

Short's Family Farm Comments



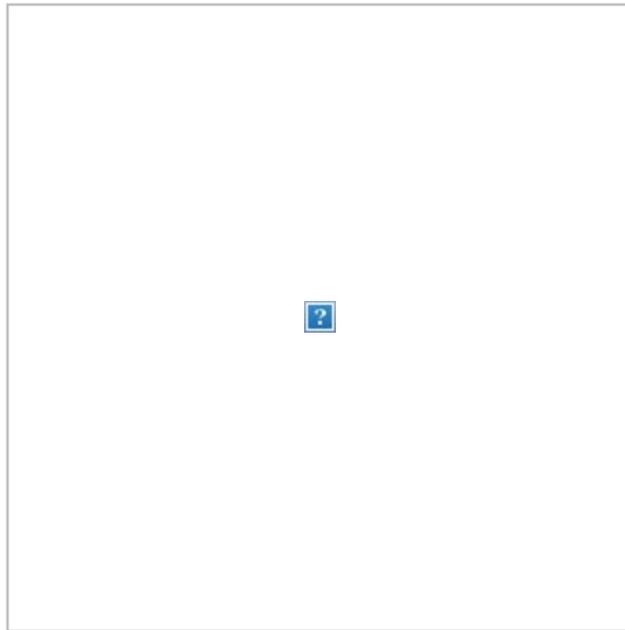
Number	Date	Name
01	10/10/2022	Anne Ricker
02	10/14/2022	Lief Knutsen
03	10/16/2022	Eric Taylor
04	10/16/2022	Al Latham
06	11/5/2022	Ric Brewer
05	11/15/2022	Marny Kittredge
06	11/20/2022	Eric Taylor
07	1/5/2023	Zach Wailand
08	1/15/2023	Neville Pearsall
09	1/15/2023	Natalie Smith
10	1/17/2023	David Seabrook
11	1/17/2023	Peter Newland
12	1/17/2023	Iris Pearsall

13-39	1/17/2023	In-Person Comment (Tony Kastella, Francesco Tortorici, Janet Welch, David Seabrook, Peter Newland, Kevin Long, Karen Page, Jean Ball, Al Latham, Nicole Witham, Diane Johnson, Hannah, Martin Frederickson, Charlotte Frederickson, Jeff Kelety, Pete Langley, Melanie Edwards, Joanne Pontrello, Steve Dowdell, Cameron Jones, Julie Boggs, Nicole, Kevin Short, Roger Short, Austin Bishop, Eric Kingfisher, Alexa Helbling)
40	1/18/2023	Janet Welch
41	1/18/2023	Zach Wailand
42	1/19/2023	Janet Welch
43	1/23/2023	Jean and Keith Marzan

From: [Anne Ricker](#)
To: [PPT Info](#)
Subject: Re: Posts from Port of Port Townsend for 10/10/2022
Date: Monday, October 10, 2022 5:06:50 PM

What a splendid idea! Your innovation is admirable.
Anne

On Monday, October 10, 2022 at 03:03:50 PM PDT, Port Outreach <info@portofpt.com> wrote:



[Port News re: Short Family Farm](#)

By Port of Port Townsend on Oct 10, 2022 10:43 am

Port of Port Townsend
Investing in farm land

Manager and Commissioners

All the below is relevant to why the port would want to invest in sustainable farm land and why it is a smart direction for both the port as well as the community

ACREtrader.com

Facilitators for wise investing in sustainable farm lands. Found link via "soil4climate" - FaceBook

The following link is relevant for understanding the big picture. It is a TED TALK, ~18 minutes, by Dan Barber, "How I fell in love with a fish" A bit slow starting, however, Dan gets a standing ovation from a large audience at the conclusion.

https://www.ted.com/talks/dan_barber_how_i_fell_in_love_with_a_fish?language=en

Leif Knutsen
Founding member of Shipwright Co-op

leifknutsen@gmail.com

Joanna Sanders

From: Joanna Sanders
Sent: Friday, October 14, 2022 2:22 PM
To: Eron Berg; Pam Petranek; Pete Hanke; Carol Hasse
Subject: Short Property Purchase Comment
Attachments: Leif Knutsen Letter.pdf

Leif dropped off the attached for you today. In it, he mentions a couple of links. To save you a few minutes, here they are.

[Dan Barber: How I fell in love with a fish | TED Talk](#)
[\(12\) soil4climate - Search Results | Facebook](#)



Joanna Sanders – *she/her/hers*
Administrative Assistant
PORT OF PORT TOWNSEND
2701 Jefferson Street, P.O. Box 1180, Port Townsend, WA 98368
360-385-2323
www.portofpt.com

Joanna Sanders

From: Eron Berg
Sent: Sunday, October 16, 2022 2:40 PM
To: Pam Petranek; Carol Hasse; Eric Toews; Joanna Sanders
Subject: Fwd: Shorts farm

From: Al <alelatham@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, October 16, 2022 9:17:03 AM
To: Pete Hanke <phanke@portofpt.com>; Eron Berg <Eron@portofpt.com>; Joe Holtrop <jholtrop@jeffersoncd.org>
Subject: Shorts farm

Hi - The Port purchasing the Short's farm is a great idea.
The Jefferson Co. Conservation District has a long history of working with Roger on farm planning and best management practice implementation and know the farm real well..
We would offer any assistance we can to the Port during your planning process.
Contact would be Joe Holtrop, district manager 360-808-3645 jholtrop@jeffersoncd.org
Regards, Al Latham, Chair, JCCD board of supervisors 360-821-1323

From: [Eron Berg](#)
To: [Joanna Sanders](#)
Subject: FW: Short Family Farm
Date: Monday, November 21, 2022 8:17:42 AM

From: Eric Taylor <spamcan57@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, November 20, 2022 7:17 AM
To: Pam Petranek <Pam@portofpt.com>; Carol Hasse <Carol@portofpt.com>; Pete Hanke <phanke@portofpt.com>; Eron Berg <Eron@portofpt.com>
Subject: Short Family Farm

Port Commissioners & Executive Director:

I see that the potential purchase of the Short Family Farm is on the agenda for this week's Port meeting.

