

**Skagit County Planning Commission
Work Session: 2016 Comp Plan Update –
Population/Employment Forecasts, UGAs, Monitoring
January 5, 2016**

Commissioners: **Josh Axthelm, Chair**
 Annie Lohman, Vice Chair
 Tim Raschko
 Amy Hughes
 Hollie Del Vecchio
 Kathy Mitchell
 Tammy Candler

Staff: **Dale Pernula, Planning Director**
 Kirk Johnson, Senior Planner
 Ryan Walters, Civil Deputy Prosecuting Attorney

Others: **John Coleman, City of Sedro-Woolley Planning Director**
 Bryan Harrison, City of Burlington Administrator
 Marianne Manville-Ailles, Burlington Planning Commission/Skagit
 Surveyors and Engineers
 Ellen Bynum, Friends of Skagit County

Chair Josh Axthelm: It's Tuesday, January the 5th. Welcome you all to our Planning Commission meeting. If you'll take a look at your agenda – before we get started I did want to note that Kevin Meenaghan and Keith Greenwood have both resigned from the Commission. We'll miss them. They had a lot to input and were a positive part of our Commission. And also we have Tim Raschko, if you'd like to introduce yourself.

Tim Raschko: Do a short bio? Yeah, I'll keep this abbreviated. First of all, I'm very pleased to have the opportunity to serve on this Commission. I'm a graduate of the University of Washington, a Huskie, 1972, in Forest Resource Management. I moved to the County in 1978 and that was for a job opportunity, and I worked in forest land management in British Columbia, Washington, Oregon, California, and a little in South America, for 42 years. Recently retired from Pope Resources, where I was Director of Timberland Operations. We had operations in three states and for a while in Canada, as well. And as far as other board experience goes, I was on the Public Hospital District 1 board for 15 years and I had to resign that a few years ago because of conflicts with my work. Anyway, glad to be here.

Chair Axthelm: I'm glad to have you here. Tim is with District 2. So if you take a look at the agenda, do you have any changes or comments for the agenda? Okay, seeing none, we'll move on to the first item, or Public Remarks. Do we have any? I suppose a good time to read this once in a while. So this time on the agenda is an opportunity for anyone to speak to the Planning Commission about any topic except items scheduled on the agenda for public hearing the same day or items that have had a public hearing and are still under Planning Commission deliberations. 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, up to 15 minutes total. So do we have any Public Remarks?

(silence)

Chair Axthelm: Okay. So seeing none, we'll move on to the third item on the agenda, the Officer Elections. So at this time do we have any nominations for the Chair?

Amy Hughes: I'll be bold. May I nominate you, Josh? I did not ask ahead of time.

Chair Axthelm: (unintelligible)

Hollie Del Vecchio: Do we need a second? I'm not sure what the process is for the elections.

Chair Axthelm: Are there – that should be a second right there, right? Or no. I'm sorry. Yes, it probably – a second.

Ms. Del Vecchio: All right. I will second that.

Chair Axthelm: Okay. All right. Are there any other nominations for Chair?

Kathy Mitchell: Would anybody else like to be on it?

(silence)

Chair Axthelm: Okay, so all those in favor of Josh Axthelm as Planning Commission Chair, say "aye."

Ms. Mitchell, Ms. Del Vecchio, Chair Axthelm, Ms. Hughes, Mr. Raschko, Annie Lohman and Tammy Candler: Aye.

Chair Axthelm: Okay, it's unanimous. And do we have any nominations for Planning Commission Vice Chair?

Ms. Mitchell: I'd like to nominate Annie Lohman.

Ms. Hughes: I second that.

Chair Axthelm: Annie Lohman has been nominated and seconded as Vice Chair. Do we have any other nominations?

Ms. Mitchell: Do you have a willingness to serve?

Ms. Lohman: It's okay.

Chair Axthelm: Okay, so Annie Lohman has been nominated as Vice Chair. All those in favor of Annie Lohman, say "aye."

Ms. Candler, Chair Axthelm, Ms. Hughes, Ms. Del Vecchio, Mr. Raschko, Ms. Candler and Ms. Lohman: Aye.

Chair Axthelm: Any opposed?

(silence)

Chair Axthelm: So unanimous – Annie Lohman is the Vice Chair. So, Annie, would you like to take your seat over here?

So with that taken care of, we'll move on to the next item on the agenda, the 2016 Comprehensive Plan Update: Work Session on Population and Employment Forecasts, Urban Growth Areas, and Monitoring. Dale?

Dale Pernula: I'll introduce this and go through some of the elements. First of all, it's kind of the heart or the meat of the Comprehensive Plan Update because periodically as your community grows, you've got to take a look at where you're at, how much growth of employment and population that you've got and make those allocations for the county and for each of your urban growth areas, according to the Growth Management Act.

So I'd like to begin with actually those population, employment, and urban growth area forecasts and land use monitoring. The forecasts are to 2036, a 20-year horizon. It's allocated among all the jurisdictions – the County, the Cities, the Towns – and they are reviewed and recommended by the GMA Steering Committee. It requires a formal consideration and approval by each jurisdiction and final approval by Skagit County. The County-adopted population forecast must fall within the Office of Financial Management – or OFM – range. The OFM 2036 population projections for Skagit County were – the low number was 128,123; medium of 155,452; or a high of 198,189. We selected – and that was approved by the GMA Steering Committee – the medium growth rate.

For this 20-year period, for the county total in 2015 the estimate is 119,701 for the county. For 2036, the projected growth is to 155,452, an increase of 35,371. Of those, the urban growth would be within the cities and their UGAs, from 81,000 to about 109,000 for an increase of 20,601. The rural area going from 38,515 to 45,665, or an increase of 7,150.

The county employment projections are based on the historical population and employment ratios, Employment Security Division projections, and local policy choices emphasizing greater family wage jobs and industrial growth. The current employment and projected growth currently 51,764 for 2015 and an increase of 18,853. For the urban area, current employment is 43,868, with an increase of 17,406, and for rural areas it's 7,896 with an increase of 1,447.

Now urban growth area sizing is based on that urban growth. The jurisdictions must demonstrate UGA boundaries are consistent with the population and employment allocations. There are a couple of possible UGA expansions. One would be for the City of Sedro-Woolley, which is initiated by the City of Sedro-Woolley, and the other one is the City of Burlington that is being initiated by the Board of County Commissioners specifically for farmworker housing. And this is the Raspberry Ridge area of town, both the existing and a couple of phases that are proposed for the future growth of Raspberry Ridge, and also to allow the future phases to hook to City of Burlington sewer. Other cities and towns and Bayview Ridge maintaining current UGA boundaries.

Land use monitoring will occur with a proposed amendment to the Countywide Planning Policy 1.1 to implement the annual land use monitoring by County, Cities and Towns, with SCOG assistance, the analyses to include common methodologies and ongoing tracking procedures.

The goals are to ensure analyses are consistent across the jurisdictions, and to track development annually to see how jurisdictions are accommodating allocated population and employment. And we may find some disparities between what was projected and what's occurring, and we can make adjustments to the plan at those times if they're significant.

First of all I would like to talk a little bit about Sedro-Woolley's proposal. I've asked John Coleman, who's the Planning Director for the City of Sedro-Woolley to discuss it a little bit. But to accommodate their projected growth they are proposing an expansion of the UGA, primarily to the north. So, John, if you'd like to talk about that.

John Coleman: Good evening. Thank you, everybody. I'm John Coleman, Planning Director for the City of Sedro-Woolley. As Dale pointed out – so should I go into my own little three-minute spiel here? Okay – as Dale pointed out using the projection figures, the City of Sedro-Woolley has shown – we did a – we showed that we were going to increase to 17,069 people over the next 20 years, out to 2036. That represents an increase of 4,555 residents, and our jobs allocation is predicted to be 9,179 jobs over the next 20 years. That represents an increase of 4,427 jobs. That represents a significant increase and a large part of that is because of the anticipated development at the Center for Renovation and Technology, formerly known as Northern State, which through our environmental impact statement and review process we've planned for that facility to be able to accommodate 2,855 jobs, you know, through the mitigation process that we've already defined. So that's how many jobs we expect to be able to go into that area without a whole lot of additional work beyond what's already been done. So what that leaves is 1,572 jobs need to be accommodated by the rest of our urban growth area – that's the existing city limits and anywhere outside of city limits that would be zoned industrial or commercial.

So there we are. We need to accommodate 1,572 new jobs and 4,555 residents. Slow me down if I'm speaking too fast. So to meet the jobs forecast, what we've proposed is a rezone of City-owned – not City-owned – currently in the city limits, properties of 21 acres as mixed commercial, so that'll take care of the vast majority of the anticipated job growth. And that's shown right here. It's right off Highway 20. That's shown there. And then up just north of city limits at Bassett Road a small 6.5-acre development area would be for development of something like a small minimart for residential growth in the north end of town. And so between those two – I've got a memo here that crunches all the numbers – that would accommodate the necessary jobs growth by zoning those lands. Roughly 27½ acres of mixed commercial will accommodate our jobs increase, along with the existing land supply of mixed commercial-industrial land that we have.

So now I move on to the residential portion. To accommodate the anticipated 4,555 residents, we're proposing an expansion of the urban growth limits north of the city limits along Highway 9 around – if people know the Sedro-Woolley area – around the Bottomless Lake area. We proposed to go northward for very practical purposes. The city is unable to grow to the south because there's a river and floodplains. We're unable to grow to the east because of farmlands and wetland issues. It's largely farmlands zoned Agricultural-NRL, Natural Resource Lands, so urban growth can't go that direction. And the same goes for to the west. It's lands almost entirely zoned Ag-NRL so we can't grow to our west. So that leaves northward direction for future development of the city, so that's why we're proposing to go north along Highway 9, the most practical location to accommodate transportation and to accommodate sewer. That's the main thoroughfare going north. There's not too many other roads going northward from the city limits. Sewer is available at the northern extent of the city limits so it could easily be extended northward without significant infrastructure improvements such as major pump lines or anything

like that, so we can achieve that by growth. We've got a fire station just at the north of town. It's already been ___ in anticipation of our future growth northward. And so it's the most logical, feasible, and practical direction for the city to grow. So that explains why we're proposing to go north.

So to accommodate the residential growth, we've proposed, as you can see on the map, about 158 acres of total land. 106 of that would be zoned R-5, which is our medium density zoning – roughly four units per acre in that zoning. And then the area around Bottomless Lake, which has largely been developed over. Throughout history people made properties to be shaped to access the lake, dodge the various terrain in that area. It's a little steep heading down to the lake and there's a few streams coming out of there so there's terrain issues there. So just past land development and environmental constraints has made it unlikely that the 42 acres right around there could ever be developed to urban standards such as, you know, five, ten units per acres or anything like that. So really the practicality is more like one acre. And the feedback from the property owners in that area is exactly what they were hoping to do. And we've done – we've had many meetings on this. We've had nine meetings total: two open houses, one work session, three public hearings, and three regular Planning Commission meetings. These are all at the Planning Commission level. Trying to get public feedback, we've had direct mailers. We've had, you know, information available on our website – postings. We've done an extensive amount of public outreach on this and had several meetings, and we seem – at this point we seem to have a lot of approval from the property owners. We haven't heard a lot of negative feedback. It seems to be almost a win-win situation here so we're fairly excited about this proposal.

