

**Skagit County Planning Commission  
Public Hearing: 2023 Capital Facilities Plan  
Presentation: Public Comments on 2023 Docket  
November 14, 2023**

**Planning**

**Commissioners:** Kathy Mitchell  
Vince Henley  
Amy Hughes  
Tim Raschko, Chair  
Joe Woodmansee (absent)  
Tammy Candler Vice Chair  
Martha Rose  
Jen Hutchison

**Staff:** Jack Moore, Planning Director  
Sarah Ruether, Senior Planner  
Robby Eckroth, Senior Planner

Chair Tim Raschko: (gavel) Good evening, everybody. Welcome to the November 14, 2023, meeting of the Skagit County Planning Commission. Let's see, we are missing Commissioner Woodmansee. Okay. And I'd ask for a motion to approve the minutes of the meeting of October 24, please.

Commissioner Vince Henley: I so move.

Commissioner Kathy Mitchell: Second.

Chair Raschko: Is there discussion, any changes, omissions in the minutes?

(silence)

Chair Raschko: All those in favor, say "aye."

Multiple Commissioners: Aye.

Chair Raschko: Opposed?

(silence)

Chair Raschko: Okay, that passes. Thank you.

Tonight we have a time for Public Remarks. This time on the agenda is an opportunity for anybody to speak to the Planning Commission about any topic except two: First, you cannot speak to the subject of a public hearing that is going to be conducted during the current meeting. That would mean that the Capital Facilities Plan is off limits. Nor can you speak of any subject of a past public hearing, the subject of which the Planning Commission has not finished deliberations. So anything else is open.

So Public Remarks, which is not part of the formal participation process for any development regulation or Comprehensive Plan amendment project, is limited to three minutes per speaker and up to 15 minutes total. So do you wish to speak to the Planning Commission?

Unidentified Female Voice in the Audience: No, thank you. I'm here just \_\_\_\_\_.

Chair Raschko: Okay, thank you. Is there anybody online?

Robby Eckroth: We do have two people.

Chair Raschko: Do either of them wish to make a comment?

Mr. Eckroth: If either of you had wished to comment, please unmute or raise your hand. I'm not seeing any response at the moment.

Chair Raschko: Okay. Well, that will close Public Remarks. Thank you.

Chair Raschko: So next on our agenda is a public hearing on the Capital Facilities Plan. The purpose of this public hearing is to receive testimony – oh, I've got the wrong one – on the 2023 Capital Facilities Plan. Before we begin, we'll hear a brief presentation from staff.

Excuse me, Robby. It's been mentioned that at our last meeting when you first presented you never had an opportunity to say a few words about yourself.

Mr. Eckroth: Oh.

Chair Raschko: Would you like to do that before you begin?

Mr. Eckroth: Sure, I'd be happy to.

Chair Raschko: Okay, in under 10 minutes?

Mr. Eckroth: Yeah, I can do that! So my name's Robby Eckroth. I'm the new senior long range planner for Skagit County. I worked six months in the Current Planning division for Skagit County prior. I spent about seven years working as a current planner for Whatcom County prior to that and also have worked as a current planner at Grant County. So I have a lot of agricultural and rural planning experience. I am from Port Orchard in Kitsap County. I went to Western Washington University to get my degree and, yeah, that pretty much sums up my professional background.

Chair Raschko: Thank you.

Mr. Eckroth: Yeah, thank *you*.

Chair Raschko: Are there any questions for –

Several Planning Commissioners: No.

Mr. Eckroth: Well, it's great to see you all again tonight. Good evening, Commissioners. I'm going to talk to you again about the Six-Year Capital Facilities Update. I'm going to give you a more

brief summary this time and just kind of talk about some of the points that we discussed last time in my last presentation.

So just to remind you: The Capital Facilities Plan is needed because the County must ensure that those public facilities and services necessary to support development shall be adequate to serve the development at the time the development is available for occupancy and use without decreasing current service levels below locally established minimum standards. So when we receive development applications we need to make sure that we have the facilities available to be able to accommodate that development.

So the – a quick summary of some of the internal changes, so the changes that are directly a part of Skagit County. The Public Health Department actually just relocated to 301 Valley Mall Way in Mount Vernon. I believe that they're still doing a little bit of moving but I think for the most part they're just about all wrapped up. Public Health also received a community development block grant to improve the Concrete Community Center. Public Health has received multiple grants in addition to that last one for the construction of a crisis stabilization center, a behavioral health facility that will be located on the County's Stabilization Campus in Sedro-Woolley. And then the Ovenell Solid Waste Station is receiving upgrades to their stormwater system.

Some of the external changes that are taking place in some of our special purpose districts, like our school districts and fire districts, are: We've updated the school enrollment numbers based on the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction for the 2022-2023 school year. Our fire districts updated facility needs in existing facilities. One thing I noted last time is that Fire District 4 may potentially build a new fire station near Clear Lake, but the future need at this location is still in discussion. The Skagit County Dike and Drainage District's updated facility needs and existing facilities. And Edison completed a capacity study for their water system, which identified likely sources of infiltration and inflow and the projects needed to address those needs.

So this year's Capital Facilities Plan, staff does not recommend that a Comprehensive Plan amendment is needed. There's no changes of level of service based on the changes in this Capital Facilities Plan update.

So next steps: The public comment period ends in two days on November 16<sup>th</sup>. Comments can be sent to [pdscomments@co.skagit.wa.us](mailto:pdscomments@co.skagit.wa.us) or mailed to our building here at 1800 Continental Place in Mount Vernon, Washington 98273. Or public comments can also be received here in person. The draft Capital Facilities Plan can be found on [www.skagitcounty.net/cfp](http://www.skagitcounty.net/cfp), for Capital Facilities Plan. And we are going to have our deliberation on November 28<sup>th</sup>, 2023, and then Board consideration is going to be concurrent with the budget adoption, which is anticipated to take place December 11<sup>th</sup>, 2023. And that is all I have and I'm available for questions or comments.

Chair Raschko: Are there any questions?

Commissioner Henley: Not for me.

Chair Raschko: Any comments?

(silence)

Chair Raschko: Okay. Well, thank you very much.

Mr. Eckroth: Thank you, Commissioners.

Chair Raschko: So we will begin the public hearing. Each person who wishes to speak will have three minutes, if you please. State first your name and address, that would be appreciated. We'll do the people who are in the room first and then see who wishes to speak online. You're also allowed to make written comments on the proposal. They're not limited in length. They'll be accepted 'til Thursday, October 26<sup>th</sup>, at 4:30 p.m.

So the public hearing is now open – and do you wish to speak?

Unidentified Female Voice: Thank you, no. I was just here listening.

Chair Raschko: Okay. So that is completed – the public hearing in regards to people present at the meeting. Is there anybody online who wishes to make testimony?

Commissioner Henley: I'd like to correct the record. I think when you read the cutoff dates there you were still in the month of *October*, I think you quoted.

