



Clark County Planning Commission

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CLARK COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION THURSDAY, MAY 16, 2019 MINUTES OF PUBLIC HEARING

Public Service Center
Council Hearing Room
1300 Franklin Street, 6th Floor
Vancouver, Washington

6:30 p.m.

CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL

MORASCH: All right. Good evening and welcome to the May 16, 2019, Planning Commission hearing. I'll call the hearing -- is there a sports game -- thank you. I'll call the hearing to order. And can we have a roll call please, Sonja.

MORASCH: HERE
GRIMWADE: HERE
BARCA: HERE
SWINDELL: HERE
JOHNSON: ABSENT
TORRES: HERE
BENDER: HERE

GENERAL & NEW BUSINESS

A. Approval of Agenda for May 16, 2019 & Minutes for April 18, 2019

MORASCH: All right. Thank you. With that, we'll move on to approval of the agenda and approval of the minutes. Is there any change to the agenda or minutes? And, if not, I'd take a motion to approve.

GRIMWADE: I **MOVE** the motion they be approved.

BARCA: Motion **seconded**.

MORASCH: It's been moved and seconded to approve the agenda and the minutes. All in favor say aye?

EVERYBODY: AYE

MORASCH: Opposed? All right. The agenda and the minutes have been approved.

B. Communications from the Public

MORASCH: We'll move on to communications from the public. This is the time on our hearing when any member of the public can come up and talk to us about any matter that's not on our printed agenda tonight. Is there anyone who wants to address the Planning Commission on any planning item that's not on the agenda tonight?

All right. Hearing no one, we will move on to our public hearing. And do we have staff? Ah, there you are. Usually we have staff over here. You're welcome to sit here or staff often sits at the staff table, but please give us the staff report.

PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS & PLANNING COMMISSION ACTION

78th Street Heritage Farm Master Plan Update

The 78th Street Heritage Farm Master Plan was originally adopted in April, 2010. The update was initiated to reflect changes to the farm since adoption of the plan, to affirm continued interest in master plan concepts not yet implemented and to solicit input on new concepts that may have emerged since 2010. No changes to the Master Plan Vision and Guiding Principles are recommended. The farm will be an accessible agricultural, educational and recreational community asset that reflects the area's history and provides a healthy, sustainable environment for future generations.

The property is located between NE 68th and NE 78th Streets west of NE 25th Avenue in the Hazel Dell community. In the early 20th Century, the property served as a poor farm where poverty-stricken residents were sent to live and work. Between 1949 and 2008 the site served as a Washington State University agricultural research center. The farm was placed on the Clark County Historic Registry in 2013. In 2012 the farm was included in the State of Washington Historic Registry and the National Register of Historic Places.

Staff Contact: Patrick Lee, Clark County Parks and Lands Division (564) 397-2301 ext. 4070 or Patrick.lee@clark.wa.gov

LEE: Usually when I come to Council I sit here, so it's just automatic.

MORASCH: Oh, all right. All right. Well, wherever you feel the most comfortable.

LEE: Thank you, Commissioners. I am Patrick Lee with the Public Works Parks and Lands

Division. And I'm here to present the Heritage Farm Master Plan. We did have a work session on this a couple of weeks ago. I don't know what all is in your packet. I do have a slightly revised PowerPoint so, but it's very similar to the last one, but it is a little bit different that I would start.

So the master plan update really seeks to document changes that have happened at the farm since 2010, reviews and validates plan elements that are not yet implemented and suggests perhaps new priorities or new configurations.

We had a public house, I gathered feedback and ideas from attendees on farm use, education and business development ideas and we also had an online survey that ran from mid-January to mid-March that 795 people submitted the survey online. Okay.

Two work sessions with the Council have been held, the first in August to sort of kick off the process and a couple of weeks ago in April to review kind of the direction we were headed to advise if any midcourse corrections were necessary and the Council really had few comments on the substance of the plan. They did reiterate their desire to see us seek outside funding for major capital improvements and to move the farm towards financial self-sufficiency. And I have a few numbers later on in the presentation that will show kind of what the general fund commitment was, at least during 2018.

So the farm has a variety of user groups that actively work the land, many of them are here. We have representatives of the food bank, some are very dedicated volunteers that work with Churches and Partnership in the fields and we also have with us two members of the Farm Advisory Committee, Sandy Brown and Kirk Gresham and a range of agricultural and horticultural programing is ongoing and more could be accommodated approximately about I would say roughly about 50 percent of the capacity of the fields is currently being utilized, so there is room for expansion of those types of uses.

Since the 2010 master plan, a few things happened which certainly provide context for some of the changes. One, the boundary line adjustment was made to move expansion of the Hazel Dell Park from north further up the hill to further west along N.E. 68th Street. Living farm concept was sort of a green building demonstration and that was actually built on another site, and the Luke Jensen Sports Complex incorporated the Bud Van Cleve Community meeting room which fulfilled one of the needs that was a very high priority during the development of the 2010 master plan.

As far as the farm is concerned, an interpretive trail plan was completed, a new greenhouse was added, historic cemetery was accurately delineated, a new parking lot was constructed, historic register listing occurred for a County, State and National status and the preservation and maintenance plan was completed to guide the future approaches to existing historic structures.

The interpretive trail plan proposed content for (inaudible) clusters for interpretation ranging from the early pioneer days to the poor farm days to the Washington State University Agricultural Experiment Station days, so all those are elements that would be interpretive through signage along the interpretive trail and it is hoped that it would encourage visitors to engage in the history of the site, visit the site and build pride in the communities past, present and the future.

