

Port of Port Townsend – Short’s Farm Steering Committee Agenda



Date: April 25, 2024

Time: 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Location: In Person – 1594 Center Road, Chimacum 98325

Two-hour drive/walk tour of the Short’s Farm commencing at 6:00 pm

Stop #1: Meet at the “Quarry” at the Short’s Farm. A map is attached depicting our rendezvous point, and planned route. Committee will board Martin Mills flatbed truck for transport around farm.

Please make sure to bring appropriate clothing/footwear. Meeting ends at 8pm at Quarry.

Time	Item	Leader
6:00 – 6:15	Meet, drive and walk of farm (interactive map)	Eric Toews
6:15 – 7:00	Brainstorm Possibilities	FSC
7:00 – 7:15	Break	FSC
7:15 – 7:45	What Committees? land, infrastructure, creek	FSC
7:45 – 8:00	Questions and Next Steps, Next Meeting	FSC

8:00 Adjournalment

This meeting is open to the public. However, it is not a venue for providing public testimony. Written comments may be submitted and entered into the record. The principal purpose of the meeting is to allow the Farm Steering Committee and Port staff to communicate with each other, ask and answer Committee member’s questions, and obtain Committee member input regarding the subject topic(s).

The Mission of the Port of Port Townsend is to serve the citizens of Jefferson County by responsibly maintaining and developing property and facilities to promote sustainable economic growth, to provide community access to Port facilities and services, and to protect and maintain our environment, community resources, and maritime heritage.

Map

Short's Farm located at 1594 Center Road



Park and Gather at Stop 1
Stop #1 – 2:00 pm: Quarry

Open House and Farm Steering Committee Meeting - April 17, 2024 Minutes

The Farm Steering Committee met for an open house meeting at the WSU extension office at the Kivley Center, at 97 Oak Bay Road, Port Hadlock. The meeting began at 5:30 p.m.

Members present: Janet Aubin, Martin Frederickson, Martin Mills, Dave Seabrook, Kellie Henwood, Al Latham, and Rebecca Benjamin

Other Attendees: Jefferson County Commissioner Heidi Eisenhour and Port Commissioner Carol Hasse

Staff: Port Executive Director Eron Berg, Deputy Director Eric Toews, and Joanna Sanders, Administrative Assistant

University of Washington: Katie Cody, Affiliate Faculty Member, Malia Wing, Abby Newbold, Clelie Fielding, Tony Charvoz, Ben Hagen, Will Palmer, Aziz Al-Azzon, Justin Patterson, Will McPherson, and Greg Suskin

Public: Roughly estimated at 35.

Welcome by UW Justin Patterson, who gave a presentation with a brief introduction on the farm. The UW prepared the draft initial conditions report and ultimately a final plan report will be presented.

Activity: Attendees circulated to stations with students addressing questions and generated ideas in the following categories. Students distributed postcards to all attendees asking participants what is desired in the community and what might be envisioned for the farm.

Agriculture: USDA meat processing facility, food resiliency and growing food to local food quality standards (farmer's market, Food Co-op, organic certification), agricultural education, crops: willows, malting barley and wild rice, preserving neighbors' organic certification, and permaculture demonstration and education. An attendee suggested a new book "Growing a Revolution," by UW Professor David R. Montgomery.

Community & Economic Development: Farmer community housing, shared farm space, compost, cold storage, commercial kitchen, farm stand, outdoor classroom, crops with direct connection to local market, prepare a SWAT analysis of how County makes money and finding the industry to support it (e.g., tree planting/harvesting), maintain rural character, and small-scale renewable energy.

Creek (Ecosystem) Management: removing reed canary grass, maintaining stream flow, long-term solutions for creek management, restoring the meander, salmon health, and appropriate buffer zone for salmon restoration/restoring salmon habitat. Question about riparian buffer zones and streams information from Dept. of Ecology.

Wildlife: Continue waterfowl hunting, balancing recreation and conservation, bird watching opportunities, swan habitat, controlling flood plain for wildlife, fishing opportunities, noise management, reduce hunting, and a beaver strategy.

Activity: Attendees voted on ideas listed with two dots/person. UW Students led the activity and recorded responses.

Next Steps: On April 18, the Farm Steering Committee would discuss Open House input. Students would then research and represent ideas rising to the top at a May 15 Open House for further ideas and more refinement.

Adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Farm Steering Committee April 18, 2024 Minutes

The Farm Steering Committee met at the WSU Extension Office Kivley Center, 97 Oak Bay Road, Port Hadlock. The meeting was called to order at 5:30 p.m.