Chair Raschko: I've got the – I think – thank you. I appreciate you being on top of that. And correction: Written comments are not limited in length and will be accepted until Thursday, November 16<sup>th</sup>, at 4:30 p.m. Yeah. Thank you.

Commissioner Henley: You're welcome.

Chair Raschko: So is there anybody online?

Mr. Eckroth: We do have three people online. They have not unmuted or indicated that they'd like to speak. If you would like to speak, please unmute or raise your hand and we'll try to assist you to be able to speak to this matter.

(silence)

Chair Raschko: Okay. It looks like there's nobody (here). Okay. So if there's no objection from the Commission, we'll close the public hearing. And just as a reminder, there are written comments on this proposal being accepted through this Thursday, November 16<sup>th</sup>, at 4:30 p.m. Thank you.

Okay, we're going to turn now to Comments on the 2023 Docket.

Sarah Ruether: Good evening. I'm Sarah Ruether. I'm a long range planner with Skagit County. And tonight we're going to discuss the public Comments on the 2023 Docket.

Some updates on the docket: There were two citizen-initiated petitions, 10 staff-initiated petitions, and one staff item, C23-7, the Flow Sensitive Basins Rules, was rescinded. Additional changes need to be made to this petition so it will be brought forward next year for consideration. I'd also like to note that the Fully Contained Communities – FCCs – are not on the 2023 docket. This item was removed by the Board of County Commissioners when they established the list of petitions.

And just for a review of where we're at in the process, the Board established the docket; we had work sessions in May and September; we had SEPA review; we sent it to Commerce for review;

and we had a public hearing on the 24<sup>th</sup> of October; and now we are at the stage of reviewing public comments. And the 2023 petitions' supporting documents can be found on our website at [www.skagitcounty.net/2023cpa](http://www.skagitcounty.net/2023cpa). The comment period was from October 5<sup>th</sup> to October 26<sup>th</sup>. The Notice of Availability was published on the 5<sup>th</sup> and a Determination of Non-Significance was published on the 5<sup>th</sup>. It was also published to the *Skagit Valley Herald* on the 5<sup>th</sup> and the listserv notice was sent out the next day. We had the public hearing. We will discuss the comments tonight and then deliberations are scheduled for our next meeting on the 28<sup>th</sup> of November.

For the citizen proposal LR23-01, the Dunlap Rural Reserve Rezone, no comments were received.

And LR23-03, the Port of Skagit Bayview Ridge Rezone, we had two comments and a response letter to those comments from the Port of Skagit, so that is the first one I'll discuss. And the comments from that can be found in Attachment 2.

And then just for a review of the County proposals, the C23-1, the Seawater Intrusion Area Well-Drilling Requirement, had three comments and one public hearing testimony, and that can be found in Attachment 3. The Qualified Professional Definition, C23-2, had one comment. That can be found in Attachment 4. C23-3, OSRSI Allowed Uses Amendment, had 18 written comments which can be found in Attachment 5. There were no comments on the Master Planned Resort Designation. There were no comments on the Fire Marshal Code Amendment. There were no comments on the Temporary Manufactured Homes Title Notice Requirement. There were no comments on the Primitive Campground Definition. No comments on the Countywide Planning Policy Updates, and no comments on the General Code Language Cleanup.

So the first one I'll discuss is the comments on the Bayview Ridge Rezone. There were two written comments, no hearing testimony, and one response that is from the Port of Skagit. The first written comment, the issue they had was they were concerned that their property will be impacted. They're concerned that the proposed Port plan for the rezone parcel – concern that development of this parcel will generate noise. Also concern about speeding on Peterson Road, concerns of safety for empty businesses like the Amazon building. And they would like to see the Port and Planning Department address these issues.

The second written comment we got was a property owner on Peterson Road. They are concerned that rezoning of this parcel would create noise, traffic. They also are concerned that Peterson Road has become a thoroughfare of speeding cars, delivery trucks, and more traffic than the road can handle and that cars do not respect the speed limit. They were also concerned that industrial parks in a residential area will invite criminal activity, in their opinion, and this will make them feel unsafe. Concern that first responder resources are already thin. Also concern of having an industrial park within 300 feet of their house will decrease property values. They don't think that industry and residential belong together.

So I'll now go over the Port's response to these comments. Just to review the parcel, I have it up here on the screen. The total parcel is 7.54 acres and 6,9 of those are already zoned industrial. So the rezone itself would be about 1.17 acres, and you can see that. That's where the overlap is on the graphic here. And you can also see where Peterson Road is. And the Port of Skagit response letter states that the rezone is just for approximately one acre. The Port plans to develop this parcel in adjacent, existing Light Industrial-zoned lands to the Watershed Business Park, which they came and discussed, I think, earlier this summer. And the goal is to create an economically-productive business park while ensuring compatibility with neighboring residential

airport and pipeline uses.

And to address the impacts to the residential neighbors, the Port is planning 100-foot separation between the residential and new development. County code requires 50 feet separation so they're exceeding the code for that requirement. Also fencing and a vegetative buffer within that 100 feet separation between the residential and commercial industrial development to reduce visual and noise impacts and provide a physical barrier between properties. Truck traffic tenants from the Watershed Business Park will be required to use Higgins Airport Way, and I do have a graphic to show that next. And widening of the Peterson Road adjacent to Port-owned property in order to extend the existing Peterson Road sidewalk. New trails throughout the Watershed Business Park to eventually connect with the Port's existing 10-plus miles of existing trail system through the Bayview Business Park. So if you look on the graphic here with the Port response letter that traffic would be directed to the Higgins Way where the red line – it's a little bit hard to see with the graphic – instead of going through the neighborhoods on Peterson Road. I don't know. Now that I see it on the – I hope you can see it there! Can you see it? Okay.

And then this is a graphic. It's also in their comment letter. It shows where the hundred-foot buffer is and the vegetation of it in this kind of landscape architecture drawing here. And then this one – it shows also the buffer along the residential area and some of the trails that they talked about. That's also in the response letter. And then this is, like, the side view of what the trails would look like. Also in the letter was the Port reiterated about hosting a community open house on April 27<sup>th</sup> to share the vision for the property and discuss the planning. Invitations were sent through a targeted mailing to reach Bayview Ridge and Peterson Road neighbors, and several Port staff and engineers were there to answer questions. Maps were shown conceptually to depict the development areas and the hundred-foot buffer. The projects may include opportunities for value-added agriculture business and a variety of uses, including light manufacturing and office. The Bayview Business Park provides employment for approximately 955 people and 39 diverse businesses in aerospace, maritime, manufacturing, and value-added agricultural sectors.

Okay, so any questions on that one before we move on to other comments?

Chair Raschko: Could you go back to the map, please?

Ms. Ruether: The graphic? Sure. This one?

Chair Raschko: Yeah, that one. That's great.

