

MASON COUNTY PLANNING ADVISORY COMMISSION

Minutes
November 19, 2007

(Note audio tape (#3) dated November 19, 2007
counter (#) for exact details of discussion)

(This document is not intended to be a verbatim transcript)

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1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Vice-Chair Tim Wing at 6:00 p.m. Chair Bill Dewey took over the meeting upon his arrival.

2. ROLL CALL

Members Present: Bill Dewey, Tim Wing, Dennis Pickard, Jay Hupp, Diane Edgin, Wendy Ervin and Jim Reece.

Staff Present: Barbara Robinson, Allan Borden, and Susie Ellingson.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes from the September 17, 2007 meeting were approved as presented.

4. NEW BUSINESS

(#0150) Vice Chair Tim Wing opened up the meeting with Roll Call and Approval of Minutes and then Chair Bill Dewey continued on with the meeting upon his arrival. Bill Dewey opened the meeting with the first agenda item, the public hearing on the Trails Plan.

(#0100) Barbara Robinson explained the update of the Capital Facilities Plan was scheduled to be on the agenda tonight but Barbara Atkins went home ill today, so we are asking that you postpone this public hearing until the next meeting on December 17th.

(#0110) No one was present to testify on the Capital Facilities Plan.

(#0115) The PAC moved to postpone the public hearing on the Capital Facilities Plan until the December 17th

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meeting.

(#0125) John Keates, Mason County Parks, opened the public hearing on the Mason County Regional Trails Plan. He introduced Ken Wilcox from Skookum Peak Consulting, who assisted in the preparation of the Plan. He also introduced members from the Trails Committee who were in attendance. Last year we brought forward the Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Plan, which, at that time, hadn't been updated for ten years. We subsequently went through and adopted that Plan. When we completed the Parks Plan, there was one element that we reviewed and that was Regional and Local Trails. One of the items we found in the Plan was that we had a serious shortfall with county trails, which led to a project this year, which was the development of the Mason County Regional Trails Plan. That's what we are here for tonight to introduce to you. A Mason County Trails Committee was formed in 2005 by the BOCC and that Plan was actually developed and adopted. What you see here builds on the work they did in 2005 and we look forward to the completion of a full scale Plan. We had eighteen members appointed to the committee this year and we have been meeting monthly. In this Plan, we focused on four major interest areas. One was off-street trails, water trails, bike routes, and areas confined to ORV usage. As we were working on this project, we came across a couple of projects that we thought had a lot of potential, and earlier this year, we did submit a grant to the State Recreation and Conservation Office for a planning and feasibility money for next year for the Camp Govey back country trail. We were successful in funding that trail so next year we will have monies to work on a trails system that has been recommended in the Plan. One of the challenges was the fact that the county doesn't have a lot of land that we can use for building trails. We've had to talk with a lot of private land owners and DNR, Tacoma Power, to see what is feasible in terms of trail corridors. What you see is a lot of ideas we have that will still require a fair amount of future planning and feasibility work to route the trails.

(#0325) Ken Wilcox, Skookum Peak Consulting, presented a power point presentation on the Plan. Our vision and purpose was developed in 2005. We endeavor to cultivate a trails system and bikeway system in the county that links communities, parks, and neighborhoods, and provide links to regional trails systems. Mason County has a lot of federal lands and state parks with extensive trail systems, but outside the federal lands there just isn't a lot in Mason County to choose from. Kennedy Creek was put together through a private partnership, which has an important salmon stream and it is used as a conservation education facility. Goldsborough Creek, also in Shelton, has a trail system as well. There's also the Huff and Puff trail, which is the most extensive developed trail that is close to the population center of the county. The Theler Wetlands is the most advanced trails design, which is in Belfair. The state parks make up the bulk of everything else. Most of the parks have nature trails available to use. Beach and water access is something that we also looked at. Fish and Wildlife has a site off of Highway 3 that provides a trail that goes out onto the flats in Oakland Bay. Everything else is up in the Olympics with hundreds of miles of trails there. We looked at potential corridors and Mason County is unique in that one forestry company owns a substantial portion of the county and that's Green Diamond Resources. We've had several conversations with them and they seem to have a pretty open mind to the idea of accommodating trails. We have identified some on-street routes as being important areas where they would like to see some improvements made. This information is helpful to Public Works so when they're doing road projects they have a sense of when to keep the bicyclists in mind.

(#0475) John Keates noted one of the suggestions that came out of this planning effort was the development of a Mason County bicycling corridor map. Jefferson and Clallam counties have transportation enhancement routes developed and that was something that came out of this work in terms of recommending a project that could enhance recreation for bicyclists. The roads already receive a great deal of bicycle use.

