

**Agricultural Advisory Committee
Meeting Summary
April 8, 2015**

Start Time:	3:35 p.m.
Location:	Whatcom County Northwest Annex

Meeting Highlights

There were 13 people in attendance (8 of the 13 voting members; 5 staff members).

Attendees – Members	Affiliation	Present
Bayer, John	Farmer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Blok, Ed	Whatcom Farm Friends	<input type="checkbox"/>
Boxx, Lesa	Consumer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Buys, Dave	Farmer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Hawley, Vicki	Processor	<input type="checkbox"/>
Helm, Larry	Farmer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Finger, Mike	Farmer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Kentch, Wesley	Farmer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Overson, Leighton	Farmer	<input type="checkbox"/>
Plagerman, Leroy	Farmer	<input type="checkbox"/>
Vander Veen, Debbie	Farmer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Van Dyk, Landon	Farmer	<input type="checkbox"/>
Yoder, Richard	Conservation District Board	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Quorum Present YES NO

Attendees – Ex-Official/Contributing	Affiliation	Present
Antholt, Charles	Chair Emeritus	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bierlink, Henry	Whatcom Farm Friends	<input type="checkbox"/>
Boggs, George	Conservation District	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gillies, John	Farm Expertise	<input type="checkbox"/>
(vacant)	FFA Youth	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hall, Alex	NRCS	<input type="checkbox"/>
Benedict, Chris	WSU Extension	<input type="checkbox"/>

Attendees - Staff	Present	Attendees - Staff	Present
Beringer, Karin	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Boxx, Becky	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Elder, Chris	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Cliff Strong	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Mark Personius	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		

Others Present

Approval of Meeting Summary

March Minutes: Dave suggested the last paragraph, under Old Business, read: ~~The AAC brought up a~~ A new scenario was brought up: only rezoning parcels larger than 20 acres in the RSA's to AG (1 per 40 acre density). Staff will look into how many potential DU's that would remove and bring that information to the next meeting. Wes moved to approve the minutes as amended. Larry seconded. Motion carried.

Open Session for Public Comments

Buzz Kats spoke regarding various enforcement activity upon his farm by the Department of Ecology (DOE) and the Environmental Protection Agency. This was followed by discussion of the committee members regarding various enforcement issues. The main topic of discussion was manure runoff into waterbodies. Mr. Kats would like to create a non-profit organization to fight these departments.

Larry Helm moved that the AAC send a letter be sent to Executive Louws requesting that the AAC is involved in the front end of any potential grant that impacts agricultural land. Dick seconded. The motion passed.

The committee asked staff to arrange to have DOE and Erika Douglas-Public Works attended their next meeting.

Old Business

The question was raised to meet in the summer or not. The committee will consider it and decide at their next meeting.

★ Rural Land Study Area to Small Lot Ag Presentation and Discussion

Karin reviewed the power point which was previously presented to the committee in 2014. There are some uses currently allowed in the Rural zone that would not be allowed in the new Ag zones and vice-versa. The rezone would not affect development rights or take the place of the APO. After studying the potential rezone it is not clear if the effort will help maintain Ag land. Staff added a "Firewall Policy" which states Ag land (40 acre minimum parcel size) cannot be rezoned to AG-5 or AG-10. The committee will decide at the next meeting what their recommendation will be.

New Business

★ Agricultural Mitigation

The county is applying for another grant to build on the work done through the first grant. A large part of the grant will focus on working with the AAC and Planning Commission to develop more fully develop an agricultural mitigation program.

Karin had the committee review the proposed letter to the Executive, County Council and the city/county planning group. The committee agreed to send the letter as written. (Motion Larry, second Debbie)

Closing:	
End Time: 5:36 p.m.	
Next Meeting Date/Time/Location	May 13, 2015/3:30 pm/Northwest Annex