Ms. Ruether: Okay.

Chair Raschko: So they'd be required to go west on Peterson to hit Higgins.

Ms. Ruether: Yeah. I think they're trying to – or they'd have to go from 20 – I think the map cuts off on this graphic. I apologize. But, I think, you know, they could take 20 and connect in with Airport Way instead of coming in on Peterson Road to avoid going through those neighborhoods there. I think that was what the Port was trying to – that would be my understanding of trying to reduce the truck traffic.

Chair Raschko: Can they really require that?

Ms. Ruether: Huh?

Chair Raschko: Can they really require which way a truck goes? It's a public road.

Laura Schumacher: We can require it of our tenants.

Chair Raschko: You can?

Ms. Schumacher: Yes, through lease agreements and signage.

Chair Raschko: Was it part of the lease or something?

Ms. Schumacher: Yeah, I mean, we can – you know, we can require that tenant operations direct their traffic.

Chair Raschko: Okay.

Ms. Schumacher: Out that exit rather than the Peterson Road exit.

Chair Raschko: Thank you. Anything else? Yes?

Commissioner Amy Hughes: I'd ask a question. Could you go back to – it would be forward a couple of maps.

Ms. Ruether: The graphics?

Commissioner Hughes: Yeah.

Ms. Ruether: This one?

Commissioner Hughes: That would be the whole section once it's developed?

Ms. Ruether: I think – I don't know if that's the whole section. I think the one further is like the whole – I think that's just this top square.

Commissioner Hughes: Okay, it's the top square. And so the development is where it says "Project Number 1" and then the rest is the buffer and office buildings?

Ms. Ruether: You can probably better see – I mean, \_\_\_\_ phases, but maybe you can better speak to how –

Ms. Schumacher: Sure. Yes. So the –

Ms. Ruether: Do you want to come up here?

Ms. Schumacher: All right. So my name's Laura Schumacher. I'm the Port environmental and planning manager so I work under Heather Rogerson. So the artistic rendering that you saw of the landscape architecture, kind of the conceptual plan? That was for Project 1, which you see depicted on this map. It's kind of up in the northwest – I'm sorry, the northeast corner of the site, and that will be the first site to be developed. And then Projects 2 and 3 are also Light Industrial land, but the trail system kind of winds – if you've been out to Bayview Business Park, it's similar to that. The trail system kind of winds amongst the parcels and kind of connects the whole space.

Chair Raschko: Are we done? Amy?

Commissioner Hughes: Could you explain in that section that's close to all the homes what all will be put into Project 1 on – it looks like both sides of a road to the south of Project 1?

Ms. Schumacher: Sure. I believe it's – is it eight parcels, nine parcels? They're all zoned Light Industrial so it's nine parcels available for Light Industrial development. Our focus on that is for some value-added ag businesses, but at this time until it's, you know, kind of pad-ready we don't have, you know, any contracts or anything. But, yeah, it is for – to be subdivided into those different parcels.

Commissioner Hughes: Okay, thank you.

Chair Raschko: Okay, we're going to go – and then Martha, I think was next, and then Jen. Okay?

Vice Chair Tammy Candler: My question was just on the red on this, is that – that's the walking trail that goes through the buffer? Am I seeing that right?

Ms. Schumacher: Yes, you're correct.

Vice Chair Candler: So part of that hundred feet is a walking trail.

Ms. Schumacher: Yes.

Vice Chair Candler: Okay.

Ms. Schumacher: So in the –

Commissioner Henley: Do you have the graphic that has the aerial photo in it? That might make it a little easier to understand.

Ms. Ruether: I didn't include that in the presentation.

Commissioner Henley: Okay.

Ms. Schumacher: So this one gives you a little bit of an idea of the landscaping that's planned as far as the type of planting. So you see the houses are kind of to the right and you've got those taller, kind of thicker buffer and then the trail and then a little more street planting. There's a – we feel it's a pretty nice buffer between the homes.

Commissioner Henley: Yes, this is the one I was talking about.

Ms. Schumacher: Yeah. Unfortunately, I don't think that one was included in this package but I'm happy to get that one to you if you'd –

Commissioner Henley: Oh, well, I have a copy \_\_\_\_\_.

Ms. Ruether: I **did** include it in the presentation. \_\_\_\_\_. Sorry.

Chair Raschko: Martha?



Commissioner Martha Rose: So can you go back to the prior slide? The one that – no, the other one that shows the – that one. So Project Number 1 looks like it's not just that one acre, 1.17 acres. It's a much bigger chunk of the whole.

Ms. Schumacher: That's correct.

Commissioner Rose: Right. So it's probably – it looks like it's – wasn't the whole thing, like, 20-some acres or 30-some? What was it?

Ms. Schumacher: So the whole Watershed Project is 123 acres. I believe Project 1 – don't quote me – I think it's 40 acres thereabouts.

Commissioner Rose: Right. Yeah, so one acre is just a tiny little chunk of that Project Number 1. It's just one tiny little piece.

Ms. Schumacher: Mm-hmm, exactly.

Commissioner Rose: Yeah. I just wanted to clarify that.

Ms. Schumacher: Yes.

Commissioner Rose: That's all.

Chair Raschko: Thank you.

Vice Chair Candler: The piece closest to the buffer, right?

Ms. Schumacher: The piece at the very top right.

Commissioner Rose: Yeah. Yeah, in fact, most of it is buffer. Most of that one-acre turns into buffer.

Ms. Schumacher: That's correct.

Commissioner Rose: I know because I'm a developer \_\_\_\_\_.

Ms. Schumacher: So if it remains zoned – with the split zoning, then we'd have to have additional buffer on the part of the parcel.

Commissioner Rose: Exactly.

Ms. Schumacher: On the next part of the parcel, basically reducing a double buffer kind of situation.

Commissioner Rose: Right. Yeah. All right, thank you.

Chair Raschko: Jen?

Commissioner Jen Hutchison: You guys are already bulldozing out there – a land pipe or something. Is that Project 2 or have you already kind of started...

Ms. Schumacher: So that is the sewer. Yeah, so that's the sanitary sewer that is being connected from the south at the Burlington pump station up to Peterson Road. And that will support all three projects.

Commissioner Hutchison: And will there be a main entry right there at Peterson? Like, is that drivable? Because traffic *will* go downhill. I live right off Peterson. Like, Fed-Ex used to be insane down there. Just constant –

Ms. Schumacher: Yeah. I mean, this drawing here does depict where the entries will be.

Commissioner Hutchison: So you'll have big truck signs – "Trucks, left please" or something.

Ms. Schumacher: Yes. Yes, there will be trucks.

Commissioner Hutchison: It *is* a longer route. Everybody's always trying to save fuel these days, I understand.

Ms. Schumacher: Yeah, although if trucks are coming from I-5 or other parts of Skagit County, the natural choice would be to take Highway 20.

