



JEFFERSON COUNTY

PLANNING COMMISSION

621 Sheridan Street
Port Townsend, WA 98368
(360) 379-4450

To: Board of County Commissioners (BOCC)
From: Planning Commission
Date: April 26, 2004
Subject: Recommendation for MLA04-26: UDC amendments related to Agricultural Activities and Accessory Uses

The Planning Commission is pleased to transmit its recommendations for amendments to the Unified Development Code (UDC) related to Agricultural Activities and Accessory Uses.

Following up on policy amendments related to Agricultural Lands made by the BOCC during the 2003 Comprehensive Plan amendment cycle, the Agricultural Lands Committee of the Planning Commission worked with Department of Community Development (DCD) Long-Range Planning (LRP) staff over a series of months to develop a preliminary UDC amendment proposal. On February 4, 2004, under file number MLA04-26, DCD issued a notice of intent to amend the UDC, notice of threshold determination under the State Environmental Policy Act, and notice of public hearing before the Planning Commission.

The Planning Commission accepted comment until the close of the public hearing on February 19 and proceeded to deliberate on the proposal until a unanimous decision was reached on April 7 to recommend jointly with DCD a modified version of the proposal. All of the public comments we received were supportive of the proposal; many were highly supportive.

LRP staff and the Planning Commission worked to integrate specific suggestions from the State Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development (CTED), the Jefferson County Conservation District, and the Washington Environmental Council. Ideas for agricultural best management practices were culled from the draft Chimacum Creek Watershed Agriculture, Fish & Wildlife Habitat Protection Plan currently in development. Language from a recently adopted amendment to the Growth Management

Act (GMA) concerning accessory uses to agriculture was inserted directly into the proposed UDC amendments.

During the deliberation process, a series of issues were discussed and resolved. The Planning Commission and DCD staff are pleased to present you the final product of months of research, creative thinking, and animated discussion. We believe that these amendments to the UDC will provide the agricultural community in Jefferson County with a full range of opportunities to maintain and improve the operation of their farms, while at the same time protecting the functions and values of fish and wildlife habitat on and adjacent to lands used for agriculture.

The UDC line-in/line-out amendments recommended by the Planning Commission and DCD under MLA04-26 are attached to this memorandum.

In support of this recommendation for MLA04-26, the Planning Commission enters the following general findings and conclusions:

1. MLA04-26 was reviewed pursuant to the UDC amendment process contained at UDC Section 9.4.
2. The Planning Commission held a duly noticed public hearing on February 18, 2003.
3. The Planning Commission deliberated on the proposed amendments at regularly scheduled meetings on March 3 and April 7, 2004.
4. Pursuant to UDC section 9.9.3, any recommendation regarding amendment to the implementing regulations (i.e., the UDC) shall be based the site-specific criteria set forth in section 9.8.1.b and c, otherwise known as the growth management indicators.
5. Concerning the amendment proposal as presented in the attachment, the Planning Commission enters the following findings in relation to the applicable indicators set forth at UDC section 9.8.1.b and c:
 - a. Circumstances related to the practice of agriculture in the state of Washington, including Jefferson County, have changed to the degree that the State Legislature saw fit in 2004 to amend the GMA in order to explicitly provide for opportunities for uses accessory to agriculture on designated Agricultural Lands.
 - b. The assumptions of the 1998 Comprehensive Plan continue to be valid. The Comprehensive Plan outlines a series of Action Items related to agriculture. These amendments fulfill a number of the Action Items.
 - c. Based on the results of the public hearing before the Planning Commission, these amendments reflect currently widely held values of the residents of Jefferson County.
 - d. The proposed amendments do not adversely affect adopted level of service standards for transportation and other public facilities and services.
 - e. The proposed amendments are consistent with the goals, policies, and implementation strategies of the various elements of the Jefferson County Comprehensive Plan.

- f. The proposed amendments will not result in probably significant adverse impacts to the county's transportation network, capital facilities, utilities, parks, and environmental features and will not place uncompensated burdens upon existing or planned service capabilities.
 - g. The proposed amendments are consistent with the GMA; the County-Wide Planning Policies; interagency agreements between Jefferson County DCD, the Jefferson County Conservation District, and the State Department of Ecology concerning the relationship between water quality standards and agriculture; and all other known local, State, and Federal laws.
6. The Planning Commission recommends that the BOCC approve the proposed amendments as presented in the 23-page attachment.

Based upon formal deliberation concerning these proposed amendments reviewed under file number MLA04-26, the Planning Commission submits these recommendations for consideration by the Board of County Commissioners.

Thomas C. McNerney
Planning Commission Chair

Cheryl Halvorson
Planning Commission Secretary

Attachment: UDC line-in/line-out amendments (23 pages)