Looking at the minutes from the 11/9/22 Port meeting, I see it was discussed then also.

To quote Eron Berg from section IX staff comments:

"A lot of meeting time has been spent on the Short Farm to foster efforts in food production, sustainable agriculture, and salmon restoration. A special commission meeting might be held at the Grange in January to share with the Commission learnings of the Phase 1 and 2 investigative assessment and hear from the agriculture community before approving the acquisition and moving forward with development plan. At the time of approving the acquisition, there would remain many unanswered questions."

The way that comment is worded makes it sound like this purchase is a done deal already, and the Port is only going through the motions of getting public input.

It seems like there is a "build it and they will come" attitude, instead of "let's have a plan in place first which answers all the questions".

As per my previous letter (see below), I feel that this would not be a good move for the Port. I think that the Port needs to spend it's precious financial resources on maintaining their existing facilities,

instead of buying more property-- which will require even more money to maintain & develop.

I would like to see the Short family farm remain privately owned and operated. I believe that this would be a suitable issue for EDC Team Jefferson to get involved with- to facilitate plans for a private party (or collaborative group of private parties) to purchase the property.

Isn't this sort of thing more in their bailiwick?

Thank you for your attention,

~Eric Taylor
172 Wycoff Road
Port Townsend, WA 98368

On Sun, Oct 16, 2022 at 7:58 AM Eric Taylor <spamcan57@gmail.com> wrote:

Hi Port Commissioners:

I just read an article in the Peninsula Daily News about the Port being interested in purchasing the Short Family Farm.

I would like to see the local agricultural / ranching economy get a shot in the arm, but I don't think the Port buying the Short farm is the way to do it.

I don't want to see a productive and profitable beef cattle operation turn into a questionable financial experiment.

The Port would have to spend two to three million dollars to buy the property, then who knows how much more money every year to operate it.

I think the Port needs to instead spend it's money getting their existing infrastructure at Point Hudson, the Boat Haven, and the airport up to snuff

As private property, this farm contributes thousands of dollars every year in property taxes that supports our local infrastructure.

There is already way too much property in Jefferson County off the tax rolls due to being owned by federal or local agencies, and more being added every year, leaving us taxpayers to shoulder more and more of this burden--

we don't need more dead weight.

As your constituent, I urge you to NOT purchase the Short Family Farm.

Thank you for your attention,

Eric Taylor

172 Wycoff Road

Port Townsend, WA 98368

Joanna Sanders

From: Eron Berg
Sent: Tuesday, October 18, 2022 8:17 AM
To: Joanna Sanders
Subject: FW: Short Family Farm

Joanna,

Will you begin to gather the Short's Farm comments in a single location?

Thanks,

Eron

From: Eric Taylor <spamcan57@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, October 16, 2022 7:59 AM
To: Pam Petranek <Pam@portofpt.com>; Carol Hasse <Carol@portofpt.com>; Pete Hanke <phanke@portofpt.com>; Eron Berg <Eron@portofpt.com>
Subject: Short Family Farm

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Thank you for your attention,

Eric Taylor
172 Wycoff Road
Port Townsend, WA 98368

Joanna Sanders

From: Pam Petranek
Sent: Tuesday, November 8, 2022 8:49 PM
To: Joanna Sanders
Subject: FW: Short Family Farm

Joanna, Ric brewer would like us to post his letter for our 11/9 meeting, in bold below.
Pam

From: Ric Brewer <ric.d.brewer@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 8, 2022 11:37 AM
To: Pam Petranek <Pam@portofpt.com>
Subject: Re: Short Family Farm

You are welcome to post.

Ric Brewer

Sent from my iPhone

On Nov 8, 2022, at 8:50 AM, Pam Petranek <Pam@portofpt.com> wrote:

Hi Ric,

Thanks for your letter and it would be great to talk as we explore the Short Farm proposal. Would you like your letter to be posted for the 11/9 port meetings public comment letters, or just leave it as an email to “informally inform” the commission?

Pam Petranek

District 1

Port Commission Chair

From: Ric Brewer <ric.d.brewer@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, November 5, 2022 8:23 PM
To: Pam Petranek <Pam@portofpt.com>; Carol Hasse <Carol@portofpt.com>; Pete Hanke <phanke@portofpt.com>
Subject: Short Family Farm

Dear Port Commissioners,

I am writing in support of the Port obtaining the Short Family Farm if used as a community resource for food production including slaughter and processing. With the lack of a USDA certified slaughter facility, a shortage of commercial kitchen space, and lack of food storage (such as commercial grade refrigeration and freezer storage) I am sure that there is more than enough agricultural need for these functions, as well as room on the site for a collaborative farming approach.

As a current farmer who is also considering raising quail, the challenge to have a proper processing facility for the birds is key to me continuing. With several potential customers, but no processing

facility in place, the idea of wading through the many restrictions to develop my property for this daunting.

Please consider this as you move forward with plans for obtaining this legacy property.