Commissioner Hutchison: Right, well, Peterson goes down to Garrett, which puts you right on the 5.

Ms. Schumacher: Yeah. Or you can just turn left on Highway – what we're envisioning is take Highway 20, highway speeds, out to the Higgins turn and come up Higgins. Just like *most* of the industrial traffic in that southern part of the business park are currently doing that.

Commissioner Hutchison: I guess it would depend on who occupies the space in the end. I mean, we might not even notice it.

Ms. Schumacher: Sure. Sure, yeah.

Commissioner Hutchison: Well, thank you.

Ms. Schumacher: Yeah. You're welcome.

Commissioner Mitchell: A question for Sarah. Wasn't this basically just a mistake anyway? It's rarely rare that a parcel has two different zone –

Ms. Ruether: Yeah, I mean, I think Jenn was, you know, originally – was the – and she looked really hard. She's very good at researching these things and she couldn't figure out why this happened. It's an odd – it's a mistake. We're not exactly sure why.

Commissioner Mitchell: Thank you.

Ms. Ruether: Mm-hmm.

Chair Raschko: Just one last thing. Were there no objections to the trail?

Ms. Ruether: No. No comments on the trails, you know. Just some noise and, you know, buffering comments, safety comments.

Chair Raschko: Okay. Anything else?

(silence)

Chair Raschko: Okay. Let's move on.

Ms. Ruether: Okay. The next one is the C23-1, this Seawater Intrusion. We have three written comments, which can be found in Attachment 3, and one hearing testimony. The organization commenting is the Guemes Island Planning Advisory Committee. This commenter does not support C23-1 docket item for the following reasons: They feel that the requirement would make building parcels worthless as it would put the burden of obtaining information regarding the location, depth, and chloride levels of surrounding wells. They think that the proposal analysis is false and nonrelative narrative and think that the proposal analysis does not justify the cost or impact of requiring an unnecessary study. They note that the sole source aquifer is filled with 3 billion gallons of rainwater that is filtered through the ground. They think there is plenty of water that is safe and little risk of seawater intrusion.

And then the other comment was from the Guemes Island Planning Committee and they support the language in the current docket item, and they think that the saltwater intrusion needs to be addressed and this would help address the ongoing problem of saltwater intrusion or seawater intrusion on Guemes Island, and that this language is necessary to address this ongoing problem because it can be a cumulative problem of wells exacerbating the problem of seawater intrusion effectively transferring the senior water rights to new junior water well rights.

And I did talk to Jason today about the difference between, you know, what the Department of Ecology does and what this is going to do, and he looks at this as more of our critical area – just an extension of the critical areas ordinance in terms of – DOE regulates water rights and that's under their purview, and this is just an extension of critical areas. I was going to have someone from our – our senior resources water planner, but she was sick today so she couldn't come tonight. But I'll try to answer whatever questions you have. I'm not that expert on the seawater intrusion though. Any questions?

Chair Raschko: Have we questions?

Commissioner Hutchison: My only question is about potential costs. Like, how much more is this study going to cost an individual who wants to develop – I know it's really hard to –

Ms. Ruether: The – from – this came about from, like, Jason did this separate from natural resources. So from his standpoint, it's to correct a loophole. But if someone came in and just wanted to put a well in and wasn't associated with a building permit they could come in and not notify anyone, and that concerns, like, residents of Guemes because it's a cumulative thing when you're trying to take care of a sole source aquifer. So it's not about trying to require more studying. It's trying to close a loophole. I mean, you still have to do the same amount of work. It's just making sure that somebody can't get in and not notify anyone. That was from his standpoint on why this came to be. I mean, GIPAC wanted this. It didn't – the County didn't, you know, initiate it. This was something that they wanted.

Commissioner Hutchison: So it's just more of a procedural burden than it is a cost burden.

Ms. Ruether: Mm-hmm, right.

Commissioner Hutchison: Didn't you say?

Ms. Ruether: Yeah.

Commissioner Hutchison: Thank you.

Chair Raschko: Go ahead, please.

Commissioner Henley: I'm a little mystified as to what the exact purpose of this wording change is. I mean, it's not going to really stop any seawater intrusion at all. I mean, there are a number of different studies which show different aquifers, even though I know that it's been designated as an SSA. But still, it seems to me that what we're trying to do here is put a layer of bureaucracy in place without actually changing anything that has to do with real seawater intrusion. I mean...

Ms. Ruether: I'm the messenger here so the message that I got from Jason, who was involved in, you know, the origin of this, was that it was supposed to close a loophole – that they were concerned that someone might come in with a property, drill a well that wasn't associated with a building permit, and nobody would know about it.

Commissioner Henley: This isn't reality. It sounds to me like a solution in search of a problem.

Commissioner Rose: I have a question about that. If somebody drills the well without – currently, without being associated with a building permit, then does that open the door for them to get their building permit because now they can say "I have water"? In other words, normally if they come in for a building permit and want to drill a well then it's a package deal. But if they can skirt under the regulations and just drill the well without scrutiny or whatever, without the – whatever the formal process it – once it's there, then does that open the door for them (for) their water availability certificate so they can get their building permit and then they don't have to go through that? How does that work?

Jack Moore: Thank you for that question. That is my understanding, is that there is some level of – that that *can* occur. It's not an outright allowed. It still has to be reviewed for the particular use. But the well is already drilled. So then I know the Guemes Island Planning Committee was very concerned that other options may not be considered at that point since it was done already without any County involvement. Whereas if the County would have an opportunity to discuss with the homeowner or the property owner about the well and potential future uses, that we could provide additional options for them to consider.

But speaking to your question, if you want further, you know, legal water questions or thresholds, we could certainly get you more specific information on that.

Commissioner Rose: Well, it seems like a relevant piece of the puzzle.

Mr. Moore: Okay.

Commissioner Rose: As well as the thing we brought up at the last meeting this was discussed, which is are you going to – somewhere the whole rainwater harvesting thing needs to be part of this conversation.

Commissioner Henley: They have rain barrel – a lecture, or at least have *had* in the past. It's not widely used on Guemes but it's there.

Commissioner Rose: Right. So years – I don't know how many years ago by now, but we took the deep dive in this Planning Commission to try to get Skagit County to come up and allow a standard plan to be created so that a person wouldn't have to spend \$10,000 on engineering to put in a rainwater harvesting system. And we got to a certain point and then the whole thing evaporated. The conversation went away. But that seemed –

Commissioner Henley: Was that when the proposed pipeline came into existence or was it after that?

Commissioner Rose: I don't know. But at any rate, it's – I think the salt – some of us took a tour of Guemes and we were pointed out certain areas where there're issues, so it seems like it's a real issue. It's not a fabricated issue, but it seems like there's a lot of circular conversations that don't go anywhere or don't resolve anything. And of course I like to resolve things so I guess I would like – I don't mind this change of language but I think in addition to that there should be another piece of the puzzle that is “and here's another option.” If you don't want to spend the money to do this testing that this new language requires, you can just use this plan and put in rainwater harvesting.