So that's the long and short of it – some residential growth north. I will explain on the map you see a large blue area. That's a little bit confusing. That's our existing urban growth area. It says it's an area currently in the urban growth area where urban services are not feasible. That's our existing urban growth area, kind of like a rural area. It was largely developed by short plats and small subdivisions without sewer; without in some cases water, I don't believe; without street lights, sidewalks, urban standard streets. So it's really – it's higher density but it's rural development standards. So what's occurred there is now we have got a lot of subdivisions in the area. We have little pockets of smaller pieces of land that if it was available for urban services such as sewer, some people might be able to put another house here and there. But there's no sewer available, which means no further subdivisions can be allowed in the area and that's just under Growth Management you can't do urban level development at – without urban services. So that area has a little bit of development potential. And there's a memo that we've provided – and I'm not sure if it's in your original packet – that describes there's 35 acres of developable land in there so, you know, piecemeal developable – not one large piece anywhere. So what we've proposed is to take that 35 acres of developable land and expand our urban growth area by that 35 acres. Also that's on top of the need for the 4,555 residents.

And I can go into more detail on that, but the long and short of it is we have an area, an urban growth area, that can't be developed so that area can't achieve the density that's necessary to accommodate our projected urban growth. You know, we're supposed to be able to accommodate an additional 4,555 people. That would be assuming that that land in the blue area could be developed. But since it can't be further subdivided you can't get further housing there, which means under that scenario we don't see it possible for the City of Sedro-Woolley to be able to actually see 4,555 residents being accommodated in the urban growth area without expanding our urban growth area by that additional 35 acres, which is kind of a drop in the bucket as far as urban growth areas go – not trying to just sweep it away and say it's not a big deal, but it's a small percentage of what our overall city size is, 35 acres.

That's kind of it for our urban growth area expansion. We've put a lot of work into it. It's fairly simple. Our Buildable Lands Analysis shows that we needed a little bit extra land to accommodate our future growth, both for residential and commercial growth, so we're proposing a roughly 158-acre urban growth area expansion.

Chair Axthelm: Thank you.

Ms. Del Vecchio: Are we allowed to ask questions?

Mr. Coleman: Yeah. Any questions from the Commission?

Ms. Del Vecchio: I was just wondering – so when you say the blue 35 acres, is – urban service is not feasible. Does that mean it's physically not possible to extend urban services to that area, or what's the – is it just because they were not originally required?

Mr. Coleman: So – okay, so what it would take would be – yeah, it wasn't required because it was built under County standards before it was our urban growth area so there were different rules applied to the area, so they were allowed to build on septic. And, like I said, not the full complement of urban services that would be required if it were to be in the city. It would be required to develop to those standards today in the urban growth area because the County and the City have interlocal agreements that say any development out there would occur to City standards. More or less, you need to annex before you can develop in the urban growth area anyway.

But something like this wouldn't happen in the future, which is a good thing and it's part of the reason why we have the Growth Management Act, is to prevent ad hoc growth that doesn't enable long-term planning and good development down the road. So what's happened is there's these little pockets of maybe a half-acre there, an acre there, that could be developed through infill; however, because there's no sewer available, it's – they can't. Now what would it take to bring sewer out to that area? That sounds easy enough, right? Well, it would require a pump station, first of all, to get – well, that whole area would require, I think, three pump stations based on studies that the City has done in the past to try to accommodate development in that area. Pump stations are extremely expensive. It would also require somewhere in the – and I don't even want to throw a number out, but, you know, hundreds of thousands of dollars. It also would require extending the sewer lines through the street system out there, which would mean removing – tearing up all of the streets and rebuilding them and then having to rebuild them to City standards, and there's just not money available for that. Most development is developer-driven so when a new subdivision goes in the developer pays for the infrastructure improvement such as extending sewer lines. And so that's how it becomes affordable. The City can pitch some money in but the City's not going to find several millions of dollars to extend sewer to people with working systems that won't connect to the sewer because they don't want to connect because they have working septic systems. So it's a huge conundrum to be able to provide services in an area like this, and Sedro-Woolley's not alone in trying to provide services to areas that are also – that development's already occurred without sewer. It happens in other cities also, and it just – you know, things that we've done in the past make it difficult for future people.

Did that answer your question at all?

Ms. Del Vecchio: It did. I mean, I've got a list of other ones now, but – so I'm just trying to visualize this. So are there other actually just dead lots that are not ever going to be developed as a result of this? There's got to be something that – there's an ideal spot!

Mr. Coleman: If there's a vacant lot, somebody can develop it. They can build a single-family house on it – that's not a problem – on septic. But you only get one septic per existing lot and there's a policy not to subdivide lots further if you don't have sewer, and that's to prevent a proliferation of septic because, you know, septic in an urban area becomes problematic when you get failures and pollutes groundwater and a whole host of problems. Septic's really – septic's great. I'm not knocking on septic, but it's not good in an urban situation where you have a lot of septage going into the ground. It poses clean water problems.

Ms. Del Vecchio: So for the lots that just aren't being used right now, I mean, is there –

Mr. Coleman: There's only, I don't know, maybe four or five.

Ms. Del Vecchio: Okay. So that's what I'm trying to get a sense of, is – okay.

Mr. Coleman: The rest are larger lots that could be subdivided but they can't be –

Ms. Del Vecchio: Okay, but the lots – they are being used. It's not –

Mr. Coleman: Yeah. Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Ms. Del Vecchio: Okay. That does make it challenging.

Mr. Coleman: And that's all addressed in the additional memo explaining how much developable land is in that area that *can't* be developed.

Ms. Del Vecchio: Okay.

Mr. Coleman: All right.

Ms. Del Vecchio: I have more questions!

Chair Axthelm: The additional memo – we don't have a copy of that.

Mr. Coleman: No, I don't think you do yet. I have them to provide. All in all, I should actually go back a little bit and say that the information that was provided about Sedro-Woolley's expansion has been ongoing since that was first given to you so the map that you see here today is different from the map that you have in your Planning Commission memo that you received, oh, a couple months ago.

Ms. Del Vecchio: So we'll get all the updated stuff?

Mr. Coleman: Yeah, so this is the updated stuff.

Kirk Johnson: If I could interject, I think in the agenda, if you followed the link to the 2016 Update website then there was a link to Sedro-Woolley's UGA proposal that has the Hovee Buildable Lands Analysis.

Ms. Del Vecchio: And that's the updated one.

Mr. Johnson: I think so.

Mr. Coleman: There's a three-page update to that – addendum.

Ms. Del Vecchio: Oh. Okay.

Mr. Coleman: And that'll all be provided to you.

Ms. Del Vecchio: Okay, and this might be addressed in there.

Mr. Coleman: Oh, absolutely.

Ms. Del Vecchio: And if so, you can tell me that it is. But you said that a lot of the anticipated growth is in connection with what used to be Northern State – what's the new name? What are we calling it now?

Mr. Coleman: The Center for Innovation and Technology.

Ms. Del Vecchio: Yes, the Center for Innovation and Technology. So how much – are we including that in the jobs projection?

Mr. Coleman: It has been subtracted out.

Ms. Del Vecchio: Okay.

Mr. Coleman: So, yeah, we're assuming full buildout of that area of 2,855 at that area, leaving a need for an additional 1,572 in the rest of the city and/or urban growth area.

Ms. Del Vecchio: Okay. Thank you.

Chair Axthelm: Any other questions?

Ms. Lohman: I have a question. So you're not proposing taking that 200 acres in that dark blue area out of your UGA? You're going to keep it?

Mr. Coleman: We're just going to keep it there but we're proposing that we be allowed to have an additional 35 acres expansion elsewhere because we can't – development can't be accommodated there. So it's not – we don't anticipate that area being able to be developed so what that's doing is negatively contributing to our urban growth area. It's actually – you know, we have an allocation of 17,069 and that's assuming that all of the land in the urban growth area and the city limits are developed to the maximum reasonable density. There's all sorts of assumptions explained in our Buildable Lands Analysis that explain how we arrived at that decision of, you know, if it's five units per acre then we assume five units per acre. We subtract out all the critical areas and a small factor for marketing growth that, you know, lots of people just – you know, 25% of people, we make an assumption, aren't going to develop their property in the next 25 years because they *like* having a larger lot or they can't sell it for as much money or whatever. So there's – all the methodology is explained in that memo. So we're just – since that area can't accommodate growth, we need to accommodate it somehow. And we're not suggesting to kick it out – well, we did at one point suggest to kick it out of our urban growth area,

but we're not suggesting that any longer. We're just proposing to be allowed to use that 35-acre additional that can't be developed in the blue area.

Chair Axthelm: Thank you.

Mr. Pernula: Just as a bit of a follow-up, I do agree with Sedro-Woolley's contention that a lot of this area in the dark blue would be difficult to develop at this time, maybe even within the 20-year horizon, and that it's only fair to allow them some of the urban growth in some other location since those undeveloped parcels are unlikely to occur in that time period and, therefore, with their current UGA size, it couldn't meet their allocation. I agree with those arguments. At the same time, the reason why we don't want to take this out of the UGA is we believe that the Growth Management Act requires us to include within the UGA those properties that are primarily developed with urban characteristics. So that's why it remains within the UGA. At some point it would be great to be able to annex it, allow those infill parcels to develop – that's really what needs to occur – but it may take some time before it's practical. So we agree with their general approach.

Going back to Burlington, the proposal for Burlington: This is initiated by the Board of County Commissioners and this is to accommodate a proposed expansion of their urban growth area to include the Raspberry Ridge area. If you're familiar with it, it's on the east side of Burlington. It's accessed off of Gardner Road through Sanchez Lane and off of Lafayette Street. Currently in Phase I off of Gardner Road there are 51 farmworker housing units; Phase II, off of Lafayette, there are 30 units; and right now there's a proposed Phase III, which includes 14 dwelling units. In 2005 – you have a map of that? – in 2005, the Board of County Commissioners adopted a resolution allowing farmworker housing within this area even though it's zoned Ag-NRL. The Board of County Commissioners is very interested in addressing the affordable housing issue, and that's part of the reason why it's cropping up. To provide sewer to the next phase or phases would require it to be within the UGA and we think that that's the best of cleaning it up so that it can be provided with public sewer. Right now the existing 81 dwelling units are on two large septic systems. And I've asked Bryan Harrison to address the issue. He's the City Administrator for the City of Burlington.

On the board you have a copy of the map. The area in the northeast part where it says RR2, that's where Phase II is. Where it says RR1 is where Phase I is. Where it says RR3 is Raspberry Ridge III. That would be the future phase.

Bryan Harrison: Yes. As introduced, Bryan Harrison, City Administrator for the City of Burlington. And as was pointed out to you, this came as a request from the County Commissioners to you for your consideration and to the City, as well, specifically for those pieces of properties that are owned by the Housing Authority. So this is a little bit of an unusual request in that it is not triggered by an analysis and demonstration of need for growth to accommodate projected population growth. This is in direct response to an intent or a desire to extend urban services primarily to existing development. Now the result of this certainly could be some limited expanded development. The resolution that was alluded to that allowed for this development on ag land and outside of an urban growth area at this density created a cap, and now it's escaping me. I think it's 125 – roughly – units and it was stated that – 125, 126, somewhere in that range – that currently there's 81 units. So what potentially could occur in the future under that existing authority is a number of things. First and foremost there's a motivation to connect the existing facilities to the City sewer and then, as you've heard, currently what is being proposed is 14 additional units, but eventually there could be as many as 35, including

those 14, to get us to – I think the number that's been thrown out, 125, but then they also have a caretaker's unit there as well, so I think it's in the 126 range.