(#0500) Ken Wilcox noted there were other projects that were identified through this project. They include the Camp Govey trail. This is a unique historic site. There is also a railroad logging system and Camp Govey is located along there. We talked to Green Diamond about the possibility of opening some or all of it up as a trail. There is a big old bridge in the area that crosses Vance Creek and it's about 600 feet long and about 400 feet high. It has a great potential for a conversion to a rail trail. It is a railroad bridge and its use was abandoned over 20 years ago.

(#0550) Jay Hupp inquired about the question of liability.

(#0560) Ken Wilcox explained that liability would be something Green Diamond would be concerned with.

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However, there is a provision in state law that protects private land owners from liability if they accommodate recreation on their nature based recreation without charging a fee. That law has been in place for a lot of years and no one, to my knowledge, has won a liability lawsuit. If you start charging money, or if you start building recreation facilities, then it gets into a different issue. It would be quite a project to develop, but relatively inexpensive. Ken explained they would create a loop system with the trail head at Camp Govey with an interpretive loop explaining some of the logging history, and perhaps some of the old cabins could be relocated to the area. There are also some interesting waterfalls along the trail. The trail would be almost all within the riparian areas that Green Diamond doesn't log. There are nine different focus areas around the county where there seems to be a lot more opportunity. The nine areas we will be focusing on are 1) Camp Govey; 2) Goldsborough Creek; 3) Kennedy Creek; 4) Harstine Island; 5) Theler Wetlands; 6) Mason Lake - Twanoh State Park; 7) Menards Landing; 8) Hoodsport - Lake Cushman; 9) North and South Forks of the Skokomish River. Regarding the ORV facilities, based on the model that Jefferson County provided with their ORV feasibility study, we feel we need to look at that issue much more carefully.

(#0800) Miscellaneous discussion on ORV use in Mason County regarding special licensing and designation of use areas.

(#0875) Jay Hupp inquired about the use of ORV's at the Fairgrounds.

(#0900) John Keates explained right now you can access Green Diamond's land from the fairgrounds. Most of all of that has been done by a motorcycle club that has a permit for that land. They stage at the fairgrounds and then access the Green Diamond property. We were looking that when the fairgrounds relocates, that might be a viable use there.

(#0945) Ken Wilcox stated the trail design are looked at in three categories. High standard, medium standard, and wildland standard. High standard would be paved, unpaved, smooth trails and with boardwalks. Medium standard would be a narrow width, steeper trail. Wildland trails are usually nature trails in the forest. They are single tract, with steeper slopes. Trail signing and interpretative areas are also encouraged on these trails. Volunteers have a lot to do with managing these trails. Bike lanes are restrictive lanes where you're not allowed to park or use them as driving lanes. They're for bikes only. Bicyclists would appreciate wider shoulders and better surfacing and better signage. Access to the shorelines of Mason County are highly valued by the public. Public access opportunities exist in the form of overlooks, boat launches, waterfront parks and trails. There are water trails, which are dots on the map. The dots are places you launch that might have a picnic area or a place to launch and between the dots you go wherever you want, but they still call it a water trail. Given the unique access opportunities that are available in Mason County, improved beach access can be a cost effective means of providing significant recreation benefits. This Regional Trails Plan provides the basis for comprehensive and well thought out trail design and development which will provide for outdoor recreation, improve non-motorized transportation opportunities, enhance motorized recreation (through further planning and feasibility efforts), protect environmental quality, preserve and enhance visual quality and character, and help generate potential economic benefits to communities. Grants can help pay for it and there are a number funding sources out there. Volunteer can also do a lot to move the trail system forward. Other partnerships with land trusts and business communities can make trails happen.

(#1300) Wendy Ervin inquired about the lines shown on the map on Highway 101 and that they weren't very specifically shown where they will be.

(#1320) Ken Wilcox explained that this is still in a conceptual stage. We don't know exactly what the shoulder improvements will be or whether they will be on both side.

(#1335) Wendy Ervin stated these wonderful lanes that have the bicycle painted on them, the medical examiner's office refers to them as 'donor lanes'. She explained she has a huge objection to having donor lanes in Mason County. Trails are wonderful, but putting that defenseless bicycle out on the street to play in traffic is not safe. She continued on saying there is a real need for having bicycle lanes on 101. However, having lived out on 101 and pass these bicyclists repeatedly in the summertime, they don't need it to be out on the highway. We need to have that separated off the highway so they have a safe place. A safe place will keep them from giving up their organs to someone that might need them.

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(#1385) Ken Wilcox responded they would like to keep them off the highway. Most accidents between bicycles and cars happen at intersections as opposed to passing them on the street. Everything has its own risk. I've come to learn that the bicyclists are going to be out there anyway, and if there's anything we can do to make it safer for them, that's great.

