

Skagit County Conservation Futures Program Advisory Board
DRAFT Meeting Summary
January 14, 2020

Members in Attendance

Steve Sakuma Scott DeGraw Wendy Pare
Jim Glackin Keith Morrison

Members Absent

Andrea Xaver
Owen Peth

Staff and Others in Attendance

Kara Symonds, Skagit County Public Works
Michael See, Skagit County Public Works
Allen Rozema, Skagitonians to Preserve Farmland

Scott called the meeting to order at 7:00 AM

Member Update

None.

December Meeting Summary

Wendy made a motion to approve; Steve seconded. All in favor.

BCC Meeting Preparation

The group discussed FLP 184 (Cook Road property) and development threats such as I-5 commercial development and I-5 interchange pressure. The current valuation system does not address the challenges and pressures specific to that piece of land. The group will develop some bullet points to share with the Commissioners ahead of their one on one meetings to set the context of this property.

Allen shared background on Burlington's agricultural heritage program and a state law that does now allow cities to expand into the floodplain. Burlington is an exemption because of their lack of adjacent land that is not in the floodplain. He added that the concept of the Avalon contained community would add additional pressure of development to the Cook Road interchange. Wendy shared that once commercial moves in, subdivisions follow. The group discussed that an Avalon type community would trigger the need for additional services. This information adds to the importance of protecting this property, but is difficult to quantify as a numerical value in the appraisal. Allen wondered if there's a way to quantify the flood risk reduction value of eliminating building rights in the floodplain.

Jim suggested the committee produce a report to quantify the value if the land was converted to a zoning similar to the east side of the freeway, such as a Broker's Opinion of Value. The group discussed that an I-5 interchange should have a different valuation approach because of the greater threat of commercial

development, but it's understood that there are tax implications of gifting. Steve added that the group should have the resources to preserve the farmland for future generations. Kara added that any County expenditures need to follow the County's procurement manual.

Allen shared background on the Program's two valuation methods, the pricing formula and the before and after valuations. He encouraged a valuation method assessment. The group discussed the main points to share with the Commissioners about this property, such as:
How does the Program compensate above appraised value; How does the Program develop a policy that allows for compensation above appraised value, without the tax implications of gifting; and
How does the Program develop the flexibility to deal with changing market conditions?

Kara will draft up some bullet points as a read-ahead for the Commissioners meeting and have the members edit as they see fit.

CFAC Membership

Andrea's membership was renewed for another term. There are no terms expiring in 2020.

Property Update

Kara shared that FLP 195 on Benson Road (160 acres, 4 development rights) did close before the end of 2019. Kara will remove all 2019 easements from the pending easement and budget sheet for the remainder of 2020.

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 AM