

Skagit County Agriculture Advisory Board Meeting Summary – August 10, 2022 Commissioners Hearing Room/MS Teams

Members in Attendance

Michael Hughes Terry Sapp Michael Trafton
Justin Hayton Murray Benjamin Steve Omdal Steve Wright

Proxy Designations

Terry Sapp for Kraig Knutzen
Michael Hughes for Nels Lagerlund
Steve Omdal for Tim Van Hofwegen

Members Absent

John Morrison Rachael Ward Sparwasser

Others in Attendance

Peter Browning, Skagit County Commissioner
Hal Hart, Director, Skagit County Planning & Development Services (PDS)
Kim Adams, Skagit County Planning & Development Services (PDS)
Will Honea, Skagit County Prosecuting Attorney
Oscar Lagerlund, Community Member
Craig Macku, Community Member

Call to Order, Introductions

Michael Hughes called the meeting to order at 7:05 pm.

Public Comment

Oscar Lagerlund was on the Agricultural Advisory Board previously for 20 plus years. He started with the board for farming and to keep it viable and keep agriculture important. He participated with the Bayview Drainage, set the model on how to get it out. Published a book, Country Boy and it is available on Amazon. His hope is that the AAB gets to continue for many years. Terry asked Oscar a question, “what do you think is the most important roll for the AAB now?” “To Preserve Skagit Farmland”.

Approval of Meeting Summary

Murray Benjamin moved to accept the July 2022, Meeting Minutes, Justin Hayton seconded. Motion carried.

Guest Speaker

Hal Hart, Director, Skagit County Planning & Development Services

Hal gave his Directors update

- The Skagit County Board of Commissioners will hold a public meeting on August 23rd, 2022, at 10:45 am for deliberation and possible action on the Shoreline Master Program Comprehensive Update and Periodic Review.
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- Agritourism Update
 - Key Components

- Draft Survey at your next meeting. Should be simplified, we will get it out ahead of time for your review
 - Extensive Survey- 16,000 households proposing to folks in Agricultural zones
 - Are we there yet? Terry Sapp, thanks to the department for committing to Agritourism and all the work they are doing.
 - Steve Omdal- Other Counties have better enforcement. Chelan County has rigid rules and they enforce, will Skagit do the same?
 - Terry Sapp's idea is to have the Auditor/Assessor have guidelines and must prove a certain amount of money is in agriculture. Have special use permits, they allow 24 weddings per year.
 - Already allow food trucks, need drastic changes now to get things right
 - How will enforcement work? Need clarity, will it be a side hustle or main income
 - Land use committee will be the point of contact for the survey, we need more local response, need to get it right this time.
- Updates:
 - Agricultural Tourism Update
 - Geography
 - Venues
 - Conway Area ?
 - Edison Area ?
 - Sedro Woolley – Upriver Area
 - Community Wide Meeting – Panel Group Moderator MV Area? Theater?
- County Growth Notes:
 - West Coast Reductions – BO 21 -1072 approximately 12 new employees once this phase is completed.
- Raspberry Ridge Proposal For 31 Housing Units in the County
 - Last week we heard from the Housing Authority. They are looking into how to construct an additional 31 apartment units in a final build out phase. They would utilize Low Income Housing Tax Credit dollars available. The project would be on the City of Burlington sewer the same as the previous phases of this development.
- Commercial Project Underway
 - Amazon/nearing final occupancy/changing internal uses to conveyor testing
 - Chuckanut Brewery
 - VanderYacht Propane
 - West Coast Reductions (green fuel)
 - Neff and Fisher Hanger
 - Hawkeye Hanger
 - Alyeska Hanger
 - New Potato Shed
- Future Commercial Projects
 - New Warehouse and two other buildings 78,000 square feet – SEPA Decision (Brandon)
 - Lindal Yachts Facility – they are going phase....near the airport – Petersen Road – grading permit and metal building prefab....currently in review
 - Mini Storage Facility – adjacent to Chad Fisher Construction – checking status Next year
 - Farm Building – Morrison – checking status – in review
 - Farm Implement Dealership Expansion – possible Cook Road approved/(HE approved)
 - Pacific Dream Seafoods (fill and grade) this a large facility...port....will generate additional jobs in region
 - Future Westland Rack House Expansion

- **Will Honea, Skagit County Prosecuting Attorney**

Will came to answer any questions regarding the Compensatory Mitigation Project Ordinance that was signed by the Commissioners

- October- bring permanent Ordinance
- Landowners giving up development of their land
- Seattle City Light is part of the problem
- 2005 Chinook Recovery Plan- fund Mitigation at the dams, Seattle should do it.
- Emergency Ordinance September 6th, then move to permanent
 - Only prohibits what they can do large habitat projects
 - Projects need to be done by professionals
 - Make clear it is not anti-habitat, it is to make sure Seattle City Light isn't throwing money around
 - Terry Sapp questioned is the primary motivation is to not lose farmland? Yes, getting control so they are done in a practical way
- Murray Benjamin commented the Chinook Recovery Plan is not working- need to limit what we can, can't do what you want on Ag Land
- How will it be enforced? Write it in the permit, if it becomes a public nuisance, it will have more enforcement
- Why do we need Seattle City Light? What is the value of the farmland?
- Need Public Comment prior to September 6, 2022
 - Justin Hayton motioned for Michael Hughes to draft a letter to the BOCC for the September 6th meeting and circulate it to the Board for review prior to submitting. Murray seconded; motion passed to prepare comment letter.

New Business

- Board of County Commissioners meets on August 23rd for the Shoreline Master Program
 - It goes to Department of Ecology next then back to the BOCC
- Commercial Aviation Commission
 - Reviewed Report, very unlikely that Skagit would be considered
- Bertelsen Farms- Small Scale Recreation
 - New/Add- Venue, parking, camping, Brewery, Dog Park, Store, & Other
 - 2023 Docket, will be very impactful to Agritourism
 - What is the "other" in Activities?
- Docket this year-
 - Telecommunications- to bring 5g into Federal Compliance

Committee Reports

Economic Development- Don McMoran

- Letter- Aviation, corporate jet larger hangers, not looking for major airline, not looking at Skagit at this time
- Skagit Valley Malting moving forward
- Island Grown Farmers moving forward

Critical Areas – Nels Lagerlund

Nothing at this time.

Land Use – Terry Sapp (Chair), Kraig Knutzen, Murray Benjamin, Michael Trafton, Steve Omdal

- WA DOT looking to have a wildlife crossing. Few sites identified up Highway 20 near Concrete. A study was done west of Concrete. Creating improved safety for travelers, creates habitable environment for the elk which may

cause more complaints. Study to be completed in 2024. Are they effective? Do not have real data to say if they are not. Must funnel it to use it, need HWY 20 to be fenced off.

- Land Use Committee will be the point of contact for Agritourism Survey. Once the draft comes out (prior to next month's meeting) the Land Use Committee will meet and discuss how to get it right this time. They will bring the questions, comments, and suggestions to the September meeting.

Flood, Drainage & Irrigation – Kraig Knutzen (Chair), Nels Lagerlund, Steve Wright

Nothing at this time.

Old Business

Next Meeting: Agritourism- Survey/Venue Discussion

Adjourn

Justin Hayton moved to adjourn. Meeting adjourned at 9:02 pm.

Next meeting is September 14th, at 7 pm.