The preservation and maintenance plan assesses the structural condition of the seven historic structures on the property, present rehabilitation recommendations for each and provides cost estimates for the rehabilitation work.

The public engagement process offered a number of ways for farm interests in the community at large to offer feedback and thoughts on the master plan. As I mentioned, we had the online survey, we had two community meetings, one to solicit ideas, the second to review kind of the direction the plan was heading and seek input on that, and we also had three meetings of the farm advisory team that focused on kind of the development of the master plan concept and we also had an e-mail distribution list of about 274 names that we sent out at blurts as new information was posted on the website.

As part of the public engagement process, the online survey sought input on preferences and priorities for farm use and farm programming. A series of questions explored agricultural and gardening uses, educational programming and potential business development and revenue generation, and the majorities of survey respondents felt that the priorities for sustainable farming elements for Heritage Farm should include an expanded partnership with WSU for nutrition and gardening classes and with other partners as well that are having ongoing classes and demonstrations and these might include Master Composters, Master Gardeners and others and certainly there was a continuing interest in improving the condition of Cougar Creek which flows through the site and what looks very much like a drainage ditch.

Survey of business ideas, business development ideas indicated that there was a high value placed on generating revenue through agricultural farmers markets or retail outlets direct marketing and there's also some discussion of if we were to go in that direction would we actually create a new farmers market, would we certainly just provide a staging area for existing farmers, et cetera, to exercise their produce and try to generate some revenue. I don't know that a small farm stand or something like that is going to generate a lot of revenue, but it is a concept that people favor, so it was one of the more popular ideas.

In terms of educational priorities, existing educational programs reaffirmed with suggestions to expand current programming, research and youth engagement. The trail was also shown to be an important feature at the farm and that was the one element that people responded to indicating that a facility like that would encourage them to visit the farm at least once a week so, and we'll get to a little more discussion of that when we get to the finances.

In terms of the proposed master plan update, the changes that I noted before, you can see, although it's kind of difficult, the existing master plan under Wayne, the most notable thing is the trail system that is taking up a lot of space meandering through the property. One of the major changes was to move the trail to the exterior of the property so as to allow more agricultural production without segmenting out little units and things and also you have a few other zones.

Besides that, you have kind of the active programming zone where you have next to 78th Street most of the public activity at this time including the main administration offices, the greenhouses, the equipment shed, that's where most of the public use is occurring at this time, other than those folks working in the fields and there's many volunteer groups working in the fields, and the master plan calls for potentially expanding uses there with a plaza of flex space that could also hopefully generate some additional revenue as we move forward.

So the existing -- the proposed master plan acknowledges those changes and directs future improvements for the historic farm. One of the reasons we wanted to do that, one was to check in after nine years and make sure priorities were on target with what the community is interested in and also it provides us a current update to a master plan that would be a useful tool for seeking outside funding.

And if you want to take a closer look at the north section, you have sort of going from left to right, well, yeah, I guess left to right. Is it coming up left to right on your screen as well? Yeah, so you have kind of the new parking lot, you have the main administration building, then you go to the greenhouses, potentially expanded greenhouses uses and then the multiuse flex space plaza and this concept also shows that it might be desirable as we get to development of the flex space to extend the main access through there off-site to connect up likely with 25th Avenue where there's a streetlight about a half a block to the east of the current property limits. So those are all concepts that came forward.

You can also see the potential restoration that would go on along Cougar Creek and that would then segregate very active public use areas from the more agriculturally centered areas. So pretty much reiterating some of the points I've already made, and the loop trail as I indicated is very popular.

We have actually a couple of panels that were funded by the Historic Preservation Commission, one is installed and one is fabricated so there was a design template that was established in the interpretive trail plan which we are following, and as I indicated it's a resource that we believe would get people out to the farm and we think that is needed so that there is greater familiarity with all that goes on at the farm and hopefully greater engagement as well. So not everything's going to happen at once, we're going to have to phase things over time as we generate resources to do so.

The plan seeks to maintain flexibility. For example, the agricultural uses are allocated on a

proposal basis. So as people are interested in using some of the field space or some of the building space on the farm, they submit an application to the Farm Advisory Committee which is reviewed for consistency with the vision and operating guidelines. And then as those are approved, we would enter into a lease arrangement with those users and they're usually, you know, maybe a year to a few years in length, some have the option to renew them, so there could be change over time.

For example, Washington State University does agricultural research but that is dependent on specific grants, so as one grant is attracted and an agricultural research project is completed, then that field might be available for a new use be it by Washington State University or another user at the farm.

In terms of the general fund commitment for 2018, as I mentioned at the work session, there's kind of three budgeting nodes that provide general funding to the farm. The first is general services, that is responsible for maintaining the building and infrastructure and that was their cost in 2018, that cost will vary depending on the needs each year but at least that's the most current year and together they give you a ballpark estimate of what the general fund subsidy is at this point.

The Health Department really maintains the contract with WSU Extension and that amounts to 310,000 per year. And the staffing, the full-time farm operations personnel that we have there, some of my time for doing administrative and sort of project coordinating work it amounts to 100 and almost 140,000, so a total a little under 600,000, about 572,000 in 2018, now again, you know, those can change but that is sort of a ballpark estimate.

Another figure that may be of interest, in the farm preservation and maintenance plan to bring, well, to complete the improvement suggested in that plan for the historic structures, the total would amount to about 606,000. I would note that that only addresses the deferred maintenance that has occurred, some of the problems that were identified, cracked walls, leaks in the roof, et cetera, et cetera. If we were to actually look at reusing some of those structures, bringing it up to building codes, providing perhaps better lighting, restrooms, things of that sort, you're looking at a far greater commitment of resources than what is shown in that particular graphic.