The City is currently undergoing its review of its comprehensive plan and urban growth area, so we have heard this request and it will go through our Planning Commission and through our City Council as well. I wanted to let you know that the City is struggling with the issue of this level of density being developed on the edge of the city. Traditionally we're all working here to make sure that we have infrastructure and planning that corresponds to proposed development and meets and mitigates for the impacts of that development. Well, this is pretty intense development outside of a city, on the fringe, not even currently in the urban growth area. A little piece of it is. And the City is struggling with the implications of extending City services. It was developed not to City infrastructure requirements. The roads aren't wide enough. There are no sidewalks. There's no parks. There's no street lights. The inner connections for emergency access aren't there to City standard. And as has been stated, there is no sewer and the stormwater provisions really are not in place.

So what the City is struggling with is that transfer of essentially liability for that future cost of infrastructure. The minute it gets in the urban growth area, that responsibility shifts from the County to the City. So I wanted to let you know we're quite positive regarding the County Commission's proposal for this to be considered. It is a very valid issue – the extension of sewer to serve this area. There definitely is a need for low income housing. But we're balancing that and engaging it with, Well, how do we accommodate that lack of infrastructure that would normally have been put in place if we had gone through a normal planning process and it had been either in the city or the city urban growth area initially? So it's a fascinating topic. The City has supported the docketing of this to make sure that we can engage this issue and have a conversation with the County about, What is the best method to extend some or all City services and what are the corresponding roles of the County and the City in trying to achieve and extend that?

So it's not the usual expansion of an urban growth area, but it has been proposed to address a valid concern of the County's and that is the initial failure of those larger septic systems and, I think, the anticipated future struggle of those larger systems in that area. And, as well, the Housing Authority has received funding from the legislature for these additional 14 units, and the funding has included payment of the connection fees and the construction fees to extend the City sewer not just to the new units but all of the existing units. We can't extend sewer to meet new growth. We *can* extend sewer to meet the failed septic system needs of *existing* development. So the City is in a position where we could connect the two units but not the newly proposed ones, but the funding is connected to the construction of the new units. So you can't fix the failed septic systems without allowing the new units to be constructed; the new units can't be constructed unless it's in the urban growth area. So we're kind of caught in that legal – I guess that legal crap that we need to address. We're certainly very supportive of the County having raised that issue. Now we've just got to engage it and see if we can come to terms of: Do we include it? What infrastructure in addition to sewer is provided? What future limitations on growth, if any? And who's responsible for paying for that?

So there we are. And I don't know what format you wanted to have, whether there was question and answer associated with that. But it's a fascinating issue and I know we have now three Planning Commission members from Burlington in attendance so I know it is a real concern to the City and city residents because – well, you can imagine it was a pretty controversial project when it was built initially and there's unresolved infrastructure issues, and it will be controversial as it goes forward. But if you have any questions?

Ms. Candler: I have a question.

Chair Axthelm: Go ahead, Tammy.

Ms. Candler: Maybe you know this off the top of your head; maybe you don't. How – where is the current end of the City sewer, if you know? How far away?

Mr. Harrington: Well, it's actually not far away. We have sewer on Gardner and – north and south on Gardner, and then going westward. So the distance to sewer is not the primary challenge. The primary challenge is funding that but the Housing Authority has apparently found a funding source for that. The capacity is there. The real challenge for this development is, What then does it lead to? We have 81 units that are currently developed and yet, as we've said, you know, sidewalks, inadequate streets, no street lights, no stormwater infrastructure, no sewer infrastructure, no playgrounds. All of that would have been required if it had been in the urban growth area or in city limits. And I know our Planning Commission and our Council members have struggled with, Well, where do we go from here? Do we allow that connection and therefore sanction that inadequate infrastructure that was put in place and those decisions that lead to that in the past? Do we allow by connecting sewer additional high density development also without that level of infrastructure, or do we not? That's the struggle. So there's sewer capacity. It's close. There's funding. It really is a matter – it's a land use planning struggle we're having.

Ms. Candler: I think I understand. On the far right of the map there, is that the Skagit River or Samish River or what?

Mr. Harrison: Yes, it is. It is the river and then Dike 12 has its levee there, and then everything east as what's identified as Housing Authority is owned by Dike 12, Dike District 12. It's open space to the river.

Ms. Candler: And how far do you – I can't really –

Mr. Harrison: Somebody help me – a few hundred feet? It's in the 100s of feet – few hundred. But there is a substantial – several hundred-foot open space there currently that will continue to be managed by the Dike District.

Unidentified voice in the audience: But not all of it is open space.

Mr. Harrison: No, no. There's a mixture of –

Same unidentified voice: There's a substantial amount that's owned by the Housing Authority that's not within this proposal.

Mr. Harrison: Correct.

Ms. Candler: So there's more Housing Authority land to the west?

Mr. Harrison: Well, I believe the whole – the whole – what's identified, there is undeveloped land there. There is future potential development on land that is owned by the Housing Authority. So there is future development potential that would exceed even the authority already been granted to the County Commissioners because it's 30-something acres. It's a good chunk

of property. So it has substantial development potential, and that for the City is as much a challenge as it is a benefit because usually, I mean, we try to get our dense development in the core of our cities where you can walk to the library and walk to schools and walk to the park and walk downtown and have transit. This is on the far edge of town and that is the struggle. But the development is there. There's 81 units there. The County Commissioners have already approved up to 120-something units, and there is a need for this type of housing in our community. So that's the struggle.

Ms. Candler: And you're talking about just on RR3 there's that number? Or other?

Mr. Harrison: No. RR1 is where there are currently 50 units. That's Raspberry Ridge I that's accessed off of Sanchez Lane. Raspberry Ridge II, or RR2 – that's not a zoning designation; that's a project – Raspberry Ridge II, I believe, is 31 –

Unidentified voice in the audience: 30.

Mr. Harrison: 30? And that's accessed off of Lafayette. Where you see RR3 is where the 14 new units are being proposed. Then where it says "Housing Authority," that's currently undeveloped in the center. Now there're some septic systems taking up some area there but there is open space, so there is future development potential – not much, under that current resolution. That resolution capped it at –

Unidentified voice in the audience: – an additional 31.

Mr. Harrison: – an additional 31 on top of the 14, I think.

Same unidentified voice: Yes.

Mr. Harrison: Yes. So you could see the 14 developed and then another 30-some. But physically if it were zoned properly and had all the infrastructure and were in an urban growth area or the city, could it have higher density? Absolutely it could. Does that make sense?

Ms. Lohman: Well, I have a question. Doesn't the – I mean, in our County Code we have stormwater rules and all of that, and wasn't this project required to follow that?

Mr. Pernula: There are some stormwater – storm sewer detention ponds in the area.

Mr. Harrison: Again, there is state law that allows waiving of a whole variety of land use regulations that was imposed at the time, and I can just stand here and tell you that the roads – the emergency access, the sidewalks – well, they don't exist – playgrounds, street lighting – none of that would meet what the City would put in place and, frankly, isn't terribly close. So there is a City concern with future development on the site and with the level of infrastructure, but we – in this process we're already engaging that discussion with the County about what infrastructure improvements should occur along with this or not, and who might or might not be financially responsible for that. So we're having those discussions, and as you might guess they're challenging.

Mr. Pernula: I would add that we're trying to put together a package to see if we can find funding to augment the existing improvements to bring it closer to the existing City of Burlington standards. That's about all I can say now because we haven't really put together the entire package. It is – they're very expensive.

Mr. Harrison: But we've engaged the issue.

Mr. Pernula: We have.

Mr. Harrison: So it's not – the County can't wave a magic wand and create money, but at least they've acknowledged that, well, there are some infrastructure needs. No promises made yet, but at least we're engaging that discussion. But what we know can't happen is the sewer cannot be extended to any new development and with the funding for connecting sewer to the existing development connected to new development, we can't extend sewer without an extension of the urban growth area. So that really is the question: Is that, in your eyes, a valuable endeavor to follow through on? And I know we'll be engaging that same discussion at our Planning Commission. So....

Chair Axthelm: Any other questions?

Mr. Harrison: Thanks.

Chair Axthelm: Okay. Dale, are you –

Mr. Pernula: Well, I think at this time this would be a good time for the Planning Commission to get engaged in a discussion, ask any questions you want of me or any of the other staff that's here. And following that, perhaps open it up to some public comment on this issue.

Chair Axthelm: Any other general comments you'd like to make?

Ms. Del Vecchio: Would it be okay to do public comments first? I would love to hear if there's –

Ms. Mitchell: Especially if the Burlington council people want to say anything.

Chair Axthelm: As far as timing or limitation of those public comments?

Ms. Del Vecchio: Can we just get the show of hands and see how many people are – would like to talk?

Chair Axthelm: Who from the public would like to talk today? Okay. All right.

Ms. Candler: I'm seeing two. Is that everybody?

Chair Axthelm: Two. That's easily – let's just start at five minutes. Does that sound good – five minutes for each of them?

Ms. Mitchell: Yep.

Ms. Del Vecchio: Sure.

Chair Axthelm: Okay. And then if you need more time after that we can address it at that point. You can go ahead and approach the microphone. And please state your name and your address or where you're from.

Marianne Manville-Ailles: Hi, I'm Marianne Manville-Ailles and I am the Chairman of the Burlington Planning Commission. I also am a land use planner for Skagit Surveyors and Engineers, and I live at 826 East Orange Avenue in Burlington.

There's a couple things I wanted to discuss. I support heartily the work that Sedro-Woolley has done for their urban growth expansion area. I think they have – that they have clearly shown that there is a need for additional residential area and that the area to the north is a good area. I just wanted to let you know a couple of things: The developments that were done around Bottomless Lake that John talked about just so happened to be developments that Skagit Surveyors did and that I was involved with, and so I wanted to let you know – just to let you know that those were developed using the County's CaRD process so that the developed lots are one acre in size. And John characterized it as being terrain issues that were out there. There are terrain issues, that's true, but there's also significant critical area issues that are associated with that, as well, so I just wanted to let you know that there are very real constraints that make that one-acre that are one zoning necessary right in that area right around Bottomless Lake. And part of that, it comes from the – from having developed those properties using that CaRD development.

Then onto the Burlington issue and I – you know, when Bryan says that we've struggled with this issue, I just want to let you know that for the better part of last summer we – the Burlington Planning Commission – went through numerous public hearings regarding the annexation of property that is – that's already within the urban growth area that you can see the Raspberry Ridge stuff from the property that was proposed for annexation. And we went through a long, very painful set of hearings regarding what the appropriate zoning should be on that property because the developers were proposing that it be for apartments. And the neighborhood could not fathom having that high of density in that area so close to the river, right at the very edge of our city. And we – the Planning Commission ended up in the end not approving a zoning that would allow high density residential in that area that is within our urban growth area, that would have been subject to all of the development regulations that the City of Burlington has in place. And yet we now are faced with this situation where because of decisions that were made outside of the City's purview we already have – we have our situation out there that the existing multifamily Raspberry Ridge with the failing septic that have to have something done with them. I don't there's anybody in this room that would say that we don't need to take care of that problem. It's a problem. It needs to be taken care of. The fact that we have been put into this box by the funding sources that we have to now allow additional *new* development in this area which is clearly inappropriate when we're saying that it's inappropriate within our urban growth area closer to town to have that density. Not only do we have this existing out here, which is inappropriate, we have to now have more.