Ric Brewer

Quilcene

ric.d.brewer@gmail.com

Joanna Sanders

From: Marny Kittredge <marnykit@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 15, 2022 3:39 AM
To: Public Comments; Linger Longer Improvement Committee
Cc: Pete Hanke; Carol Hasse; Pam Petranek
Subject: Questions/Clarification re Quilcene Marina/Shorts Farm

Greetings Port of Port Townsend Commissioners,

On behalf of the LLAC I'd like to thank you for coming to Quilcene to engage in discussions regarding the Quilcene Marian property.

The issue of the Port purchasing Short's Farm was brought up and several of us felt it was insufficiently addressed.

If you could please respond to the questions below in a more thorough manner we would appreciate it.

Respectfully,

Kit Kittredge

LLAC member

<https://portofpt.com/port-news-re-short-family-farm/>

A couple of questions come to mind:

- If the Port can spend possibly \$2 million on a farm that it is prohibited from farming, why cannot the Port fix the Quilcene Marina?
- Even if they bought the farm, how much more would they spend as they contemplate additional infrastructure to be built on the property such as a storage facility?
- The Port asked for an IDD Levy because it did not have enough money to maintain its current property portfolio.

- How will they maintain everything including a farm when that levy runs out?

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows

From: [Eron Berg](#)
To: [Joanna Sanders](#)
Subject: FW: Short Family Farm
Date: Monday, November 21, 2022 8:17:42 AM

From: Eric Taylor <spamcan57@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, November 20, 2022 7:17 AM
To: Pam Petranek <Pam@portofpt.com>; Carol Hasse <Carol@portofpt.com>; Pete Hanke <phanke@portofpt.com>; Eron Berg <Eron@portofpt.com>
Subject: Short Family Farm

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Looking at the minutes from the 11/9/22 Port meeting, I see it was discussed then also.

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Thank you for your attention,

~Eric Taylor
172 Wycoff Road
Port Townsend, WA 98368

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As your constituent, I urge you to NOT purchase the Short Family Farm.

Thank you for your attention,

Eric Taylor

172 Wycoff Road

Port Townsend, WA 98368

From: [Janet and/or Willi](#)
To: [PPT Info](#)
Cc: [Public Comments](#)
Subject: Short proposal
Date: Wednesday, January 18, 2023 3:33:46 PM

I was told at tonight's meeting that this letter had not been received. I received a notice today that it was not delivered. I see that the link is "publiccomments" but when you click on that link it creates the address without the s (see below). I wonder how many other letters were lost in the ether! I've sent to info just to make sure it gets through.

Janet Welch

Begin forwarded message:

From: Janet and/or Willi <aloha@olympus.net>
Subject: Agricultural land
Date: January 5, 2023 at 9:37:55 AM PST
To: publiccomment@portofpt.com

Dear Port Commissioners,

First, I would like to commend you on your foresight in putting the Port's considerable weight into supporting local agriculture. For the reasons you state, it is both needed and appropriate for the port to engage in activities that strengthen and broaden our agricultural sector.

So, while I am very supportive of the Port's interest in purchasing agricultural land, I could not be more opposed to the purchase of the Short property in Chimacum Valley. Though it is a large contiguous ownership, the vast majority of it is poorly suited to most agricultural uses. The flooding of most of the property is well known, and as the NOSC study linked in the project page details, the geomorphic patterns and topography are far better suited to riparian restoration than the long history of attempts to drain it to render it usable for grazing.

Another link included in the project page (thank you for providing the background information in such an easy to access format) provides information on the conservation easement. In spite of the \$800,000 that the Shorts received in exchange for that easement that precludes development on acreage that wouldn't have been developable anyway, the reach of Chimacum Creek that runs through the easement is notably one of the most degraded in the entire watershed. Even with just a windshield survey one can see that this reach of Chimacum Creek suffers from the failure on the part of the owner to participate in planting and other stream restoration efforts (vs drainage efforts) that have taken root throughout in the watershed in the past 20 years. In addition, soil compaction and erosion from decades of excessive grazing pressure is easily seen in winter months when surface water is seen clearly only on the Short side of the Finnriver/Short property line.

If the Port intends to leverage its assets on behalf of local farmers, producers, and value added manufacturing, I would hope that it wouldn't select a "Charley Brown Christmas Tree" that stands out not for its assets but for its liabilities. While the Short reach of Chimacum creek *is* in desperate need of a focused effort to restore floodplain ecologic values, I don't believe that the Port is the agency that is best suited to address that; and while an admirable objective, it seems like quite a stretch of interpretation of the Port's mission.

Since the Shorts are willing to sell, has the Port looked into their property in Beaver Valley? While it isn't as large as the Chimacum holding, the lack of flooding enables the entire parcel to be used for agricultural activities, and the lack of a restrictive easement would facilitate greater flexibility in use. And how extensive has the Port's search for suitable land been? I hope there has been a methodical query and that the Short option hasn't been simply pitched to the Port by interested parties. I suspect that there might be any number of owners of agricultural land around the county who would be delighted to know that there is an interested buyer out there. Maybe some of them have already contacted the Port; I am concerned that the Short possibility may appear to be a done deal.

I hope that you hear from farmers who can help you to understand how limiting the soils and the topography are on the Short farm; I hope you read the stories of the Shorts resistance to Environmentally Sensitive Area designations, citing them as a 'taking' in the local property rights battle; I hope you see that letting somebody else buy the property will likely result in the new property owner embracing the restoration of floodplain forests, beaver-created water bodies, fish rearing pools, and off channel features. Jefferson County taxpayers would be much better served by the Port looking at a different (even if smaller), higher quality, historically well-managed agricultural opportunity. Please pull the plug on this option and look elsewhere.