And as I mentioned at the work session, there's a couple of short-term steps that we think we could pursue to keep momentum going with improvements to the farm; long-term, we really think that the Friends of the Farm Foundation which was set up to support the farm as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization is really the direction that is going to provide the greater bang for the buck. That group I think just incorporated within the last year to 18 months, so they're still in the early stages but we would expect that we might be able to work with them to pursue capacity building grants or other things to strengthen their position and their engagement in the farm over the years.

In terms of long-term, there was interest in hosting additional special events be it concerts, be it, you know, historical period interpretation, et cetera, those were all ideas that came out of the public process. I think that we would look at those very closely because really you'd need sponsorships and vendor income probably to make those profitable and so you'd have to identify parameters very conscientiously. And then there also engage a public/private partnership for major capital improvements such as the flex space plaza, that hopefully if the lease arrangements were well crafted would provide a positive revenue stream to the farm. And that is my presentation and happy to take any questions.

MORASCH: All right. Thank you. Does the Planning Commission have any questions at this point?

SWINDELL: Yeah. Actually, I'd like to just ask a couple of clarifying questions. So if we could go back on the funding, 576,00 or 572 for 2018, that was the general fund amount of money that was put in there, but that does not include any of the other 606,000 that's proposed or 606?

LEE: No, there were no improvements done to the historic structures.

SWINDELL: And that is kind of, just to kind of get it kind back to where it needs to be. So if I were to say that funding would be to, for ongoing funding to be able to do continue to upkeep and whatnot would be more like 750,000 a year is what it's going to cost to run it, maintain it and keep it up once those --

LEE: Yes. Yes, once that's deferred maintenance needs and then keep it up over time, yes, absolutely.

SWINDELL: Okay. That's what I was wondering.

TORRES: I have a question. So some of the updates that you talked about like the greenhouse, the fencing, the parking lot, was all that out of the general fund or were you guys able to find sponsorships for that?

LEE: No. Most of it was through other funds. The parking lot was done largely with Department of Ecology grants. The greenhouse included some solid waste funding because of the connection to the Master Composters, but also it included a lot of volunteer labor by the Master Gardeners themselves.

And so, you know, the, other than the basic maintenance that has been taken care of, most of the other things that have been done on the farm recently have been done through grants or other revenue streams, for example, we used real estate excise tax to develop a new irrigation system last year.

TORRES: So that's good news when you look at the future projects.

LEE: Yes, it's good news. Obviously, general fund is what Council is most concerned about; however, they, you know, are conscious of all the funding going in there be it from because if it goes, say if REET goes there, it doesn't go elsewhere. So, you know, chipping away at some of the infusion of County funds in the farm is definitely a goal they've set for us.

TORRES: Thank you.

MORASCH: Any other questions? Ron.

BARCA: I guess I'd like to talk about that concept then about a long-term plan as far as trying to chip away at what is coming out of the general fund. I still find the plan really kind of lacking with any depth as to how we're going to generate the revenue. I think when we had the work session we talked about the potentials of some community partnering and some of the specifics about portions of the plan that we thought we might be able to attribute to getting the public or components of the public/private sector involved with helping shift some of that burden.

If I look at the all of the rehab that we wanted to do for structures beyond the general fund, that \$606,000, that brings those buildings back up to what level of service, can they be used as actual ag buildings at that point in time?

LEE: Some of those buildings are currently used as ad hoc meeting spaces but without the best meeting environment, let's put it that way, and all the amenities that you would like to have in a good meeting place. A lot of them are just used for storage of various things at this point in time. And it's, I think the focus was on trying to reinvest so they don't continue to deteriorate at this point and then I think as you identify specific structures for a reuse, then you're looking at sort of a different ball game entirely.

BARCA: Okay. So the description on most of the buildings was an agricultural use description and I think that's just historical precedent then, is that what we're dealing with, so there's a milking shed, there's a hog shed?

LEE: Yeah, you had a hog barn, you had a bunkhouse that, you know, hired hands lived in or, yeah, I think the farm manager probably lived in that, the poor farm manager probably lived in that. So, yeah, a lot of those are go back to the poor farm, poor farm days.

Some of the other outbuildings like the shop down in the main activity area was actually imported from Eastern Washington at some point to become a shed, although it was determined to be a historic structure, it was not a part of the poor farm structures but that is, you know, as you seek and get approved historic designation for a property, I think it's very good in many ways, it opens up certain funding sources but it also provides more regulatory

oversight for what may go on there.

BARCA: Okay. And I think that's fair to understand that by spending the money what is the potential for the structures as they become rehabbed and that's kind of what I'm getting at. Would that open it up to any other type of use other than the novelty of understanding how the poor farm operated, would it be able to be incorporated in any other type of usage which I think is really what we're trying to get at?

Is the idea that somehow we want the function of the farm to display the historical heritage that it had but also if we can involve the public, involve the private sector to become partners with us, then it would be something that would say it's either generating revenue from that partnership or in a usage format and we just don't have a lot of that presented to us right now to understand how we can recommend or commit a plan to the Council?

LEE: Well, in the work session I know that the Commissioners advised certain steps would be good steps. One would be to do a broader financial analysis, a second would be to develop a business plan to try and realize the goals that you set for the farm, another one would be a marketing strategy that would increase awareness of the farm and hopefully gradually lead to greater opportunities for investment from a broader section of the public and the private sector.