So to say that we're struggling with this is very diplomatic on Bryan's part. It's a situation that we're really – we're struggling with it. We're struggling with it because it is so unfair to be forced onto the City of Burlington. And so I think that there needs to be a lot of discussion that happens around it. Any addition to the urban growth area needs to be extremely, extremely tightly done and extremely limited to ensure that we are not going to be allowing something that we would not have allowed our good developers to have come in and do in town to all of the urban standards and now turn right around and in the same neighborhood allow something that is significantly substandard. And so we – that's something that we have to struggle with because we have to face these same people month after month, you know, with them coming to us. And, you know, we have to – the Planning Commission and the Council. So, you know, you guys now, you've sat through controversial and difficult hearings, but it is mightily frustrating when these situations are being thrust on us by other entities of government. Thank you.

Chair Axthelm: Thank you.

Ellen Bynum: Good evening, Commissioners. Ellen Bynum – sorry – with a cold, Friends of Skagit County, 110 North First, Mount Vernon.

I first want to speak to the issue of the Sedro-Woolley expansion of the urban growth area. One of the concerns that we have continuously had in our appeals and in our reviews of City requests has been this idea that you're adding land in that may be zoned Ag-NRL. And I haven't looked at that in some times but that was one of the concerns. When the land was zoned Ag-NRL, our position was it didn't matter what you wanted to do with it: It needed to stay outside of the UGA and be continuously used for Ag-NRL. And that has to do with our position on the cumulative loss of ag land and the inability to replace those soils. So I guess I would say that we would not support taking in any property that is either the soils are appropriate for ag or zoned Ag-NRL, or it's being used as an active farm. And there's no reason that you can't remove land, even though they're proposing not to remove land – so if you feel that some of the land should be taken out and it's not necessary.

I guess the other concern I have about it is the plan for the – I'm not going to get it right – Center for Innovation is not – it's in the beginning stages. It hasn't been completed. And we don't actually know – we know what could be built there based on the infrastructure that's there now and replacement of the facilities and the housing – or not housing, but the structures that are there. But we don't really know what could possibly be done there with another look at the infrastructure, another look at the funding and the housing. So it might – it may be premature to consider – I mean, it may be expedient to put it inside the UGA right now, but there's very little certainty about what you're going to do with it.

Let me also remind you that despite the fact that you might want – not want four units per acre, that is the minimum urban density that you can allow and you want to allow that in UGAs. And regardless of how you did it in the past or what's there, you really do have to look at that again and make certain that you're getting those four units per acre because if you're not, you're not following the GMA request.

Okay, so on the Raspberry Ridge, a bit of history: The land for that development was donated by a private farmer who donated the land. It was in response to the lack of farmworker housing existing at the time and it was a crisis at the time that that was proposed and built. I know that it was done with what money was available. There was not consideration about getting enough money to make the infrastructure up to urban standards. It was a concern for Friends and also for other organizations, and they made comments on that at the time. All that said, I'm assuming that people feel it's a good thing to use the money that has been allocated for it. I am fully aware that the County could or the City could find funding to do the infrastructure upgrades. Now that's in the millions of dollars. We have found that in the past – I remember one year that the County kindly applied for a community development block grant to help assist residents on the Swinomish Reservation to put in a pump system for sewer, and that was at 1.7 million and it had to be matched. And so I know that some of that money could be made available through some of those programs. So I guess I would say – oh, and the other thing is I think it's erroneous to think that your urban growth density at the edge of the area should be less or more than in the center. Technically the whole city should be at a higher density than we've got going right now. And how you get there, if you happen to start with your density over here at Raspberry Ridge and you say, Okay, that's a model and we want the whole of Burlington to look like that.

(unintelligible comment from the audience)

Ms. Bynum: You don't. I know you don't. But I'm just saying in Oregon when you look at the lines of the urban growth areas, they're lines and they're fully developed. So it's not a *bad* thing. We don't do it. People don't want it and I understand that it does not address the community concern for the development, for how the development was done, or what it will do to the neighboring. I guess I would be urging the City to look at possibly coming back and figuring out, you know, Is there a creative way that we can do development around Raspberry Ridge in the future? And I don't know what that is. So – and I would also say you don't know what you can do – you don't know how much money you can get until you ask for it. And I would really urge both the City and the County to go back and ask for more than what you need from as many places as you need to look to get the money. Because the thing is there. It's in place. It was there – it was put there to fulfill a need. It doesn't fit all the rules, and if you're concerned about the precedence, you can write the pieces of regulation with the Housing Authority, with everybody so that, you know, it is a one-of. We don't like one-ofs, you know? Friends has filed many appeals to the Growth Management Hearings Board about one-ofs. But I'm saying it's here and it's just – it's what you have to look at it. So I guess I would urge both the County and the City to go back and look at other ways that you might ameliorate what you've got there, because there's no right answer and there's no good answer. It's messy. But, you know, that's what planning is about. It's very messy. And so is public process, right?

Chair Axthelm: Thank you, Ellen.

Ms. Bynum: So I guess that's all I have to say right now. I had one other thing that was unrelated but I'll do that later privately to you in an e-mail, and that is a change in the septic design standards made by the Public Health Department that I think is erroneous – one piece of it. Thank you.

Chair Axthelm: Okay. Thank you. Are there any other comments from the public?

Mr. Coleman: I just wanted to assure everybody that there's no ag land in the City of Sedro-Woolley's proposed – in this map and what you've seen. It's all zoned RR, I believe – Rural Reserve. And getting to the point of the Center for Innovation and Technology, that's already in the city limits. It's not in the urban growth area. It's in the city limits, and all of the environmental planning has been done and it's complete at this point. The City did a planned action environmental impact statement and studied the impacts of the 2,855 jobs and necessary infrastructure improvements that would be necessary and mitigation that would be necessary. And all of that has been studied and the mitigation has been identified. Funding sources have been recognized though not secured. And so the advanced planning for those 2,855 jobs have actually been completed and is all documented in the EIS process, and (we) passed a planned action ordinance that also specifies what is allowed under that environmental impact statement. So nothing beyond what – nothing beyond those 2,855 jobs could happen without doing additional environmental review. That's that issue. So I just wanted to make sure that everybody was on the same page on that.

One other comment about the requirement that you can't go below four units per acre in urban areas is that used to be a Growth Management Hearings Board decision that was reversed. So there is actually no requirement that you have to have at least four units per acre. There are definitely requirements that your City has to maintain a certain amount of density, and the rules are in place exactly for the situation where there are constraints that would necessitate – and we anticipate being able to show that, you know, there's very specific reasons why we're

proposing one-acre zoning – one unit per acre zoning. It's not our desired zoning, but based on the critical areas, the terrain, and the existing development, that's why we're proposing that one-acre zoning. Otherwise in general the City of Sedro-Woolley's philosophy is to accommodate higher densities of residential development. It's just – in this very specific instance it's just not possible and so we're sort of forced to have a one-acre per unit, or one unit per acre zoning in that area. And we're more than happy to – and we've already shown a lot of the reasons why that is and confident that it will pass GMA review.

Chair Axthelm: And that density technically is higher, if you consider that taking out the areas that you can't use.

Mr. Coleman: And if you were to look at it that way, if you were to subtract the critical areas such as the creeks, wetlands, the lake itself, it's very well possible that the density might be, you know, more than one unit per acre. It's sort of mental gymnastics to think of it that way, but your point – I appreciate your point that because it's so constrained, that's why you can't get four units per acre. You don't really want to put high density in areas with critical areas. So we're trying to tread lightly on the constrained area. That's the only reason that we're proposing a one unit – one unit per acre zoning, which is less than desirable but, you know, a necessity in this specific area. Thanks.

Ms. Candler: I have a question for the speaker.

Chair Axthelm: Tammy, go ahead.

Ms. Candler: You may have addressed this a little bit earlier and it may be in the memo – I haven't seen it – but you know there's very high density east of town up by the golf course. There's very high density west of town, kind of north of Cook Road area.

Mr. Coleman: Oh, yes. Yes.

Ms. Candler: So you may have mentioned – you said there's some reason we can't go east or northeast of that because – like why would you choose – I'm assuming septic is in that area and I don't know how far the septic – or sewer goes north. But is there some reason why northeast of town is not appropriate?

Mr. Coleman: It's ag land.

Ms. Candler: That's ag land and this is Rural Reserve.

Mr. Coleman: That's Ag-NRL land so we can't expand in that direction.

Ms. Candler: And what about –

Mr. Coleman: And the same with eastward.

Ms. Candler: Same on Fruitdale Road?

Mr. Coleman: Yep, same east of Fruitdale Road.

Ms. Candler: Okay. Thank you.

Ms. Del Vecchio: Just to add on to that – sorry – and I apologize. I'm not terribly familiar with the site. But the Northern State property itself, is there any potential there?

Mr. Coleman: That's zoned public, owned by the state so, you know, all the environmental planning that we did was for uses appropriate – there's some plans for, you know, hotel use there associated with that research and development center.

Ms. Del Vecchio: There's no discussions right now of incorporating any housing into that?

Mr. Coleman: Not housing developments of any sort. You know, a few units associated with the research and development facility, but not a standalone residential. I don't believe that's even something that the state would approve to be used on their land. Because that land's still owned by the state, leased by the Port.

Ms. Del Vecchio: Okay. Yeah, I wasn't sure if the whole property was the same anyways. I don't know enough about the property. So thank you.

Mr. Coleman: Okay.

Ms. Bynum: I was also going to point out that – sorry, Ellen Bynum. I was also going to point out that, you know, the Raspberry Ridge is a public housing project. It is somewhat different to private development. It's a public-private partnership and with that regard there are instances where Cities have made different arrangements and different zoning rules for public benefit projects. So, you know, you should keep that in mind when you make your decisions. Thanks.

Chair Axthelm: Thank you. Just from my standpoint, one of the concerns I have when we expand urban growth areas is that density – is making sure that we have enough density that it doesn't turn into sprawl. You know, it seems like a lot of these communities are resistant to building up more where they should be building up more because – but yet people in the community don't want to have a higher density development beside them. So it's kind of a catch-22 because if you don't develop up you're going to move that out and it's going to be more sprawl. So somehow there's got to be some arrangement to allow for that and get people to accept it a lot more. Dale?

Mr. Pernula: You know, it's kind of hard to separate these specific projects from what we're talking about here, but what we're really talking about here is population and employment growth and the necessary UGA expansions to accommodate that growth. So, you know, it's kind of a high level look at these things rather than something up close.

In the case of Burlington, if this is added to the Burlington UGA, remember they take over responsibility – their codes take over rather than ours.

Chair Axthelm: Is there a way with urban growth area expansions that we can request the Cities to modify their density within their cities to increase that density and show that they're trying to use that land a little more effectively?