(#1425) Wendy Ervin noted what's happening in Olympia. They have a sidewalk, a bicycle lane, a donor lane, and then in the middle are the car lanes. So you've given up almost a whole car lane to these two lanes for bicycles. When you see bikes, they're on the sidewalks. They don't use those designated lanes. They use the sidewalk because they're not stupid. It makes more sense to widen the sidewalks.

(#1460) Ken Wilcox responded there are hundreds if not thousands of planners and engineers that have looked at this and spend their whole career trying to provide safe facilities for bicyclists and they're fairly confident that the guidelines that have been developed through the American Association of Highway Transportation Officials and through WSDOT that those are the best we have to work with right now.

(#1500) Dennis Pickard inquired how much contact there has been between this project and Public Works and making them more aware of the concepts that you are trying to get implemented as new roads are added or as existing roads are upgraded.

(#1510) Ken Wilcox responded the Public Works people are much more sensitized to this kind of thing in the last 15 years. Congress rewrote the transportation funding rules back in the early 90's. If they provide for the non-motorized users in the road system they actually score points and they do better when competing for grant money, etc. We have had a few conversations with Mason County Public Works but they haven't been at the table helping to develop this, but that's not unusual. They will know what to do and often it's up to the public to convey to them their particular needs.

(#1585) John Keates added that when they redid Grapeview Loop Road, they widened that and put in wider shoulders and that became a much more friendly area to bicycle on that what it was before.

(#1585) Bill Dewey stated that it's still not designated with bike lanes whereas if there had been previous coordination with Public Works that might have been something in their consideration as to how it was redone.

(#1600) John Keates responded that is not necessarily true. Having a 4-foot wide shoulder is better than having none. Before they widened it, it was a very unsafe place for walkers or riders.

(#1610) Ken Wilcox added they also designed a new multi-use paved path from the city limits out to MCRA and that's a project that is well into design and will actually get developed in the next couple of years. That was all put together by Public Works.

(#1625) Diane Edgin requested the spelling of 'Hartstene Island' be changed to represent to correct spelling as 'Harstine Island'.

(#1640) Tim Wing inquired what the current budget is to support trails.

(#1645) John Keates stated they want to concentrate on some of the simpler things we can get done first, like trails in existing parks, and feasibility for some of the other requests we've received. Within our existing budget, we have enough resources to do a certain amount of improvements but we're not at the point where we have the money to develop a high standard trail between Belfair and Shelton.

(#1690) Tim Wing brought up the Theler Wetlands Trail in Belfair and that the Theler Center is having budgetary problems right now. There has been some discussion by the people at Theler Center of the possibility of turning that whole trail system over to the county. Is taking over a trail system like that something the county could consider?

(#1710) John Keates responded something like that would be easier in terms of the type of trail system it is.

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The biggest issue there would be garbage, etc. Without knowing exactly what their maintenance standard is, it's hard to give you an answer. There are a lot of great models out there in terms of citizen coalitions that help and those are things we will be looking at as we look into the future.

(#1755) Wendy Ervin inquired if there is an order of development where you lay out the order of development for the trails.

(#1765) John Keates explained that a lot of it depends on the ability to work with landowners so what we've done is take a look at some of the projects where the feasibility would allow us to work with them. Also, with Oakland Bay Historical Park, we owned the property and we're doing a Master Plan on it so we can probably get a lot of the trails done with help from volunteer organizations. We're also looking at improving some of the existing facilities we already have.

(#1850) Tim Wing inquired about the Allyn and Belfair UGA's, as well as Shelton. Those areas are county jurisdictions and there were plans to build, for both Allyn and Belfair, and in the Belfair Plan there were trails.

(#1900) Ken Wilcox responded that they are incorporated in the Plan. There's some reference to the Plans and also there are maps showing the proposed trails. There were little connector trails that connected in between but they seemed to be very conceptual. As those areas developed, they were proposed to be developed at that time. Therefore, we kept to more of the regional trails and those along SR 3. We can certainly add those other ones, but they seemed so general that it didn't appear that they added a whole lot.

(#2000) Tim Wing expressed his concern that 65% of the future growth in the county is supposed to go into the UGA's, and in Belfair and Allyn, that's a lot of population. Tim explained his concerns about the roads as well, and that the county needs to have a plan for where roads will go and for where trails will go before people start carving up pieces of property and building houses and putting in sewer lines. The roads and trails need to at least on the map so that people know where things are planned for. If that much of the population is going in there, that's something that needs to be addressed in a future version of this plan. I don't think that we're planning all of these trails strictly for tourists.

(#2075) Bill Dewey inquired about the funding. There are grants available for the system developed, but regarding ongoing maintenance, how will that be funded?

(#2100) John Keates explained there is a combination of general funds and volunteers. There's very few grant sources for maintenance.

