

SKAGIT RIVER FLOOD CONTROL COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

March 5, 2007

Flood Control Committee Members:

Charles Bennett – Present
William LaRue – Present
Jack Billman, Jr. – Not Present
Ed Lipsey – Present
Dan O'Donnell – Present
Eileen Warchow – Not Present
Esco Bell – Present
Rick Blair – Not Present
Don Moe – Present

Dave Olson – Present
Daryl Hamburg – Present
Fred DeVries – Not Present
Herb Hanson – Present
Ken Johnson – Present
Leonard Halverson – Not Present
Richard Smith – Not Present
Konrad Kurp – Present
Chal Martin – Present

Others in attendance: Gary T. Jones, Carol Ehlers, Bob Helton, Jim Martin, Ric Boge, Dave Brookings, John Shippee, Chuck Steele, Lorna Ellestad, and Delores McLeod.

Chairman Bennett called the meeting to order at 7:07 pm.

Roll was called

Smith House Findings - Hamilton

Chal Martin, City of Burlington, presented information gathered from an investigation by the City of Burlington as to the probability of a major flood in the area of the Smith house in Hamilton. The presentation focuses on the fact that the Smith house was build before the 1909, 1917 and 1921 floods. The recent 1995 and 2003 floods were high enough to impact the Smith house and the 1909, 1917 and 1921 floods didn't. According to the presentation, the PIE model estimates that the earlier floods would have been several feet higher than the '95 and 2003 floods if the flows were as large as the USGS estimates. Chal's conclusion is that the Pacific International Engineering hydrology is more accurate than the Corps of Engineers' hydrology and that the Baker should be providing more flood control. Dan O'Donnell expressed his opinion that the County slow down the GI process and wait for the restructuring of USGS. Discussion regarding the meeting this last week with the Corps ensued.

Recap of February 27th Skagit River Feasibility Study/ G.I. Executive Committee Meeting

Ric Boge reviewed the Executive Committee meeting held Tuesday, February 27th in Mount Vernon with all three Skagit County Commissioners, Colonel Michael McCormick, District Commander of the Corps of Engineers and staff, as well as representatives of Patty Murray's, Maria Cantwell's and Rick Larsen's offices. Overview of background and discussion of County objectives and the Corps' proposed work plan, timeline and budget were discussed. Copies of the agenda and Corps' handout were provided.

California Flood Trip Information

Dan Berentson presented an overview of the trip by area representatives to flood-prone areas in California and Nevada last August. Dan, as well as Ken Dahlstedt, Dave Brookings, Larry Wasserman, Garnor Benson, Lorna Ellestad and Chuck Bennett spent a week touring areas with similar flood challenges to Skagit County. The group was able to gain a wealth of information from area officials and local representatives regarding their planning, design, funding and construction of flood projects. Dan said it was obvious the projects that were moving provided taxed funding to support the projects. Reno and

Napa both had large community groups supporting their plans. All of the groups used sales tax as the main source of the local match.

Flood Control Zone District (King County Update)

Dave Brookings reported that King County's Flood Control Zone District is moving forward with very little opposition. The King County Council is expected to pass the district plan in early April. This will form the district and dissolve the existing Green River district. The Council will be looking at a possible rate of \$.05 - \$.10/\$1,000. Options include a flat rate or possibly a variable rate for those who live in the floodplain. They plan on creating technical committees in each river basin as their framework and a 15 member policy committee. The technical committees will prioritize the work program for each river basin and then be used to justify the rate for collection. The law firm of Preston, Gates and Ellis are assisting King County in this project. Dave also mentioned that Skagit County has a definite advantage since we already have a Flood Control Zone District established.

Dave said California's Dike Districts were found liable for damages from flooding for not aggressively proceeding with levee maintenance even though they were not successful in obtaining the required permits. Colonel McCormick's February letter to the Skagit County Commissioners stated that the County should explore local capabilities to fund needed repairs to levees. Daryl Hamburg feels that the Dike Districts and the other 13 Washington state districts need to push for the PL84-99 funding so that the Dike Districts don't create precedence by funding their own repairs. The County supports the Diking Districts effort to aggressively maintain their levees per the PL84-99 program criteria and is working with our congressional to restore the funding to repair the recent damage.

Skagit County is proceeding with the development of a recommended rate structure for the Flood Control Zone. Once the overall framework is developed, it will be presented to the Board of County Commissioners for their consideration. Dave will continue to keep the Flood Control Committee updated on the proceedings.

Federal Funding for Flood Control \$2.5 Million SAFETEA: LU

Dave Brookings advised the members there will a meeting scheduled on March 22nd with the Washington State Department of Transportation to discuss the how best to utilize the SAFETEA: LU funds. He mentioned this award was a direct result of Chal Martin's D.C. trip to lobby for funds for widening the 3-bridge corridor and protection of I-5. Dave mentioned that this is an opportunity to move forward with an "on the ground project" using the preliminary findings coming from the Army Corps General Investigation. The County is interested in utilizing the funds to widen portions of the three bridge corridor. Dave reiterated to the group that it would be beneficial to use these funds for actual construction to show the community that actual work is being done in partnership with the Diking Districts to improve flood protection and that people involved in flood damage protection are being proactive.

Flood Control Committee Positions

Dike District 22 is meeting Wednesday, March 7th and will establish a new representative for the Flood Control Committee. Ads will be placed in local papers for the open positions for:

- Lyman
- Allen-Samish
- Rockport- Marblemount
- South Skagit Highway

The meeting adjourned at 9:07 p.m.