Commissioner Henley: I agree with you. I think there ought to be other options, okay, that people can use.

Commissioner Rose: Yeah.

Commissioner Henley: And I think that if we're going to put in place a regulation that it ought to have some physical impact and not just be a bureaucratic \_\_\_\_.

Commissioner Rose: I agree. So in other words, I'm agreeing with the changing of the language and closing the loophole, but – at any rate, I think I've said enough. So you got the message, right?

Chair Raschko: Vince, did you finish?

Commissioner Henley: I'm done, I think. I know where we are.

Vice Chair Candler: I'm a little bit confused about the closing the loophole. It does, I think, more than that, right? It requires the County get involved in a process that they are not involved in anywhere else in the county because it's up to Ecology. So when you say “closing the loophole,” what – can you just – and I already said it, but can you articulate what this involves?

Ms. Ruether: It's that the Guemes Planning Advisory Committee is concerned that someone might drill a well that's not associated with a building permit and that that would not – that the County would therefore not be notified. Because DOE is water rights so DOE is water rights but because it is a sole source aquifer it's actually regulated under our critical areas. So to trigger the

critical areas you'd need, like, a building permit. So it's a loophole that someone could drill a well without Skagit County being notified.

Vice Chair Candler: I see. That's the loophole that you're referring to.

Ms. Ruether: Mm-hmm.

Vice Chair Candler: Okay. Thank you.

Commissioner Hutchison: Like an existing resident whose well has failed would be an example of that?

Ms. Ruether: I think they're more concerned about new wells. I think it's also because with sole source aquifers they're worried about location, like where a well is located.

Vice Chair Candler: The other question that I have is about the water rights. Do you have any information about senior water rights versus junior water rights? Is that something that is clear and open and determined somewhere? Is that in a deed? What is that? Where's that come from?

Ms. Ruether: That's a good question. I'm not an expert on water rights. And I feel like that's more of a DOE kind of department. Jack's shaking his head. Maybe he knows more than I do about it.

Mr. Moore: No, I'm just agreeing with what you're saying.

Ms. Ruether: Okay.

Mr. Moore: Water rights is purely a Department of Ecology function, so that is nothing Skagit County has any authority over or gets involved in.

Ms. Ruether: I do know, just looking at some of this stuff on the aquifer, that your location of where you drill is very important. So I think that the Planning Committee is very concerned about like, you know, if a new property's going to drill a well, they want to know where that's located because if it's right next – how you locate your drilling is very important in terms of where you hit that aquifer. So I think that they want to make sure that they can weigh in on where that person's going to drill the well. I don't know. I'm not a geologist.

Commissioner Mitchell: No, no, you're right for what you said. Yes.

Ms. Ruether: Okay, okay. I'm guessing that's maybe why they're concerned about not being able to weigh in on where the well is drilled at the very beginning and then being stuck with a well that's maybe not in a great location but it's already drilled, and so they are kind of stuck with it. I think that's the loophole they're trying to close – is that if someone came in, they drilled the well and nobody knew about it, then it's too late and they're stuck with a bad location.

Chair Raschko: Thank you. So Kathy was next, then we'll come back to \_\_\_\_\_. Jen, did you have something?

Commissioner Hutchison: (inaudible)

Chair Raschko: Okay.

Commissioner Mitchell: Okay, so I'm a little confused about this loophole thing too. Because with water rights – senior water rights, junior water rights, anybody else's – that's under DOE control anyway, right?

Ms. Ruether: Mm-hmm.

Commissioner Mitchell: So for somebody else to come along and say where the neighbor can put the well is none of their business. Everybody has (a) right to access water, number one, and number two, they're also assuming that every time somebody drills a well that it is strictly for a building permit or to come in for a house. That's not true. People need to water their cattle, they need to water their animals, they need to water the crops – whatever they're going to do. There's much more land out there than people are talking about, and the areas with this seawater intrusion are in specific areas. And people are pretending that the whole thing is connected. It's not. And so the question I have is, How can this be closing a loophole when the DOE is the one that gets to say who has water rights and who doesn't? That's why I'm really confused. Along with the idea that this is another layer of bureaucracy, when the County doesn't know anyway and – you know, forgive me, Jack, but you just indicated the same thing – there's things that we don't know and the County may or may not. That is the DOE's bailiwick. So how can this be just closing a loophole? I'm really confused.

Ms. Ruether: Well, I mean, I can try to get Jason to maybe – he couldn't be here tonight but to further explain, because I wasn't in on the meetings of, you know, why – the Guemes Island Planning Advisory Committee is who wanted this, and that was the reasoning he gave me.

Commissioner Mitchell: Right, and they intimate in an awful lot of stuff over time and most recently as well they're concerned about people building. Well, water's not always about building. And if somebody owns a piece of property or other piece of property around, then why do they have the say-so whether somebody gets the water or not? That's the bottom line here. So I'm really confused about the stance for the loophole thing.

Ms. Ruether: I can have – you know, ask Jason. Maybe he can provide comment on that.

Commissioner Mitchell: That'd be helpful.

Chair Raschko: I think it would be.

Ms. Ruether: Sure.

Commissioner Mitchell: Do we deliberate in two weeks or four weeks?

Ms. Ruether: The 28<sup>th</sup>, so – I mean, I guess I can have him answer that – a written –

Commissioner Mitchell: Okay, thank you.

Ms. Ruether: Yeah.

Chair Raschko: Okay, Martha and then Jen, did you have something?

Commissioner Hutchison: No, I don't.

Chair Raschko: Okay, Martha?

Commissioner Rose: I recall when I took my little tour of the island that they pointed out several spots where wells has failed because of seawater intrusion because of too many wells in that particular area. You know, where it was good water up to a certain point and then there got to be too many wells. So those people either had to revert to the machinery that takes the salt out of the water, which is very expensive, or a couple of them had actually put in rainwater harvesting systems. They bootlegged them in. They didn't bother asking permission or getting permits or anything because they were desperate for clean water. So I guess this idea about everybody should be able to drill a well if they want one, I'm not quite on board with that because what do we do? Let everybody drill wherever they want and then everybody gets saltwater intrusion? I mean – you know what I'm saying? The problem, as it was presented to me, is not imaginary. I mean, I saw the cisterns and I –

Commissioner Mitchell: I think we all did.

Commissioner Rose: What's that?

Commissioner Mitchell: I think we all did.

Commissioner Rose: Yeah, and so I don't know what percentage of wells have failed but what percentage does it take to take some action steps to solve the problem? So I don't know whether this solves it or not, but it might be a step in the right direction.

Chair Raschko: Vince?

