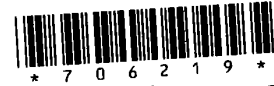


O'Donnell, Mary Beth



CP16#0279

From: Tilton, Rebecca
Sent: Wednesday, September 10, 2014 1:35 PM
To: Mielke, Tom, Madore, David; Barnes, Ed, Orjiako, Oliver, O'Donnell, Mary Beth
Subject: Written Testimony re. Comp Plan Update
Attachments: Susan Rasmussen_09-09-14.pdf, Carol Levanen comments_090214 pdf

Hello,

Attached please find written testimony submitted from Carol Levanen and Susan Rasmussen during the Sept. 9 board hearing (public comment time).

Thank you,
Rebecca

cc-d-BOCC
Orjako
O'Donnell

for the public record
Dawn Rasmussen for CCCZ, Inc.

Sept. 9, 2014

The Need for a Rural Development Council In Washington State **RECEIVED**

Concept Paper: *Forming a Rural Agenda*

January 2014

SEP - 9 2014

need to fix the obsolete, restrictive Home Business
OC Ordinance
Board of Commissioners

Introduction

* Historical evidence readily demonstrates the ongoing economic challenges faced by many living in our rural communities. These communities continue to face community and economic development challenges that can include fewer financing choices from private and public funding agencies, lower wages and higher unemployment for rural residents as well as the historic out-migration of its younger, more educated population. Making rural communities viable, attractive, and sustainable is essential to the survival of rural America.

Though not all of Washington State is rural, rural issues affect all in Washington and rural Washington State continues to make significant contributions to our nation's economy. Agriculture and its many related industries and businesses continue to support the rural way of life; however, as economic opportunities in rural America can be limited, more and more rural Americans must now seek ways to improve their education, build a career, and achieve personal goals outside of their rural location. The good news is that there are many new and emerging industries that are coming out of rural America such as renewable and alternative energy including wind, solar, biofuels and bio-mass and internet protocol-based businesses to mention a few.

With these things in mind, we offer that the re-creation of a Rural Development Council (RDC) in Washington State can provide a means for rural communities to better choose their paths to success by improving partnerships with local, state, federal and tribal governments and maximizing those efforts by working more efficiently with strategic, private/public community and economic development groups and partnerships. These are just some of the reasons we highly recommend the reestablishment of a Rural Development Council in Washington State.

The Current Situation

In Washington State, federal, state, public, private and philanthropic resources are available as community building resources for rural communities. There are also a good number of high functioning interagency and private/public strategic partnerships working in areas such as health care, education, employment, housing, and business. It is our hope that by re-creating a Rural Development Council we can better coordinate all of these organizational efforts so important to helping determine a path to prosperity for our rural Washington residents thus, promoting prosperity for all Washington residents.

Currently, there is no systemic and sustainable mechanism for rural stakeholders to effectively communicate with each other in a coordinated way. There needs to be a more efficient way of sharing information with the focus on maximizing how resources can best be

utilized, based on local priorities and a rural plan – a state rural agenda if you will. Also, local rural communities could potentially benefit from a more holistic way of coming together to decide on a set of regional priorities for community development activities that could tie into a larger statewide dialogue on rural Washington priorities.

Some Solutions

In these days of fewer public resources, serious economic challenges, eroding rural community infrastructure and shrinking government it is more important than ever that informed public policy and economic decisions be made using a system that utilizes good information exchange between all stakeholders. We believe a RDC could better help accomplish this. This goal should also include the provision of effective capacity building for rural communities to help them set local and regional priorities. All of this could be better achieved by:

- Establishing a RDC that would consist of state rural leaders and stakeholders to lead on rural issues and identify a rural, community and economic development strategic agenda for Washington State.
- Utilizing the RDC to identify local, regional, agricultural, federal, and state priorities to help inform rural policy and funding decisions.
- Providing a strategic means for rural communities to build capacity and access technical assistance for community planning and to set local and regional goals and priorities.
- Coordinating the deployment of public and private resources, including those of philanthropy, for a better informed investment of financial and technical assistance resources into the rural areas of Washington State.
- Using an internet/web based platform as a tool to: 1) Identify the need for technical and planning assistance for rural communities and deploy that assistance, 2) Garner regional, local input on locally established priorities to advise funding decisions made by resource providers, and 3) Establish a tracking clearinghouse type system where funders, communities, and stakeholders could view community projects underway and the status of funding for those projects in real time.

