



King County

Water and Land Resources Division

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**King County Agriculture Commission
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, November 10th, 2016
King Conservation District, Renton**

Commissioners	P	A	Commissioners	P	A	Commissioners	P	A
LeAnn Krainick, Chair Pro-Tem	X		Siri Erickson-Brown	X		Leigh Newman-Bell	X	
Amy Holmes, Vice Chair Pro-Tem	X		Shelby Jors	X		Larry Pickering	X	
Roger Calhoon		X	Meredith Molli	X		Bob Vos	X	
Bruce Elliott		X	Eldon Murray	X				

P=Present; A=Absent

County Staff Present			
Patrice Barrentine, DNRP	Michael Lufkin, DNRP	Megan Moore, DNRP	John Taylor, DNRP
Joan Lee, DNRP	Richard Martin, DNRP	April Sanders, KCC	

Guests Present		
Sylvia Berndt, Enumclaw FFA	Bea Covington, KCD	Josh Monaghan, KCD
Kendra Bertrand, Enumclaw FFA	Jarvis Keller, Sno Valley Tilth	Courtney Naumann, KCD
Liz Clark, KCD	Bobbi Lindemulder	Libby Reed, SVT

Meeting Action Summary

- **Approval of October 2016 Meeting Minutes**
- **Welcome to Enumclaw FFA**
- **Recommendation for King County Farmland**
- **Comprehensive Plan Hearing & Remlinger 4:1 Proposal Update**
- **Farm Fish Flood (FFF) Draft Agreement Discussion**
- **Next Meeting: December 8th, 2016 at Pike Place Market, Seattle**

Meeting Called to Order at 4:08 pm

Approval of Meeting Agenda

LeAnn Krainick suggested switching the FFF agenda item to occur after the scheduled break, with the KC Farmland and Comp Plan items instead to precede the break. Bob Vos motioned to approve the amended agenda as suggested. Meredith Molli seconded the motion, which passed by full acclamation.

Approval of Prior Meeting Minutes

Bob Vos motioned to approve the October 13th, 2016 meeting minutes. Leigh Newman-Bell seconded the motion, which passed by full acclamation.

Public Comment

Two high school students from Enumclaw FFA spoke about their proposed goal of the city of Enumclaw becoming a participating entity with the King Conservation District (KCD). They added they would like to make a formal presentation on this project to the Commission in December 2016 and/or January 2017.

Recommendation for King County Farmland – Land Committee

Richard Martin of DNRP summarized a proposal on criteria to determine new and existing lands' potential place in the County's portfolio, and the County's role in leasing these lands to potential farmers. The two criteria agreed upon by the Land Committee were: 1) provide a launching pad for beginning farmers; and 2) ensure all suitable County lands are farmed to maximum potential. A third possibility, not specifically recommended by the Committee, was to create a broad partnership of County, non-profit, and other entities to network farmers with potential lands. He noted the Committee and County do not generally favor County fee ownership of land, except as reviewed on a case-by-case basis by the Commission.

Mr. Martin added that a long-term goal of the proposed partnership is to ensure farmers are successful by networking them with land pieces an appropriate size to be economically viable. This sparked a discussion about possible subdivision of larger parcels to reach a certain size, and a perception/concern among Commissioners that terms in the County's Farmland Preservation Program (FPP) favoring consolidation of parcels conflict with the subdivision idea. Patrice Barrentine of DNRP recommended DNRP's FPP program staff speak to the Commission in December to clarify this issue, particularly in regards to the recently-consolidated Sinnema property. Amy Holmes stated she believed the ultimate driver of this discussion was for farmland to remain farmland regardless of parcel size.

Ms. Barrentine said the Land Committee supports the idea of the County playing a role of "matchmaker" or "broker" to facilitate transition of land to new farmers, and is asking the Commission to support this recommendation. LeAnn Krainick added that the County Executive's land conservation initiative increases urgency to implement this process: that in some cases the most time-economic path to save farmland may be for the County to purchase a piece of land then make a determination on a course of action for it at a later time. She also noted that acquiring conservation funding from entities like the Nature Conservancy or Forterra would also require the County to play an intermediary role.

Bob Vos recommended clarifying the meaning of "ownership" in the proposed language, to specifically refer to keeping existing County farmland ownership. There was additional discussion on leasing property at market rates and the County's need to fulfill its "equity and social justice" requirements in this process.