Sincerely,
Janet Welch

Joanna Sanders

From: Public Comments
Sent: Friday, January 6, 2023 11:01 AM
To: Eron Berg; Abigail Berg; Matthew Klontz; Eric Toews
Subject: FW: Short Family Farm

FYI, the following public comment will be added to this Commission Packet. With the meeting on Jan. 17, we may decide to include all comments to date on that agenda so that we have a record summary in one spot. Let me know thoughts.

-----Original Message-----

From: Haley Olson-Wailand <dharmaridge@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 5, 2023 7:15 AM
To: Public Comments <PublicComments@portofpt.com>
Subject: Short Family Farm

Hello Port Commission,

My name is Zach Wailand from Dharma Ridge farm. My family and I farm at the Boulton farm in Quilcene and Glendale farm in Chimacum. We currently manage about 120 acres between the farms with 70-80 in organic produce. The produce is sold through two distribution companies which each pick up three times a week from June through November.

We are potentially looking to expand our operations in Chimacum and would be interested in land lease opportunities at the Short farm. We also haul all our product grown in Chimacum back to our home farm in Quilcene where we have our cooling and shipping facility with semi truck access. The potential of the Port developing the Short farm to have this capability is something that we would be excited to be included in the conversation about. Feel free to contact me about any follow up.

Thanks, Zach Wailand
360-302-0143
Info@dharmaridgefarm.com

Sent from my iPhone

From: [Neville Pearsall](#)
To: [Public Comments](#)
Cc: [Neville Pearsall](#)
Subject: Shorts farm
Date: Sunday, January 15, 2023 2:57:25 PM

Please note your email comments link on the shorts farm page has the incorrect address so my first attempt was rejected. It has public comment@portofpt.com
That would limit comments.
Trying again.

As an immediate neighbor on the west property line I am not in favor of all the noise created by the “magic dirt “ operation right outside my kitchen window. It should be zoned industrial not agriculture even though topsoil is being manufactured.
They have used the most noisy and obnoxious chipper machine for long periods. I don’t mind the manure smell as much as the noise.
When we bought the property 40 years ago there was about 40 or 50 acres of forest on the other side of the fence that was clear cut by the Shorts in the 80’s

We also don’t like the Chimacum alarm clock of shotguns at one minute after dawn for two months of water fowl hunting. Sounds like it is right at our window. Usually about 15 or 20 blasts at dawn followed by intermittent battles every half hour. Shotguns are not delicate weapons.

As for future development an orchard or vineyard on the west side hilltop seems good. Maybe potatoes.

Please No housing for workers right on our fence line. We already had to endure that placement and a wacko employee of the farm. Put that near the Center Road developments and infrastructure.

I like the sound of a tree growing.
Neville Pearsall

**Public Comment on the Potential Short Farm purchase by the Port of Port Townsend
January 17,2023 Chimacum Grange**

Good evening, commissioners and staff. My name is Peter Newland. For the last fourteen years my wife Robyn Johnson and I have lived on the shores of Tarboo Bay near Quilcene. The quest for provisions requires that we pass by the Short Farm on a regular basis. On my way here this evening I noticed that the flood waters have receded some but still cover a great deal of the acreage.

My biases and beliefs are formed by a fifty-year career in the construction and development industry in Snohomish County. During that time, I also served two terms on the Snohomish County PUD. Those twelve years 1985 – 1996 taught me a great deal about public policy and the rewards and challenges of public service. I hold appreciation for what it is like to sit in your chairs.

During my time in office, I was what today is called a budget hawk. My first wife was fond of saying that “I cared more about the public’s money than our own”. Some hyperbole but mostly truth.

Certainly, my caring is what brought me here this evening. Like you I have more questions than answers.

- As yet, there is no appraisal of value.
- We have not seen a detailed concept or plan for what the Port might do with this investment of public money.
- There is no hint of what the return on investment might be.
- There has been no examination of alternative sites that might perhaps be better suited for a robust agricultural investment by the Port.
- The Port, as I understand it, has existing underutilized assets. Perhaps it would be beneficial that any new Port initiative first be concentrated on those.
- We know the Short Property is compromised, and development of industrial agricultural uses are burdened by a restrictive easement held by Jefferson Land Trust. County zoning regulations and environmental requirements also pose potential constraints.

Without a specific proposal accompanied with an environmental checklist and perhaps an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) it seems risky to proceed apace.

Never in my fifty years in the construction and development business, nor during my time as a PUD Commissioner, did I ever proceed on a “buy now, figure out what to do with it later” basis. It is simply not a prudent way to proceed.

And this is surely a case where it would be prudent to know a lot more before a purchase is consummated. I can not tell if this is in the public’s interest or not. It seems like, for some reason, this decision is being rushed. As they say, “haste makes waste”!

“As long as we are talking recklessly here” was a phrase that the great poet, William Stafford, sometimes used to introduce a topic for discussion. He meant it as an invitation to open up and think more broadly.

In that vein...

1. Why not, renew the option of the property for an additional 12 months?
2. Why not, pay the Short Family a reasonable, nonrefundable monthly option fee that is tempered by their continued use of the land and that is applicable to the purchase price?
3. Why not, in the interim, gather all the information needed for the Commission and the Public to make a wise and truly informed decision about a purchase?

Thank you for the opportunity to share these thoughts.

Peter Newland
pnewland@whidbey.net
425-754-0700

From: [Natalie Smith](#)
To: [Public Comments](#)
Subject: Short's Farm Purchase
Date: Monday, January 16, 2023 5:48:41 AM

Good Morning,

I am a farmer living in Chimacum & working for an established farm in the valley. First, thanks to the Port and the community as a whole for caring about the land and it's use for agriculture, as well as small business. I am proud to be a part of such a community. I wanted to chime in what little I can offer in terms of the potential Port purchase of the Shorts farm property in Chimacum.

