

**THURSTON COUNTY
AGRICULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**McLane Building Conference Room
5033 Harrison Avenue
Olympia, WA 98502**

APRIL 24, 2014

MINUTES

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Pat Labine, Co-Chair
Doug Wiseman
Robert McIntosh
Eric Johnson
Bill Wyman

MEMBERS EXCUSED: John Lentz, Lucas Patzek, E.J. Zita, Chery Sullivan, Dave Nygard, Erik Hagan

STAFF: Polly Stoker, WSU Thurston County Extension

GUESTS: Concerned Citizens regarding C & R Resources Application: Shelly Forest, Bonnie Johnson, Rick Petrich and Glen Johnson

Agenda Item Speakers: Sara Brallier, Andrew Deffobis

GUESTS: Sierra Smith

CALL TO ORDER – 7:10pm, Pat Labine, Co-Chair

ADOPTION OF MINUTES – The minutes from March were approved (after review of the bylaws stating the attendees at a meeting can approve minutes even if there is not a quorum).

REVIEW AGENDA –

THE PUBLIC COMMENT was provided by the above mentioned citizens listed as “concerned citizens regarding C&R Resources’ application. They are concerned with this industrial type business going in near their rural neighborhood in Tenino. According to the citizens at tonight’s meeting, this LLC has already built a 8 ft. tall solid fence around the front 5 acres and is putting up green houses (95 ft x 50 ft) with cement foundations (which are not legal due to the fact they will not be portable) The house that is on the property is now not occupied by a resident even though the application states a person lives there. It is actually an attorney who has now incorporated themselves into an LLC. The windows have been knocked out and boarded it up with plywood and venting has been added. (Tonight’s group of citizens stated there is no building permit for these changes in the house.) They feel C&R Resources has gone full steam ahead without approval of their special use permit from the county. A question they have for the AG Committee is if the committee even defines Marijuana as an AG crop due to the fact it is still listed as a “controlled substance” by definition. They state it’s the manner in which it is being grown, not the actual marijuana that is in question. It’s coming into a neighborhood and changes the

look and feel of it since these grow operations are an industrial type of business and not a “plow the field” type of AG farmland crop. The public here today feels like the county has made the ordinance difficult for the cities to have these grow operations, which then drives them to the outlying areas where the county will benefit from the tax money collected. Another concern is the environmental impacts of this being an indoor grow? They state the experts in greenhouse grows say toxic mold and bacteria will be rampant on the indoor crop unless fans are used to circulate the air. They intend to have grow lights on 24/7 which will be disturbing for the neighbors. Per the homeowners here tonight, they state the property is zoned rural residential, and this is going to be an industrial type business that belongs in a warehouse. They are also required to have a 24/7 surveillance camera on each corner of the property which makes it seem like they are in danger of being robbed in this small and up to this point, safe community.

ANNOUNCEMENTS & OTHER BUSINESS –

The letter recommending Kevin Jensen be added to the AG Committee as a farmer member was approved and signed. It will be delivered to the Commissioners next week.

DIRECTOR REPORT: n/a

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS: The group would like a representative from County Development Dept. (Mike Kain?) and also someone from WA State Ecology Dept to come and educate the committee on the Permit Green Sheets, and Water Rights questions that keep arising with the marijuana grow operations.