Meredith Molli motioned to support the Land Committee's recommendation with Mr. Vos's suggestion incorporated. Siri Erickson-Brown seconded the motion, which passed by full acclamation.

Comprehensive Plan Hearing/Remlinger 4:1 Proposal Update – John Taylor

John Taylor of DNRP reported the King County Council (KCC) would convene a hearing to adopt the KC Comp (Comprehensive) Plan on December 5th, with a public hearing to precede on November 28th.

He spoke in more detail about a piece of the plan, the Remlingers' 4:1 proposal to develop property directly adjacent to the city of Carnation and the Snoqualmie Valley APD. Under the proposal, out of 25 total acres, five would be developed, and the other 20 added to the County's portfolio as "open space." This was not preferred by the County, Mr. Taylor said, as 4:1 land must remain open space forever, and never be used as farmland. The County also did not wish for a fee purchase of the land. He said their goal is to conserve the land, and their preference is to own the development rights, and the Remlingers lease it as farmland.

April Sanders of KC Councilmember Kathy Lambert's office advised the "worst case scenario" on the 4:1 would be, should new information come to the KCC's attention, a vote before they recess on December 12th. She affirmed that while the city of Carnation had passed an ordinance in favor of the 4:1, the Remlingers appeared to be considering a transfer of development rights (TDR) instead.

BREAK

FFF Draft Agreement – Commissioners Only (Closed Discussion)

LeAnn Krainick asked the Commission as a whole if they generally supported the spirit and intent of the proposed Farm Fish Flood (FFF) draft agreement as presented in the report document before them. Larry Pickering and Bob Vos advised they would vote against the current draft, as there were several issues they did not believe had been adequately addressed in it. Meredith Molli also voiced reservations.

Siri Erickson-Brown, who served as Commission designee in FFF, said she fully supported the action item agreements that emerged from the FFF process, and encouraged fellow Commissioners to do likewise. She believed the agriculture caucus achieved the best results possible with the means provided, but there was a missed discussion on how the County would manage the agricultural land base in the Snoqualmie Valley, and balance its needs with fish recovery. She reiterated a concern that implementation of the FFF process had removed regulatory language protecting land in the SV APD from outside developers or restoration projects. There had been caucus discussion about a “cap” on the total land removed from agricultural use for projects, but she did not believe the current FFF implementation timeline placed enough urgency on this concern. She strongly urged the Commission to make this issue a top priority going forward.

Several questions sparking lengthy discussion were raised concerning the uncertain nature and purpose of the next phase of FFF, “FFF 2.0,” and specific issues that individual Commissioners wished to see addressed in the agreement. Amy Holmes and Ms. Krainick presented a draft letter for Commission review, with a purpose of stating to the County the Commission’s general support for the spirit of the agreement, but also noting their specific concerns. Ms. Holmes stressed this letter was not intended as blanket approval of the agreement, but an urgent opportunity for the Commission’s voice to be relevant in the FFF 2.0 process.

Bob Vos recommended four concerns to include in the letter: 1) concrete definition of “wins” (progress) for agriculture to match those of the fish community; 2) a definitive list of farm-friendly caucus members for FFF 2.0; 3) a to-be-determined security mechanism to assure “bundled” priorities for the three caucuses move forward together; and 4) fair and balanced representation and implementation for “pilot programs” like drainage and alluvial fans. Commissioners voiced general consensus to include these concerns in the letter. John Taylor advised that further negotiation on some of these concerns could forestall completing work for FFF 2.0, but noted the Commission needs to be comfortable with the document. He also advised any requested changes to the agreement would be best circulated for discussion as specifically worded language in a document. This discussion, he said, could either occur through email or a meeting.

Prolonged discussion followed on what the specific security mechanism in #3 above should be. Due to time constraints, Mr. Vos suggested holding a special meeting between tonight and next scheduled Commission meeting to continue this discussion. Patrice Barrentine proposed a three-hour meeting where the present document was reviewed line by line, with a focus on a mechanism to enforce bundling. Several staff from non-county entities were suggested for inclusion in the meeting to assist. The Commissioners present agreed to convene this meeting on November 28th from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm in the Snoqualmie Valley.

Updates – Commission Details

- **KCD, Farm Bureau, Agriculture Program:** These updates were tabled due to lack of time.
- **Commission Details:** Patrice Barrentine reported Anne Becker had resigned from the Commission, effective immediately.

Meeting Adjourned at 7:20 pm

Next Meeting

Thursday, December 8th, 2016 at 4:00 pm
Pike Place Market, Seattle