Mr. Johnson: There are UGA criteria in code and they were negotiated with the Cities, and the down south Cities in the core Puget Sound region are required to abide by certain buildable lands requirements and those include looking at reasonable measures other than expansion, so for infill and redevelopment and densification. We're not – Skagit County isn't subject to those same rules and so what we have in our UGA expansion criteria is that the Cities must consider

those but the County doesn't have the ability to – you know – to force. Oh, no, you've got to go to six units per acre or eight units per acre rather than four. And as you can hear from some of the comments earlier, Cities really don't like it when the County tries to tell them what to do within their city limits or even urban growth boundary limits. So it's more of a discussion and negotiation than a mandate situation.

Ms. Del Vecchio: If we're not expanding the urban growth area, though, we kind of are mandating. Okay. Okay, I'll just leave it.

Mr. Johnson: Yeah, it all comes down to – I mean, the County has been pretty strict over the years in telling Cities – I mean, 10, 15 years ago we got proposals – essentially a sheet of paper – saying, We'd like to expand the urban growth boundary because it's justified. And that resulted in some Hearings Board cases and the County was on the hook even though it was the City saying that they wanted it, and so I think in the mid-2000s the County said we're not doing that anymore. If you want the expansion you've got to document why. And that's why the Sedro-Woolley UGA proposal has taken three or four years to get to the point of being docketed because the County didn't feel like they had done the analysis to demonstrate the need. Now we feel like they have done that analysis and so that's why it's coming before the County and you at this point in time. So, I mean, if a City has a true need to grow and to expand its urban growth area and they have some deference regarded them under the Growth Management Act to say, We want to be a city that's, you know, between four and six units per acre rather than 12 and 15, I'm not sure the County can simply continue to say, Well, no, we're not going to allow you to expand. But then there are other places like into Ag-NRL or into the floodplain where there are valid reasons. So it's kind of a give and take.

Chair Axthelm: Now the forecast that you showed us was based on the 80/20. Is that correct? So like in a situation like Sedro-Woolley where you pull something into the urban growth area or into the city, that affects that number. So if you take an area that used to be a subdivision out in the county and then becomes part of the city, all of a sudden now the County has a low number for their – for that percentage.

Mr. Pernula: I think – partly I think the added units would account for some of their allocation, but the existing units wouldn't. Those are existing dwellings that are already – are inhabitants that are already counted in our existing population. That's just shifting it from a rural area to an urban growth area. That's all that's doing. But the added units, you're right. It's not a lot on a scale of how much growth we're talking about. It's pretty small.

Chair Axthelm: The concern I would have is if when let's say that becomes part of the city and that it's taken out of the county and the county's number goes way down, now it's pushing for more growth into the county, and I just – although it's nice to have some growth in the county and have some areas that are set up for it, it's – is that how we want the growth to go? Amy?

Ms. Hughes: When was the proposal of the Burlington expansion first brought up?

Mr. Pernula: I don't recall exactly when but several months ago – I don't recall when – we were approached by the Housing Authority as well as the Office of Rural and Farmworker Housing of the state talking about adding these 14 units. And immediately we said, you know, we sure would like to have not only this but the existing dwelling units in Raspberry Ridge on public sewer. And so it just kind of expanded from there. Ryan, do you recall when this all began?

Ryan Walters: I do not.

Ms. Hughes: Post-summer?

Mr. Pernula: Oh, I think it was before.

Mr. Walters: No, before that.

Mr. Pernula: It was before that.

Ms. Hughes: Before summer?

Mr. Pernula: Yes.

Ms. Hughes: Okay.

Mr. Walters: We've been working on this for quite some time really now. As Dale mentioned, the first question is: How do you get the existing units on sewer? Because we do have a letter from the State Department of Health which permitted their septic system, indicating that they at some point in the past had a failing septic system. They do not currently have a failing septic system but the State Department of Health expects it will fail again because of the high water table in that area, what gets flushed down the septic system, and just constraints on how it can operate. So we recently received another letter from the State Department of Health confirming that yes, they recommend that that – that those two existing developments get connected to Burlington sewer.

Ms. Hughes: Okay.

Mr. Walters: And to make it very clear, Burlington could allow that connection because we have that letter, but there's nobody to pay for it except through this state legislative appropriation of about \$650,000 that would get money to the Housing Authority to pay for the connection for Raspberry Ridge I and II as part of the connection of Raspberry Ridge III. It's new capital construction money for new housing so it's not money that's available just for connection of existing projects.

Ms. Candler: And does it require that this be in the UGA – that money?

Mr. Walters: No. The reason the UGA question comes up is ordinarily you cannot extend sewer outside of a UGA. You're limited to the UGA area to provide sewer. That's the general rule. There's an exception to that rule and that's for a public health emergency, which we ostensibly have for Raspberry Ridge I and II. That's why the letter from the State Department of Health is important. But you don't have that for Raspberry Ridge III because Raspberry Ridge III – and they don't like to call it that, but it's convenient – Raspberry Ridge III doesn't exist, so there's no public health problem there. So you couldn't connect Raspberry Ridge III without it being in the UGA, and you can't spend the money without building a Raspberry Ridge III.

Chair Axthelm: Any other comments or discussion?

Ms. Candler: I have a question.

Chair Axthelm: Yeah?

Ms. Candler: Raspberry Ridge III on the map is closer to more development than II. Is there some reason why II came – got developed before III?

Mr. Walters: The Housing Authority might be able to answer that question.

Chair Axthelm: Wasn't the land given, or –

Mr. Walters: I'm not aware that any land was *given*.

Mr. Pernula: They bought this whole area.

Ms. Manville-Ailles: Marianne Manville-Ailles. If you look at the map, you will see that the RRI, which is the Raspberry Ridge I, that is accessed off of Sanchez Lane, and Sanchez Lane – you see where the – in the light blue where there's the little bump up? Sanchez Lane starts there and comes in. That's where the access to the Raspberry Ridge I is. The access to Raspberry Ridge II is off of Lafayette, which is up north of where Raspberry Ridge II is. And I believe the reason that they were developed the way that they are is because that's where that – that's where the access is and there was already an access that came down off of Lafayette and I think that was what drove how that development happened. It was based on existing access infrastructure.

Ms. Candler: That makes sense.

Chair Axthelm: So homes – back to the general discussion – is there anything generally, as far as the County not necessarily specific to these two projects, but for population and employment and monitoring the UGAs?

What about Mount Vernon and Anacortes?

Mr. Pernula: Mount Vernon and the City of Anacortes, neither one indicated that they needed to expand their UGAs, that they could accommodate their forecast population within their existing UGAs.

Chair Axthelm: I guess that was the big ones but there's other ones there, too, so same situation with the rest of them?

Mr. Pernula: Yes.

Ms. Del Vecchio: I looked at these numbers a little while back, but the 2036 projections that we're looking at are pretty close to what we were dealing with ten years ago for the 2025, right? Is that –

Mr. Johnson: Yeah. The state's medium growth projections before the recession were quite a bit more aggressive than they are now. So, yeah, the 2025 forecast, I think it was halfway between the medium and the low – was like 149 – and now the 2036 forecast under the medium is 155. So even though 35,000 sounds like a lot of growth to accommodate in a 20-year period, it's really not very much more than what we were looking at in 2005 for 2025, if that makes sense. Prior to the recession, the elected officials felt like, Wow, that OFM medium's too aggressive. We don't want to grow like that. We're going to aim halfway between the medium and low. And they looked at the current medium and said that that seems reasonable and doable. But it is a big change since pre-recession and post-recession.

Ms. Del Vecchio: Do we know where some of the other Cities fall as far as how much growth they can accommodate? I know they're not – it's nothing that really ties in here but just more out of curiosity, are they good till 2050?

Mr. Johnson: Well, Mount Vernon has said it can accommodate most of its 20-year growth within its city limits –

Ms. Del Vecchio: Okay.

Mr. Johnson: – and doesn't even need its urban growth area.

Ms. Del Vecchio: Okay.

Mr. Johnson: Anacortes, I think, for the first time that I've worked for the County (17 years) is talking about accepting additional population growth, which is nice to see, and they're doing a good look at how that can be accommodated within the existing city limits and urban growth area, which I think are pretty much the same thing. And then I – I mean, Marianne is the planner for Concrete. She could probably speak to that better than I could.

Ms. Manville-Ailles: All I can tell you is Concrete has a lower population! Marianne Manville-Ailles. I'll switch my hats now and put on my Concrete Town Planner hat. Concrete actually has a lower population for 2036 than we did for 2025 – so by 157 people fewer than we did for the last planning go-around. We also – Concrete has a real interesting situation in that we have a quite large urban growth area but our urban growth area is large for a different – entirely different reason than for most areas. In the Town of Concrete itself, there is virtually no industrially-zoned property within the city that's – you know, our industrial property is the dam and Puget Sound Energy. Literally there's one small parcel that is – that could be developed for industrial. So when the – when Concrete first did their planning their urban growth area was sized to accommodate the additional industrial area that would be necessary for the town. And because of that, the urban growth area for Concrete is not going to grow for a very, very long time. There's plenty of space in it to accommodate the growth far into the future unless we are successful in getting something really awesome up there. If you haven't been to Concrete for a while, you really should come check it out. There's an awesome vibe in Concrete and there are really cool things happening up there. So if you haven't been there for a while, I really encourage everybody to go and check it out.

Ms. Candler: And the Eagle Festival this week.

Ms. Manville-Ailles: Yep, the Eagle Festival.

Ms. Del Vecchio: And under these forecasts, are there any Cities that are absorbing a higher share than they usually typically would? Or have there been discussions along those lines?

Mr. Johnson: Well, again, for the longest time Anacortes said, We're going to grow to 18,000-some hundred and we're not going to grow anymore, and they're no longer saying that. So I think the – I mean, you could kind of look at the forecast population growth percent of this. They're looking at 16%, Mount Vernon at 34.8. I mean, you can kind of get a sense. Let's see, is that – I think that's over their current population rather than a percentage. Or, no, maybe that is the – I'm sorry. That's the percentage of the whole maybe. Yeah. Yeah, actually I was getting a

little confused. But the one that sticks out in my mind is Anacortes that in the past has said, We're not going to grow, and now they're looking at taking almost 6,000 more people.

Ms. Del Vecchio: Okay.

Mr. Johnson: For a while there was a question whether Burlington could accommodate the 3,800 additional residents because they're really in mainly an infill situation, but I guess they have figured out how they can do that.

Ms. Del Vecchio: So I guess where I'm headed with this, is there a – if some Cities are absorbing more of their share, is Sedro-Woolley – is there the possibility that they'll be – that they would be absorbing less, or could be required to absorb less? Okay.

Mr. Johnson: One big switch is that the last go-around Bayview Ridge was planned to take, I think, an additional, like, 3,800 and the County changed course on that and said, We don't want any urban residential at Bayview Ridge, so that 3,800 had to go somewhere else. And I think maybe some of it went to Sedro-Woolley and maybe some to Anacortes and maybe some to Burlington. I mean, it was actually a better process this time around than it was in 2005 with each of the jurisdictions kind of saying, This is our need. Can – our giving up – I mean, the County's thinking, Could our giving up some residential allocation help, like, the City of Sedro-Woolley that was looking for expansion? So it actually worked out pretty collaboratively.

Chair Axthelm: Perhaps I misspoke on the density, because it looks like with this is that the densities are going to the Cities more. The Cities are opening up to it. So I misjudged that. Or like Sedro-Woolley where they've got the – or the growth that's happening there is not necessarily residential. It's commercial in nature – the urban growth area. Anything else?