BARCA: I think we would all agree that those would be great steps although they didn't make it into the presentation and I'm a little concerned about when we go to Council that there's nothing in there that says, you know, we're trying to get to those places.

LEE: I mean, the Planning Commission advises the Council, if you think those are important steps, then I would so advise.

BARCA: Okay.

LEE: I don't disagree with it at all, I mean I agree with it, but, you know, I wanted to, I didn't want to keep changing the staff report that I wrote prior to the work session and so I did not pick up on some of those ideas and I actually think a recommendation coming from the Planning Commission would add value to those strategies.

GRIMWADE: That just raised another question. Subsequent to the work session we received correspondence from the Department of Ecology.

BARCA: Get really close.

GRIMWADE: Subsequent to the work session we received correspondence from the Department of Ecology which talks about it being a toxic site, how big an issue is that?

LEE: I can give you a little history. I would characterize their comments as boilerplate that we see a lot. There was some underground storage tank issues that I think were addressed in 2004 with soil remediation, et cetera, et cetera, and at that time there were options to continue to do remedial work, one was to take on the responsibility ourselves, a second was to let the Department of Ecology take on the responsibilities.

There was a choice and the choice was, and this was permissible in terms of the Department of Ecology Administration of Hazardous and Toxics Programs, that they had at least policy direction to do that. Now, whether the funding ever came to continue to do work at the site is another question, but certainly that is why you still have a site that is identified as not fully remediated whether it is or not because the follow-up work to ensure that it has been has not been done.

GRIMWADE: Okay. Thanks.

MORASCH: All right. Any other questions? All right. Thank you. Sonja, do we have a sign-in sheet? Now I'm going to open the public hearing. I usually read from a canned statement but I don't have a copy of it up here today, so I'm going to just go by memory.

You've all heard the staff report. We're getting the sign-in sheets. So when I open the public hearing, that will be the time for the members of the public to come in and come up to the microphone and make your presentation. If you have anything in writing, you can hand it to Sonja and we can include that in the record.

We're going to make a recommendation tonight. Our recommendation will be reviewed by the Board of County Councilors. We don't make decisions, they do, so I would encourage anyone who is interested in this matter to follow up and find out when the County Council hearing is and attend that.

But when you come to the mic, remember we have a court reporter, so try to speak fairly slowly and clearly, give your name, if you have an unusual name, spell it so she can get it down right in our minutes and then give your presentation. Sometimes we limit presentation to five minutes, but there's not too many people here today, so I think we'll just let people talk as long as they want, but try to keep it, you know, to the point and fairly brief.

And with that, I think -- oh, and I will ask, is there anyone on the Planning Commission who has any conflicts of interest? I probably should have asked that at the beginning before we opened the staff report, but I don't think there is, but are there any? No, no conflicts. Okay. Good.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY

MORASCH: So with that, I will open the public hearing for public testimony. And the first person on the list is Laura Hoggatt.

HOGGATT: I'm sorry, I just signed in showing I was present. I'm staff along with Pat just here to learn.

MORASCH: Okay. All right. Thank you. Larry Grell.

GRELL: Grell.

MORASCH: Larry Grell.

GRELL: Bad handwriting.

MORASCH: Yeah. Did you want to talk?

GRELL: I would like to just make a quick statement.

MORASCH: Then please come forward to the microphone and maybe spell your last name and tell us what you have to tell us.

GRELL: Larry Grell, G-r-e-l-l. I've been a volunteer for ten years. I'm a member of Churches and Partnership which is just the slave labor component for the farm. We find and you'll hear others lay out the statistics, but we find that the farm has changed dramatically in the last ten years.

When we first started it was sort of isolated groups out there doing their own thing and in the last ten years, and this is my point tonight, we've grown a community. Master Gardeners has helped us increase our yields dramatically which has a spin off for food bank. They deal with much larger issues around the county of food and security, but the cross pollination between the groups out there has helped us improve what we're trying to do.

So even though that statistic is a little hard to measure, it's not in pounds of potatoes or tons of something, it's a very important component especially in a time when we are so politically divided in this country. We receive support from other groups and I think it's sort of an unrecognized benefit of this farm and I hope you continue as an agricultural production unit. Thank you for your time.

And I would like to add also that working with Patrick over the last ten years is it's -- it puts your faith back in government. If you need an answer, Patrick's accessible and you get an answer, it may not be the one you want, but you get an answer promptly and precisely. Thank you for

your time.

MORASCH: All right. Any questions for Mr. Grell? All right. Well, thank you. Lynn Grell.

GRELL: No, I just thought I needed to sign in as well.

MORASCH: Okay. No problem. Mr. Gresham, I can't quite read your first name, so...

GRESHAM: I have the same problem.

MORASCH: All right.

GRESHAM: Good evening. My name is Kirk Gresham. I am in addition to the advisory board member, I am on the foundation for the Heritage Farm and I just wanted to mention on the foundation side some of the things we're working on right now which dovetail right into your suggestions and ideas.

We had a study done a couple of years ago, about a year and a half ago, where the recommendations from the study were to develop a marketing plan to expand our board, number of board positions which we have five now, the recommendation was to go to at least nine to get broader community representation on our board and another thing was to increase our social media activity. We have a Facebook that is inactive and needs to be addressed and I'm not really good at that yet, so the Facebook is (inaudible), but they made a few recommendations, they made a few more, but those were the key recommendations that seem to be compatible with what you're talking about and your suggestion.