Commissioner Henley: This seems to me like a band-aid. I mean, it really isn't going to do much for saltwater intrusion at all. I mean, if you did nothing more than draw the maximum amount from all the existing wells, you'd probably end up with the same degree of saltwater intrusion that you'd have if you put in more wells. That would be my take on the thing. I view this as a sort of a soft solution to a problem that's been articulated but may or may not be real.

Chair Raschko: I just want to caution: Are we getting into deliberations here?

Commissioner Rose: Oh, good question.

Chair Raschko: This is meant to be informational, I believe.

Commissioner Henley: Sorry.

Chair Raschko: No, it's okay because I think it's a good conversation. But I'm just not sure now's the appropriate time. Or am I wrong? I mean, if people feel otherwise, let's have at it.

Commissioner Henley: And run the same arguments up the flagpole next time we do this?!

Chair Raschko: Well, I think it's good preparation. Is there anything else on this subject?

(silence)

Chair Raschko: Okay.



Ms. Ruether: We did get one comment on C23-2, the Qualified Professional Definition. The issue they brought up, the comment was focused on areas related to Washington Geological Survey work and they were in support of making the changes to the “qualified professional” definition. They just asked for future consideration adding a reference to the Washington Geological Survey portal. So we said we could consider this as part of the comprehensive update. Any concerns about that?

Chair Raschko: Any questions or concerns?

(silence)

Ms. Ruether: The comments on C23-3, the OSRSI Allowed Uses, we got 18 written comments in Attachment 5. No hearing testimony. Seventeen of the written comments were in support and one comment addressed concerns with a specific recreation area. The organizations commenting was the Skagit County Parks and Recreation Advisory Board in support; Sedro-Woolley Innovation for Tomorrow in support. The letter was signed by Skagit Trail Builders, someone from the City of Sedro-Woolley Public Works, and the Port of Skagit. The comments in support were in favor of trails being permitted uses in OSRSI – I think I missed a letter there, RSI zone. In favor of reducing barriers and costs to building trails, commenters note that access to trails and nature is connected to better mental health and should be promoted. Trail building organizations allow people to get together and share a common goal. And the comments from the trail building organizations were in support. Other comments about how trails are a treasure of Skagit County and should be expanded. Government leaders should lead the way to making it easier for communities to create access to these spaces.

The Skagit County Parks Board wrote a letter in support and their letter stated that “as a greater number of lands with high recreational value are lost to development it’s important that public lands have attainable access to open space public lands” and that this amendment would allow them to keep the costs down while allowing greater efficiency. As an advisory board to a parks department of limited resources, they know how important it is to reduce bureaucracy and costs.

SWIFT, Sedro-Woolley Innovation for Tomorrow, wrote a letter in support and saying that this amendment will ensure continued success of building and maintaining primitive trail systems. Trail organizations are instrumental to the success of public lands. And this amendment would help ensure these organizations can complete their work efficiently in a timely manner, and that volunteers are the backbone of successful trail building and maintenance and that this amendment would help ensure permitting requirements are not so arduous that they interrupt successful volunteer-led efforts. They continued on that the hearing examiner process for building and maintaining permitted trails is a drain on public resources and creates inefficiencies. Environmental regulation will continue to be a requirement of a staff-initiated permit process. If trail work rises to a threshold where more process is necessary, permit staff will ensure that further research and mitigation is completed. As more development incurs in Skagit County, there are fewer places for the public to experience natural areas of the Pacific Northwest. All members of the public, regardless of socioeconomic status, should have access to trails, and that trails have an economic benefit to the region – that they can attract visitors to our county, boosting tourism and local businesses, which can lead to economic growth.

There was one comment that expressed concern that trails in the Northern State Mental Hospital would have its status changed and they were concerned about overuse of this facility. And the

Department responds that the status of this \_\_\_\_\_ change is part of this proposed code amendment.

That's it.

Chair Raschko: Anything on that?

(silence)

Chair Raschko: Okay.

Ms. Ruether: Okay. So the next step will be – our next meeting will be deliberations and then the next step from that is to go to the Board. Are there any questions about process?

(silence)

Chair Raschko: Nothing?

(silence)

Ms. Ruether: Okay.

Chair Raschko: Thank you very much.

Ms. Ruether: Thank you.

Chair Raschko: Wait a minute. Excuse me. Before I – I was going to ask later, but I had a sudden thought after we got off the subject. But have the wells that are suffering from saltwater intrusion on Guemes Island been mapped? Does anybody know?

Ms. Ruether: Have they? Okay, Kathy's shaking her head. I don't know. There was a USGS report that was supposed to come out and it's not out, but I did give Kathy the 1995 report today.

Commissioner Mitchell: They have a series of maps; they started with 1995, and there are some that are still up – whether the report that they're still working on that was supposed to be out a few months ago is going to change that or not. But yes, the maps exist for where they had the saltwater intrusion. Most of it is on the northwest side and a little bit on the southeast. And it's just typical to most places that you would think. It's on the perimeters of the island. It's not the interior. It's not like you have to stuff lenses up through the whole island. But you can find those maps. I think – well, there's some easy connections with it. I think the Subarea Plan might still have some of the – the Subarea Plan may have some of that too.

Ms. Ruether: Oh, the Guemes Subarea. And I can send the stuff I sent you to the whole Planning Commission too.

Commissioner Mitchell: That would probably be helpful.

Ms. Ruether: Okay, I can do that.

Commissioner Henley: Do Guemes maps address all of the aquifers on Guemes or just –

Commissioner Mitchell: No. And there's another set of maps – did you give me that one that was the poster of the 2010 study? I did look through what you gave me today. There's a 2010 study –

Ms. Ruether: Okay, I don't know.

Commissioner Mitchell: – that WSU did with Skagit County where it does more information for where those are. And there's three formation aquifers and they found some more – people were using more wells from some of the interior, other aquifers. There's three aquifers, not two, that people are drawing from. And again, if you look at – but there's a map where you can literally see where the ones were with this intrusion, and most of it is on – if this is the island, here and a little bit here. And you're not going to see too much up on the east side because it's, you know, higher ground and things like that. The geology's pretty – people say it's complicated. It's not. It's pretty simple, if you look at it. And that's where the intrusion is, is on the perimeters. And it's probably not different than most of the other places in the islands anywhere.

Chair Raschko: Well, I thought it had to be interesting to see where they are and how deep, if that information was available.

Commissioner Mitchell: It is, sort of.

Chair Raschko: It is?

Commissioner Mitchell: Yeah – for what they had before, barring the new stuff.

Chair Raschko: Okay. I'll find out from you where \_\_\_\_\_.

Commissioner Mitchell: Yep, I'll get it for you.

Chair Raschko: All right.

Ms. Ruether: Okay. I can try to get a hold of – I know the stuff that I sent you, and see if I can find that subarea plan and what it has in there too.

Chair Raschko: Well, thank you.

Ms. Ruether: Mm-hmm.

Chair Raschko: Very good. Okay, we'll turn now to the Director's Update. Mr. Moore, please.

