

1 Summary of October 3, 2019
2 Northeast Citizen Advisory Committee Meeting #4
3 Knappa Fire Station
4 43114 Hillcrest Loop
5 Astoria, OR 97103
6

7 **The meeting was called to order at 4:02 p.m. by Tallie Spiller, NECAC Vice Chair.**
8

<u>NECAC Members Present</u>	<u>NECAC Commissioners Absent</u>	<u>Staff Present</u>	<u>Public Present</u>
Kelly Huckestein	Jennifer Rasmussen	Julia Decker	Vickie Barrett
Cheryl Johnson	Dirk Rohne	Victoria Sage	Jeanne Windsor
Tallie Spiller			Ed Johnson
			Ben Bartlett
			John McKesson
			Kurt Donaldson

9 **Welcome and Introductions**

10 The NECAC members, staff and members of the public introduced themselves.
11

12 **Review of September 5, 2019, Meeting Summary:**

13 No corrections, additions or deletions were provided.
14

15 **Continuation of Discussion from Meeting #3**

16 Ms. Spiller gave a demonstration of NOAA’s website in regards to the topic of climate change and sea-level
17 rise that had been discussed at the previous meeting. She demonstrated the interactive modelling tools
18 that shows the inundation of lower lying areas as possible projections through the year 2050.

19 www.coast.noaa.gov
20

21 **Report from Countywide CAC Liaison:**

22 Ms. Johnson reported that the Countywide CAC (CCAC) group only got through half of their discussion on
23 Goal 3, and will be continuing it at their November meeting. The group heard a presentation from Clatsop
24 Soil and Water Conservation District that centered around small farms and their growth in the county,
25 especially small organic farms as opposed to the large industrial farms. The CCAC discussed how to protect
26 the smaller farms that are prevalent in the county that don’t fit in the 80-acre-minimum box, while
27 balancing how to continue to protect the large-tract farmlands from encroaching development.
28

29 Mr. Johnson added that when all of the land-use planning laws began in the 1970s, all of Brownsmead was
30 EFU.
31

32 Ms. Johnson offered to give a presentation on the watershed issues workshop she had attended over the
33 weekend later on in the meeting.
34

35 Mr. McKesson added that Clatsop Soil and Water would be holding an upcoming meeting regarding
36 population modelling; he expressed his concern that the projected net loss of population in the diking
37 districts could undercut the funding that they rely on.
38

39 **Comprehensive Plan Update Overview**

40 Ms. Huckestein stated that she would like staff to give a brief statement of the scope of work for the
41 update process and the role of the Citizen Advisory Committees for member of the public who are
42 unfamiliar with the project.

1 Ms. Sage provided a brief overview describing planning areas, statewide and countywide goals and policies,
2 and the purpose of the comprehensive plan as a framework for local zoning ordinances.

3
4 Ms. Johnson mentioned that she had been wondering how much strength or teeth the comprehensive plan
5 actually has and how the CAC can create enforceable policies. She asked how the CAC's findings will be
6 created and written.

7
8 Ms. Decker provided an overview of this process: the CAC is looking at the comprehensive plan as a county
9 wide tool, but through the specific lens of the Northeast community. The goals and policies are aspirational
10 and are then used to create implementing ordinances; the update process is recursive.

11
12 Ms. Huckestein wanted to clarify (for the benefit of the general public) that the role of the CAC is not to
13 make decisions and change zoning regulations and ordinances themselves; that their role is to make
14 suggestions but not write the document.

15
16 Ms. Decker provided clarity of the level of formality expected of the groups, that all of the groups take
17 public comment in different ways and really up to the groups individually.

18
19 **Goal 3 Overview:**

20 Victoria Sage, Community Development Planner, provided a brief overview of the purpose of Goal 3 and
21 how it is applied in Clatsop County.

22
23 **Discussion of Goal 3 – Agriculture:**

24 Ms. Spiller asked Ms. Huckestein what her take was on small farms versus large ones as they pertain to
25 Goal 3, from her perspective as a small organic farm owner.

26
27 Ms. Huckestein stated that although her farm operation is in Residential-Agriculture (RA) Zoning, she still
28 sees tremendous value in maintaining large EFU property, and in fact had looked to purchase some but was
29 unable to find any that she could afford at the time. She found that Goal 3, as it's written now, does not
30 have a lot of "substance" to it and was dismissive of farming in Clatsop County; she would like for it to
31 address farming as a viable option in this area.

32
33 Ms. Barrett agreed that the original Goal 3 was designed to protect the "big boys" (specifically industrial
34 farms in the Willamette Valley etc.) and small farms weren't really considered. She advised a focus on
35 strengthening the farming language around RA-Zoned lands to shift the mindset away from just large-scale
36 and to respect and encourage the small scale. How can the comprehensive plan be used to protect RA
37 farms from subdivisions built next door that may object to the odor or noises from farming practices?

