

Kate Blystone - Urban Growth Areas - Whatcom County "Land Grab Areas"

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Date: 9/17/2009 9:41 AM
Subject: Urban Growth Areas - Whatcom County "Land Grab Areas"

Randy & Kim Schnackenberg
 2357 Brown Rd
 Ferndale, WA 98248

Date: September 17, 2009

Whatcom County Planning Commission
 c/o Whatcom County Planning Department
 5280 Northwest Drive
 Bellingham, Washington 98226

RE: Urban Growth Area Proposal

Commission Members:

My address is given above. We own property with the Parcel Number of [390207 181257 0000](#). We are concerned that the changes under the current UGA proposal will adversely impact my property, its value, future use and my taxes. I urge you to retain the existing boundaries until a better study of the issue and more realistic growth projections can be used.

With the zoning adversities at hand, I find it quite difficult to work with the Whatcom County Planning Commission and the Whatcom County Conservation District as the left hand is apparently not talking with the right hand. We own a small hobby farm on the parcel number listed above which is currently zoned UGA 5. Whatcom County would like to change it from the UGA5 to a UGA10, and to have us in the Ferndale's City "Reserve". We have been harassed by the Whatcom County Conservation District (to be referred as the "WCCD") about the 7 horses we currently breed, raise, train, show and give lessons to the youth...and troubled youth. Our horses have made national headlines with numerous Regional Championships as well as a National Championship, articles have been written about our horses in Regional and National publications. We have brought amazing highlights to the Pacific Northwest.

The WCCD has informed us that we may receive up to a \$1,000/day fine if we do not comply on getting

a Farm Plan put in place. When we asked the Planning Commission about the issue, they inform us that it is untrue. We have neighbors who have tried to get building permits, but had to have a "Farm Plan" put into effect before the Whatcom County Planning Commission would issue the building permit. Clearly these two departments are not communicating clearly with each other, or, are they?

What does the "Land Grab Areas" and the "Farm Plan" have to do with each other you ask?

Whatcom County Planning Commission has stated that they would like to preserve the Agriculture/farmland. The Whatcom County Conservation District is trying to enforce "Farm Plans" on all farms. When the question was posed "what do you consider a farm?", the question was answered by George Boggs, District Coordinator: "If you have one goat, or one sheep, or one pig, or one cow, or one horse, or one llama, etc. that considers you a farm. ALL farms will HAVE to have a Farm Plan and it will cost you \$XXXX a year...." At this rate, Whatcom County will not have sustainable farmers to the hobby farms, with all the "Agricultural Land Preservation" Whatcom County is trying Zone...because the farmers will be discouraged, disgruntled, and financially ruined.

Commissioners, Council Members, Legislators, Senator, we urge you to assist the people who bring you your milk, produce, steaks, poultry.

Sincerely,

Randy & Kim Schnackenberg