(#2130) Ken Wilcox added there are plans to get a volunteer group up and running. Trails don't require as much maintenance as the parks do.

(#2160) Bill Dewey noted Wendy has her bike trails issue, Tim wants to make sure we take care of the UGA's, and my issues are with shellfish growing areas and making sure there are adequate toilet facilities so we're not polluting our shellfish areas from a recreational and commercial standpoint.

(#2200) Ken Wilcox noted he can get together with Barb Robinson and Barb Adkins and look at the UGA's, and I can add the other trails in Belfair. We will look at that in a more comprehensive manner to include Public Works.

(#2250) Tim Wing noted the riparian area buffers that were set up for a particular reason. People that own the property have paid an economic price to participate in that. The setbacks from water are necessary in order to protect species. I have concerns about the wildlife and I also have real concerns about if we say to these people that they can't do anything in that 150 feet, and then turn around and say that we want a public trail through it, that could be a real problem. I'm not sure that a trail is so appropriate there. I think there needs to be some more research into that.

(#2300) Ken Wilcox noted we're not talking about the bigger paved trails, but the narrower nature trails that run through the riparian areas are considered a low impact facility and it really depends on the site specific conditions. It doesn't mean you can just go build trails in all the riparian areas but there's often compatibility

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in certain site circumstances. Just because they're drawn on the map doesn't mean they're going to happen. That assessment would still need to be done. There are environmental assessments that would have to occur as well as feasibility studies.

(#2350) Jim Reece stated it was a well done plan. Some areas have exercise or fitness trails. There would be some locations along the trail where you could do workouts and other rest areas. Is it appropriate to include something for the users in this report like that. Also, there should be signs posted that state that you pack out what you pack in.

(#2400) Ken Wilcox noted you tend to see that in the larger facilities. It's something to think about as we take some of these projects forward.

(#2435) Tim Wing stated those are all excellent comments and the code of ethics are most important for trails that are right next to schools where young people use them. That's when you have a chance to put into peoples heads for the rest of their life how to take care of trails and forested areas.

(#2475) Wendy Ervin if there are any plans for having dog owner accessible trails?

(#2500) Ken Wilcox responded they didn't look into that specifically, but that tends to be a decision you make project by project. They would be appropriate in some areas.

(#2550) Bill Dewey opened up the public comment portion of the hearing.

(#2600) Dave O'Connell, member of the Trails Committee, stated he has worked on preparing this plan for the last two years. I've been in Mason County for fifteen years and before that I spent twenty years in Whatcom County, starting out in Whatcom County Parks and Recreation with both the same type of setting we have here. We worked with where to put parks and trails, and if any of you go up to that area you will see that many of those issues have all been worked out. They found a lot of acceptance and a lot of development has occurred around those parks. You're starting at ground zero and so there is a lot of work to do. With respect to donor lanes, I have to make a comment. I have a couple of thousand of miles and I'm 62 years old and I haven't donated anything yet on my bicycle. I must say that if you talk to those folks that are coming down off of 101 or down Highway 3 you might find you have a very unique phenomenon going on here. Most of those people are not from this area nor from this nation. This is the route for the west coast of the United State bike trail; it comes right through Mason County. You have a tremendous economic opportunity here to tap into that and build amenities for that. As a bike traveler, I go and spend everything I can in all these other areas. I'm not going to carry any gear; I'm going to carry a nice, light credit card. It's nice to be accepted in a community where you spend your money on those things. You have a tremendous amount of potential here in Mason County and I hope you will see that with this plan so that we can make some progress with our trails and parks.

(#2700) Bill Dewey thanked the committee for their hard work and with no other public wishing to speak, closed the public comment portion of the hearing. Bill inquired of John Keates what kind of recommendation he might be looking for tonight.

(#2750) John Keates explained he wanted to present this document and we will go back and incorporate some more items and bring it back to you at a later date. We would like a recommendation towards looking at adoption of the plan. However, we do have some more work to do.

(#2800) Ken Wilcox suggested doing a supplement document showing the incorporated changes.

(#2850) Bill Dewey summarized the concerns raised tonight by the PAC. They include: concerns on the bike lanes. There was a recommendation to have better coordination with Public Works, particularly in the UGA's trying to incorporate trails with roads. There was a concern raised about adequate toilet and pet waste facilities, particularly on trails that would potentially impact water quality and shellfish growing areas, or in any areas. There were concerns regarding riparian areas and designating trails in those areas. There were issues raised regarding having a code of ethics / rules for use of the trails and consideration for resting and exercise areas, particularly in the urban areas. There was also the request to correct the spelling of Harstine Island. John Keates was instructed to review those suggestions and concerns and bring the document back

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to the PAC for a final recommendation to the BOCC.