(silence)

Chair Axthelm: We're good? Okay. With that, we'll move on to the Deliberations Process, or discussing the process of deliberations for future meetings. Is that you, Ryan?

Mr. Walters: I think that's me. So this agenda item is about doing some planning ahead for what you're going to be encountering in the next several months. You have two major work items and only two major work items through the first half of the year. That's the Comprehensive Plan and the Shoreline Master Plan. The Planning Commission has had many meetings already on the Shoreline Master Plan; on the other hand, the composition of the Planning Commission keeps changing so Planning Commissioners as individuals – well, maybe Josh and Annie have seen it before. So the Planning Commission has gone through a lot of the Shoreline Plan, provided feedback to staff. There're a couple of sections that we haven't yet gotten the second round of feedback on, and those will be coming forward in the next couple of meetings. And then the hope is to button it up into a complete draft – something that has all the components – and put it out for public comment. You'll get public comment. There will be 60 days of public comment on the Shoreline Plan. It's a complete rewrite of the 1976 original Shoreline Plan so it's a major effort. The Comp Plan maybe a little bit less of a significant rewrite because we're leaving it basically the way it is. The Comp Plan will probably have a shorter comment period. But the Shoreline Plan will also have at least one public hearing, probably in the middle of that 60-day comment period. And then you will need to deliberate on what it is you want your recommendation to be, and based on how some of the previous deliberation processes have gone, we anticipate you needing to be very focused and sequential in your process of deliberations.

So what we wanted to do was talk about how previous deliberations processes have gone and explore what a process might be for your deliberations on these two major items during the first half of this year. Maybe the first question there is: How would you like to do the recorded motion? And my first thought is that you would probably not do it the way we have done it in the past, which is a whole lot of live editing here in the room. Maybe there's some of that still, but it's quite likely that staff will need to draft many, many findings for the Comp Plan and the Shoreline Plan recorded motions and that will probably need to be done after or partway through your deliberations and then brought back to you, because if the recorded motion is to be lengthy, it just probably mechanically won't work to draft it in committee here in the room.

We are talking about scheduling eight or nine Planning Commission meetings one week after another for deliberations on those two items. That doesn't mean you have to take all those meetings, but it means that all of those would be available to you. It also means that you would really not be able to go beyond nine meetings of deliberations. And we're not talking including the public hearings. Those would be separate meetings. But you wouldn't be able to go beyond that because then we would not meet the deadline, the end of June deadline. Also we anticipate that being plenty. But it depends on how your deliberations go. If you decide to fill all of them, you can do that. If you think you can get each item done in three meetings then you can shave three meetings off that list.

But we wanted to propose some things, discuss some things in terms of process so that you have some structure to your deliberations so that you can make the most efficient use of that time as you go forward. So I guess, first of all, does anybody have any ideas or initial comments on how you want to structure that?

Ms. Lohman: Mr. Chair?

Chair Axthelm: Go ahead, Annie.

Ms. Lohman: I really liked when we were working on it where Betsy had given us a syllabus, if you will, where we're going to talk about these chapters this meeting, these chapters that meeting. If we could do it something like that, because it is – while it's all linked together, some chapters I can see us breezing through rather quickly and others have a lot more meat in them. And if we could maybe follow her earlier solicit we used when we did our work sessions?

Mr. Walters: So for both of these projects they will have discrete components. The Shoreline Plan has maybe a lot more components than the Comp Plan actually. But definitely each one could be broken into a list of components.

Ms. Lohman: But if we had it in advance, and well in advance like she did where you had the – your course basically outlined in advance, because it's quite a bit of reading for an awful lot of the new Commissioners and newer Commissioners who haven't been in the room on all those sessions.

Mr. Walters: Oh, yeah. So the material itself you will have 60 or 45 days in advance of when you will need to deliberate on it.

Mr. Pernula: Let me interject something just to answer – I think I can help answer your question. We're going through our third time totally through the Shoreline Master Program. We're almost done. We've got a little bit more, maybe one or two more meetings, and we'll be

through the whole thing. I don't think that we're going to be going through the entire thing all over again or we will be holding the hearing in six months from now instead of one or two months from now. So the idea is we'll get it out – we will do as you suggest for the remaining portions of the Shoreline Master Program now, with a syllabus of what is going to be covered on those meeting or meetings. And then we'll bring the whole package back to you for an early release and then a public hearing on it all.

Ms. Del Vecchio: So we will be provided with all of the information but we'll also be told what we really need to be focusing on 45 days in advance. Is that – I know we're going to get a whole packet of information well in advance.

Mr. Walters: Well, for each of these projects they will be released onto the website, legal noticed, public hearing/public comment period scheduled – the whole document will go out. The whole document is your reading list.

Ms. Del Vecchio: Right. So as we're going through that – I mean, if we're talking about how to get more efficient –

Ms. Lohman: Right.

Ms. Del Vecchio: – about this – I'm not saying I'm not going to read the whole thing but if we know what we really need to be focusing on for the purposes of deliberations –

Ms. Lohman: That's what I'm referring to.

Ms. Del Vecchio: – that would be helpful.

Ms. Lohman: If we know that we're going to cover 1 through 5 or 7 through 8 or whatever it is that night on that deliberation, then you don't have to worry about – you know, you could be prepared.

Mr. Walters: And it's easy to componentize both of those.

Chair Axthelm: Well, and the same thing with the public is the comments will be restricted to that certain – that certain area instead of having to go through a whole bunch of comments that don't apply to what we're talking about.

Mr. Walters: So we could try to organize all the comments in sequence.

Chair Axthelm: Well, and if we're addressing specific sections that's what the comments apply to.

Mr. Walters: Yes. Yeah.

Ms. Candler: I have a question. Are we going to be getting in advance a hard copy or electronic copies?

Mr. Walters: Probably hard – these are significant documents. You probably will want the hard copy. If you don't, we can save the paper but I think everybody assumed we would be producing the hard.

Ms. Lohman: I think we'd all have to have the paper copy because that's a little much to ask us to print.

Ms. Candler: I think so.

Chair Axthelm: Well, and some of the sections may be pretty close to what we had before but some of them could be changed quite a bit.

Mr. Walters: We're not going to try to figure that out. We'll just give you the –

Chair Axthelm: Yeah, I know. I'm just saying that some of them, even though we've seen it before, have changed or we didn't have near the information before. So there were some sections that we didn't really have developed.

Mr. Walters: Yeah.

Chair Axthelm: I think it's aquaculture –

Mr. Walters: And for the Shoreline Plan you will just have the new document because it is completely different from the 1976 document. With the Comp Plan, you will have a track changes version and you'll be able to see – with maybe the exception of the Transportation Element because there used to be a whole different transportation plan and now it's just in the Comp Plan. So you'll – I think the Comp Plan, frankly, will be quite a bit easier than the Shoreline Plan because there just isn't as much going on in terms of changes. And the Shoreline Plan is just quite a bit more – it's quite a bit more complicated in terms of its regulatory effect, and it's not just policies. It's also those development regulations so, yeah, the Shoreline Plan will be – which is why you've seen it three times – because it's such a greater effort.

Chair Axthelm: I have to poke fun at it, because it said "Shoreline Update" before and a lot of people back when we first started it says it's not an update, this is a total rewrite. And tonight you've referred to it as a total rewrite!

Mr. Walters: Yeah. Yeah. I mean, I would characterize it as both because it is –

Chair Axthelm: Yeah. No, I understand. I'm just having fun.

Ms. Hughes: I have a question. As far as making it – the deliberations – a little bit more straightforward for us, is it possible to have a work session after public comment so we could – since so many of us are new – we could kind of go back to a work session format before we worry about writing down on a piece of paper, just to get ourselves acclimated to, Now where do we stand now that the public has made their voice?

Mr. Walters: Especially with the Shoreline Plan, I think that there would be time for that because we're talking about a 60-day comment period with a public hearing in the *middle*. You couldn't begin your deliberations, but in that latter 30 days we could have work sessions where we go through the whole thing, make sure that you're familiar with the organization of the document – the flow – answer questions about why is this here/what does this mean – but clearly structure that as something other than deliberations because the public comment period wouldn't have ended yet. And then once the public comment period ends then you could move into deliberations. But, yeah, I think there's going to be space in the schedule for that to happen,

because you won't really have anything to do otherwise while you're waiting for comments to come in.

Ms. Lohman: Can we maybe say we want to do that now and then it's scheduled so then everybody knows that's how we're going to do it?

Ms. Hughes: It just would be easier for me to know kind of what all the thoughts are before we try to do that – put our words down. It seems to be what slows us down on the day we actually want to do a resolution. Is that the word I'm looking for?

Mr. Walters: Well, and you could maybe in that work session start to flesh out some of the issues that you want to discuss in more detail. Maybe just make a list of those for later discussion, rather than having the discussion then, identify the issues upfront, make that list, get all your questions answered, proceed through the rest of the document, and get the complete list on the table. So then you have – then you're aware of all the things you're going to want to talk about so you don't spend hours and hours on the first five items when you then realize you've got another 25 to talk about. Does that make sense?

(sounds of assent from the Commissioners)

Mr. Walters: Sort of an issue-spotting at the outset?

Chair Axthelm: I've seen it before where we come up with the – where we've had – in deliberations we've come up with a statement or we've just gone straight into a discussion before we've even voted on anything. So it seems to me that the discussion works real well but we have to keep that structured a little bit more so that we keep that time down. So that certain time allotment to say, okay, we have this much time to discuss it, and then once we go into deliberations we were actually setting that Finding of Fact and Reasons for Actions.

Mr. Walters: And when you hit deliberations, I think what I would recommend you do is you take your list of issues and determine maybe what order you're going to take those issues in and then how much time you're going to devote to each one and then enforce that time limit. Or maybe a group, you know, gets two hours and the next group gets two hours or whatever it is. But you spend some time coming up with the structure of your deliberations before you go into actually having that discussion. So postpone the substantive discussion until you've organized how it is you want to go through it, and then enforce your time limits. So if you get to the – if you decide one issue is really important and it gets an hour, one issue is really not and it only gets half-an-hour – when you get to the end of that hour, you make some call as to what it is you're going to do. And maybe it's cut off discussion, move on to the next one, come back later. Maybe after – because you can – any group can get into a situation where you're just discussing it without really making progress, so you hit the time limit and you move on. You come back or you just call for a vote at that point. Because eventually you have to make a decision on each of these issues – you know, whether you want to recommend to go in a different direction or whatever it is you want to say about each of the issues that you identify. So maybe you hit the time limit and you call for a vote and you're done, and you move on to the next one.

Chair Axthelm: Another thought is if you take, like, public comment, perhaps when you put the advertisement out that for public comment that there's some formats possible that people could have. You know, help us come up with the Finding of Fact, or help us come up with the Reasons for Actions or the statements in there, or what changes they would like. Instead of

saying we have a problem with this, if we know how they want us to edit it or have a suggestion for it – a solution – then it's a lot easier for us to come up with those solutions.

Mr. Walters: Yes, and I think it's definitely a good idea to do what you're suggesting there to provide some structure. On the other hand, not all commenters are as adept at doing that, or may or may not understand the code or the policies or the structure of how those interact. So I think it's a good idea to do that. I just don't think it's going to yield a whole bunch of different types of comments than you usually get. Because the comments you usually get, you know, identify a problem that somebody doesn't like or something that somebody does like and you hear it's bad or good. And that is probably still what you're going to get but I don't see any reason not to do as you suggest and specifically ask. But again we do have a lot of problem making sure that it just gets sent to the right e-mail address, because a lot of people are touching these documents for the first time, don't participate in these issues, they're not experts at commenting.

