

Whatcom County Council Planning and Development Committee

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



Committee Minutes - Draft Minutes

Wednesday, November 5, 2025

10:30 AM

Hybrid Meeting - Council Chambers

**HYBRID MEETING - MAY BEGIN EARLY - ADJOURNS BY 10:45 A.M.
(PARTICIPATE IN-PERSON, SEE REMOTE JOIN INSTRUCTIONS AT
www.whatcomcounty.us/joinvirtualcouncil, OR CALL 360.778.5010)**

COUNCILMEMBERS

Todd Donovan
Ben Elenbaas
Jon Scanlon

CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

Cathy Halka, AICP, CMC

Call To Order

Committee Chair Ben Elenbaas called the meeting to order at 10:33 a.m. in a hybrid meeting.

Roll Call

Present: 2 - Ben Elenbaas, and Jon Scanlon

Absent: 1 - Todd Donovan

Also Present: Barry Buchanan, Tyler Byrd, Kaylee Galloway, and Mark Stremmer

Announcements

Committee Discussion and Recommendation to Council

1. [AB2025-769](#) Resolution approving recommendation on an application for open space current use assessment

Alexander Harris, Planning and Development Services Department, read from a presentation (on file) and briefed the councilmembers on the application. He stated this came before the Planning Commission on the 9th of October and had a lower (though high enough) score at that time because the landowner was not interested at that point in accommodating recreation. There is a restrictive conservation easement on the property through Whatcom Land Trust that is protecting sensitive wildlife habitat. On October 9th, the Planning Commission decided to not recommend approval unless the landowner were to accommodate public access.

Collin Stevens, landowner, gave a history of the property, regarding open space, which was not included in the application, and how it should have been classified as open space years ago. He stated the property scored high enough without having public access, which is why he submitted in that fashion (and that was supported by the Whatcom Land Trust). However, based on the recommendation to deny unless there was public access, he submitted a memorandum to offer some public access. He answered what the reasons would be to no allow it and what allowance his memorandum proposed.

Harris answered what effect a conservation easement has on taxes, and spoke about how it affected this property.

Councilmembers and the speakers discussed what level of public access the property should have and that the landowner's proposal of limited access is what is being presented to the Council, and Harris answered questions.

**Scanlon moved that the Resolution be RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL
AS WRITTEN. The motion carried by the following vote:**

Aye: 2 - Elenbaas, and Scanlon

Nay: 0

Absent: 1 - Donovan

Items Added by Revision

There were no agenda items added by revision.

Other Business

There was no other business.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 10:58 a.m.

ATTEST:

WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL
WHATCOM COUNTY, WA

Cathy Halka, Council Clerk

Ben Elenbaas, Committee Chair

Meeting Minutes prepared by Kristi Felbinger