Members present: Janet Aubin, Martin Frederickson, Keith Kisler, Laura Llewellyn, Martin Mills, David Seabrook, Kellie Henwood, Al Latham, Rebecca Benjamin

Other Attendees: Heidi Eisenhour, Jefferson County Drainage District and Erik Kingfisher of the Jefferson Land Trust

Staff: Port Executive Director Eron Berg, Deputy Director Eric Toews, Administrative Assistant Joanna Sanders, and

Commissioners: None

University of Washington Team: Katie Cotie, Malia Wing, Abby Newbold, Will Palmer, Justin Patterson, Will McPherson, Greg Suskin

Meeting Introduction and Purpose: Farm Steering Committee met to review ideas from the April 17 Community Meeting. Eric Toews noted an additional meeting may be necessary to narrow alternatives before the May 15 public meeting.

Observations from April 17 Open House and Discussion of Questions/Ideas/Options:

1) Initial Conditions Report: How to present edits/comments? Staff would address inaccuracies and would welcome those via email.

2) Operational Structure of Farm: Will there be one (1) or 17 individuals leasing the farm? There was a request for clarification of the Port's expectations for the Committee. The majority felt it critical to develop an operational manual to stabilize the property and document how the farm works. Contents should include diagrams of operations, water shutoff, electricity lines, plumbing system, electrical systems, how to winterize pump and sprinkler, water location, septic lines, refrigeration, breaker panels/locations, existing problems, what freezes in winter, maps, surveys, consider hiring an operations manager. Santos has been helping on the farm for 25 years, so it is time sensitive to address operations before September 1.

Eron Berg clarified the Port would welcome short-term and long-term information to ensure operational knowledge is captured and covered. FSC might also recommend an advisory committee to continue working to create a standard operating plan. He recognized an immediate need for a plan and a lease of the property for a 15-month period or other short-term lease and not any infrastructure until there is a plan.

3) Reed Canary Grass. The Port should mow now and obtain permits to be in the creek possibly with the help of Jefferson Land Trust. The Conservation District has been most involved in permitting with current permit covering July 15 to July 18, 2024, but able to be extended from three days to five (5) years.

4) When does the FSC start to strategize the needs? There was discussion of what items should be the focus aside from the present needs mentioned. Should a subcommittee be developed? The committee felt there is a definite need for an operations/transition committee. NOSC might help figure out what should occur to restore habitat.

5) Port Collaborating with Conservation District on a topo elevation survey. A lidar survey is critical for baseline data and should be completed right after mowing, although some of the ground is hard to mow until August. A question was whether there is a way to integrate lidar along with a traditional survey.

6) Discussion/Questions for Livestock and Vegetable Farmers: Continue meat production/livestock farm as much of the land is not suitable for vegetables based on soil type, maintain environmental quality and water access, little land is available in the area with water, so there is value in the water for vegetable farming. Much of the land is still too wet well into the season and a lot would be determined by how much land is available for different types of vegetables. A question whether the agricultural conservation easement is meant to protect agricultural values (no net loss of ag values), so a conversion to habitat on a broad scale would require much coordination to amend the conservation easement.

How much of the land is not flooded right now? Drone pictures would be helpful to find out what is leasable – and update them every couple of weeks as conditions change: condition of drain tiles (they are not working optimally according to Roger). What is sloped, what is flat, what is farmable?

7) Agriculture Additional Questions Before Recommendations: What are the mechanisms the committee could recommend to stimulate the ag sector. Could the Port collaborate/activate Jefferson Landworks collaborative to play a transition role (lessons learned), to keep ag lands viable, engage and assist farmers, and help to identify initial conditions? Could the Collaborative be resource support for the transition plan?

How much tillable land is there? What are the farmer's needs in this community? Is farm drainable? Get updated metrics from the Jefferson Landworks Collaborative and needs assessment of ag community. Also need to know what the farm is best suited for to make a long-term plan. Eric Toews summarized the goal to develop a work plan, transition plan, and prioritize issues that would lead to future decisions and farm plan. What types of lease opportunities are possible to generate 9.5% financial return. Port staff mentioned it could seek funding for the transition phase. Multi-tracks might be needed for operations in the meantime such as USDA meat processing, but no net loss of farming acreage.

8) Creek/Ecosystem Management: NOSC, Land Trust and Jefferson Landworks Collaborative need to meet and consider a survey and what ability there is to drain the property and the broader conversation about habitat and agriculture.

9) Next Meeting/Survey Group: 6pm on Thursday, April 25 p.m. The Committee agreed to meet on the farm property to walk, discuss, make comments, and brainstorm. It might be helpful to develop an interactive map showing pasture, former pasture and begin to overlay some uses as well as existing limitations. It was noted Eron Berg and Erik Kingfisher would not be able to attend. Also

consider forming subcommittees for infrastructure, facility, and land and consult a wetlands expert.

There was also a suggestion for an extra full Farm Steering Committee meeting before May 15 with facilitation (to keep Committee on task), so a report could be prepared on what the survey group found. The intent of the May open house may need to be restructured.

Meeting adjourned at 7:54 p.m.