I wanted to reinforce that the foundation is working on those and hopefully in the next two or three months we'll have some specific activities. We have a lot of ideas about and specific suggestions about partnerships with local businesses and local industries to help raise the sponsorship and the awareness of the farm in the community which is sorely underrated at this point in time. Thank you.

MORASCH: All right. Thank you. Any questions for Mr. Gresham?

BARCA: Mr. Gresham, before you go. For my clarification, the study that you were talking about, was that from the Leadership Clark County?

GRESHAM: Yes, it was.

BARCA: Okay. That was the question.

GRESHAM: That's correct.

SWINDELL: And I'm going to speak for Karl tonight because I know he's a school teacher so I'm just going to throw it out there, I betcha there's a lot of 4-H kids that would run that Facebook page and do all that social media stuff for you as a school project, so...

GRESHAM: Yes. I'm very active in 4-H and I'm a 4-H leader myself here in Clark County and have been for 25 years so I just need to tap the right one.

SWINDELL: Get those young kids, yep.

MORASCH: All right. Well, thank you.

GRESHAM: Thank you very much.

MORASCH: Matt Edmonds.

EDMONDS: Good evening. I am on staff with the Clark County Food Bank.

BARCA: Can you start with your name, please.

EDMONDS: My name is Matt Edmonds, E-d-m-o-n-d-s, Matt Edmonds, and as I mentioned I'm on staff at the Clark County Food Bank and my goal for being here tonight is to ask you to continue to keep Heritage Farm what it was designed to do over 100 years ago when it was first started and that is to provide healthy nutritious food to people who struggle with food and security right here in Clark County.

And if I may, I would even reference Mr. Lee's PowerPoint presentation that he just shared with us. Slide Number 12 indicated that one of the goals of the master plan is to, let me see, what does it say, open up farm land for more efficient and uninterrupted crop management and production, so that's one of the goals of the revised master plan to open up farm land for more efficient and uninterrupted crop management and production. And can I tell you as a representative of Clark County Food Bank that is absolutely vital to provide food, specifically healthy nutritious food to the people that we are giving food to.

So if you don't know, Clark County Food Bank opened its doors in 2012 and the next year in 2013, we began tracking literally every pound of food and every crop that was produced through Heritage Farm and so in these short six years since 2013, Heritage Farm has grown and harvested more than 500,000 pounds of healthy nutritious produce, so that's just right there at Heritage Farm, half a million pounds of fresh produce, healthy produce, that's what's been grown and harvested there.

So then when you look at the Washington State Department of Agriculture what they value food at, the dollar amount that they assign to that level of food, you're talking just shy of a million dollars worth of healthy nutritious produce and 100 percent of that food is going to

people in Clark County who are in poverty, people in our community who cannot afford that food on their own and that is just since 2013.

But not only is Heritage Farm providing food for people in poverty in our community, but it's also providing a highly meaningful way for people in our community to volunteer and to give back to our community. You see because as Clark County Food Bank we don't, of course we don't hoard that food or keep it to ourselves but rather we give that away, we give it away to people in our community who need it and we utilize the work and the network of over 60 different distribution sites in our community in Clark County, 60 different food pantries, 60 different organizations, 60 different groups that give that food away to people in poverty and people who need it, and the only way that happens is through the volunteer efforts of folks like Mr. and Mrs. Grell who you heard from, Larry and Lynn Grell who volunteer their time every single Wednesday, every single Saturday to help grow and harvest and prepare that food for people in poverty.

So not only is Heritage Farm providing food for people who need it, but it's also providing a meaningful, a highly meaningful volunteer effort for people in our community who want to give back. And so of course I could tell you, I could tell you hundreds of stories tonight from thousands and thousands of volunteers who have donated their time at Heritage Farm, but I'm not going to tell you hundreds and hundreds of stories because we want to go home sometime tonight, but I want to highlight two, and one of them is of course the group that Lynn and Larry both belong to that is Churches and Partnership.

Churches and Partnership is one of the longest running volunteer groups that have been donating their time to Heritage Farm. As you heard from Larry, nearly a decade of service and volunteer hours have been donated to Heritage Farm. So that group set out with five Presbyterian churches just shy of a decade ago and their goal was to plant a garden, and whatever grows out of that garden, they would donate it to people in poverty through Clark County Food Bank and so over the past decade that one group has donated more than 150 tons of fresh produce from their harvest, so that's 300,000 pounds of produce that's come just from this volunteer group.

The second volunteer group that I want to tell you about is called Volunteers for Veggies, Volunteers for Veggies. Now, that is a program that Clark County Food Bank help start with in partnership with the Women, Infant and Children program which most commonly is referred to as WIC, so that is where we encourage WIC clients, that is moms and their kids, to come volunteer at Heritage Farm on Wednesday mornings but primarily on Saturday mornings.

So they come and volunteer on Saturday mornings, and if they volunteer for up to one hour, then they get to go home with a bag of produce that's 10 to 15 pounds of fresh produce that was just harvested there at the farm. And so over the course of just these couple of years that we've instituted this program, Volunteers for Veggies, we have seen over 200 different WIC clients and 200 families, those families in poverty have come to volunteer their time and they

go home with a bag of fresh fruits and vegetables.

Now, we've had a lot of success stories from those WIC clients, but perhaps most notably was one of a particular mom named Naomi. Now, Naomi showed up and in her own words this is what she said, she said I wasn't sure how me and my kids would be treated when I first showed up. I was worried that we might be looked down upon because we weren't there just to volunteer but we were also there to get food.

And then she goes on and she tells her story and she says all of that changed once I actually showed up and I met other volunteers like Lynn and Larry Grell and other volunteers from Churches and Partnership and other volunteers who were there to help.

