

**UDC UPDATE PROJECT  
RURAL CLUSTER SUBDIVISIONS CODE REVISIONS SUBPROJECT  
FACILITATED DISCUSSION WITH SOUTH COUNTY CITIZENS**

**AS DISCUSSED ON JULY 17, 2007**

**In attendance:**

Approximately 10 citizens were present.

<u>Comments</u>
*All comments listed are made specifically by residents and do not include PDS Staff commentary
Who retains Open Space? What happens to the designated Open Space?
Taxes?
How many existing rural cluster applications exist?
Are existing rural cluster applications considered vested? For how long?
How many lots do the 200 existing applications represent?
Rural Cluster developments look suburban.
Development in rural areas should be 1du/5ac, not 2.3du/5ac; How is this type of development even allowed?
Location of Rural Cluster Subdivisions seems arbitrary.
Landscape in 1974 allowed for farming/livestock.
Housing types in rural areas are not cohesive and differ drastically.
Tree Retention
Are the buffers proportional to the building footprints/units?
Soil types in some developments are inadequate for drainage.
Water quality of Woods Creek is being impacted.
Drainage issues need to be looked at cumulatively.
Look at Washington State Community Trade and Economic Development Department's (CTED) requirements/regulations for sequencing of Rural Cluster Subdivision type of developments.
Must consider rights of the property owner.
Look at development holistically.
Rural Cluster developments are too large, size should be limited.
Density bonuses are not working.
Should Rural Cluster developments be subject to the SEPA process which allows for considerable public input, environmental analysis and appeals?

Look into the Hearing Examiner process as a model.
Rural Cluster developments go up too quickly with minimal public and neighborhood input.
Look at design standards when considering rural character.
More vegetation should be retained.
Majority of houses just look like rows of garages.
In relation to existing housing, rural cluster units look like McMansions.
Lot size averaging is needed.
Proximity of rural cluster developments to existing structures is insufficient.
New covenants do not allow for previously rural uses.
A percentage of new rural cluster developments should be affordable and be required to remain below median housing prices.
Some new uses in the rural area are not a good "fit", for example, warehouses and horse or livestock arenas (noise).
Infrastructure in the Granite Falls, Gold Bar and Lake Rossinger are inadequate to accommodate larger scale developments.
Where in the approval process is transportation planning considered? Where do traffic plans become part of the rural cluster process? What is the process for LOS determination?
What are the factors of concurrency and are traffic analyses being performed?
Snohomish to Machias route is at LOS F and congestion is attributable to rural clusters.
Traffic impacts to Marsh Rd should limit further development.
County should perform empirical study to determine whether traffic congestion is attributable to rural cluster subdivisions.
There are significant safety concerns for walkers/bikers because of drivers; County should look for alternatives to placing bike lanes on rural roads and explore installing a walk/bike trail parallel to county roads.
There are safety concerns for drivers because of walkers/bikers.
Rural roads are functioning like highly congested thoroughfares.
Rural roads should have shoulders or bike paths that lead into the newer developments or should consider installation of a 2 ft gravel shoulder.
The concept of what is rural is changing.
Old farm and logging roads are being used by developers.
When did the County last update mitigation fees related to traffic?

Development Community is aggressively buying up large tracts of land in the rural area for future development of rural cluster subdivisions.
The character of rural cluster subdivision residents is not rural; they are a different breed.
There should be a moratorium on rural cluster subdivisions.
Look at the size, quantity, frequency and zoning issues related to rural cluster subdivisions.
Residents feel dismayed that so many of their neighbors have subdivided their property. Now surrounded by rural cluster development, remaining residents feel pressure to sell and move.
Utilize legal contracts with builders and homeowners for Open Space areas.
Lack of trust is related to open space being held in perpetuity.
Rural cluster subdivision development should be tied in with TDR Program. Look into using rural areas as sending areas. Using already undevelopable land to facilitate TDR seems unfair.
The proximity of rural cluster subdivisions to each other should be regulated.
Is there a mechanism in place within the rural cluster subdivision process that protects the rights of existing property owners to utilize their land in a rural fashion?
Viewsheds are being compromised when entire hillsides are developed.
Habitat corridors are being removed.
What are the limits of rural cluster development in terms of the amount of forest clearing that can occur?
Do not clear until you build; require clearing permits related to building permits
Stream protection, illegal dumping
Explore additional consequences/ramifications in addition to fines for inappropriate actions.
Designate staff to monitor builder/developer for compliance or require the dedication of a portion of Homeowners Association fees to monitor compliance.
Enforcement concerns; funding.
Explore ways of routing citizen complaints related to code enforcement more efficiently so that action can be taken immediately.
Improve response time to citizen complaints.
Educate the public on land uses; what to look for in terms of reporting code compliance issues.
Install code enforcement contact information on Native Growth Protection Area

signage.
How will this input be used to improve our quality of life?
Elderly residents are disconnected from opportunities to provide input. Explore use of mass mailings to invite disconnected members of the community (establish mailing lists) or those without e-mail and internet access; Expand ways of diversifying the forms of communication we use with rural residents (billboards).
Rural residents are disturbed by the quantity of proposed land use action signs they see in their neighborhoods and feel that they should be notified and have a say in what gets approved.
Provide summary notes of citizen meetings to the Planning Commission for review prior to the 7/24 meeting.
On-line links to the rural cluster public meetings are buried on our website.
Citizens are concerned that their input/voice will be less prominent than that of the development community due to financial imbalance. Does the development community care what we have to say?
Citizens hope that our elected officials place value on rural land and character.