RDC Governance and Sustainability

The primary purposes of a Washington State RDC should be fivefold. These are to:

- 1) Bring rural stakeholders together for ongoing and informed discussions on what rural goals and needs are in the state and set priorities for how these can be met.
- 2) Ensure that a means for local community/regional capacity building and planning exists in our state.
- 3) Provide a way for rural communities and regions to feed into the discussion of the RDC to provide a data base of established local and regional priorities.

4) Provide a source of policy input/feedback where rural needs can be factually assessed in a prioritized way by policy and funding decision makers.

5) Create a way where public and private resources could be planfully invested in rural areas based on a rural agenda and local and/or regional priorities.

In establishing a RDC in Washington, care must be given to ensure several factors. Some of these have already been mentioned; however, first, the Council should include input from stakeholders from all levels of rural concern. These should include but not necessarily be limited to representation from:

- Agricultural production and value-added industry
- Local jurisdictions – counties, cities, towns, socio-economic regions and tribal areas
- Business and Economic Development
- Housing
- Education
- Health care
- WSU Cooperative Extension
- Philanthropy
- State and Federal government agencies
- State, Federal, Local government political representatives and elected officials
- Tribes as sovereign nations
- Technical assistance providers for services across multiple disciplines related to the spectrum of rural, community and economic development needs

A critical consideration is how RDC governance will work and how stakeholders will be able to provide ongoing input into the mission and purpose of the Council. Governance can be ultimately decided as stakeholders convene to establish the work of the Council; however, to accomplish this in a sustainable way, some entity needs to ultimately "own" the work of the Council and it is recommended here that the State of Washington take on that ownership.

Currently, the State of Washington may not appear to be in a good position to expend sizeable financial resources for this work; however, the value of the RDC in terms of stakeholder input, prioritization and coordination for the investment of public and private resources into rural areas thus achieving increased efficiencies in this regard, require the State give this type of supportive investment into a RDC high consideration. Stakeholder commitment to the work of a RDC in Washington has the potential to bring on board intellectual capital that would ensure efficient expenditure of scarce public and private resources. This could also create a culture of sharing best practices that could elevate the effectiveness of community and economic development efforts as whole, in our state. Based on current outreach, it is clear that a high level of interest exists on the part of rural and other stakeholders in the creation of a RDC in Washington State.

Finally, a sustainable financial support model for a RDC still needs to be crafted, but can come from the deliberations that form and promote an initial council. Models from other states, including Oregon, Wyoming, Minnesota, and Kansas, have utilized multiple sources, such as fee for services income, as well as contributions from philanthropy and public sources to sustain the work of the RDC's in their respective states.

Conclusion

There are many fine accomplishments and successes that have occurred and are currently occurring across the multiple disciplines of community/economic development work in rural Washington. Many fine-tuned and high functioning partnerships are tending to rural concerns and needs from local to statewide levels. These include entities from local, public, private sectors, philanthropic organizations, nonprofits, businesses, agricultural groups, health care and education entities among others. However, there does not exist a way for these groups to coordinate their work with each other from an established set of priorities that blend with public policy and support a multi-faceted rural agenda in Washington State.

Finally, the time has come to maximize the use of modern web based technology as a tool for rural leaders, policy makers, stakeholders and funders to ease the need for labor intensive efforts used in the past in the areas of outreach, capacity building, planning, community relations, funding decision making and community technical assistance. The use of technology like this could modernize local planning, further local priorities and better effectuate the funding of prioritized projects. Web based platforms to accomplish this exist now and we should be utilizing these tools to make community development efforts in rural areas more coordinated and efficient.