CONSERVATION FUTURES RANKING PROCESS AND RESOURCES TO EDUCATE – Andrew Deffobis

Prior to this meeting, Andrew emailed documents showing the Conservation Futures Operational Guidelines, Strategic Plan and Group Ranking Criteria so that Robert can present a brief synopsis of the legal requirements for selecting CF projects at our next meeting. Andrew came tonight to answer questions that were not quite defined last month when Scott Clark was a guest speaker. Since 1990 over 4000 acres have been preserved through this program. The applications that are submitted are all sponsored by a land trusts or non-profit organization. The AG committee wanted to be assured the majority of the CF money awarded is used to save farm lands and requested the actual percentage since the inception of this program. (Andrew said he would research the question.) Another question is about this year’s funding and how much of it is being earmarked for County to mitigate the impact of the permits they will be approving or work the actual county may be doing. Andrew shared that yes, the county will need to acquire land to be in compliance for the future listings of the endangered species acts and CF is a potential source of funding. The exact number of acreage needed to be in compliance is not known at this time. In addition to the county needing to mitigate impact, JBLM is also doing this same. Both are partners in the “REPI” project (Readiness and Environmental Protection Initiative). This is a pot of money funded by the federal department of defense to help set aside prairies that are impacted by the endangered species act. This is part of the new national program called Sentinel Landscapes partnership and Andrew can send the committee more information on this. Andrew also wanted to remind the committee that these prairie lands and farm land can work together benefitting both sides. Bottom line how it would work is this...there are species on the list that are on your 5 acre plot and you are surrounded by development. It doesn’t make sense to tell you not to develop your land but you will need to pay a fee to mitigate your use of the land to save another piece of land where the species could live.

TC ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH, WATER/SEWER REGULATIONS & STANDARDS – Sara Brallier
Sara passed out the “small public water systems” latest newsletter (March 2014) which outlined new rulings for 2014. She also brought a document from the Liquor Control Board which addresses the regulatory/permitting guidelines for indoor marijuana producers. Basically 2 of our health codes are related to sewer and water and both are driven by state law and adopted by ordinance by the county. The county can be more stringent with these

laws but cannot be less stringent. Article 4 is the septic system, and is exactly the same as the state law. Article 3 is drinking water and does have local ordinances that the county implemented back in 1994 to address the urban growth areas and boundaries. She also went over what's a public water system? The different types are single family well for a single family, Group A which is a system serving more than 25 people per day, and Group B which serves less than 25 people per day. For agriculture, the limit is 750 gallons per hose bid, per day times 6 lots = 5,000 gallons per day. Currently, there is not regulation that monitors agricultural use of water. There is an annual fee to help monitor the Group B systems since there is not enough staff to go out and inspect the units individually.

BUILDING PERMITS were reviewed and there were concerns with two: C&R Resources LLC & Schumaker applications were incomplete due to not identifying their water plan usage as well as how they will manage run-off or waste-stream. Lucas will draft an email to send to County addressing these concerns. (The C&R Resources LLC is the property that all of the public attendees tonight came to protest their application as well.)

Below were the concerns for each. The Two Permit Applications that were marked for concerns from the April AG Meeting were:

C&R Resources LLC & Silica Phoenix LLC, project # [2014101063](#)

and

Schumaker, project #[2014101205](#)

On both, the question arose as to why these were even being presented on "green" sheets to the county if they are an agricultural enterprise, versus a permit for development? And the AG Committee would like someone from the Development Dept. to come speak on that issue to explain it. They are also hoping that someone from Ecology could come speak regarding this topic to in regards to water rights, nitrates, herbicides & pesticides that may be used in these grow operations.

Another point that if these are actually Farm Applications, they would be required to have a Farm Plan from the Conservation District, and their CD is not even listed on the green sheets as a resource to checkmark off.

On the C&R Resources, the concerns specifically are:

-the grow lights illumination on the 6 hoop houses which are going up and will need to be on 24/7 and how this will affect the AG farmlands around them.

-the greenhouses going up are not portable as they are required to be, but are being cemented into place as a permanent structure

-8 ft fencing around the entire property that has already been put up prior to this "green sheet" being approved.

-Toxic Mold

-Water run off

On Schumaker, the notes indicate that there the application does not show enough information about WATER, (usage, rights, disposal) Also there is not a written waste disposal plan for liquid (250gal) and fibrous waste.

What's the contact for the disposal of this waste? Where is this offsite water from that will be shipped in as noted on the app? Is the water right commercial? The Zoning is 1:5 not commercial. Need a definition of licensed premises: is it 5 acres? States it is a producer but in the text is a Processor too?

Another question is on the application it states it will ship in water but does not identify where the water will come from. Anything with hydroponic needs a disposal plan as well and these applications are lacking that as well.

ADJOURN – 9:30pm, Pat Labine, Co-Chair