Mr. Moore: Thank you, Chair. I'll just share a few things that are going on in the Department.

Battery energy storage systems are a large topic of conversation right now as we do have an application in at the moment for the first one in Skagit County. The Fire Marshal's office met with the fire chiefs and did a presentation on what those look like and some of the concerns and things that we'll be looking at and how that may affect emergency response for the fire departments. So chiefs were very thankful for the communication and definitely we'll be keeping in touch with them in the future to let them know how that's going.

Another fire marshal-related thing is that we have seen in uptick in structure fires. This happens often at the beginning of the cold season where people are starting to use their furnaces, heaters, woodstoves – more so. So we are seeing a few more structure fires this time of year.

We're continuing to work with the Port on sort of a preemptive aquifer recharge work that we hope that when we get that – when that project is finished it will help us to process individual permits more quickly, as opposed to needing to have studies done on that work for each individual project. So it's a cumulative, an overall look at the entire property up there. So (we're) happy to work with the Port on those sorts of things to help keep things moving a little faster.

Another thing, we're working through the – Skagit County with the Skagit – the Council of Governments on starting to talk about allocations for housing and different income levels. So that is something that, given the new state requirement that we include that in our plan, is going to be difficult for us. We're seeing some challenges. So we're working with the local Cities to try to find solutions for housing as it relates to different income levels in the county. The default model shows that the rural area should take quite a bit of housing, but we're trying to figure out how that could occur. So if you look at the – most of the lower income housing that are for people who are well below the mean income levels, typically those – we want to have those associated more closely near services, bus lines – you know, places where they could have resources. So right now the state guidance would seem to indicate that Skagit County in the rural area would need to take a lot of that type of housing. So we're trying to figure out if there is a more regional way to address that. We're just in the beginning stages of talking with the Cities about that to see if there might be a better regional solution for the state requirement. To be continued on that. Question?

Commissioner Mitchell: When you say “regional,” what do you literally mean? I know you mentioned Cities.

Mr. Moore: (unintelligible)

Commissioner Mitchell: Okay.

Mr. Moore: County. Countywide. Yeah. Just looking to partner with the Cities on how to balance housing for all income levels. You know, as the County – you know, there're kind of conflicting requirements from the state under the Growth Management Act that says we can't really do a lot of multifamily out where there are no, you know, utilities or sewer. We can't extend sewer out to serve those sorts of developments, which are – typically one way of providing a lower cost housing – is by using density. Not the only way, but one common way. So as we are not allowed to do that from other state limitations, it's difficult to think how we might accommodate that many housing units for the lowest income levels. So we're hoping that we can partner with the Cities to have some kind of – share responsibility or come up with a cooperative game plan on that so we can have housing within the county but in the appropriate locations where those folks could better be served.

Vice Chair Candler: I have a question about that.

Chair Raschko: Just a second – Martha –

(several unintelligible voices)

Vice Chair Candler: Do you have any numbers from the last few years? I think that UGA also requires like a – not requires but suggests an 80/20 split with the cities versus counties. Do you have any recent numbers of where we are on that on growth?

Mr. Moore: Hmm, I don't know if we have results on that. Have you seen anything?

Ms. Ruether: It's higher. I think it's like 26, like when you look at the actual growth numbers. They have the Growth Monitoring Report from SCOG. It's like 26 or 27, so we don't hit the target exactly. We tend to go more rural than we do urban. I'm not sure why that is but it does go over to the rural more.

Commissioner Rose: Yeah, so as an infill builder I've liked the idea that you're talking about we're working together with the towns and the cities in the county, because from my perspective there's so much land within the urban boundaries it's ridiculous. And it's not ridiculous; it's an opportunity. But also has the County – have you guys looked – is part of the conversation looking at land trusts, like the Kulshan Land Trust where an entity other than the homeowner owns the underlying land in perpetuity and that allows a home buyer to buy the house itself, but they don't have the land cost, and they have to fall into a certain income level that's quite low to qualify, and then they are restricted as to how much appreciation they can realize? It's just not unlimited. It's written into the contract that they can improve it, they can sell it, but they have to realize a more modest gain on their investment. But that seems like a really no-brainer. If some properties – the Burlington Mall – I don't know where the property is but, I mean, there's certainly lots of opportunities out there. Even deciding – we had this conversation in one of these meetings. I don't remember when, but we were talking about industry is different than it used to be and industry and housing in the past haven't mixed because industry is thought of as being dirty. But nowadays a lot of industry is very clean. Is there any reason why apartments can't be built on industrial property too? So these are just some of the – obviously it's my livelihood. I think about this stuff a lot and I'm not in the meetings because I'm busy doing other things. So I'm giving you some ideas.

Mr. Moore: Thank you, Commissioner.

Commissioner Rose: Yeah. Maybe you already had them, but I'm reinforcing them if you did.

Mr. Moore: Okay, thank you so much.

Chair Raschko: Can I ask you a question about that?

Commissioner Rose: Yeah.

Chair Raschko: With regards to the Kulshan Land Trust. They own the underlying land. Somebody owns the building. But you say that they cannot – I mean, there's a maximum gain they can make when they sell it?

Commissioner Rose: Yes.

Chair Raschko: Now do they have to sell it to particular buyers?

Commissioner Rose: That I don't know. I don't know that answer.

Chair Raschko: Because, you know, a lot of houses are being bought up by –

Commissioner Henley: Conglomerates.

Chair Raschko: – venture capitalists and that type of thing.

Commissioner Rose: I know. Yeah, I know.

Chair Raschko: Even if you put the lid on the price that they can sell it for, that just makes an easy –

Commissioner Rose: No, no, I think it's probably reserved for people that are –

Chair Raschko: You have to qualify as a buyer first.

Commissioner Rose: Below a certain income. Yeah. I think – and there's lots of land trusts. There's the Evergreen Land Trust. You know, I don't know them all but the Kulshan one is up in Bellingham. And I think they have multiple sites. It's not just one piece of property. And I don't know where the underlying money comes from but I know that there's levies that are passed on our property taxes to fund low income housing, and that money, that levy money, could be used to establish a land trust. So at any rate, I know about all this stuff because it's part of the fringes of what I do, but I'm not in the mix, in the center of it. Yeah.

Chair Raschko: Okay, any other questions for staff?

Commissioner Hutchison: I'm a little curious too about ADUs out in the county area. From what Commerce is sharing with everybody in all of their many meetings around housing, \_\_\_ housing, and everything that's coming, ADUs are expected to be allowable on just about any parcel, from my understanding. I don't know quantity-wise where that falls as far as where we are within the county, but are there issues with utilities, water, sewer, in some of these rural residences where they wouldn't be able to establish an ADU onsite? Because that'll help us numbers-wise to have that extra unit. But can they actually **plummet**? Like, is there a sewer problem? Are there limitations out in the county that prevent them from \_\_\_.