(#3000) Allan Borden opened the public hearing on the rezone request by Belfair Properties to rezone . property along North Shore Road from Rural Commercial I to Rural Residential 5 zone. The current owner wishes to cease the operation of the commercial use and utilize the property for residential land use. This property, .419 acres in size, has two residences as well as a restaurant. Parking for the restaurant is on the northern portion of the property. In reviewing the request there are seven criteria. Under Criteria #1, the future single family residence development will be at a lower intensity than the current use. Water and septic services are already provided on the property and there is no anticipated increase in those services. Criteria #2, the request to change the zone is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. Criteria #3, the proposal to redevelop these two parcels would not increase sprawling, low-density development. Criteria #4, the redevelopment would not create an urban level of service on the site. There will be less demand for services, like fire and police protections services. Criteria #5, there would not be an impact to urban development. Criteria #6, the redevelopment of the site would need to comply with current review standards, which include setbacks and shoreline critical area. Criteria #7, this unique rezone request results in future development more compatible to adjacent properties. Therefore, staff concludes that all seven criteria are met, and recommends approval of the proposed rezone request by Belfair Properties to rezone this property from Rural Commercial I to Rural Residential 5 zone.

(#3550) Jim Reece inquired about the density in regards to Rural Residential 5 zone.

(#3600) Allan Borden explained if there was only one residence on the property, they could only have one residence on the property after the rezone. There are two residences on this property so that affords them to have two residences. They are grandfathered in this instance. The property that is being rezoned has a cabin, a manufactured home and the restaurant facility on it. The applicant owns two lots and the other parcel to the west is already zoned RR 5.

(#0100) Wendy Ervin noted in a previous rezone request in a UGA, it was noted the criteria did not match that situation so you struggled with that. This strikes me as being the same sort of thing. This is moving from a more intensive land use to a less intensive land use and your criteria doesn't match. Criteria #5 talks about moving to a more intensive land use. That does not apply in this situation. We have a problem with our criteria. At some point we need to develop UGA criteria.

(#0170) Tim Wing inquired if the two residences were going to be developed on the two parcels.

(#0185) Allan Borden responded there will be two residences on the property that is requested to be rezoned. It's likely when they remove the commercial building, they will have the opportunity to move the boundary line between the two to the west to accommodate more room for the two residences.

(#0205) Bill Dewey opened up the hearing for public comment. There was none, so the public comment portion of the hearing was closed.

(#0245) There was a motion and a second to approve the rezone request. The vote was taken and the rezone request for Belfair Properties to rezone a parcel on the North Shore Road from Rural Commercial I to Rural Residential 5 was approved.

(#0375) Allan Borden opened the hearing on the rezone request for Scott Miller to rezone property from Rural Residential 20 to Rural Residential 10 zone. This property is located south of State Route 108. 5.5 miles west of US Highway 101, and 2 miles east of the Grays Harbor County boundary. The applicant desires to create new residential lots likely through a performance subdivision and utilize the existing cleared area and existing bridge crossing as part of the proposal. Regarding Criteria #1, a proposed subdivision and subsequent development would have to meet the county standards. Criteria #2, there are lands to the east, south, and west that are long term commercial forest, and lots to the north are residential, and to the northeast are ag resource lands. The critical areas would need to be part of the development review. Staff concludes that the characteristics of the parcel are consistent with the RR 10 zone. Criteria #3, if the request were approved, residential development would have to provide for the long term forest on the adjacent lot. The lots that could be created would not create low density, sprawling development. Criteria #4, the subsequent subdivision

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would not create intense development requiring urban level services. There will be concerns about additional traffic onto the state highway, but this can be addressed through approval of an access permit through WSDOT. Criteria #5, development of new lots would not interfere with development in the Shelton UGA. Criteria #6, the planned development will need to provide critical area buffer protection, especially the Skookum Fish and Wildlife Habitat stream values, and have open space and separation from timber lands. Criteria #7, there should not be pressure to rezone nearby properties because the surrounding lands are either residential land uses on the small lots, or long term commercial timber uses on the larger lots. Therefore, staff finds all seven criteria are met, and would recommend the requested rezone from RR 20 to RR 10 by Scott Miller be approved.

(#0800) Diane Edgin stated that the rezoning of property in the rural areas could affect ability of the volunteer fire departments to handle the increase of the loads that is happening in our rural areas.

(#0850) Allan Borden stated that in a typical county process on a proposed subdivision, the fire marshal and local district fire department will be involved in the review. They will review apparatus access standards. The county adopted those regulations about 2 and a half years ago. They review access from the highway, slopes and they also look at the configuration of how the properties are laid out, along with the number of houses. There's a general provision that when there is a proposal for six or more new lots, well and water rights and capacity becomes an issue.

