

O'Donnell, Mary Beth

From: Orjiako, Oliver
Sent: Tuesday, June 16, 2015 1:57 PM
To: Cook, Christine
Cc: O'Donnell, Mary Beth
Subject: FW: Clark County Farm Tour - Thank You Councilor Madore and Key Takeaways

Hi Chris:



Just FYI. Please, Mary Beth for index. Thanks.

From: warren neth [mailto:warren@slowfoodswwa.com]
Sent: Tuesday, June 16, 2015 1:19 PM
To: Madore, David; Mielke, Tom; Stewart, Jeanne
Cc: Euler, Gordon; Alvarez, Jose; Anderson, Colete; Orjiako, Oliver
Subject: Clark County Farm Tour - Thank You Councilor Madore and Key Takeaways

Greetings,

I would like to give a big thank you to Councilor David Madore for joining Slow Food Southwest Washington on our tour of Mid-sized farms in the Sara/Felida/Ridgefield area. I hope Mr. Madore has shared some of his observations with you, I appreciate the reflections he shared on his Public Facebook page, it showed some clear insights facing Clark County's farming future.

I have put together some Key Takeaways from the tour which you can review below. I have also put together a list of Next Steps, that I requested David Madore consider to follow through on to support a farm future in Clark County.

I would appreciate discussing these Key Takeaways and Next Steps with each of you further, especially as you work to develop the upcoming Comprehensive Plan Preferred Alternative.

Key Takeaways:

- We spoke with berry growers that have 100-400 acres in production. A majority of those farmers lease their land, most of which is AG-20. Alternative 4 of the Comprehensive Plan removes the AG-20 zoning, so all properties in that zone, would turn into two AG-10 lots or even AG-5. Once upzoned, the landowner of that leased land could be motivated to subdivide the lots and sell residential lots that would be less likely to lease as AG land.
- We spoke with farmers that are working AG-20 parcels, that have smaller residential lots around them, while Right-to-Farm policy's in the county provide some level of protection, they still get neighbor complaints for the dust when tilling the field, when they apply spray, when they get mud on the road from tractors, when loud farm machinery starts up before sunrise or many other farm related activities. We have a small opportunity to identify Agricultural Production Districts where we can focus farmland conservation funding, keep AG-20 and minimize the conflict of interest between residential and mid-sized farms.
- We visited April Joy Farm, who farms 25 acres, pays two full-time farm workers, has an integrated farming system that rotates pasture raised animals and annual crops, plus grows soil fertility on-site with cover crops and collect the manure from the pasture raised animals. The farm has CSA members, sells

directly to restaurants and brings Fruit Valley elementary school out to grow potatoes. April Joy Farm is the type of farm that would work well in areas that currently have neighboring residential, they are also dependent on having at least 20 acres to pay their wages and rotate their integrated field management.

- We drove through Jones Berry Farm, that is near the Ridgefield Junction and in the Pioneer Irrigation District. Their family has been farming that land for many generations and would like to continue the tradition. Having generational farming families working land in an already established Irrigation District is great foundation for an Agricultural Production District, that the county could direct Purchase of Development Rights funds from the Legacy Lands program toward.
- We toured Goug r Cellars Winery and heard his proposal for a vineyard incubator, and the potential growth of the Clark County wine industry and how that would effect our regions desirability for locating major employers.
- After decades of intense centralization and scaling-up of our nations food system, there is a growing trend to re-strengthen a network of regional mid-sized farmers. The trend is a result of disease outbreaks in mega farms raising meat and eggs and the drought facing our Nations bread basket, California’s Central Valley. Clark County needs to do its part in supporting mid-sized producers to cultivate the amazing soils and climate Clark County provides. Amanda Osborne from Ecotrust joined the tour and has recently finished a year long report, Oregon Food Infrastructure Gap Analysis (www.ecotrust.org/publication/regional-food-infrastructure/). The report shows the infrastructure gaps in the regional farm economy, which is great information to inform an economic development plan for Clark County’s Ag sector.

Next Steps:

1. Hold a BOCCC Work Session on Farmland Conservation tools and invite WA Farm Bureau, WA office for farmland preservation, Clark County Food System Council, Clark County Citizens United, Columbia Land Trust and American Farmland Trust.
2. Have Community Planning develop a White Paper on Transfer of Development Rights.
3. Ask Clark County Planning Commission develop a proposal for Agricultural Production Districts.
4. Ask that WSU Extension and CREDC analyze Oregon Food Infrastructure Gap Analysis and collaborate to develop an economic development strategy to encourage mid-sized farms and farm to institution partnerships.
5. Ask Legacy Lands program to identify properties that have agricultural and habitat benefits.
6. Identify Agricultural Production Districts before creating the 2016 Preferred Alternative and do not upzone AG-20 into AG-10 in those zones.
7. Analyze ALT 4’s R-1 and R-2.5 impact on conceptual Agricultural Production Districts.

As you may have noticed, the tour gained coverage in the Columbian, titled “David Madore may be new friend to farmers”.

I hope we can get back together soon, figure out ways to keep mid-sized farms in Clark County and find ways all the BOCCC can be friends to farmers.

Thank you,

Warren Neth

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Warren Neth
Executive Director
Slow Food Southwest Washington
www.slowfoodswwa.com
cell- 360-771-1296