Mr. Moore: So ADUs are a solution that Skagit County has used to help provide additional housing. And we made changes recently to actually ease the limitations on those and increase the size.

Commissioner Hutchison: Right.

Mr. Moore: The – you know, the state guidelines that I think you may be referring to are more applicable to larger cities and urban growth areas. So that said, you know, we were considering possibly using an expansion of ADUs or an ease of permitting ADUs as a way to help increase affordable housing. The difficulty is that, you know, in addition to needing to plan for specific income levels there's also a new law that says we have to plan for climate resiliency as well, which is a good goal. What we're concerned about right now preliminarily is that limiting vehicle miles travelled will likely be a part of that. So dispersing, you know, lower income or additional housing units far and wide around the county would be in contrast to that goal.

Commissioner Hutchison: My mind sees it so traditional: Like the mother-in-law suite – right? – where it is the mother and they're shopping in the same car, and that's just imaginary.

Mr. Moore: Sure. You know, I still think that's one good solution for getting more housing stock because just the – it *is* a lower price way to build. It's – I guess maybe it's somewhat similar to what Commissioner Rose had mentioned – that the property's paid for; now you're just adding a dwelling unit.

Commissioner Rose: I have one more comment about that, though, and that is one of the obstacles is the sewer capacity charges. And they're called different names but they're often applied at full rate to an accessory dwelling unit and they shouldn't be. In fact, if you have an apartment in your basement of your house or the lower level, you're not charged any additional sewer capacity. But if you build a little cottage out back, now you are. And if we think about it logically, decades ago every household had four to 12 people in it and now the average is two or three. And so adding another little house out back, or two even, doesn't put extra burden on our sewer because there's fewer people living in the main house than there used to be. And so I've had conversations with public utility people and they said there's a state mandate that requires that sewer capacity fee to be charged to every single dwelling. Whether it's a tiny little cottage or a big mansion, the price is the same. And I do know that in Seattle they have recently amended how those fees are charged, but they're significant fees and they add a lot to the cost of housing and they're non-discriminatory. They charge the same – like I said, in most jurisdictions it's the same cost whether it's a small house or a giant house. So that's another piece of the puzzle that needs to be addressed in trying to solve this housing problem.

Mr. Moore: Yes. You know, I don't disagree. That was an issue when I worked for a City planning department. Fortunately in the county, we're primarily based on septic systems for sewage treatment so –

Commissioner Rose: But the urban centers –

Mr. Moore: Urban centers potentially, yeah, but – so for at least us, the bulk of our development is on septic so it's just simply based on the number of bedrooms to help establish the load. At least we don't really have widespread fees for – you know, sewer impact fees.

Commissioner Rose: But if you're going to encourage partnering up with these Towns and stuff and try to put this housing in the urban growth areas, it *is* all sewer.

Mr. Moore: Okay. Certainly we could, you know, maybe bring that up as a way to incentivize additional housing there to see if they would be amenable to something like that.

Commissioner Rose: Yeah, I think – I mean – I mean I think it's got to be a piece of the puzzle. It's only one piece, but yes. Yeah.

Mr. Moore: Okay. Thanks again.

Commissioner Rose: Yeah. Thanks for letting me share!

Chair Raschko: Thank you. Commissioner Mitchell?

Commissioner Mitchell: Could you elaborate? You touched on something about miles driven. I didn't catch what that meant. How does that associate and what does it mean?

Mr. Moore: Vehicle miles travelled. Trying to reduce the car traffic or mileage to help reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Commissioner Mitchell: So they're talking about reducing how far people can go?

Mr. Moore: It's just one consideration in climate resiliency.

Commissioner Mitchell: Hunh.

Mr. Moore: So. Mm-hmm. It's not the primary necessarily or the *only* thing we're going to be looking at, but it's one component.

Commissioner Mitchell: We'll see how that flies, huh?

Mr. Moore: It's going to be a balancing act. I mean, all of this. Obviously we are constrained in many ways as a rural county, so, you know, while we need to consider that, not exacerbate any issue, we also need to figure out how to, you know, provide housing if we're asked to do that.

Commissioner Mitchell: Right.

Mr. Moore: So obviously, you know, looking at urban growth areas around the perimeter of incorporated areas would be one way to do it. That's likely the best way to hit all of those marks they're lining up for us.

Commissioner Mitchell: Can you imagine how that would mess with GMA? So if they pushed that hard enough then you go back to the rural village concept where all of a sudden those would be built again – and you see where I'm going? – because we are so rural. How can you do that to people without the other? It's like you said earlier. There's conflicting –

Mr. Moore: There are. We're going to have to find a balance there somewhere.

Commissioner Mitchell: Yeah.

Mr. Moore: So we're just getting into that conversation, like I said, with the Towns and Cities at the moment and in the next, oh, 18 months or so we'll hopefully find what is an acceptable solution.

Commissioner Mitchell: That'll be fascinating.

Mr. Moore: Mm-hmm.

Chair Raschko: Anybody else?

(silence)

Chair Raschko: Well, thank you very much.

Commissioner Hughes: If we're circling around to the very first subject, the structure fire...

Mr. Moore: Oh, sure.



Commissioner Hughes: One of the things I'm really supportive of is a lot of information out to the public. In the summertime, campfires and yard burns. But now it would shift to heating systems. And we do have a fire marshal. Kind of like Flood Awareness Week – you know, maybe throughout the calendar year there's different times that there should be some awareness given to the public. I read our local newspaper daily and I don't see a lot on fire awareness.

Mr. Moore: Okay. Okay.

Commissioner Hughes: So that might be a thought.

Mr. Moore: Noted.

Commissioner Hughes: Thank you.

Mr. Moore: Yeah – thanks.

Commissioner Hughes: Oh, and one more thing to add to that: The importance of it is that so many of our fire departments are run by volunteers. And so this is – when they're having to respond to these fires, they're taking time out of their workday to be there and so it is a communitywide issue, not just one house is caught on fire. It becomes a countywide issue sometimes.

Mr. Moore: Definitely. Good point.

Commissioner Hughes: Okay, thank you.

Mr. Moore: Yeah, thank *you*.

Chair Raschko: Are we done?

(silence)

Chair Raschko: Great. Well, thank you very much. I thought that was really, really interesting.

Mr. Moore: You're welcome.

Chair Raschko: We continue with Commissioners' report, so Martha?

Commissioner Rose: I don't have anything else.

Commissioner Hutchison: Thank you.

Commissioner Henley: Nope, I'm done.

Vice Chair Candler: I don't have anything.

Commissioner Hughes: I'm finished.

Chair Raschko: I'd just comment, I thought it was a really interesting conversation tonight. I appreciate everybody's input. Thank you, staff.

Vice Chair Candler: It always is – typically.

Chair Raschko: Yeah. So thank you very much. Everybody have a good evening and we'll be adjourned (gavel).