

Whatcom County Council Planning and Development Committee

**COUNTY COURTHOUSE
311 Grand Avenue, Ste #105
Bellingham, WA 98225-4038
(360) 778-5010**



Committee Minutes - Final

Tuesday, October 24, 2023

2:35 PM

Hybrid Meeting

**HYBRID MEETING - ADJOURNS BY 3:05 P.M., MAY BEGIN EARLY
(PARTICIPATE IN-PERSON, SEE REMOTE JOIN INSTRUCTIONS AT
www.whatcomcounty.us/joinvirtualcouncil, OR CALL 360.778.5010)**

COUNCILMEMBERS

Tyler Byrd
Ben Elenbaas
Kaylee Galloway

CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

Dana Brown-Davis, C.M.C.

Call To Order

Committee Chair Ben Elenbaas called the meeting to order at 2:15 p.m. in a hybrid meeting.

Roll Call

Present: 3 - Tyler Byrd, Ben Elenbaas, and Kaylee Galloway

Also Present: Barry Buchanan, Todd Donovan, Carol Frazey, and Kathy Kershner

Announcements

Committee Discussion and Recommendation to Council

1. [AB2023-701](#) Resolution amending Resolution 2023-033 to docket an additional Comprehensive Plan and zoning amendment related to County Code 20.68 and other relevant sections of Title 20 to define appropriate industrial uses and conditions for industrial uses in Heavy Impact Industrial (HII) Districts within a city's designated urban growth area

Donovan briefed the Councilmembers and stated this is for the purpose of giving direction to Planning staff so they can work on something that can go to the Planning Commission and then come back to the Council. It is amending the docket.

Galloway moved that the Resolution be RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL.

Elenbaas asked whether it is necessary to docket this with the Comprehensive Plan review coming up in 2025 and Donovan stated it has to be docketed either way.

Councilmembers discussed the motion and the sentiment of maintaining our industrial lands.

Galloway stated, she hopes they would be thoughtful about where they can add industrial zones in other places if they are going to rezone or down zone industry lands because it is important to ensure a vibrant economy and family wage jobs.

Elenbaas stated there is a lot of support for a working waterfront. He does not oppose docketing this for a robust process. It is unfortunate they could not have done that years ago.

Galloway's motion that the Resolution be RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL carried by the following vote:

Aye: 3 - Byrd, Elenbaas, and Galloway

Nay: 0

Committee Discussion

1. [AB2023-398](#) Discussion of an ordinance adopting various amendments to WCC Title 20, Zoning, regarding home-based businesses

Elenbaas stated he thought this was not ready for prime time since he is gathering feedback and has not collected as much feedback as he was hoping to. His preference would be that they hold off on moving forward on this because there have been a few concerns. One concern was the regulation for two weeks a year for camping in the Agritourism Activities definition in Whatcom County Code Chapter 20.97. There are consequences to some of these regulations that might not fit what is actually happening in the Ag zone.

Cliff Strong, Planning and Development Services Department, stated we do regulate campgrounds already and there are certain facilities that you need for setting up campgrounds.

Elenbaas stated those types of events tend to regulate themselves. He would like to collect more feedback.

Strong read from the memo for this date (on file) and spoke about the proposed changes.

Elenbaas spoke about his concern with the language in Chapter 20.97 Agritourism Activities which says:

...Activities such as farm festivals, barn parties, and camping may be considered agritourism activities only if limited to two weekends per year; otherwise it is a Type IV Home-Based Business.

Two weekends a year seems like it might discourage more of those activities and he thinks the public would like to see more.

Donovan asked whether there is anything in the code about distance or offset buffer regulations for event facilities (besides the parcel size not being less than 10 acres) to take into account, even on a bigger parcel, an event that might be closer to a cluster of neighbors.

Strong stated those regulations have to do with event facilities and not agritourism and he is thinking about rural areas where there are a lot more houses wanting to do these types of events.

Elenbaas spoke about the regulations maybe being more prohibitive to smaller farms in the rural zone. He stated they will move forward with getting feedback and will come back to this at a later date.

This agenda item was DISCUSSED.

Items Added by Revision

There were no agenda items added by revision.

Other Business

There was no other business.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 2:45 p.m.

ATTEST:

WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL
WHATCOM COUNTY, WA

Ben Elenbaas-via email 11/28/2023

Dana Brown-Davis, Council Clerk

Ben Elenbaas, Committee Chair

Kristi Felbinger, Minutes Transcription

SIGNED COPY ON FILE