(#0900) Tim Wing noted they might require sprinkler systems in houses, as opposed to not requiring that. Tim also stated that inside the UGA when you're proposing quite a few new homes, then they're also looking at having to have more than one road out. If we don't get some roads inside the UGA's, we won't even be able to build the houses.

(#0945) Jay Hupp inquired where the requirement comes from that we have two exist.

(#0965) Barbara Robinson responded it's when you have more than fifty lots. It's stated in the fire code, which is the international fire code.

(#0985) Bill Dewey opened the public comment portion of the hearing. There were no comments from the public, so Bill Dewey closed the public comment portion of the hearing.

(#1000) Bill Dewey brought up for discussion the issue of materially increasing sprawling, low-density development. Allan states in his staff report there will be three to six lots, depending on whether it's a conventional or performance subdivision. Allan justifies it by saying 'The cumulative impacts of rezoning the subject parcel would not increase sprawling, low-density rural development beyond its current locational extent'. That's saying it will increase sprawl but just not beyond the current extent.

(#1100) Jay Hupp noted Mason County, from an overall prospective, was zoned way too restrictive when the original zoning was established. It does not bother me to see it loosened up a bit. The rezone request is part of loosening it up a little bit.

(#1150) Miscellaneous discussion regarding the definition of 'sprawl'.

(#1200) Bill Dewey reiterated we need to be consistent about how we interpret it and apply it. We can't say one time three to six new homes out in the rural area is okay, and then next year, say three to six is not.

(#1250) Dennis Pickard inquired if under the existing zone of RR 20 if they could still do a performance subdivision and what would be the maximum lots.

(#1265) Allan Borden responded they could only double the density and get two lots.

(#1295) Tim Wing noted his idea of sprawl is Highway 99. It's spreading out down a road and he's agrees with the plan that's not a good thing. This is different. They've designated three properties just north of this as RR 20 and they aren't even four acres apiece, so they already have low density. So I think we're dealing not with sprawl but with density.

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(#1335) Wendy Ervin noted we need to have a work session that helps to understand the real meaning of sprawl and other words and phrases that we use and providing additional criteria.

(#1365) Allan Borden explained the criteria was not developed by GMA, or the GMHB. They were developed locally.

(#1385) Bill Dewey stated we just need to have the proper tools and documents to try to be as consistent as we can. Bill inquired about the chance of the adjacent long term commercial forest properties would apply for a similar request similar to the Little Creek Casino or golf course.

(#1400) Allan Borden explained Green Diamond would have to apply for a comprehensive plan revision. It's a resource land designation. There are policies in the Comprehensive Plan on that process.

(#1450) There was a motion and a second to approve the rezone request. The vote was taken and the rezone request for Scott Miller to rezone a parcel south of State Route 108 from Rural Residential 20 to Rural Residential 10 zone was approved.

(#1465) Allan Borden opened the hearing on the rezone request by Ron and Gayle Barker, and Terry and Dorthee Gregg to rezone parcels at the end of Marisa Place and west of Webb Hill Road from Rural Residential 20 to Rural Residential 10 zone. Allan explained there is only one access to these properties and this is off of Marisa Place.

(#1485) Miscellaneous discussion of location of parcels and access.

(#1650) Ron Barker, applicant, added there is a defined road off of Webb Hill, which was part of our contract with Green Crow, from whom we purchased the property.

(#1700) Allan Borden continued on by stating that the applicants, Ron and Gayle Barker, own the 40 acres in the northeast location, and Terry and Dorthee Gregg, own the 40 acres in the northwest location, and also the 27.2 acres in the southwest. In reviewing future land divisions, the county encourages the clustering of lots and provision for open spaces, as well as setting aside critical areas and buffers. Wetlands are known to occur on these properties. The wetland study would require buffers that are associated with the wetlands when they're identified and delineated. Criteria #1, the proposed land division would not damage public health, safety, and welfare. There would have to be provision for water supply and adequate protection of wetland areas. Criteria #2, there are a variety of lot sizes around the subject parcel. The areas to the east, north, and west are under timber management land uses, and the lands to the south, as well as the subject 27.20 acre parcel, are developed for residential and open space land uses. The proposed action would be consistent with the Mason County Comprehensive Plan, Development Regulations, other county ordinances, and GMA. Criteria #3, this proposal would add five to ten lots. The cumulative impacts of rezoning the subject parcels would not increase sprawling, low-density rural development beyond its current extent, due to the slope and wetland critical areas. Criteria #4, creation of the five to ten lots would not increase the need for urban level services. Utilities are available from Webb Hill Road and fire protection facilities are located a half mile to the south. The impacts on available water, transportation, and fire protection services would be further evaluated at the time of subdivision review in coordination with state health agencies and local tribes. Criteria #5, if this rezone were approved, a subsequent subdivision would not interfere with the GMA by directing growth away from the UGA's. Criteria #6, if the rezone were approved and properties were proposed for subdivision, the applicants would have to provide and identify wetland and critical areas. Careful site planning is needed on these properties so that these critical areas can be protected. Criteria #7, with the wetland and critical areas present, they do provide constraints for development, but they would also tend to put a strain on proposed subdivision of other land in the area, as well. There's likely to be some pressure but not high pressure to do so. Staff would conclude that the seven criteria are met, and therefore staff recommends approval of the requested rezone.

