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DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

FINAL MEMORANDUM

TO: Clark County Planning Commission
FROM: Hunter Decker, Clark County Forester / NRS II
DATE: August 20, 2020
SUBJECT: Year 2020 Reviews for the Year 2019 Current Use Assessment Requests (Timberland/Open Space)

BACKGROUND:

The Department of Public Works has reviewed the Current Use Assessment request accepted during 2019. The approved request will become effective during September 2020 for the 2021 calendar year tax statements. As required by Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 84.34.037, Current Use Assessment requests are processed in the same manner as a Comprehensive Plan Amendment. These requests are usually evaluated after receiving the applications late in the calendar year preceding the year of tax assessment to be under Current Use.

All requests for Current Use classification require Planning Commission review, and are approved by the Clark County Council. This is the 33RD year the county has reviewed Current Use Assessment applications. The Timberland classification requires a 5-acre minimum parcel size, exclusive of a one acre home site, and parcels may be transferred from Designated Forest Land or Farm & Agriculture. The stocking and management requirements are enumerated in County Code Chapter 3.08.070. Open Space classification criteria vary according to the category requested. All properties have been evaluated in light of these criteria and are attached to this report.

2018 REQUESTS:

The County received **1** request for the year 2019 Current Use Assessment. Staff received **0** requests for the Timberland classification. Staff concludes that the **1** request for Open Space classification meets the applicable criteria of the category chosen under Chapter 3.08 (.031), (.040), (.050), (.055), (.060), or (.070) of the Clark County Code.

The following is a summary of the case for which staff recommends *Approval*:

Open Space Applications Must Have:

3.08.021 – Parcel size – Parcels must be at least ten (10) contiguous acres in size exclusive of a home site of one (1) acre, to be eligible for “open space” classification, except as specified herein. (Sec. 4 of Res. No. 1977-10-32; amended by Sec. 3 of Ord. 1982-02-65; amended by Sec. 3 of Ord. 1992-02-03; amended by Sec. 1 of Ord. 1996-02-30)

3.08.080 – Weed Control – An effective noxious weed control program must be implemented on all “open space” and “timber land” tracts. (Sec. 10 of Res. No. 1977-10-32).

3.08.090 – Platted Land – Each lot or parcel of land within platted subdivisions or short subdivisions, must meet the minimum acreage requirement for the classification being applied for (Open space equals minimum ten (10) acres), exclusive of a one (1) acre home site. Land being used for second or recreational homes shall not be eligible for “open space” classifications, except when such lots are eligible for classification under Section 3.08.060, Historic sites, or under Section 3.08.031, Archaeological sites. (Sec. 11 of Res. No. 1977-10-32; amended by Sec. 1 of Ord. 1996-02-30).

Application for Transfer from the Farm & AG Classification to Soil Conservation – 3.08.050

Soil Conservation – 3.08.050 - Applications for “open space” classification based on promotion of the conservation of soils will be restricted to the following:

- 1) Tracts which contain not less than ten (10) acres of Class I or Class II soil, as identified by the local Soil Conservation Service Office, and at least eighty percent (80%) of the tract must be in production of food or fiber.
- 2) Tracts wherein a major portion is incorporated into the comprehensive park greenway plan. Public access may be required, provided public access shall only be required as long as open space classification is in full force and effect and shall not be deemed to vest any permanent rights of public access or use. (Sec. 7 of Res. No. 1977-10-32; amended by Sec. 6 of Ord. 1982-02-65; amended by Sec. 1 of Ord. 1996-02-30)

2019-00001 – Erkenbeck Project

The applicant has requested that 21.23 acres of the 25.56 acres in parcel #s 263453-000 (5.39 acres), 263487-000 (2.77 acres), 263482-000 (12.90 acres), & 263483-000 (0.17 acres) be transferred from a Farm & Agriculture classification to Open Space Soil Conservation. The site is located at 6813 NE 384TH Street, LaCenter, WA 98629 and lies within Clark County's jurisdiction. Current zoning designation of the area indicates Rural-5 with a Comprehensive Plan of Rural-5.

The Soil Conservation category is based on the promotion of conservation of soils and was reviewed based on the following findings:

Finding 1 – Tracts which contain not less than ten (10) acres of Class I or Class II soil, as identified by the local Soil Conservation Service Office.

A Geographic Information System (GIS) review indicated that the area applied for contains a class II soil type of Hesson clay loam (HcB) greater than 10 acres in area (12.66 acres).

Finding 2 - At least eighty percent (80%) of the tract must be in production of food or fiber.

A GIS and an on-site review indicated that at least 80% of the 12.66 acre tract is in food or fiber production (10.14 acres = 80.09%). Each parcel has a part of the tract that meets the criteria, parcel #s 263453-000 (3.33 acres), 263487-000 (1.18 acres), 263482-000 (8.03 acres), & 263483-000 (0.12 acres). The remainder acreage in each parcel is either not a Class I or II soil, or it is not producing food or fiber and therefore does not qualify.

These findings imply that the application meets all criteria for Open Space Soil Conservation as specified in Chapter 3.08 (050) of the Clark County Code. Therefore, staff recommends **APPROVAL** of 12.66 acres out of the 21.23 acres requested to be transferred.