In terms of the property, I don't know how viable it would be to divide into smaller parcels for leasing as I do think the best use of that land due to flooding, etc., is to rotate ruminant animals on pasture. I'm sure more expert voices could contribute to the logistics of this, but I am curious how much of the property would be useable for growing produce. I'm sure this is a detail the Port has investigated. If it is viable to break it into smaller parcels for an incubator farm type model, that would be one ideal. It is excellent pasture land in my eyes, for grazing and hay production. It also has incredibly rich soil. As I believe it was used in the past, it's also viable grounds for raising dairy cattle.

I also see immense community value in its current use and future potential for a community hunting grounds. It is also clearly a priceless habitat for wildlife.

In summary of above, I believe this land absolutely needs to maintain its use as ruminant livestock pasture, hunting grounds, and wildlife preservation.

As for the current infrastructure, I do believe there is a need for storage facilities for small farms to use (walk in cooler space, long term covered storage, climate controlled storage), tool, tractor and resource sharing, etc. Also, some local small farmers could potentially benefit from utilizing the current farmstand facilities.

The community would benefit greatly from a processing facility for local livestock farmers. Reducing the travel time between farm and processing facility greatly reduces stress on the animal as well as reduces the carbon footprint of the food supply. This comes with its own challenges of USDA inspection and management of other regulations, financial investment including sewage(?) if even viable, etc. But I see a great need here in our community that I wonder if this property & the Port could somehow provide. Here is an interesting relevant read: <https://modernfarmer.com/2021/07/rancher-meat-co-ops/>

Another substantial need in the local agricultural community beyond physical land use &

affordability, as well as start-up resources, is affordable housing. For local farms who hire seasonal crew members, a lack of reliable affordable housing has become one of the greatest barriers to hiring, and negatively impacts the longevity of farming in the area as a career for young farmers. If there was a way to utilize the Shorts property to provide farmer housing, I would see that as a win as well.

Last but not least, this land could be purchased and “simply given back” to the indigenous tribe(s) in the area to manage how they see fit with the financial support of the Port and the community, in alignment with conservation easement guidelines. We occupy unjustly colonized lands that are the traditional territories of the S’Klallam and Chemakum people. Perhaps we could use this opportunity an act of collaboration and reparation. I am ignorant to the logistics of such a plan but everything is possible.

I wish I could be in town for the meeting to learn more. I would love to see the Port and our community paving the way forward in agriculture by creatively utilizing a community, cooperative-based model

Thank you very much,
Natalie Smith

Port of Port Townsend
Chair Pam Petranek, Commissioners Pete Hanke, Carol Hasse
P.O.Box 1180
Port Townsend, WA 98368

David Seabrook
2340 West Valley Rd
Chimacum, WA 98325

January 17, 2023

Re: Potential acquisition of Short's Family Farm

Dear Chair Petranek,

I am in favor of the concept that the Port acquire the Short's Family Farm for the reasons I outline below. As an introduction to my comments I offer an observation from the visionary Albert Einstein:

"We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking that created them."

Our current problems include challenges that can seem overwhelming and are perhaps this is why they're often excluded from organizational strategic planning. I argue that consideration of such big picture issues are of vital importance to our local near-term future. A brief overview of what our problems include:

- "Climate change" including global warming, sea level rise, drought (including in regions of prime agricultural production), changes in precipitation patterns, flooding, wildfires and smoke pollution. The 8 hottest years on record have occurred... in the last 8 years. There is growing evidence we have already passed some tipping points.
- Resource depletion: The term "overshoot" describes how human consumption of resources has exceeded supply and is unsustainable. There is evidence that the era of cheap, readily available supply of oil is over. Energy is the "master resource", as its supply dwindles we should expect price volatility and conflict. History provides many examples of how civilizations collapse when they exceed resource limitations.
- Ecosystem damages from human land use patterns, including depletion of topsoil and mass extinction of species. The Earth's population has recently passed 8 billion people.

We have known since at least the 1980's that global warming is a problem but despite efforts, no progress has been made to reduce our global greenhouse gas emissions. In fact emissions increased in 2022. Our current global human civilization depends on a complex of interdependent systems, many of which show signs of vulnerability. The risk of cascading systems failure is real and increasing. In short, we are facing a crisis, it's time to respond accordingly.

I contend that critical systems adaptation planning makes most sense at the local level. To mitigate the risk of failure in our vital food system it would be advisable to develop local capacity for production, processing, storage, marketing and distribution. There is solid potential that the Short's Family Farm could be renovated to accomplish such economic development. Ideally we could use the property to develop sustainable local Ag capacity and to demonstrate how we can transition away from using fossil fuels as the primary energy source for local Ag. Experimenting with transitional models will be difficult within the existing economic paradigm that treats food as a commercial commodity subject to the vagaries of market capitalism. This is why the Port's leadership will be so important. Some will say now is not the time for experimentation but when is the best time to explore new models? I argue that the best time is before a crisis occurs. To quote Milton Friedman:

"Only a crisis - actual or perceived - produces real change. When that crisis occurs, the actions that are taken depend on the ideas that are lying around. That, I believe, is our basic function: to develop alternatives to existing policies, to keep them alive and available until the politically impossible becomes the politically inevitable."

I am hopeful that with The Port's leadership a plan can be developed that provides for needed ecosystem conservation and restoration while also providing opportunities to develop local capacity within our local food system. It makes sense to me that a resilient local food system should be viewed as a "public good". The leadership of a responsible public organization will be a key requirement, I believe, in taking this step forward. (If not the Port, who?) I am hopeful that other public agencies and organizations will partner with the Port to help make the project a success. I encourage the Port to provide bold and innovative leadership.

