Preserving Rural Character—Agriculturism

Agriculturism is becoming more and more popular across the state. Agriculturists can choose from a wide range of activities that include growing fruits and vegetables, feeding horses, tending honey, keeping wine and cheesemaking, or shopping for fresh gift shop and farm stands for local hand-crafted goods. Agriculturism gives farmers the opportunity to educate visitors about their way of life and share their agricultural livelihoods with others.

Due to economic hardships and changes in farming industries across the state, many farmers, especially those with small, family-owned farms, have found they must supplement their agricultural business model and explore new ways of generating income.

With so many wonderful agricultural activities in Thurston County, Commissioner Romero’s Office has been working to create a TDR program in order to help farmers continue farming and keep the state’s economy moving forward.

Thurston County was the first county in the state to create a TDR program, but since then the program has not been used to its full potential. A group of farmers and stakeholders is trying to fix that problem with the help of a full-time temporary staff member who will start January, 2011.

As an incentive for preserving these rural lands, layers of the rights have greater flexibility within certain urban zoning areas.

Traditionally the flexibility has been in the form of development density, but to make this program successful we may need to look at new innovative incentives, including parking height limits, co2 mitigation, and acreage densities.

For more information on the county’s TDR program please go to: www.thurston.wa.us/tbrd

Agritourism gives farmers the opportunity to educate visitors about their way of life and share their agricultural livelihoods with others.

Conserving Rural Lands—TDRs

(Transfer of Development Rights)

Update: Off Leash Dog Park Now OPEN

Dogs of all shapes, colors and sizes celebrated the county’s first off-leash dog area with a “paw-cising” ceremony on October 29.

The new site is now open and located at the county’s Waste and Recovery Center at 4210 Hogum Bay Road N.E. in Lacey.

The five-acre facility, open from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., seven days a week, features a special area for small dogs and small, water-station (for dogs and people), a sand and gravel area for digging, paws and pooping.

This is a very exciting and long-awaited event. We’ve received many calls asking about when this park would open.

The five-acre site includes a large, dog-friendly paved path and decorative fire hydrants.

The park consists of personalized “tribute” bricks available for purchase from Thurston County Animal Services, 323-2210. Proceeds from the sale of the sand blasted and engraved bricks will benefit the Hawks Picnic Facility and other future off-leash acreage in the county.

Please note that parking is currently very limited. A separate, parking lot with direct access to the off-leash area will be completed early in 2011. In the meantime, vehicles will enter through the Chehalis Loop Park parking area.

Details on the facility are available at the county’s Visitor’s Guide, Workforce Office at 751-4380.

To subscribe to this list please send an email to: paribel@co.thurston.wa.us

Conserving Rural Lands—TDRs

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