Comments can be made to Mario Villanueva, State Director, USDA Rural Development
t (360) 704-7715 / email mario.villanueva@wa.usda.gov

Rec'd 9/2/14 from
Carol Levanen - rit

Clark County Board of Commissioners
P.O. Box 5000
Vancouver, Washington 98666

September 2, 2014

Re: 2007 Comprehensive Land Use Plan Resource Land Maps

RCW 36.70A requires that certain criteria be used when designating resource lands in a counties Comprehensive Land Use Plan. To aid in those designations, certain language can be found in the Washington Administrative Code (WAC).

WAC 365-190-040 Process, item (4) states, *Classification is the first step in implementing RCW 36.70A.170 and requires defining categories to which natural resource lands and critical areas will be assigned. (5) Designation is the second step in implementing RCW 36.70A.170. (8) Counties and cities must involve the public in classifying and designating natural resource lands and critical areas. The process should include: (i) public participation should include, at a minimum, representation participation from the following entities: Landowners;.....*

WAC 365-190-050 Agriculture resource land (3) (b) (ii) states, *In determining whether lands are used or capable of being used for agriculture production, counties and cities shall use the land capability classification system of the United States Department of Agriculture Natural Resource Conservation Service as defined in relevant Field Office Technical Guides. These eight classes are incorporated by the United States Department of Agriculture into map units, description published soil surveys and are based on the growing capacity, productivity and soil composition of the land. (c) The land has long term commercial significance for agriculture. In determining this factor counties and cities should consider the following non inclusive criteria as applicable. (i) The classification of prime and unique farmland soils as mapped in the Natural Resource Conservation Service.....*

According to the Soil Survey of Clark County, Washington published by the United States Department of Agriculture Soil Conservation Service, In cooperation with Washington Agricultural Experiment Station, Issued November 1972, page 47:

Capability grouping shows, in a general way, the suitability of soils for most kinds of field crops. The soils are grouped according to the limitations of the soils when used for field crops, the risk of damage when they are used, and the way they respond to treatment. The grouping does not take into account major and generally expensive landforming that would change slope, depth, or other characteristics of the soils; does not take into consideration possible but unlikely major reclamation projects; and does not apply to rice, cranberries, horticultural crops or other crops requiring special management.

Those familiar with the capability classification can infer from it much about the behavior of soils when used for other purposes, but this classification is not a substitute for interpretations designed to show suitability and limitations of groups of soils for forest trees or engineering.

In the capability system, the kinds of soils are groped at three levels; The capability

class, the subclass, and the unit. These are discussed in the following paragraphs.

Capability Classes, the broadest groups, are designated by Roman numerals I through VIII. The numerals indicate progressively greater limitations and narrower choices for practical use, defined as follows;

Class I soils have few limitations that restrict their use.

Class II soils have moderate limitations that reduce the choice of plants or that require moderate conservation practices.

Class III soils have severe limitations that reduce the choice of plants, require special conservation practices or both.

Class IV, V, VI, VII, and VIII is indicated to have, very severe limitations that make them unsuited to cultivation and restrict their use.

Capability Subclasses are soil groups within one class with small letters used to indicate limitations. In Class I there are no subclasses, because this soil has few limitations.

Capability Unite I-1 soils are Cloquato and Newberg series, but could not be found in Clark County on the soils maps in the document.

Capability Unit I-2, and IIe-1 soils are Hillsboro series. Fertility is moderate to high with possible erosion hazard.

Capability Unit IIe-2 soils are Newberg (none found) and Sauvie series. Fertility is high, but the soil has an erosion hazard.

Capability Unit IIe-3 is Cinebar silt loam, 3-8% slopes, is the only soil in this unit. Fertility is moderate with erosion hazard. Soil is productive if properly managed.