Ms. Del Vecchio: My suggestion might kind of fly in the face of that, but it seemed like with the CDI Program one of the struggles we had was going through and drafting all the Findings of Fact and Reasons for Action, and then acting and having the action disagree with the Findings of Fact and the Reasons for Action. And so I'm wondering if we could make a policy of actually voting before we go through all of the – because there's a lot of wordsmithing that goes into creating those Findings of Fact and Reasons for Action, which –

Ms. Lohman: It feels backwards.

Ms. Del Vecchio: Yeah.

Mr. Walters: I definitely agree with that. I think you should come up with your recommendation first and then I think what will have to happen is staff will go back and draft Findings of Fact and Reasons for Action. So in the past that has been problematic because one Planning Commissioner might talk a lot and the rest might not speak very much and then you don't know – if you're lifting stuff from the meeting, you don't know does that reflect the will of the entire Planning Commission or just that one Planning Commissioner, regardless of how the vote went. But especially if we're doing this over four meetings there's probably time to have the Planning Commission hit several of those issues in the first meeting, make recommendations on those issues. We draft up Findings and Reasons for Action. You can see those at the next meeting. At the next meeting, you're not editing them. You're just going on to the next set of issues, but you can look through those, see if there's anything particularly objectionable or different that you want to get into. Otherwise you can leave them, leave them be, and then get all the way through all the issues and then review at the last your final document.

Chair Axthelm: I think some of the hesitation is that we don't have the opportunity to discuss it before we're making the decision on it. So sometimes there's understanding, so allowing us to have that discussion beforehand – or we were talking about having that discussion beforehand, then making that motion, and then handling the Finding of Fact. I think that's what's kind of gotten mixed up, is that people feel like if we say that, we aren't able to discuss it. So getting us – having an opportunity to discuss it is important.

Mr. Walters: So I don't quite follow that. What –

Chair Axthelm: That if we make the main motion – so like if we make that motion and we don't have the opportunity to discuss it beforehand. Because we were talking about – a few minutes

ago we were talking about having a discussion period. So after the public hearing we want to have an opportunity to discuss it before we come up with the main motion so we have an understanding, then come up with that motion.

Ms. Lohman: Mm-hmm.

Mr. Walters: Yes. But I think what we've been talking about is identifying a list of issues and then you're just talking about the issue –

Chair Axthelm: Yeah.

Mr. Walters: – and then you make some motion after that discussion about the issue as to what recommendation you want to make related to that issue. So maybe you decide – maybe the motion at the end of the discussion is to not make any kind of recommendation there because you don't feel like there needs to be any substantive change on that particular issue, and you can just move on to the next issue. But maybe you want to make a recommendation to the Board that they change the proposal on that issue. So that's your motion. In either case, you have that discussion first. So I think that's consistent with what you were saying.

The other thing we thought about in terms of soliciting public comment – because we've seen this in other jurisdictions – is you could have – if you anticipate having multiple days of public hearing, you could split the public hearings into particular issues. But we pretty quickly thought that was probably a bad idea because then people have to come to two days of public hearings if they want to talk about issues that are on different lists. So we thought that that doesn't really – and you can't really anticipate how many people are going to come to a public hearing. So we are thinking that there'd be one public hearing for each of these on one day, with reservation of an additional day if there's – if it's necessary.

Chair Axthelm: Yeah, I think when you have the public hearing that after the public hearing some people understand things a little differently and want to make an additional comment, and having that time period is nice.

Mr. Walters: But typically in our process for the last couple of years, that opportunity has been provided through the written comment because the written comment period always ends *after* the public hearing.

Chair Axthelm: Yeah, that's true.

Ms. Lohman: So when do you anticipate having the review copy out?

Mr. Walters: Of?

Ms. Lohman: The Shoreline – sorry.

Mr. Walters: The Shoreline – like the complete plan? I don't –

Ms. Lohman: Or could it trickle out a bit?

Mr. Walters: Well, we've trickled a lot of it in the last couple years.

Ms. Lohman: Right.

Mr. Walters: We would like to stop trickling – just get it complete so that this process can come to its merciful end.

Ms. Lohman: Because I thought in an earlier meeting you said April and May, and typically that's –

Mr. Pernula: March and April.

Ms. Lohman: Oh.

Mr. Pernula: I think there'll be a trickle coming out next week for your meeting in two weeks. That could be all or a portion of what's left, and then not long after that the whole document will come out. I'm not sure how long that will take – a few more weeks?

Mr. Walters: It can't really take longer than that.

Mr. Pernula: Yep.

Ms. Lohman: So March and April, you think, we'll have it?

Mr. Pernula: You should have the whole document probably by the end of the month.

Mr. Walters: Yeah. I'm having trouble remembering what it is we were thinking. I think we were thinking that the Comp Plan would be ready for release March 1. It may or may not actually happen, but that's the expectation. And that the Shoreline Plan would – I can't remember if it was to be – we had played with the dates, tried to figure out where it could fit in. The thinking here is that the Shoreline Plan is an element of the Comprehensive Plan and they really both need to be done by the end of June. The Shoreline Plan cannot be completed by the end of June because it has to go off to Ecology for approval, unlike the rest of the Comp Plan. But at least we'd like to be able to say to the state that we did *our* part and now we're waiting on the state agencies to review it.

Chair Axthelm: Kathy?

Ms. Mitchell: I've got a request. I don't know if it's routine or not, but in the past when an agenda's come out for a Planning Commission meeting there used to be some links on there so the public knew what documents we were going to be looking at specifically or what portions of them, and lately we've not been doing that so much. I noticed that the ones that we get have links for what we're going to go after but what the public sees is just that there's a meeting and they can go to the page. And so I just want to draw attention to that just to make sure that they get the same detail.

Mr. Walters: The same agenda should be on the Planning Commission page as what you got.

Ms. Mitchell: It is for the general announcement, but if we're looking at specific documents that's not always there.

Mr. Walters: Maybe you could send Linda an example of that? Because it's supposed to all be the same. Although if you print it in a certain way the links don't show up, so I don't know what's going on.

Ms. Mitchell: Maybe it's the curse of our system all the time. I don't know. I'll come up with some examples and talk to Linda then.

Mr. Walters: Yeah.

Chair Axthelm: Perhaps at the latest with getting the Shoreline Plan all at once is that we could clean up that page and just kind of start fresh so that any new comments don't get mixed in with the old ones from years ago.

Mr. Walters: The Shoreline Update page?

Ms. Lohman: Yeah.

Chair Axthelm: It could be Shoreline Update page or the Comp.

Mr. Walters: Yeah, something will happen to move that down. I don't think we want to lose them off the page.

Chair Axthelm: No, just put them in a separate paragraph so that they're able to – we can separate those items.

Ms. Lohman: Okay, you did not say what the release date for the Shoreline Plan would be then.

Mr. Walters: I don't know. Talk amongst yourselves for a moment.

Ms. Del Vecchio: Can we talk about trying to keep meetings within a three-hour or less timeframe? Because the ten o'clock meetings are not going to last!

Chair Axthelm: I think nine. People's patience kind of runs thin after nine.

Ms. Lohman: And if we could have the meetings down below in a work session if we're not having a hearing? I think we should work down there. Then we have more sprawl room and –

Ms. Mitchell: We can see each other.

Ms. Lohman: We can see each other. You can use your notes. You can use your computer.

Chair Axthelm: In the work session now as far as deliberations –

Ms. Lohman: We can deliberate down there.

Chair Axthelm: Ryan, there's a reason that we did deliberations up here.

Mr. Walters: For deliberations if you need to see the screens you can't really see text with the bigger monitors. I've written down here February 1 for release of the Shoreline Plan, but that's not actually going to happen.

Chair Axthelm: The other thing as far as, like, with these meetings, if you have a motion to make, make the motion, because sometimes I'll wait for that motion to happen because I don't

want to make the motion. And if you make the motion then I have to address it, but if you don't then I just have to wait _____.

Ms. Del Vecchio: Are you referring to the motion to adjourn or the motions in general? Okay.

Chair Axthelm: Whatever motion you have. But just a general motion within the meeting, because if we don't it doesn't move forward. So if you have something you think is getting stuck, make a motion. And if you make a motion, I have to address it. So it gives some forward motion on that – or forward movement – on the discussion.

Ms. Candler: I agree with what you said about nine o'clock and about ___ as far as thinking and functioning.

Ms. Lohman: Well, and when we're hungry – a lot of us haven't eaten dinner.

Ms. Del Vecchio: Exactly. I don't make any decisions after nine o'clock!

Chair Axthelm: So allowing for any last Department Update and Planning Commissioner Comments, should we try for ten-to-nine to go to that, or quarter till?

Ms. Candler: How much ___? Depending on how much time they need, but at least.

Chair Axthelm: In general, yeah. Yeah. Okay.

Mr. Walters: So I think we'll generate a document that describes this process sort of as we've discussed, maybe with some dates we can commit to – maybe – and forecasted – or maybe they're forecasted dates for how that process plays out over the next six months, and bring it to you *maybe* at your next meeting.

Ms. Candler: Any other tips? I mean in terms of efficiency on our deliberations. Any other ideas?

Mr. Walters: During your last deliberations, I think there was some reluctance to just move, make a motion – just do it, sort of as Josh was just saying. If you want the direction – if you want the discussion to go in a certain direction, make a motion to that effect and if it's not seconded then no harm, no foul. If it is, then the discussion should then focus in on that motion. And you might look at your Robert's Rules materials. You have other opportunities to dispose of motions other than voting actually on the motion. So if there's a motion to do something that really nobody wants to discuss – not wants to pursue but just doesn't even want to talk about – you move to postpone it indefinitely and then it's gone.

So if someone makes a motion completely unrelated, perhaps inflammatory – to build a wall around the City of Burlington – you don't want to be someone who votes “no” on that because, you know, you have friends in rival Mount Vernon, but you also don't want to vote “yes” because some of your relatives live in Burlington. You don't have to have the discussion on that motion at all. You don't have to vote on the substance of the motion. You can just move to postpone consideration of that indefinitely and a positive vote on that gets rid of it. So any one person can make a motion. It's got to have a second, but just because two members of the Commission want to pursue that direction, if you find that it is just a motion you don't want to discuss or a cruddy motion – ill-conceived; poorly worded – you don't have to try to amend it. You don't even have to discuss it. You can just get rid of it. So go back to your Robert's Rules' materials and

look through them because there are techniques like that that can help you get rid of things quite a bit faster – dispose of things and move back to what it is you actually want to talk about. Also if there's no disagreement amongst the group at all on a thing, you don't need to even have a vote. The Chair can just say, Well, if there's no objection then we will do whatever it is the motion is. Or if there isn't even a motion but there is unanimous agreement among the group as part of your discussion, then you don't even need a motion. The Chair can just say, Well, if there's no objection, we'll add that to our recommendation.

