



SKAGIT COUNTY FOREST ADVISORY BOARD

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Minutes February 5, 2007

Present: Paul, Gordy, Al, Dave, Lisa, Fred, Ken, Tom, Larry, Chuck, Aubrey.

Absent: Dick

Guest: Commissioner Dillon, Chief Civil Deputy Will Honea, Oscar G and Guy

Fred moved and Gordy seconded to approve the January minutes. Approved.

Dave passed some newspaper articles from California showing the closing of Pacific Lumber mill. Tom noted that these were good people and that it was a huge loss. Some more discussion followed on the number of mills that have closed over the last few years.

Al circulated an article on biomass. There was some discussion on the possibility of integrated opportunities, but also noting that there is not a lot of energy created to fuel the masses.

Discussion Items:

- I. Commissioner Dillon spoke to the FAB reemphasizing her belief in a 'healthy working forest' and told the FAB to keep doing a good job. Ken stated that it is unfortunate, but the FAB seems to be getting a 'bum rap'. Outsiders seem to think the group is linear. He explained why that was not true.
- II. Commissioner Dillon also relayed her pleasure over the possible settlement on Blanchard Mt. This broke into a full discussion on what was the solution package being offered. Kendra and Ken relayed their perspectives and concerns. They commented that if implemented as proposed, it should be a plausible solution....with the devil in the details.
- III. Will Honea described the County's strategy and the cost as well as the fear of loss regarding the Lake Whatcom case. FAB members asked some questions and relayed how important the case was to the beneficiaries.
- IV. Oscar relayed his decision on the moratorium after a forest practice. He said he would honor the policy created in 2003 for the project before PDS today, but would not afterward. He said that he was having staff work on it and would work it through the process. Maybe there would be some language in the amended development regulations. Dave suggested a sub-committee be formed to help work on language. Kendra pointed out two new bills that were dropped during session last week concerning this issue. (HB 1408 and HB1409.) Kendra also was told by Tom Robinson, the timber county liaison, that counties could do what Skagit Co did in the policy without having to change any legislation. Dave and Aubrey will work as an advisor to Oscar. Kendra will add support.

- V. Guy updated the FAB on the Planning Commission's work related to forestry issues on mapping. The PC did not approve the large Janike request or the one in Oyster Creek. Also told the FAB that the PC did elect to recommend getting rid of the requirement to stay within 200' of a county road in the IF designation and noted the number of properties that would be able to have some development rights in doing this.
- VI. Kendra brought a request forward from Gary Rowe to evaluate whether or not a fire district should determine development rights and if not how should protections be accomplished. The concern is based on how to best protect against fire. PDS had offered that by denying an expansion of a fire district then there would be limited development and this could help prevent the threat of fire. The code allows for single homes to be built in Secondary Forest and Rural Resource without a fire district if they follow other requirements, but the code says no subdivisions without being in a fire district...was that correct or not? There was much discussion. But it was agreed upon unanimously that fire districts should not determine development rights. The zoning map (Comp Plan) needs to be changed if the County wants to limit development. Ken stated that this should not be the criteria. Fred noted that these are very small segments (only about 1-2%) that would be penalized and questioned for what gain. Aubrey said they were two separate issues at hand. Ken concurred, but didn't want a Trojan horse. Suggested that two motions be put on the table.
- Motion: Fire district should not be used as a tool to allow or disallow development. Land use should be decided based on the Comp Plan. Died.
- Motion: Fire district should not negate the zoning district criteria for residential development. Died lack of second.
- Discussions then lead to offering clarification as to the intent of the policy and regulations in place today.
- Motion: Dave moved and Fred seconded that the "Industrial Forest designation criteria regarding fire districts should not be used for the Secondary Forest or Rural Resource lands for purposes of regulating fire district boundaries. Discussion: The FAB did not believe that a fire district boundary should be denied because there was fear of growth. Vote taken: Approved unanimously.
- Motion: Fred moved and Gordy seconded that it was not the intent to limit subdivisions by fire districts. Discussion: Subdivisions are allowed in those two land use designations and when working on resource land criteria in the 1990's it was not intended to limit growth...it was for fire protection. If it can be done other ways then that should be okay. Vote taken: Approved unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 9:20.