

Yellow Pad Comments, Big Lake Community Meeting, 10/27/15

Question 1: What do you value the most about the community in which you live?

- More open space (farm, forest), nice balance – keep them for many reasons
- Resident on edge of Mount Vernon: Agrees with rural comments. Values environmental values, ecosystem services, five species of salmon and steelhead, sense of community, been here 20+ years, feels like a new comer
- 7,000 plus in rural areas, what's the plan to accomplish that? Rural zoning requires large parcels
- Lack of awareness of history of area, since 1940, lost 40% of farmland. Population has also tripled. Cities should build up, not as much rural development, save farmland and all resource lands, have to be vigilant to keep those lands
- Hope County will be more responsive than they have been, city and county got together and changed zoning at Devil's Mountain, 1 house/20 acres now, used to be 1 house/40 acres, not looking at earthquake faults, County needs to look at hazard areas for planning, don't see it in handouts here
- History should be part of the plan
- 80/20 split, is it arbitrary? Would 100% in UGA's be a reasonable comment?
- Lots of information on what HAS happened, future THE shouldn't be based solely on that, would like to see more non-motorized consideration
- How do you change the 80/20 split? (CPP change to change)
- Has any community just said, let's keep a lid on it? We're here because people like it the way it is. If someone has a right to subdivide land, ok with that, impacts schools, services and more development
- Bought home in 2007, fled Los Angeles, looked from Santa Barbara to Whatcom, this county has agriculture, is sustainable, can take care of its own, is a treasure on a national scale. New Yorker article, "The Big One." Can't ignore that either. Think about where we put people, impacts on transportation
- Cascadia subduction zone, not in Hazard Mitigation Plan, not enough monitoring stations. Lahar will be devastating
- Climate change, growth, certain businesses go away – what do you want to see for future? Not as many tulip fields or pea production, what's the vision for the future? How do we morph the vision given changes to the community but retain things that are valued (forest, ag)?
- Realize the risks from volcanoes and earthquakes. Value the character of place, I'm in the Sedro-Woolley school district but the Mount Vernon UGA, school values, I don't want to become part of the Mount Vernon school district, want to maintain the integrity of the community. The Mount Vernon UGA line shifted without people affected being part of the discussion. Several landowners in the NE corner of the UGA – 100 to 150 acres +/-, asked to be taken out of it. Didn't want to be in Mount Vernon UGA or incorporated into the city. But we were turned

down. In initial meetings – large crowds with maps and some agreement on the UGA lines. At some point a decision was made to change the line and they didn't ask the landowners. Wants to keep it as ag and forest with selective logging. Decisions without considering what people want. Why wasn't somebody listening? Want to trust you guys.

- People in rural areas overlooked. Wishes not considered.

Question 2: What are your biggest concerns for the present and/or the future?

- Want to live in UGA and have open, rural land close by. Viable ag industry, gain in ecosystem. Concerned about loss in ecosystem services and resource lands values
- At this morning's meeting [before the Board of County Commissioners] – huge theme, rural residents feel unrepresented. How can you change that? Loss of ag land has been terrifying.
- Has looked into creating a conservation trust for his land, spent \$30K to draw up papers and make it happen.
- Difference in the trusts out there and the Farmland Legacy Program (FLP). TDR is being considered. Want to see it in writing.
- TDR proposal – would do the same as Farmland Legacy for other resource zones.
- Can a landowner put a conservation easement on lands within UGA?
- Could people here in the UGA be sucked in for other purposes? Part of the Sedro-Woolley UGA is zoned residential, but the city wants to rezone to Industrial. Lives in city of Sedro-Woolley on road that connects to proposed industrial area. She's residential, concern they'll be rezoned to industrial too. Poor communication from the city. Fluke that they heard, why doesn't the city have to notify them? Residents caught between city and county.
- Paid money and asked to be removed from the Mount Vernon UGA. Just told no. Didn't have the courtesy to say why. Felt like they were given the finger. We're on the border of the eastern edge of the UGA. Would have been logical to remove our land.
- Lives on the edge of the Mount Vernon city limits. Wasn't on the edge when he moved there. Feels the creep of the city. Believes in the GMA process. How do we keep things we've said we value? Is okay with limits on the use of his property. Thank you Ron [Commissioner Wesen] for representing our interests.

Question 3: What goals and policies should be emphasized in the Comprehensive Plan Update process?

- Goal is to maintain as much forest and farm land as possible.
- Could the city or county poll people within the UGA? Make them aware of options available to them? Inadequate information getting to the people affected. How about a full page in the Skagit Valley Herald with UGA boundaries on maps in the article?
- Why do cities have so much more power to increase their boundaries, taking in county lands. County lets it happen. The County needs to step up and represent those county landowners affected. Need to consider hazards too.

- Want to see TDR program implemented. Will it be part of the Comp Plan update? Want lands other than ag be able to preserve their land have a conservation easement. The Open Space Plan – is it part of the Comp Plan update?
- Non-motorized transportation: is there a formula for how that factors in? Mass transit – is it being factored in? At what level?
- Want to see a strong non-motorized element as component to this Comp Plan. Needs to be updated. Increased non-motorized transportation helps support values in the community. Need to plan for it so people can use it safely. Comprehensive pedestrian, bicycle, and transit program and a plan with a goal for 50% vehicle travel and 50% non-motorized. Also want to see change in the 80/20 split. Put growth in the cities. Up the urban % and lower the rural %. GMA only way to see salmon recovery happen. Lucky Skagit still produces so many species of salmon.
- TDR: spoke in favor at one of the meetings. He's a small forest land owner and member of a forest landowners' organization. Thinks TDS is a good option for them.
- Consult scientists and geologists so don't extend growth into dangerous areas.
- How do we get information to the people? It's such an important concern for the proposed [Sedro-Woolley] rezone. Residential UGA land would then be rezoned to industrial. Concern for property value. Concern that continued widening of street and sidewalks will cause her to have to cut trees. Moved here because it's rural. Has a barn and animals. Wants to see stars at night. Concern over proposed marijuana grow operation. Area bordered by train tracks. Concern for more train traffic where drainage is bad. High water table. Salmon stream in area.