Thank you for your time, and for considering the need for a robust and resilient local food system.

David Seabrook
davidseabrook@pacifier.com

PORT COMMISSION SPECIAL BUSINESS MEETING – Tuesday, January 17, 2023

The Port of Port Townsend Commission met for a special business session at the Chimacum Grange #681 at 9572 Rhody Drive, Chimacum, WA and via Zoom online.

Present: Commissioners Hasse, Hanke and Petranek
Executive Director Berg
Deputy Director Toews
Port Recorder Sanders

I. CALL TO ORDER (00:00:42)

Commissioner Petranek called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

Executive Director Berg led the staff presentation noting the purpose of the meeting is primarily to accept public comment and especially hear from the farming community. Documents available on the Port's website do not yet include the property appraisal. It is anticipated a Commission decision on the purchase would occur early February.

Deputy Director Eric Toews noted the vision of the Port referencing a document from October of 1926 to support local agriculture. The Port desires to partner with the agriculture community, work with jurisdictions, and scale up local agriculture production.

Eric Kingfisher, Stewardship Director of the Jefferson Land Trust, presented information about the conservation easement that follows the ownership of the land in perpetuity.

II. PUBLIC COMMENTS (00:05:55)

Tony Kastella, representing the Jefferson County Sportsman's Association, spoke about the easement on the farm for duck hunting and wants to ensure hunting is included in the listed uses including the option for game management.

Francesco Tortorici spoke about the value of the current uses, including use of biochar.

Janet Welch spoke in support of the Port's broad thinking, but in opposition to this project without a plan. She suggested instead exploring existing Port property south of the airport runway.

David Seabrook commented (including written remarks) in favor of the project, about climate change, and critical systems adaptation planning.

Peter Newland urged extending the purchase option and exploring the most suitable property for the desired purpose (included written remarks).

Kevin Long of the North Olympic Salmon Coalition spoke in support of the Port acquisition.

Karen Page spoke about the importance of the Short Farm for its wildlife and urged maintaining wild fowl habitat.

Jean Ball had concerns about this particular property and what value the Port might bring in terms of environmental impact and economic benefit/viability.

Al Latham, Chair of the Conservation District, but speaking personally said he was employed early on at the Short Farm. Roughly 70-100 acres never floods and there is a lot of slab and benefit of existing waste storage.

Nicole Witham, General Manager of the Chimacum Corner Farm Stand, asked about the agriculture easement and is curious whether the Port would be successful in seeking Washington state funds given the funding that has already gone into the land. The community needs farm infrastructure, including USDA slaughter/processing and a food hub and distribution facility.

Diane Johnson, President of the Grange, spoke in support and urged reviewing the Grange farm survey. The concurred with Nicole Witham's comments as well as the need for cold storage.

Hannah, a farm worker, had concerns about flooding but also spoke of the positive aspects of wildlife and lack of a plan for flexibility and creativity in seeking options for agriculture production and resilience.

Martin Fredrickson, a neighbor farmer to the Shorts and direct marketer of livestock, spoke about land access and many creative solutions needed from the collective agricultural minds to keep lands as productive as possible.

Charlotte Fredrickson spoke in appreciation and support of the Port's willingness to explore this opportunity although uncertain this is the best business move for the Port.

Jeff Kelety was curious to hear from the farmer's desires to lease space.

Pete Langley spoke in support of the idea and was concerned about removing the property from the tax rolls and what the leasehold tax would contribute when taking this into public ownership.

Melanie Edwards, of the National Young Farmers Coalition, spoke in support of acquiring land and about opportunities of getting young farmers on the land.

Joanne Pontrello, of the Conservation Futures Committee, spoke about the Port of Skagit Viva Farms and in support of exploring opportunities.

Steve Dowdell of Gray Fox Farm, spoke in support and about access to farm land for the next generation as well as pooling resources.

Cameron Jones of the Conservation Futures Committee and of Black Lives Matter of Jefferson County spoke in support of the project and collaborating with the community on youth-based thinking -- bring this conversation into the schools.

Julie Boggs, Manager and Co-owner of Westbrook Angus, spoke in support and about the importance of conservation. The farm needs to be managed in a dryer state and be viable as farmland.

Nicole, a farmworker, spoke in support of this opportunity and exploring options for the reasons and values stated, including the farm's importance to the quality of life.

Kevin Short spoke in support of the project and needing to let farmers maintain the creek and the flow of the water. He is sorry to have to give it up.

Commissioner Petranek thanked the public for the letters and correspondence on the project and about the next Port meetings January 25 and February 8.

Roger Short, here since 1945, spoke about the importance of building infrastructure for the community and the younger farmers. He is happy to hear the many feelings shared.

Austin Bishop, who inherited his grandfather's farmland, spoke in support/understanding the Short's struggle and desire to stay on the farm. He urged the Port to consider the water problem and how addressing the water would help the farmers with their land.

Eric Kingfisher, spoke of the Trust's conservation easement and recognized the drainage situation and the Short's efforts to maintain clear drainage and how agriculture productivity is impacted by increasing flooding. The drainage system has been maintained since 1920 by the drainage district. Arriving at creative solutions as well as maintenance of the system would benefit the agriculture productivity and further community resilience.

Alexa Helbling, former worker on Dharma Ridge Farm and now running her own vegetable farm, spoke in support of the project and the supportive farming community and the difficulty connecting to land without wealth in some way.

Commissioner Hasse spoke about the importance of access to healthy food and being moved by the passion around farming, growing food, and access to land.

Commissioner Hanke thanked farmers young and old and for their collaboration. He recognized the fast process accommodating the Short Family schedule, the Port's stewardship of the public's money and said forming a committee would be important to continue the conversation.

