

MEMORANDUM

Date: 10/18/04

To: Fidalgo Island CAC and TAC

From: Aubin Phillips

Re: Fidalgo Island Subarea Plan CAC Meeting 10/14/04

Attendance:

CAC: Bill Dinsmoor, Ed Goodman, Chuck Manning, Terry McNeil, Tom Stowe, Bill Turner, Bill Wooding, Mike Trafton

TAC: Bob Bell, Dave Cortelyou, Jim Mecca, David Pearson, Ross Barnes

Consultants: Roger Wagoner, Aubin Phillips

County: Jeroldine Hallberg

Other: Laurie Sherman, Keith Sorensen

Introduction

Participants were welcomed to the meeting by Ed Goodman and Roger Wagoner and provided an overview of the meeting agenda. Participants were invited to share their favorite things about Fidalgo or living on the Island and write their responses on a 4x6 postcard. The information gathered will be used during the open house to solicit public feedback through an interactive exercise.

In order to establish regular meeting dates, members discussed upcoming CAC/TAC meeting dates. The proposal considered was the second Thursday of each month from 7 to 9. Members adjusted this timeframe due to the upcoming holidays and settled on Thursday November 18th and Thursday December 9th.

The South Fidalgo Island Subarea Plan website will be launching soon. Copies of content are included in your binders and also handed out to general public in attendance. The postcard was also distributed as it will be received in the mail by this time next week allowing a two week lead time for folks to attend the open house on November 3rd from 4-7.

Details of the upcoming open house were discussed next. A press release for the open house will be issued soon to the Anacortes paper following the postcard mailing.

Members reviewed the notes from last meeting, notebook information and the website write-up. Land use and parcel size maps were distributed to members. It was pointed out that the assessor map displays names differently than the way planners normally label land uses. For instance, open space equates farms in many cases due to the open space taxation program. If members have corrections to the maps, the consultants are happy to make corrections prior to developing open house materials.

Please note that since the meeting we have been advised by the County Assessor's Office that we should not be using their data to map existing land uses. The differences between their classification system and the "real world" are too great. Committee members are encouraged to throw away the draft land use maps we circulated at the meeting.

The maps are an example of the type of information that will be available through display materials at the open house. Members requested that there be a way for the public to provide corrections and for consultants to be open to that type of input. The consultants are happy to take corrections to materials at any time and expect that there will be errors. Sticky notes will be provided to allow participants to correct maps during the open house. There will be an accurate zoning map provided at the open house which is already included in participants' binders.

Jeroldine Hallberg was unable to attend the CAC/TAC meetings, as she was required to present at a Planning Commission meeting on the Bayview Ridge Plan. Members were also informed that the Del mar water system has applied for a substantial expansion of service area and were told to contact Jeroldine if they would like more information.

Planning Survey

The planning survey will ask open-ended questions of stakeholders and residents regarding what they would like to see for Fidalgo Island in twenty years. Skagit County is prepared to go ahead with the survey with or without additional funding. The PUD and City of Anacortes were identified as potential funding sources. Four surveys were returned as of yesterday, and two today for a total of 6 completed. Many CAC & TAC members included suggestions. Every property owner on Fidalgo will receive a survey. There were some concerns and suggestions regarding the survey:

- Survey is very cumbersome and should be pared down.
- The questions are not all encompassing.
- There were problems with the document being sent over e-mail.
- Additional questions should be included.
- The order of questions should be changed.

There was a question about the date that the survey could be sent. We shared with members that we don't know how fast the County will be able to get the survey printed and mailed. There was a suggestion that maps should be made available in the library, permit center and website for citizens to access and we should point the public to these sources. It was noted that the survey needs to be substantially edited and clarity is needed. The consultants will review comments received and determine appropriate next steps. A revised draft will be circulated prior to dissemination. The survey will be sent via e-mail and people should contact us by phone or e-mail if they have any problems with the file so that a hard copy can be sent my us mail.

The group also discussed how to inform the community about the purpose and meeting times of the CAC and TAC. The web site is a venue for posting meeting times, locations and dates. Public are welcome to attend, observe and provide public comment at CAC/TAC meetings.