Capability Unit IIe-4 is Hesson and Olympic series. Fertility is moderate and has erosion hazard.

Capability Unit IIw-1 is Sauvie and McBee series. Fertility is high but McGee could not be found in the county and Sauvie has erosion hazard.

Capability IIw-2 is Semiahmoo and Tisch series, Fertility is low to moderate, and subject to flooding and seasonal wetness which require drainage.

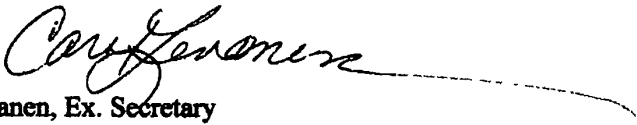
The Hillsboro series is located in the lower Southwest-central portion of the county. The Cinebar series is located in the upper North East corner of the county. The Olympic series is located in the lower Southeast portion of the county. The Hesson is located in the upper Northwest corner of the county. The Sauvie series is located in the far Southwest portion of the county.

Clark County Citizens United, Inc. limited the initial research of resource lands soils to Class I for agriculture and Class I-II for forest resource lands. This was done to comply with GMA directives that soil is a primary criteria for resource designations that would have long term commercial significance and be productive. Class III and higher soils have too many limitations to be practical and economically productive for the resource. After creating a large Notebook of Maps, consisting of many past and current GIS maps of soils, resource and land use maps used by Clark County, CCCU, Inc. reviewed them

all for consistency, accuracy, and application to the agriculture and forest resource designations. When compared, there appears to be no consistency or accuracy in any of the maps reviewed. It also appears that Clark County never used the USDA Soil Survey of Clark County, Washington as a basis for the designation of Prime Class I and II agriculture and forest soils. In addition, no Metadata is present in the record for the current soils maps in the Comprehensive Plan, to confirm what the process was, other than an item called "landuse" that states county staff, aeriels, and current use were used.

Of particular interest are current soils maps that are contained in the 2007 Comprehensive Land Use Plan. These maps depict where agriculture and forest soils are located in Clark County and used to determine appropriate zoning for such land, under the GMA, in 1994, 2004, and 2007. The same maps were used in each successive year and are intended to be used in the EIS for the 2016 Comprehensive Plan update. These maps have never changed through the years and have been the basis for resource designations, focus group recommendations and rural studies. In comparing the maps, it can be concluded that ag and forest soils are in the same location in both maps. In addition, there is no consistency with other GIS maps provided by the county from 1990 to 2007. A notation on the Clark County Perspectives 1990 Draft Community Framework Plan map states, *Revised 1990, Note: Extreme care was taken in the compilations and analysis of this map. However, due to the need to rely on several outside sources for information, Clark County, Washington cannot accept any responsibilities for errors, omissions or positional accuracy and therefore there are no warranties which accompany this product.* This map indicates the proposed resource land uses. But, none of the county maps depict Hillsboro Loam Class I soil in any of the zone locations for agriculture zoning, even though they are claimed to be from the same GIS source. The same is true for the Prime I-II Cinebar Loam soil that was determined to be prime forest soil according to numerous forest consultants and the Department of Natural Resources. The forest zones are not consistent with the location of the forest soils.

The only consistency noted on all of the maps is the enormous number of small 2.5 and 5 acre rural lots that were included in the resource zones, but are not conducting the resource. These were created before the 1994 Comprehensive Land Use Plan. Zoning most of these small rural parcels into large lot resource zones, using incorrect maps and inaccurate data, demonstrates a total disregard for the rural history, character, vesting, property rights and lifestyle of the rural communities. The only way to correct this information is to correct the soils maps. These parcels need to be returned to appropriate and accurate zoning, using the proper criteria according to the GMA.

Sincerely, 
Carol Levanen, Ex. Secretary
Clark County Citizens United, Inc.
P.O. Box 2188,
Battle Ground, Washington 98604