Executive Director Berg thanked the public for attending. He reviewed the Port's limitations on using the airport for agriculture –referencing the Port of Skagit. In 2024, the Port would engage in an airport master plan.

III. ADJOURNMENT: meeting adjourned at 7:47 p.m., there being no further business before the Commission.

ATTEST:

Peter W. Hanke, Secretary

Pamela A. Petranek, President

Carol L. Hasse, Vice President

From: [Iris Pearsall](#)
To: [Public Comments](#)
Subject: Short's farm
Date: Tuesday, January 17, 2023 5:23:39 PM

My 10 acre property shares a fence line with the Short's farm. There was a large stand of trees on their side of the fence when we purchased our property, but now almost all of the remaining trees are those on our property only. Our house is relatively close to the border between the properties, due to limited good building sites. Thus, noise is a real consideration.

I would ask you to restrict activities that require machinery that generates a lot of noise on a regular basis, even if it's related to agriculture or value added production of agricultural products, at least near our home.

We hear shooting on a regular basis during hunting seasons. It is frightening and loud, for us as well as the birds, pets, and other wildlife. Please do not open the property for hunting if you acquire it.

I also would oppose the setting up of residences for farm workers right near our property line and home, due to the noise. We had an unfortunate experience when a couple was allowed to camp for a couple months on the Short's side of our fence close to our house and we could hear them yelling and arguing at all hours. This was an extreme instance, but I would still oppose housing on this small section of the Short's farm that is near our house, where sounds travel so clearly. At the other end of the Short farm would be okay.

I grow much of our food in my 2 large gardens, using organic methods. I support small scale organic farming and would be distressed if my 44 years of organic gardening was ruined by having farmers next to us contaminating my soil and water supply by spraying herbicides and/or pesticides that reached my gardens also. Thus, I'm asking for you to permit only organic farming if you acquire and lease parcels for farming.

Thank You,
Iris Pearsall

Joanna Sanders

From: Janet and/or Willi <aloha@olympus.net>
Sent: Friday, January 20, 2023 11:46 AM
To: Public Comments
Subject: Short proposal

(I'm glad the link is working now. I hope that you are able to retrieve the emails that used the flawed link.)

Dear Commissioners,

I would like to summarize some of the many thoughts that came up at the special meeting:

Process

It came out at the public meeting that the idea was generated 'over the tailgate' in a discussion between a Port Commissioner and Roger Short. It was described, as I recall, as 'a way to help Roger out since he wanted to retire and sell the property'. Mr. Toews would know better than I, but I suspect that the process being followed for the Port to use millions of taxpayer dollars to 'help out a neighbor' would be considered inappropriate, at the very least. It would be quite different--and well considered-- if the tailgate discussion led to the idea that the Port could get involved in helping the local agricultural economy, and that idea was taken back to the Boardroom and discussed as a general concept, followed by a methodical discussion of a process, beginning with brainstorming of what the Port might want to use land for, and only then initiating a thorough search for suitable land. The public record shows the process flaws began early on and continue in the form of an unrealistic decision timeline. Unfortunately those process flaws cannot be adequately mitigated at this point, in spite of the wise decision to host a very informative special meeting of the Commission. Even extending the date of a decision would neither remedy the clearly stated preferential treatment given to one landowner by the Port nor bring clarity to the suitability of that ownership for the Port's (as yet undetermined) purposes.

A Port Commissioner said that the Port's purchase of the property would prevent somebody 'from Palo Alto' from buying it. Looking at recent purchases of acreage it appears to me that the newcomers are deeply committed to practicing agriculture while embarking on large scale restoration of degraded reaches of our watersheds. It is a slap in the face to those people that we should consider outsiders a threat to productive and sensitive utilization of land.

Finally, the idea that the Port would close on a purchase while hoping, but not knowing, that it would be funded by the State Legislature seems absolutely reckless. This process is unsalvageable.

Suitability for agriculture

Virtually every speaker at the meeting supported the idea of the Port owning agricultural land and making land and resources available to startup and existing farming ventures. Kudos to the Commission for considering the concept.

However, the primary advantage of the Short property described by staff was the size of the contiguous ownership, it being large enough for hay and beef production. Aside from the person who is leasing adjacent property (and who advocated the Port's acquisition because he would like to lease it) most of the types of agricultural uses and resources mentioned by the public would not be possible on the Short property. As one person stated "There is no limit to the imagination, the limit is to possible uses". Indeed! Those limits are extensive. The long period of seasonal inundation and the even longer period of saturated soils (which prevent spring plowing and/or spring grazing) do not lend themselves to

field crops. The lack of available space in the building envelopes and limited suitability for septic installation would severely restrict the scale and type of potential uses such as processing, agricultural startups and other farmworker endeavors, or even farmworker housing. Conversely, there are many areas in the county that would be suitable for many of these uses, possibly including the Port's own properties. The economic potential of the Short property is clearly less than other, albeit smaller, parcels for a number of reasons.

Drainage Woes

The elephant in the room made itself visible near the end of the comment period when a couple of speakers noted the need for a long sought after watershed-scale drainage 'remedy'. One speaker said "Don't fight this battle against flooding" and went on to give suggestions as to how to fix the bigger problem, which was to remove trees and vegetation from Chimacum Creek! Many of the attendees cheered this sentiment. The drainage district activities (e.g. dredging and channelizing of Chimacum creek and installing drain tiles in the fields) in the past century did reduce flooding of the fields for a few decades. But as the NOSC report clearly documents, the natural state of that reach of the Chimacum Creek watershed is to be NOT well drained, with geomorphology and topography suited for fish and wildlife habitat, not agriculture.