And Naomi goes on to recount her story to say that not only was she so impressed with how she was treated, but she was impressed with how her daughter was treated and her daughter was encouraged to try fresh vegetables that were just harvested right then and there in that morning and it was through that experience that she had at Heritage Farm that she was then encouraged to begin volunteering to repack food boxes for other families in need and other moms in poverty at Clark County Food Bank.

So she began doing that and she recruited not only her own family, but then she recruited her daughter's preschool, her daughter's kindergarten class to begin volunteering at Heritage Farm. And so Naomi is really this tremendous success story because in her connection with Heritage Farm, she was encouraged to seek out higher education.

And so through some education assistance, some financial assistance as well as through some scholarships, Naomi went back to Portland State University and began to pursue a degree in food systems and management and so that's where she currently is right now. A former WIC client who's now enrolled in higher education at Portland State University pursuing a degree in food systems and management.

And I got to tell you that Naomi's story isn't over yet because she's still volunteering. She's still pursuing her higher education, but she's doing so with this awareness that her connection at Heritage Farm through volunteering and receiving food and through her connection with folks at Churches and Partnership, she's become motivated to give back to her community, to give back to Clark County and to help other families to come to Heritage Farm and to receive food and the assistance they need and she's there to volunteer right along side of them to help.

And so that's why I'm here on behalf of Naomi and truly the 100,000 other clients in Clark County, 100,000 residents who live in Clark County who have requested food assistance this past calendar year, so I'm here on behalf of her, I'm here on behalf of Lynn and Larry Grell and Churches and Partnership and the tens of thousands of volunteers who have donated their time at Heritage Farm to request that you continue to maintain Heritage Farm to do what it was designed to do 100 years ago which is to get healthy nutritious food to people in poverty and

here in our community. So I thank you for taking just a few minutes to listen.

MORASCH: Thank you. Are there any questions?

EDMONDS: What questions do you have?

MORASCH: All right. I just have one. So I take it you support the update then?

EDMONDS: Right. Wholeheartedly.

MORASCH: Do you have any recommendations to change it or do you support it as written?

EDMONDS: I support it to the extent that it certainly does provide more land and opportunity to grow those crops and produce for people in poverty.

MORASCH: All right. Well, thank you.

EDMONDS: Yeah. Thanks for listening.

MORASCH: Jerry Hofer.

HOFER: My name is Jerry Hofer, J-e-r-r-y, H-o-f-e-r, and I've also been working with Churches and Partnership for the last ten years and I'm not going to repeat what Larry said and what Matt said and what Pat said because you already got that all understood.

But when we set out ten years ago, we had a half acre and it was by trial and error and we didn't make a lot of trial, but boy did we ever make a lot of errors and you'd think growing vegetables was really simple but, well, we do a little better now, but the point I wanted to make is that in addition to the volunteer time, the Churches and Partnership doesn't run the money through the County system for the support that they provided, you know.

We bought, you know, fertilizer, seeds, irrigation equipment, and we spent somewhere between 25 and \$50,000 in the last ten years and we don't, you know, we don't need any record of that. But my point is that there's -- and we've had other businesses, you know, like Simplot provide us fertilizer and people will donate lime and I used to run a landscape company and through connections we'd buy the irrigation supplies for 60 cents on the dollar and so there's, there's a lot of things that have gone in to make that work that didn't cost the County any money and that was just the point I wanted to make was I expect that will continue, you know, we'll continue to run into people that will want to support Heritage Farm and will want to support the food bank and it's all about getting it on the ground and doing some good.

Also, the food bank through grants that bought some equipment at the farm, they bought a Gator, they bought a bed shaper, pretty substantial investments in equipment, but I'd say the

bed shaper takes this flat dirt and it mounds it up and covers it with plastic and puts a drip line down so that you only water the things you're growing and not the weeds and you don't have any weeds around the plants and we use water soluble fertilizer so you're only fertilizing the plants with what they need and not the rest of the weeds and we probably have tripled or quadrupled our production because the food bank got the grant to buy that piece of equipment.

You know, we, you know, we bought the Gator which is the thing we run around and haul the vegetables back and, you know -- so my point is that if you look at the bigger overall picture, there are some people and some organizations that are contributing on a substantial monetary basis that isn't in any reports and I only see that increasing with what's going on and what's coming out out there and with the needs of the food bank, I only see that increasing. So I don't know how to factor that in a report but it's good information to have in your mind and in the background. So thank you very much for the opportunity.

MORASCH: All right. Thank you. Any questions? All right. Thank you very much. Hanna Samet.

SAMET: I also thought it was just a sign-in sheet. I don't have anything to say.

MORASCH: Okay. Thank you. Sandy Brown.

BROWN: I also just signed in. It must be a trend, we're just use to signing in.

MORASCH: All right. That's perfectly fine. Yeah. Bill Baird.

BAIRD: I also thought it was a sign-in sheet, but I'll take an opportunity to talk if you give it to me.

MORASCH: You certainly have the microphone, it's yours.

BAIRD: Bill Baird, B-a-i-r-d, I'm from Camas, and the group that I'm affiliated with are Churches and Partnership and Clark County Newcomers Club and through them I volunteer at the farm with Larry and Lynn and Jerry and I volunteer at the food bank as sorting food including stuff that comes from stores and stuff that comes from the farm and I also volunteer at one of the local pantries, so in a small sense I see the whole supply chain.

