

**Agricultural Advisory Committee
Meeting Summary
March 12, 2015**

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

Meeting Highlights

There were 15 people in attendance (9 of the 13 voting members; 2 ex-officio, contributing, 4 staff members and 1 others).

Attendees – Members	Affiliation	Present
Bayer, John	Farmer	<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Plagerman, Leroy	Farmer	<input type="checkbox"/>
Vander Veen, Debbie	Farmer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Van Dyk, Landon	Farmer	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Yoder, Richard	Conservation District Board	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Quorum Present	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>
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Attendees – Ex-Official/Contributing	Affiliation	Present
Antholt, Charles	Chair Emeritus	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Bierlink, Henry	Whatcom Farm Friends	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/>
Elder, Chris	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Cliff Strong	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Mark Personius	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		

Others Present		
Rod Ericcson?		

Approval of Meeting Summary

January Minutes- Larry motion, Debbie second, all approve. Wes raises the question of Richard Yoder being reappointed. In the January minutes it says that Richard Yoder did not reapply. At that time, that was our current info, so we will just add to this meeting's minutes that Richard has been reappointed.

February Minutes- Larry would like to add to the quote "Larry would like to see the PIC Program address waterfowl *because it reflects good science.*" Debbie motioned to accept the minutes with Larry's modification. Landon seconded. All approve.

Open Session for Public Comments

Henry Bierlink spoke on the need for an AG mitigation program and a policy in the comp plan to protect ag lands from UGA expansion. Karin says that the AAC will be working on policy recommendations for an AG mitigation program at their next meeting(s).

Henry would like to see a letter from the AAC to the cities and county council to let them know that the AAC is working on an AG mitigation program. Mike Finger moved that a letter be drafted. Larry seconded the motion. All approve. Staff will draft a letter with assistance from the committee, and will bring the draft to the committee for the next (April) meeting.

Old Business

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

Cliff Strong presented a power point regarding the small lot ag zones. The reasoning behind the small lot ag zone is to help support the goal of 100,000 acres of agricultural land the county set. The uses in the new zone mostly reflect uses in the current agricultural zone. Larger uses currently allowed in the rural zone, not to be allowed in the new ag zone are schools, churches, campgrounds, recreation facilities, etc. In a staff memo it was cited "In staff discussions, we have asked ourselves, "Would a rezone of RSA lands to small-lot ag (with no reduction in densities) accomplish this request?" It would make it more difficult to change the GMA land use designation from Ag back to Rural (or some other designation), but so far all we have talked about is making the new small-lot Ag zones more like the Ag-40 zone in terms of uses. There's not a huge difference in existing and proposed uses. This, in and of itself, may not meet Council's expectations of strengthening farmland preservation policies." Potential scenarios were discussed which the AAC was asked to think about and prepare to make a recommendation by the end of their business year (May).

The AAC brought up a new scenario: 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.

New Business

No New Business

Closing:	
End Time: 5:30 p.m.	
Next Meeting Date/Time/Location	April 8, 2015/3:30 pm/Northwest Annex