Clearly, there are many people who see the Port as a powerful entity who could, and should, champion their cause for re-invigorating a large scale drainage effort throughout the watershed. It was both inferred and spoken to directly at the meeting. However, there are many individuals, organizations, and departments who think otherwise. They did not express that side of the issue at the meeting. Purchase of the Short property would put the Port squarely in the agricultural drainage crosshairs of the Property rights vs fish conflict. Besides being an undesirable place to be, I would think that the goal of getting funding through legislative action would very much be at risk as legislators learn the habitat risks associated with the proposal.

Fear to speak up

Many people I've talked to have said that they can't understand why the Port would consider a piece of property that is so obviously hampered by topography, flooding, and lack of upland acreage. I was surprised that that same sentiment wasn't expressed at the meeting (other than by me). I began to understand when the person sitting next to me, whom I don't know other than that she said she lived and farmed in the valley, said that she was very opposed to the selection of the Short property. I asked her if she was going to say anything and she looked around the room and, as if she would be tainted by simply talking to me, said that she couldn't say anything. Having experienced a vocal disruption by Roger Short during my presentation, I'm guessing that a lot of people may be unwilling to publicly express their opposition to this proposal. I was pleased that the meeting wasn't antagonistic, but I am concerned that the Port didn't hear from the many people who feared saying anything, e.g. the person next to me, opting to maintain peace with friends, family, and their neighborhood.

In summary, we have heard clearly and repeatedly that access to land and availability of infrastructure are the biggest barriers to farmers. The port is well positioned to address these needs. You have a good idea, you have the institutional capacity, and you see possibilities that others have not acted on, but I urge you to pull the plug on this proposal and start over with a defensible and productive process that will remove those known barriers and creatively address other ones.

Sincerely,

Janet Welch

From: [Haley Olson-Wailand](#)
To: [Public Comments](#)
Subject: Short's Farm
Date: Wednesday, January 18, 2023 9:13:04 AM

Hello Port Commissioners,

Thank you for putting on the meeting at the Grange last night. It was interesting to hear different perspectives and ideas on what could be possible at the Short's farm if the port proceeds with the purchase. What seemed to be somewhat missing from the conversation was the input from mid sized producers who are actively farming in the valley and would be positioned to take on initial management of the farmland.

The Short's farm on account of the hydrology could reasonably be split into two zones. The wetter ground would most likely want to remain as perennial pasture that could be cut for silage and hay as well as summer pasture. Remaining in cover would minimize soil washing into the creek during flood season. I believe this ground can grow multiple cuttings of quality hay without irrigation. The drier fields (sprinkler field) could be managed for higher return specialty crop production. Most of this production is tillage based so not necessarily suited for the wetter fields. Prime well drained valley soils with irrigation capabilities are rare in Chimacum. These areas, especially if the port is maintaining the pumps and ponds, could be leased at more of a premium.

Dharma Ridge farm is currently farming organic specialty crops at the Boulton farm and a section of Glendale farm. We are actively looking for a third sight between 10-40 acres to accommodate crop rotation so would be poised to take on a lease for the coming season. Maintaining management of the farm over the initial transition seems key. Longer term infrastructure improvements that would directly and immediately benefit us would be refrigeration potentially leased by the pallet space with loading dock and truck access. Having distribution able to pick up at the farm would save a huge amount of hauling of product back to our facility at the Boulton farm. This may also give other growers an opportunity to work with a wider distribution network to reach our wider regional community. There are obvious logistical and management challenges to all of this ranging from drainage to crop and soil pest and disease management to mechanical systems operations to organic and food safety certifications that are required by distributors. These requirements seem to be attainable especially with leadership of the port as an entity with the resources equipped to navigate the various aspects of management of the Short's farm.

I would like to schedule a short meeting to talk about these items in person if possible. My number is 360-302-0143 or email at info@dharmaridgefarm.com.

Thanks again,
Zach Wailand
Dharma Ridge farm

Sent from my iPhone

Joanna Sanders

From: Eron Berg
Sent: Sunday, January 22, 2023 2:27 PM
To: Joanna Sanders
Subject: Fwd: Short Farm input from taxpayer

From: JEAN MARZAN <marzan359@msn.com>
Sent: Sunday, January 22, 2023 11:07:18 AM
To: Eron Berg <Eron@portofpt.com>
Cc: Val Thurston <toteru@msn.com>; Jane Asbury <jane.asbury53@gmail.com>; Paul Eisenhardt <paul@eisenhardtgroup.com>; Charlene Engel <13.1nana@gmail.com>; aaKeith Marzan <blueseas5001@outlook.com>
Subject: Short Farm input from taxpayer

My husband and I are property taxpayers on six homes in Port Townsend. We support the Port's projects and use your facilities as a boat owner. We oppose your considering the proposal of buying the Short Farm or any agriculture ventures. The idea is 100 years old and LOTS of changes and ideas have transpired since then! Those ideas were considered in a different economic and cultural mind set. It's 100 years later and other considerations and needs to be addressed. You have expanded the PORT's land holdings- such as the airport (that wasn't in existence in 1924), all the marina's that have been developed since that time, the Port harbors, and shoreline developments, etc. We pay taxes to support that portion of our community- NOT farming especially with all the facets that farming entails. You are not farmers- that would mean hiring more personnel to oversee and manage such an endeavor. Then what about operational costs? And profits? Stick with something YOU know about- that's what WE support. In addition, our tenants and we cannot afford economically to support this project. Let another community agricultural organization take on that project. We are in the twenty-first century- NOT the twentieth.

Thank you,
Jean Marzan
Keith Marzan