And I just, I echo the words of others that have spoken and really see the value as a volunteer and the comradery and the opportunity to volunteer, and it's a great service that the farm provides, and also I see the benefit to the clients and especially like, you know, working in the farm and working with the WIC families and the WIC kids. You see the kids and then in the pantries you see the kids and you really get a good sense of the value of it.

So I want to encourage you to continue to support and maintain and extend this. And I know there's other competing possibilities and then I looked at the Clark County website I see that we have 57 parks and trails and I see that we have four active food banks, but the farm is unique and, you know, to develop a 58th park or trail or a fifth food bank I think should take much lower precedence than continue this unique opportunity for volunteers and for the community. Thank you.

MORASCH: All right. Thank you. Any questions? All right. Well, thanks for coming down to the mic.

BAIRD: Yeah.

MORASCH: Emily Kaleel.

KALEEL: I thought it was sign in.

MORASCH: All right. Okay. And that brings us to the end of our list. Is there anyone that didn't get a chance to sign in that wants to speak? Speak now or I will close the record. All right. With that, I will close the public hearing and turn it back over to the Planning Commission for any questions of staff. Do you have a question? Should Mr. Lee come back up?

RETURN TO PLANNING COMMISSION

BARCA: Sure.

MORASCH: All right. There we go. We got questions.

BARCA: So, Pat, based on the public testimony that we have that's been given to us, I think there is your opportunity to enhance your presentation between what the volunteers have talked about and Mr. Edmonds discussing actual volumes and quantities, I think that really speaks volume to the current value of the farm that maybe we missed in the presentation as it was relayed, 500,000 pounds of produce over six years. I did a rough number just based on what I believe Mr. Edmonds value came out, so we're talking \$167,000 a year worth of food production.

I think that helps in the discussion of offset perhaps general fund versus the community and what's being given back and I would encourage the foundation to try and get a handle on volunteer hours because I think that speaks really strongly of the infrastructure that's already in place supporting the farm.

We have a number for what the County spends in the form of labor, but what we're not valuing adequately I think is what the community is willing to invest into the farm and those labor

hours genuinely are able to have some attributed value to it. But I think what we're going to be surprised about is the number of hours that are already being given willingly as volunteers and I think that also can help the cause as to the discussion about the future of the farm.

And while the business plan is being developed and while the marketing plan is being developed, which I think are all very important components to help alleviate the concern that there's a general fund infusion, I think what may not have been recognized nearly well enough is what the community is already willing to invest and what the community is receiving in that investment, and I think we could really strengthen and bolster the existing product of saying this is what the farm is now and we're hoping to do better with these other things.

I think we got to get the foundations future contribution put in to the presentation also.

So I think I am very heartened by just the current state, but what I feel with the presentation we're missing even what the idea of what the near future could be just in the community growing the farm and how it would be giving back and I think for me hearing that changes a lot of the discussion and the concept about how quickly the farm needs to be, you know, financially independent in that regard because I don't think we've recognized already what value is being given back to the community already from the County's contribution and the communities contribution put together. So I think that would be valuable and I am interested in knowing if you feel like there's enough time to work with the foundation to change that up before you go to your hearing with the Councilors.

LEE: Yes, I think so. I think, you know, I know certainly the minutes will be forwarded on to the Council and I can certainly note some of those points as sort of another dimension of the financial aspect.

BARCA: Great.

SWINDELL: I'd just like to say that everything that Ron just said I absolutely agree with and hearing some of the things that Matt had to say and the value that is given to the community, I mean just hearing and seeing all the presentation that you gave is a great presentation on what the master plan is, but we really didn't feel the value to the community, hearing the stories of how it's, I mean what's the value of that to this community. The gal you were talking about going to college and her daughter and what her daughter is seeing, the daughter is seeing how that's going to affect the next generation.

So even though, I mean I'm asking the question, what's the cost every year to run this thing, okay, it's three-quarters of a million, well, what's the benefit to the community? Well, when you're talking about families and how it affects families, that's a huge value, and I think that the County Councilors need to make sure they're understanding that total value to our community, even though we're infusing money into this thing, there's a huge value that all these volunteers are adding to our community and I think it's a marvelous thing what's going on out there.

And, Matt, I really want to say thank you for bringing what you did bring tonight and make sure you're at the hearing or with the County Councilors because I think your passion is felt and I think you might want to think about radio because you've got a marvelous voice for radio, no, just you really did, you really impacted me, I'm not sure about the rest of the guys, but it really impacted me and what the value truly is to the community, so thank you.

TORRES: You know, from my perspective I do appreciate all the input from the speakers, it was very helpful. I do like the updates to the plan, I like the vision, I like the ideas, but kind of like Ron said, there's the how piece of it is missing.

After hearing Mr. Gresham speak, I think I'm hopeful that implementing some of the ideas from Leadership Clark County quickly would help, and also again to what Matt said, I've been involved with the food bank since 2013 with Leadership Clark County, I know they're very savvy at getting sponsors and raising funds and I think your partnership with them could benefit a lot by being publicized, they are a very well respected organization in our county and I think, you know, publicizing that partnership you have with them could be very helpful to raise funds and to grow sponsors and other things, so...

But I am, you know, I do like the plan and I'm much more hopeful now after hearing the speakers, so I appreciate all the presenters.

GRIMWADE: I think until tonight the real value of this resource hasn't been fully understood and I think congratulations to those people that spoke tonight in favor of the farm.

The vision is great, however, it becomes a matter of how do we go about implementation and my concern goes to the fact that today there are many, many competing resources for limited dollars, everyone wants everything and everyone has a very strong passion behind it and we have to prioritize where resources go.