(#2222) Bill Dewey noted the PAC was faced with a similar rezone near Brockdale last year and we didn't grant the full request, but only approved some of the parcels due to the access issue. Bill inquired what the BOCC's recommendation was on that request.

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(#2250) Allan Borden responded the BOCC approved the one parcel next to Brockdale, which was the PAC's recommendation.

(#2275) The applicant supplied a map of the parcels for the PAC to review.

(#2375) Wendy Ervin inquired if the development was going to be a cluster subdivision.

(#2400) Bill Dewey opened the public comment portion of the hearing.

(#2410) Ron Barker, applicant, responded it is the request of two retired school teachers to enjoy the bounty of the parcels. Here with me is Terry Gregg, the other applicant. We are friends and we both taught in the same school district for many years. When Terry was building his house on his parcel, it made me aware of the prospect of this one 40-acre parcel and he was in the process of obtaining the 40-acre parcel just north of his property. Our primary intention is to keep them for our families, and the hope was to have some flexibility in our creating some sites for our family members and to maintain the aesthetics and the beauty of the parcels. There are no plans for any development. As we looked at that potential, we felt that our request was legitimate so we're pursuing it to the best of our abilities. Ron explained he took the forestry stewardship class and plans to embellish the existing timberland. Terry lives here and makes his home here, and it our intention to come down here in four years to make it our home.

(#2555) Pat Grover, neighbor, testified. She stated she has been a Mason County resident since 1977 and her back wall of her house is 290 feet from the boundary of the proposed project. She stated she's walked the ground and knows it fairly well. She has a forestry resource background, and she stated there are some things she wants to state that weren't in the staff report. She explained she will refer to the parcels as 'A', 'B', and 'C'. 'A' is the 27-acre parcel, 'B' is Mr. Gregg's 40-acre parcel to the north, and 'C' is Mr. Barker's parcel to the east. A rezone request for parcel 'A' was submitted to rezone from RR 20 to RR 5 zone. At that time, staff's recommendation was for denial of the request. The rationale was that it failed to meet the criteria and would add further development density in that area of RR 20. This request was subsequently withdrawn before a final decision was made. Since that time, the Greggs have cleared several acres and they've built a home there. Parcel 'B' was purchased by the Greggs in 2006 and parcel 'C' was purchased by the Barkers in 2007. Documents show these parcels were classified as forest land. They indicated by doing that they showed the commitment for 20 acre parcels under timber designation for ten years. An open space taxation agreement was recorded for parcel 'A'. I have studied the rezone criteria and earlier minutes from this board. I did not receive notice of this rezone. I read about it in the paper on the 1st of November. The criteria, by which the subject properties were evaluated under in 2000 during the initial Comp Plan and zoning, and the subsequent review in 2003, haven't been modified a great deal. There has been some BLA's but on the smaller parcels to the south, but there really hasn't been a whole lot of development except for on plats that were developed prior to GMA. I looked at the criteria to evaluate this rezone. The following comments reflect my review of the criteria. The staff report states the greatest concern would be water to serve these properties. I have been aware of the Webb Hill biosolids site and just recently a report came out addressing water flow from that vicinity. It also addressed nitrate levels which are above the Washington standard. The aquifer gradient for that particular site is not moving to Hood Canal like they had thought; it is moving from the south and to the west, which is in direct proximity to these parcels that are proposed for rezone. That particular document, closed with the fact that recommendations are provided to further define the downwater flow direction and extent of nitrate contamination through two additional monitoring wells and monitoring offsite wells. Immediate identification and sampling of offsite water supply wells 3000 feet down gradient of the system is recommended. There are two wells that have been drilled in the last ten years and they have both gone dry within the past 5 - 7 years, and redrilled. I also reviewed the criteria and determined it didn't reflect a RR 10 zoning. Subject parcels 'B' and 'C' were part of a survey filed in October of 2006 at the request of Green Crow. An easement agreement filed with the county states 'it is understood and agreed that the seller may at some future date develop through subdivision the north one half of the northwest quarter of section 24, township 21 N, Range 4 West, W.M., and that said easement will serve as primary access to the future lots of the sellers subdivision'. Having had some previous knowledge of what Green Crow has planned for that area, I saw a plat that had the whole area in 5-acre plots. That quote made me concerned about the potential for sprawl. The subject properties are not adjacent to the county road. The current easement requires approximately a half plus mile of construction following a logging road to reach the north property line