Also, I would say that the round-robin that your Robert's Rules training talked about where you go down the line can be very useful, but you can't do it every time because then it just takes too long. I think you'll find it most useful for identifying issues – what we talked about at the beginning, maybe the issue-spotting: Go down the row, provide your list of issues, don't talk about any of them. Don't get into a discussion, just make your list. So everybody gets a chance to talk. Because there's no discussion, nobody gets lost in that component of the discussion. And then you have your list and you can come back and choose which ones you want to talk about. Then you get everything out on the table all at once. And then maybe the Chair might decide to employ the round-robin at some later part of the discussion, but not all the time because you don't need it all the time – just maybe when the Chair *senses* that it's necessary to draw people out. So you have some – you have quite a few options there. You probably need to keep it sort of varied to see what works when, because the same techniques don't work all the time. And Robert's Rules is really quite flexible. It only needs to be as strict as the body wants, so if the group really doesn't need to have Robert's Rules be applied strictly and no one has a problem with it being very loose, it can be loose.

Chair Axthelm: And I think the Robert's Rules helps as far as, like, saying things like "Point of order" if we're going off that discussion. If anybody finds that we're kind of going off on a tangent, "Point of order." And we shouldn't take offense to that at all. It's just a matter that sometimes we get passionate about a certain subject and we just need to shut it down!

Mr. Walters: And it's not very fair to the Chair to have – to make the *Chair* call points of order, and maybe the Chair shouldn't really do that at all. But if you find it difficult to say "Point of order" – if that sounds a little harsh – then maybe you could say "Let's refocus." You know, use some other euphemism. But definitely it is important to hone in on the particular topic at hand because if you don't you'll be all over the place early so you have the opportunity to get all over the place and then not really make progress because you're not discussing the one point at one time. You're back and forth. So I have definitely seen where if Robert's Rules is not strictly applied, you lose that focus. But you don't need to apply it very strictly on all of its points in order to achieve that focus. You just need to be cognizant of what topic you're talking about now and to stay on that topic. And maybe some people want to interject because (a) they will forget what it is that they just thought of, or they're concerned that there will never be an opportunity to raise that point. You should be writing points down that you think of that you want to raise later that aren't germane to the topic at hand, and hopefully through this issue-spotting exercise that we'll do at the beginning you will get all of those points listed so you'll know that there will be an opportunity to hit those points later.

Chair Axthelm: Now with the – like the CDI, for example, there was in the policy there was some sections that I had some comments on but how do you – how do we appropriately make those comments into our answers? Because I don't think – it was difficult to get those comments across otherwise, so – like editing the text.

Mr. Walters: I would say that it's outside of your responsibility to try to edit the proposal's text. It's also – you're not going to be capable of doing it when it's hundreds of pages and you have nine people or however people we may or may not have on the Commission at that time. I mean, you won't be able to do all that editing and you don't need to, so I would characterize it not as editing the text but as making specific recommendations about the proposal. And those recommendations can have, I guess, whatever level of specificity that you want, but you're not responsible for editing the text of it. So if the text says "The houses in Kirk's neighborhood are to be blue" and you want them to be red, you can specifically say "We want them to be red." You can less specifically say "We think blue is an inappropriate color for Kirk's neighborhood." You know, you can vary your specificity but you don't have to say we want to use this word instead of that word or we want it to not apply to – you don't have to rewrite the policy and provide a new draft of the policy. You just have to say, in whatever level of specificity you want, what you want changed. And then it's usually helpful if you tell us why you want that. But I hope that I am conveying the difference between editing the text and between just saying what it is you want or what it is you find fault with.

Chair Axthelm: Okay. I think sometimes there's some situations when editing the text might be appropriate, where –

Mr. Walters: I think that's possible.

Chair Axthelm: Yeah, but keeping that limited so that if it's just a general comment and you just want to say, okay, let's make this document, or just change some portion of the document in general, not exact text. But that's not always easy to separate those two.

Mr. Walters: Yeah.

Chair Axthelm: I think that's progress. It'll help us out. So if there's no further comments we'll move on to Department Update.

Mr. Pernula: I think I've covered a lot of this stuff already. The next meeting in two weeks will be on some additional portions of the Shoreline Master Program. And we'll get that out next week as soon as we get it prepared.

Another item I wanted to announce, if you haven't seen it: There's a Housing Summit being held by the Public Health Department – Bob Hicks, if you remember him at our Housing workshops. It's going to be held January 22nd from 8:30 to 11:30 a.m. at McIntyre Hall. You need to register if you wish to go to it. It's right on the County's front webpage for registration, or I can send you a link. They said register early, that there's already 200 people who have signed up so far. So if you're interested in it, try to get that in as soon as possible.

And the only other thing is in the last couple weeks we've lost both Kevin Meenaghan and Keith Greenwood, and they're big losses. That's all I have.

Ms. Candler: I have a question. The Housing Summit is at a time when I'm at work. I can't really attend. Is that going to be on Skagit 21 or will that be televised?

Mr. Pernula: I'll find out. I don't know.

Ms. Candler: I mean, it's not in this room so I guess maybe it can't be, but – okay. Thank you.

Mr. Pernula: I'll find out if it's going to be recorded or if there's going to be some sort of transcript or whatever and I'll let you know.

Ms. Candler: Okay, thank you.

Chair Axthelm: You know, with so many meetings – because there's a lot of meetings, you know, compared to what – when I first came on it seemed like it was supposed to be every month and we're going to every two weeks. I don't – all of us aren't going to be able to make it every time. Having an opportunity to put some comments in that will then become part of the public record – Ryan, what's the best way to do that?

Mr. Walters: Well, the Housing Summit is not a GMA process.

Chair Axthelm: I'm sorry. I was referring to not the Housing Summit itself. I was saying general comments.

Mr. Walters: Oh, on the Planning Commission?

Chair Axthelm: Comp Plan, Shoreline, any of that. If we aren't able to make the meeting, how do we –

Ms. Candler: Maybe one way to ask it is, Can we give someone a proxy vote, or is that appropriate?

Mr. Walters: No. No. The best you could do there would be to find someone on the other side of the aisle from you and both agree to not vote – like they do in Congress.

Chair Axthelm: I like what Kevin did the one time. He had a letter. He was not able to make the meeting. It didn't mean it necessarily went to the vote, but it was a letter limited – but it was a letter stating what his feelings were.

Mr. Walters: Yes, and that, I think, worked out because there was only *one* person sending such a letter. You can't send e-mails back and forth and you can't have multiple people sending e-mails to everybody, so I don't know exactly how that will work out. I think that because we're talking about deliberations processes that are going to last for multiple meetings, maybe you can circle back to some issues that you missed a meeting about. I guess only if the group is willing to do that because there's some substantial reason to do so.

Ms. Lohman: Well, at the end couldn't you have an opportunity to kind of quickly recap and capture any omissions like that?

Mr. Walters: Yeah, that's why I'm saying circle back at later – at the last meeting – last deliberations meeting on that project or something, but only if the group really wants to reopen issues they've already decided. Because you won't be issuing your recommendation until the end. You'll be constructing it along the way, but you won't get to your recorded motion until the final meeting.

Chair Axthelm: Yeah. Yeah, but if we can't make the meeting and we do have a burning issue we can send it, so possibly somebody from the Commission could read that.

Mr. Walters: Oh, yeah. If you want to send it to somebody or staff or whoever to read *in* the meeting, I think that's fine because then it's part of the public meeting. The problem would occur if there were multiple communications *outside* the public meeting.

Mr. Raschko: I actually read the Short Course and I thought there were provisions that you could call in by telephone to the meeting, if I remember correctly.

Mr. Walters: I don't think that there's anything that would stop you from doing that except maybe the technology. I don't know if we're set up for that.

Ms. Lohman: I asked them if they could handle it and they said they could.

Mr. Walters: Yeah. I don't – I know that there are other – that there are city councils, that the Board of County Commissioners has done that in the past.

Ms. Lohman: Commissioner Dahlstedt did it, I believe, one time.

Mr. Walters: Yeah. So it is definitely not as good as appearing in person and I think it might be very quickly problematic if two people tried to do it at the same time, but if we need to do it I think we can probably accommodate that, especially on a limited basis.

Ms. Lohman: Why would it be problematic if two people did it?

Chair Axthelm: There's one phone.

Ms. Del Vecchio: Because you can't hear anything.

Mr. Walters: I'm not sure that everybody would – that is the key. You've got to be able to hear. Everybody's got to be able to hear everybody. I would not recommend it or endorse it if that weren't the case. So I would want to know how that was going to work, but also it would make for a very awkward meeting if you had more than one person gone and appearing telephonically.

Mr. Raschko: I've participated in those and it's miserable, particularly if they're on the telephone – you can't see people's faces or body language and you can't hear well and it's – but if somebody is desperate to be heard –

Mr. Walters: I think potentially we could do a video conference, as well, because we do have this streaming live – although it may be slightly delayed so that might not work perfectly. But we have a computer, we have Internet. We could stream somebody's face on the monitor behind you. It'd look a little Big Brotherish. But we haven't needed to go there before, but if we did need to do that we would need, I think, substantial notice in order to make it happen.

Ms. Lohman: I mean, it's not ideal but it's better than not participating.

Chair Axthelm: Well, I don't have any issue with like Kevin's situation – you know, reading the letter, and it was at least that his information got in there. And I may not have agreed with it all (but) I don't have any problem reading it because it's what Kevin said. You know, if that's – if you can't make it and there's a small statement that you want to make, that's fine.

Ms. Lohman: When is our next meeting?

Ms. Del Vecchio: Yeah, when will we know our – what's that? In two weeks? Okay. And are we getting a revised meeting schedule? Is there –

Mr. Pernula: We'll work on it.

Ms. Del Vecchio: Okay. We'll get it more than a day in advance?

Mr. Walters: The meeting schedule on the website, though _____.

Mr. Pernula: That one? Okay.

Ms. Del Vecchio: I mean, is the one on the website accurate? It sounds like we're putting more meetings in there that are not currently on the website. Or maybe I was just –

Mr. Pernula: No, I think they're all on there.

Ms. Del Vecchio: Are they all there? Okay.

Mr. Walters: Yeah, the Planning Commission webpage has the schedule for 2016. This is what we're considering "regular" meetings – are all those meetings that are listed, and they are every two weeks, or they're the first and third Tuesdays of the month except for April and May, where there's one meeting every week, and August, where there are no meetings.

Ms. Del Vecchio: Okay.

Mr. Walters: And December, where you only have one meeting.

Ms. Del Vecchio: Thank you.

Chair Axthelm: Anything else?

Ms. Candler: I have a question, kind of on what you said earlier. Going into after May, is it projected that the new normal is going to be two meetings a month for an indefinite period of time, or was that because of what we had going on up until these two major updates?

Mr. Pernula: Probably often two meetings a month, but sometimes one and zero in August. But we – I think we laid it out for the normal being two a month. But with these two big projects down, we may not have as much need for two meetings a month even. However, there are other projects coming right down the pike.

Ms. Candler: So that's what I'm – I guess I'm wondering what comes after these two major things.

Mr. Pernula: We'll see. We just hope that it doesn't extend beyond June 30th.

Ms. Candler: Okay.

Chair Axthelm: All right, with that, any comments from – other comments, at this point – from the Planning Commission?

Several Commissioners: No.

Chair Axthelm: Again, Kevin and Keith will be really missed. They were very positive for our Commission. I wish them the best. Okay.

Ms. Lohman: I move to adjourn.

Chair Axthelm: Sounds good. The meeting's adjourned (gavel).