A participant raised a concern about an experience they had where they tried to sell their ten - acre property and learned that there had been a change in zoning that affected them. They did not realize when or how this had occurred. The question was asked whether the Island needs changes in development regulations and how they are applied, such as requiring public notification.

Tom Stowe stated that Skagit County doesn't currently have an ordinance related to Transfer Development Rights (TDRs). He believes that TDRs don't work and has provided his thoughts on the matter in a handout, which he passed out to fellow members. Tom Glade mentioned that the City of Anacortes has been working successfully on TDR's for protection of green belts and corridors. Black Diamond has installed them voluntarily. TDRs can be an important tool to use to protect the environment. There was a difference of opinion among the group about the effectiveness of TDRs, some felt they were very complicated in the financial sense and that they were harder to apply in a rural area while others are interested in exploring them as a means to protect the environment. The topic of Urban Growth Areas (UGA) was brought up and it was discussed how the UGA acts to protect open space and natural areas. The UGA is the means to manage growth and concentrate it into urban areas where greater densities and necessary services are provided. The rural and resource areas are intended to protect resource lands and natural features while allowing growth at much lower densities.

Open House

The open house was discussed next. The open house will be on November 3, 2004 from 4-7 p.m. at Fidalgo Elementary School. The role of the CAC/TAC at the open house will be to listen to fellow members of the public regarding their concerns and comments. To validate your role as a CAC/TAC member, it is important to play a neutral role with the general public. Members of the public are looking to you to represent various interests of the community. You may share an opinion or disagree with a comment provided, it is important to capture the feedback and bring it to our meetings to discuss and determine an appropriate direction. You have been invited to participate in the CAC or TAC because you have an opinion and one that perhaps varies from another member. It is hard to remain unbiased but it will ensure that we conduct a sound public involvement process that can be supported by the community once recommendation and a plan are developed. Safe things to say to participants if you share an opinion are, "I have heard from others that share your concern or that has been raised during out CAC or TAC meeting." Staff and consultants will be looking to members of the CAC and TAC to assist in orienting open house participants and encourage them to provide their feedback on comment forms, easel pads and through conversation. We appreciate your assistance and recognize your key role in this process.

Public involvement consultant, Rebecca Baker, provided an overview of the open house format and agenda. Comments will be received at the open house through several methods. Participants can write corrections on post-its to affix to the maps. Participants will share what they like about Fidalgo Island and what they would change about the Island. (Please see attached outline of the open house for additional information on stations, goals and logistics of the open house.) Member of the CAC and TAC are invited to attend the open house and assist in staffing stations and exercises during the evening. Please let us know if you are unable to attend. All CAC and TAC members are asked to arrive at 3:00 the day of the open house to assist in final preparations for the meeting as well as participate in an overview and question/answer opportunity prior to the start of the event.

Public Feedback

A participant mentioned how important the subarea planning process is to South Fidalgo Island. He noted that the LA basin, Bay Area, Portland, Seattle, Vancouver have been ruined by poor growth strategies. Europe's approach to stricter regulations is something to consider. They have a thumb on cutting down trees and painting houses etc. Strong design guidelines and regulations that have preserved the quality of the community. The participant and others mentioned that they were not sure this style of regulation is appropriate here but there needs

to be a way to protect what we have and maintain a place that is desirable like Europe is. Others agreed with this goal and look forward to discussing trade-offs which will accompany each decision and recommendation.

Members considered how far the community should go to preserve the current state of the Island. Many people who move to Fidalgo make their decision based upon the beauty of the Island, and it may be gone in the future if it isn't carefully preserved. One participant noted that they came to Fidalgo for the winter over thirty years ago and they are still here. The community must take action to defend the integrity of the location. Another member felt that the Island is cleaner than it used to be several years ago. Additional concerns were raised about increased traffic in the future from the Vancouver Winter Olympics and the new NASCAR racetrack. Many felt that an increasing population was inevitable and the community should plan for growth. Skagit County's growth projection of 900 more residents for South Fidalgo Island by 2025 was questioned, and it was thought that the number was too low.