To ensure the sustainability of this farm, not only is the drive plan important, but more so is a good solid business plan that goes behind it to give the volunteer groups and the partnering groups something to work by and to demonstrate the value that comes through from their efforts back to the City or the County Council.

So I would urge my colleagues tonight that if we were to recommend the adoption of the draft plan management it also be with the proviso that the County requires within a certain period of time the development of a business case and marketing strategy to help everyone bring this into a highly sustainable farm for the future.

MORASCH: All right. Well, we've morphed into deliberation from questions. Is there any more questions? If not, is there any more deliberation? And hearing nobody jump up, is there a **motion** someone would like to make?

GRIMWADE: I move a **motion** that the draft plan be adopted subject to the development of a business plan and marketing strategy that be brought forward within a time determined by the County Council.

BARCA: I'll **second** that.

MORASCH: All right. It's been moved and seconded. Is there any discussion on the motion?

SWINDELL: Can you explain a little bit more what you're asking for here.

GRIMWADE: What I'm in effect asking for is a business plan which will set out what are the casings we need to do, when, in what order and what are the resources required. It will give us an idea of the true cost of some of those capital improvement works, it will identify opportunities for partnering, it will also final, financially recognize the value that is brought forward from the various volunteer groups and the value that is created from the farm in terms of assisting with the food bank and the like. So we actually monetize everything that's going on at that farm and we can then start prioritizing very clearly.

It is a very powerful tool when you want to go to a sponsor and ask for money because the first thing the sponsor is going to want to know is, well, how many people am I going to affect if I give you a contribution of X thousand dollars, having that business plan is one of your most powerful ways of gaining capacity financially for your organization.

The marketing strategy is also very important because you are going to be competing along with all the other nonprofits in the area to certain companies for resources, so it's how are you going to sell it and one of the things that you can link to is you are talking about benefits, the benefits are endless with these sorts of resources. There are many, many hundreds of thousands of campaign slogans that you can put around everything that you want to secure from a sponsor and you can package those with those slogans to hit the right sponsor at the right time.

So those two documents will actually help you build your capacity, get your revenue in, get it onto a sustainable future and not be beholden always to the County funds which are going to be up and down from year-to-year, and as soon as the crisis comes, you can be at their beck and call of, oh, we'll cut your funding. So this will give you the ability to take charge of your future as opposed to sitting down and sort of second guessing what's going on.

SWINDELL: So I appreciate that. What I'm looking for is a little clarification. So you're wanting that done prior, you want us to recommend that to the County Councilors prior to them approving it, that you want that done prior to them approving this, is that what you're recommending?

GRIMWADE: Approve the draft plan, but also recommend that they do those two additional steps.

SWINDELL: You're recommending it as a recommendation?

GRIMWADE: Yep.

BARCA: So my understanding of the way it was worded is that the County Council sets the deadline for the business and marketing plan, not us.

GRIMWADE: Yes. Unless the Commission wants to set that deadline.

BARCA: That wasn't how the motion was read and that wasn't what I seconded. So I'm agreeable to having County Council set the deadline and I believe since most of the Leadership Clark County recommendations include a lot of that, that that structure is mostly in place, so I'm good with seconding that motion.

GRIMWADE: Yeah.

MORASCH: Okay. It's been moved and seconded for the recommendation for the plan update to be approved conditioned on the adoption of a business plan and a date that the County Council will set for the adoption of the business plan. Is there any further discussion?

SWINDELL: Is it a recommendation or is it a condition? I want to get clarification on that.

MORASCH: My understanding is it was a recommendation for a condition.

SWINDELL: Okay. I just want to get clarification on that. Thank you.

MORASCH: All right. Hearing no further discussion, can we have a roll call please, Sonja.

ROLL CALL VOTE

MORASCH: AYE

GRIMWADE: AYE

BARCA: AYE

SWINDELL: AYE

TORRES: AYE

BENDER: AYE

MORASCH: All right. Passes unanimously. Thank you all for coming. That concludes our public hearing item for tonight.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

A. Election of Chair & Vice Chair

MORASCH: The next is we have new business, election of chair and vice chair, now Karl is not here and I know he was interested in this election. Should we wait until we have a full -- I see nods, so then, yes, we will postpone this once more and hopefully in June we'll have a full seven member Planning Commission for the election of the chair and vice chair.

COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION

MORASCH: That brings us to comments from members of the Planning Commission. Anyone have any comments on anything?

BENDER: Yeah, I do.

MORASCH: All right. Richard.

BENDER: I've recently had a course change in my life and have taken on new obligations. I've enjoyed working with this committee here whether it be Ron who tends to bisect stuff which is understandable, Robin with his business background and his projections that he wants to see on certain issues, Steve heading the ship and giving his legal expertise, we've got quite a group of people here and these people are dedicated to the good of the county, that has been seen over the years that I've worked with this particular group, but it's with regret that I will have to resign to take on other adventures in my life, but, gentlemen, I've enjoyed working with you and the best to the county.

MORASCH: Well, you'll be missed, but I wish you very good luck in your endeavors.

BENDER: Thank you.

MORASCH: Are you going to be here in June or is this effective immediately?

BENDER: This is my last meeting.

MORASCH: Last meeting. All right. Well, good luck.

BENDER: Thank you guys.

MORASCH: All right. Any other comments? All right. With that, we are adjourned.

ADJOURNMENT

ADJOURNMENT

The record of tonight's hearing, as well as the supporting documents and presentations can be viewed on the Clark County Web Page at:

<https://www.clark.wa.gov/community-planning/planning-commission-hearings-and-meeting-notes>

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