

AGENDA

Conservation Easement Program Oversight Committee

Planning and Development Services – Northwest Annex

5280 Northwest Dr, Bellingham, WA 98226

Northwest Annex Conference Room

or

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83517926824?pwd=SnVUOVRKbVBQekdrUnVzNDIySTJQZz09>

Passcode: cepoc

Friday, October 28, 2022

8:30 – 10:00 AM

1. **Welcome, announcements, public comments, & agenda review (10 minutes)**
2. **Approval of previous meeting minutes (5 minutes)**
3. **Updates since previous meeting (5 minutes)**
4. **Discussion items/business (60 minutes)**
 - Whatcom County Budget Update
 - Utilize Buy-Protect-Sell and Buy-Protect-Lease Strategies
 - Farmland Access Forum
5. **Public comments (5 minutes)**
6. **Next meeting (5 minutes)**
 - December 9th, 8:30-10:00 AM- Online and In-Person Option
 - Future agenda items
 - Review Master Applicant List

Included in the meeting packet (or provided at the meeting):

- July Meeting Minutes

Community members who require special assistance to participate in a committee meeting are asked to contact the meeting facilitator at least 4 business days in advance. Please contact meeting facilitator, Becky Snijder van Wissenkerke, at 360-778-5956 or rsnijder@whatcomcounty.us.

Determination of a Quorum/ Welcome

We have a Quorum for the meeting.

Public Comments

No public comments at this time.

Announcements

No announcements at this time.

Approval of Minutes – June

Jeff moved to approve the meeting minutes. Sean seconded. **The motion passed with all in favor.**

Updates Since Previous Meeting

Heather announced she attended the Climate Impact Advisory Committee meeting last night. She asked for strong communication and coordination from the Climate Program and also requested the CIAC draft a letter of support for the CEP's additional staffing request. The CIAC showed interest in data sharing and long range conservation efforts. The Climate Program is about to hire a manager and data specialist. Heather suggested we ask the CIAC to present at a future CEP meeting.

Discussion Items/BusinessMeeting with County Executive

Heather provided an update on the meeting that three committee members had with the Executive's Office. Committee members were directed to work with PDS management on the CEP staffing request. Committee members were also informed that the Executive's Office intends to work with department heads on Conservation Futures coordination. Heather and Paul will draft the talking points from the meeting.

Program Acquisition Update

Becky provided an update of the conservation easements to be purchased this year. Heather asked to look at the master list of program applicants at the next meeting.

Utilize Buy-Protect-Sell Strategy

The committee briefly discussed further pursuing buy-protect-sell/lease strategies with easements. The committee requested more information on other organizations' use of such strategy. Sean suggested contacting Whatcom Community Foundation and Cloud Mountain Farm Center to see their interest and ability to contribute to pursue buy-protect-sell easements. Sean also added that it is easier to have a profitable farm on leased land. It was noted that further conversation is needed at the next meeting when the committee chair and land trust staff are present.

CEP Staffing Request

Becky provided an update on the meeting she and Paul had with PDS management to discuss the committee's increased staffing request. She reviewed the draft request and inquired about specific details for the position. The committee stated that the request should be for a permanent mid-level planner and should focus on program outreach. Heather and Jen agreed to review the draft request and provide edits. The committee also requested that Becky recirculate the editorial piece Jen had previously drafted.

Closing Comments

No closing comments at this time.

Future Agenda Items

- Whatcom County Budget Update
- Utilize Buy-Protect-Sell Strategy
- Review Master Applicant List

Next Meeting

The next meeting was scheduled for Friday, September 23, 2022, 8:30-10:00 AM. This will be a hybrid meeting with an in-person and remote option.

Meeting adjourned at 9:53 AM.