	Farmer
Vander Veen	Debbie		<i>Debbie VanderVeen</i>	Farmer
Yoder	Richard			Conservation Distict Board

Ex-officio Members and Contributing Members

Antholt	Charles			Chair Emeritus
Bierlink	Henry		<i>Henry Bierlink</i>	Whatcom Farm Friends
Boggs	George			Conservation Distirct
Gilles	John			Farm Expertise
Gliva	Carly			FFA Youth
Hall	Alex			NRCS
Benedict	Chris			WSU Extension
Gill	Peter	✓	Present	Whatcom County staff
Lutz	Samya	✓	<i>Samya Lutz</i>	Whatcom County staff