

Adam Zack

From: Learner Limbach <learner.limbach@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, April 9, 2018 6:21 PM
To: Comp Plan Update
Cc: Erika Shook; Bill Watson; Mike Thomas; Linda Ann Kuller; Adam Zack
Subject: Vision Recommendations 4/9 from ARC to Planning Commission
Attachments: 2018-04-09 Vision Recommendations ARC to Planning Commission ADOPTED (1).pdf

Hello, please note the attached Memo from the Agricultural Resources Committee.

Thank you!

Best,

Learner Limbach
ARC Chair

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Agricultural
Resources
Committee
of San Juan County

Memorandum

To: SJC Planning Commission

CC: Adam Zack, Planner II, DCD
Linda Kuller, Planning Manager, DCD
Erika Shook, AICP, Director, DCD
Mike Thomas, County Manager
Bill Watson, County Council

From: San Juan County Agricultural Resource Committee (ARC)
Learner Limbach, Chair, ARC 

Date: April 9, 2018

Subject: Comments on *SJC Department of Community Development Staff Report* dated March 29, 2018.

Purpose

To provide the Planning Commission, County Council and County Planners with feedback and recommendations regarding the *SJC Department of Community Development Staff Report* dated March 29, 2018.

Background

The Agricultural Resource Committee is a Citizen Advisory Committee tasked with advising the County Council on issues affecting the Agricultural environment. The ARC is comprised of 15 voting seats, at least 50% of which must be farmers. ARC members act as listening posts throughout the islands and the ARC conducts formal and informal outreach throughout the year that informs the ARC's work.

March 16th - Planning Commission Meeting: ARC recommends adding a stand-alone Agriculture section to the Vision and provides specific language.

March 29th - SJC DCD Report lays out several options for the Planning Commission to consider, with a recommendation of **Option A- No action** in regards to adding a new section.

April 9th - Following the DCD Report dated March 29th the ARC submits a recommendation that the Planning Commission go with **Option C- Add a stand-alone agriculture section to the Vision.**

The ARC voted in favor of these recommendations by email vote concluded on April 9, 2018.

Attachment: The ARC's recommendations dated April 9, 2018 are attached.

Recommended Amendment to the San Juan County Vision

Adopted April 9, 2018 by the Agricultural Resources Committee of San Juan County.

Recommendations:

1. **Adopt *Staff Report* OPTION C¹: Add a stand-alone Agriculture section to the Vision**
2. **ADD the following section**

AGRICULTURE *The San Juan Islands have a rich agricultural heritage that remains culturally and economically significant. We invest resources to ensure that agricultural lands are preserved and to maintain and enhance agricultural viability. We encourage regenerative practices and recognize the integral role that agriculture plays in the stewardship of our soils and water resources. Agricultural activities are essential to the health and well-being of our community, contributing to the social, economic and environmental fabric of our islands.*

Why adding a stand-alone Agriculture section to the Vision makes sense:

- A fragmented approach to addressing Agriculture in the Vision weakens the overall message of both the Agriculture statement **and** the other statements.
- It was suggested that “if we add an Agriculture section we’ll have to give everyone a section” specifically referring to the possibility of adding a Tourism section. However, staff analysis in the March 29th memo states “Despite the amount of feedback received about tourism, there were few specific comments that proposed changes to the Vision and **none** (emphasis added) requested a separate tourism statement.” In stark contrast, “**Thirty-eight public comments** (emphasis added) and the Agricultural Resources Committee (ARC) requested the addition of a stand-alone agriculture statement.” Additionally, the ARC provided the specific statement to be considered.
- At the meeting on March 16th there was some uncertainty among Planning Commission members as to whether the request was for only a new statement in the Vision or to have a new element added to the Comp Plan as well. **The ARC is only requesting that an additional statement be added to the Vision** and feels that this new statement would complement additional consideration for agriculture in the areas of Economic Development, Land Use and Natural Resource Land Elements and goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan.
- According to findings from the [San Juan Islands Visitor Study](#) (page 50) published on February 28, 2018 Natural and Rural Scenery was voted as the #1 Most Important Island Experience during a ferry passenger survey.

¹ OPTION C: Recommendation can be found on page 3 of *SJC Department of Community Development Staff Report dated March 29, 2018* found here:

<https://www.sanjuanco.com/DocumentCenter/View/14761>