38
39 Ms. Huckestein stated that she could think of a couple of personal examples of small farms around the
40 state being shut down due to these types of circumstances. She then clarified for Ms. Spiller how RA farms
41 can apply for the same special tax rate that the EFU farms receive.

42
43 Mr. Johnson provided a local example of neighbors in the Clatsop Plains complaining about a guard dog at
44 Tagg Ranch, causing the Taggs to be fined, although it was found that the "legitimate use" of the dog was
45 associated with accepted farming practices.

46
47 Ms. Johnson stated that the findings for Goal 3 should reflect the new number of small farms in Clatsop
48 Count, and what kind of financial impact they have; how they are causing the county to grow and change.
49 She'd like to see protections for them that reflect the ones for EFU.

1 Ms. Spiller brought up switching the emphasis from how climate change will affect farming, to how farming
2 can be a tool against climate change. She stated that local farming supports communities without the need
3 for expensive transport, and thus pollution.

4
5 The group had a brief discussion surrounding water rights in the Knappa, Wickiup, and Astoria water
6 districts; how they have “adequate” water, although perhaps not a “surplus”.

7
8 Ms. Spiller brought up flooding in Brownsmead. Mr. McKesson and Ms. Barrett discussed how levees have
9 created artificial environments from land that used to be wetlands.

10
11 Ms. Huckestein summarized that EFU zoning was created to protect areas like Brownsmead, but the goal
12 itself isn’t regulatory as the ordinance is. She would like to see a statement in support of agriculture in
13 Clatsop County as a guiding principle for Goal 3.

14
15 The group began a discussion of the third agenda bullet point regarding balancing affordable housing
16 demand with preservation of agricultural lands. Ms. Barrett questioned whether EFU lands should even be
17 concerned with a housing goal. Their primary purpose is agriculture, to provide food resources, and the RA
18 zones will be the place to address housing issues.

19
20 The group discussed their views on whether housing should be allowed to be built in tidelands such as
21 Brownsmead, which is predominantly zoned EFU. Ms. Johnson suggested the group would like to see
22 protections expanded for the smaller pieces of land.

23
24 Mr. McKesson stated he would like to see a balance of opportunities for both wetland values with
25 agricultural land values.

26
27 The group moved on to a discussion about marijuana crops. They agreed that the NE planning area wasn’t a
28 major supporter of outdoor growing operations, but they do have some interior ones. They discussed some
29 of the effects and ensuing lawsuits from marijuana crops affecting neighboring wineries and potential
30 effects on a dairy farm. Ms. Decker provided some context that she had observed some farms brought out
31 of food production and into marijuana production in the recent past, although that seems to be slowing
32 down now. She went on to clarify that the county code and the comprehensive plan do not differentiate
33 between crop types; Clatsop County does not dictate what farmers can and cannot grow. She asked the
34 group if they thought there were any issues surrounding this stance.

35
36 Ms. Johnson asked how a situation that she encountered could have come about: how did a subdivision
37 end up next to a dairy farm? Ms. Decker described how different zoning intensities usually surround and
38 buffer resource lands, and how that could have been manipulated to create the example in question.

39
40 The group discussed applications for marijuana growing and processing around the county, particularly
41 when they are adjacent to a school. Ms. Windsor suggested the group research decisions made by other
42 counties regarding regulating marijuana as a farm crop. Ms. Huckestein warned that dictating which crops
43 people can grow is a slippery slope.

44
45 Ms. Johnson gave a brief presentation on the watersheds and forests workshop she had attended in
46 Nehalem the previous weekend. There were six speakers from all over the state; the workshop had been
47 very well attended by both Tillamook and Clatsop County residents. The discussions focused on how state
48 forestry practices impact domestic water supplies. Ms. Johnson also reported that she had attended a
49 county listening session on Monday about a proposed harvest in the Arch Cape area, as there is a lot of

1 concern about how that will impact domestic water supply, especially as it relates to stream buffering and
2 herbicide spraying. She summarized that watersheds are a “hot topic” for Clatsop County citizens right
3 now.

4
5 **Distribution of Meeting #5 Materials:**

6 Ms. Sage distributed materials and gave an overview the presentation by the Oregon Department of
7 Forestry on October 17th, reviewed the holiday and upcoming meeting schedule, and confirmed with the
8 group that their next meeting date will be November 7th. Ms. Johnson encouraged attendance at the ODF
9 meeting.

10
11 **Closing Comments and Adjournment:**

12 Ms. Johnson stated that in the last County Wide meeting, Clatsop Soil and Water Conservation District
13 expressed a desire to see more grant applications from county residents, and Ms. Johnson encouraged the
14 group to spread the word. Mr. Johnson helped to summarize the function of the grants.

15
16 ***There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 5:21pm.***