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of the property. The subject parcels 'B' and 'C' that access along the northernmost route have been subject to trespass, garbage dumping, and other illegal activities prior to installation of the existing gate. This places an increased demand on fire protection services and law enforcement. The local fire department is staffed by volunteers and although the station may be only a half a mile from the southernmost boundary of parcel 'A', access to any future buildable site will be at a considerable distance and not by a county road. Due to the remote nature of the properties, a rezone to a more intensive use has the potential to trigger similar requests if approved. Since the properties are not adjacent to the county road, allowing the rezones would be inconsistent with GMA of encouraging development in the urban areas. If the proponents wishes are to create a sanctuary and potential residents for their children and extended family, a performance subdivision would allow them to meet their objectives, better protect critical resources within the property boundaries, and not create pressure to change land use designations of other lands adjacent to their properties. The burden of proof will be on the applicant to show their responses to these criteria and information provided that the proposed rezone to a more intensive land use is warranted. I feel just because you want to have your family around you, I'm not quite sure that's rationale or a warrant to rezone. In conclusion, there appears to be a high likelihood that approval of this rezone request as presented may result in future rezone requests. The performance subdivisions allowed within the RR 20 designation would allow the development necessary for family use without opening the door to future rezone requests and development of this predominately natural resource area. The majority of the criteria for rezone are met for parcel 'A', however the majority of the criteria for rezone to RR 10 are not met for parcels 'B' and 'C' as proposed.

(#3175) Bill Dewey closed the public comment portion of the hearing.

(#3200) Wendy Ervin stated she doesn't see the amount of wetlands in any of the parcels to be daunting in terms of this request. Compared to the relative size of the property, the amount of wetlands is certainly workable in whatever development is made.

(#3255) Bill Dewey stated based on his earlier comments, and what the PAC did south of Brockdale last year, he could justify seeing it on parcel 'A' but not on all parcels.

(#3280) Tim Wing stated he has difficulty with the zoning that was applied to these parcels in the first place. One of the goals of GMA is to encourage the availability of affordable housing. Affordable housing needs to be fairly close to roads and so why originally they took 5-acre pieces and designated them as RR 20 when they're right next to a road. Right below it is RR 5 on a piece that's almost identically sized to Pat Grover's piece.

(#3320) Miscellaneous discussion of possibility of different subdivision scenarios.

(#3450) Allan Borden explained the performance subdivision. You can put the critical areas in conservation areas and designated open space areas so that you are essentially setting aside 50% of the lot area so you can develop on the other half. Under a performance subdivision, you can get lots down to 20,000 sf in area. If you had lots that small, you would cluster them so you could provide common services, like water and septic.

(#3500) Miscellaneous discussion regarding surrounding parcels and their zoning and density.

(#3700) Diane Edgin noted it's not like this is going to developed overnight. These projects can take forever. If they do decide to go with a performance subdivision and they cluster the lots, you would be getting something of the best that is available to us. You're preserving land and yet you're giving people what they need to have for their families or whatever. We do have to allow them to do something. I'd rather have a small group clustered in and having a big open space. That's easier to handle for all the necessary services.

(#3785) Dennis Pickard made note of the fact that there's 200 plus acres of RR 10 immediately to the left and that made it seem like a natural fit. It's obviously available to develop to a similar standard to what we're talking about as potential maximum development. If they were to be zoned RR 10 it would seem to actually be more consistent with the role of providing transition areas. That causes me to lean towards approving it.

(#0050) Bill Dewey stated that the other three sides are surrounded by RR 20.

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(#0055) Dennis Pickard stated that it's not developed in that fashion. The existing zoning in the areas to the east and the south don't generally match RR 20 despite the zoning. They're already further subdivided into smaller parcels.

(#0075) Bill Dewey stated he just wants to have consistency with the review of these rezone requests so when it comes up again to use the same rationale in reviewing the requests.

(#0100) Miscellaneous discussion regarding how the county originally placed the zoning on these properties.

(#0225) There was a motion and a second to approve the rezone request. The vote was taken and the rezone request by Ron and Gayle Barker, and Terry and Dorthee Gregg to rezone parcels at the end of Marisa Place and west of Webb Hill Road from Rural Residential 20 to Rural Residential 10 was approved.

(#0300) Discussion on changing the meeting dates in January and February of 2008 from the third Monday to the fourth Monday of the month due to conflict with holidays. There was a motion made, seconded, and approved to change the meeting dates in January and February of 2008 from the third Monday to the fourth Monday of the month.

(#0350) Bill Dewey and Jim Reece were excused from the December 17, 2007 meeting. Bill Dewey was excused from the February 25, 2008 meeting.

Meeting adjourned.