



RE: Klickitat County Administrative Appeals Process, Followup

Date: May 10, 2022

To: Klickitat County Commission

Dear Commission members,

This letter is from the Yakima/Klickitat County Farm Bureau (YCFB/KCFB). YCFB/KCFB is a grass roots organization with 3100 members consisting of farmers and ranchers with operations both large and small as well as other folks with interest in agriculture affairs in Yakima and Klickitat Counties.

Recently, Commissioner Christopher emailed the YCFB/KCFB and we thank him for following up on our letter. His message helped clarify some issues but we believe the underlying matter still exists: That of transparency and public involvement.

While the portion of the appeals process the Commission is contemplating on eliminating or “adjusting” pertains to non-site specific actions, the YCFB/KCFB believes that they are still pertinent to the public interest.

Commissioner Christopher cites some examples in his email and one of those is related to Energy Overlay Zones (EOZ). The YCFB/KCFB believes that the Commission apparently focusing on our concern as just being “anti-solar” is a mistake and misses the mark, using the EOZ as an example is never the less useful. That is because the manner in which an EOZ is formulated will dictate or guide much of how the site specific administration process proceeds later on.

In the larger picture, the YCFB/KCFB is concerned not just with solar issues in relation to the appeals process but in anything that affects agriculture and our members quality of life and decisions with regards to non-site specific issues are still important.

Certainly, the YCFB/KCFB opposes processes that become mired in legal challenges by parties removed from the matter at hand and are only meant to block progress just for sake of it. We believe that the Klickitat Commission could borrow some ideas from the Yakima County's appeals process, specifically about who can challenge Commission decisions to help the process move more smoothly.

The YCFB/KCFB continues to oppose the Klickitat County Commission potential elimination or curtailment of the voice of its citizens by eliminating portions of the Administrative Appeals Process in Klickitat County. Further we also believe that other counties ordinances may hold a better key to improving the existing process.

Thank you,

Mark Herke

President, Yakima/Klickitat County Farm Bureau