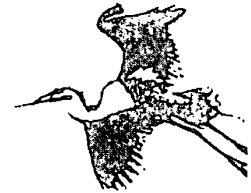




VANCOUVER AUDUBON SOCIETY

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www.vancouveraudubon.org



Comments: The 2016 Comprehensive Growth Management Plan Update

To: Community Planning Comprehensive Plan Comments
PO Box 9810
Vancouver WA 98666
Comp.plan@clark.wa.gov

C/O Gretchen Starke
308 NE 124th Avenue
Vancouver Washington
October 20, 2015

I am Gretchen Starke and I am speaking for the Vancouver Audubon Society. I have previously spoken about the impacts of the alternatives, especially Alternative 4, on birds and other wildlife, including fish. Today, I will be speaking about the process of this particular update of the growth plan, which process has been abominable.

The process, which included a work session that I attended, on the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) started in the summer of 2014. Staff developed three alternatives, including the state required no-action (keeping things as they are) alternative. There were the required open houses and citizen comments and feedback. Staff continued to work on the alternatives. Then, at a work session, which I attended, on January 21, 2015, about six months after the start of this whole process and with the need to keep things moving, Councilor Madore presented the idea of what he called a "rural option." He expressed concern that a small group of people in north Clark County (calling themselves Clark County Citizens United or CCCU) had "not had a seat at the table." Staff contradicted him, saying that they had had plenty of opportunity to present their views. I can attest to that as they were persistently present at every county meeting that I attended. Sometimes one of them would monopolize the attention of staff.

At the direction of Councilor Madore, the staff told the consultant to stop work on the Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (DSEIS). Then, Councilor Madore proceeded to draw up the 4th alternative with little or no input from staff (except for the GIS Department), but with plenty of input from CCCU. This group helped with preparing the maps, pointing out which properties they wanted to divide. At least some of this work on Alternative 4 was done at Councilor Madore's private home.

At one of the work sessions that I attended, one member of CCCU was invited to sit at the table with the county councilors and representatives from the cities. No other group was given such consideration.

The completed maps for Alternative 4 were presented to the public at two open houses. I am saying "maps," plural, because at various times, different versions of the map appeared. As an example, between the two open houses, a map appeared on the county website that was different from the one presented at the first open house. A staff member caught the "error" and replaced the wrong map with the right one, that is, the one that was at the open house.

The blatant favoritism on the part of Councilor Madore in favor of his alternative and CCCU was on display during the joint planning commission-county council hearings on the DSEIS. There were two such hearings, and at the first hearing Councilor Madore announced that no one would be permitted to speak at both hearings. If a person spoke at the first hearing, in order to give all a chance to testify, he or she would not be permitted to speak at the second hearing. At the second hearing, which I attended, Councilor Madore, who is chair of the county council and, so, presided over the hearing, explained that each person was limited to three minutes. Fair enough. The second person to testify opposed Alternative 4. He was allowed his three minutes and when the bell rung, Councilor Madore dismissed him. Subsequent speakers, those who supported Alternative 4, were permitted to run over the three minutes, sometimes considerably. When a woman, a member of CCCU, rose to speak, staff (I think it was legal staff), reminded Councilor Madore that she had spoken at the first hearing and, therefore according to the rules that the councilor himself had made, she could not be permitted to speak again. Councilor Madore overruled himself and the woman was permitted to speak. At length.

I spoke toward the end in opposition to Alternative 4. During all the previous testimony, I had been editing and editing what I planned to say because I perceived that I would be cut off. I was right. When the bell rang, I had three sentences left. Councilor Madore dismissed me. As I was getting up, I told him that I "perceived bias" in treatment of those testifying, reminding him that, while those who opposed Alternative 4 had been abruptly cut off, those that supported Alternative 4 were allowed to go on and on.

Since that hearing, there have been reports of Councilor Madore being closeted in his office with only members of CCCU and a couple of his personal hires (done before the charter was in force) allowed a peek at what he was doing. Rumor has it that he is working on yet another alternative, but no one outside of Councilor Madore's inner circle knows for sure. We don't know if the rest of the county council knows what is going on, let alone the staff. Perhaps we, the great unwashed, will be presented with something at the October 20 hearing.

The point of all this narrative is to illustrate the following:

- Councilor Madore has possibly violated GMA's provision that the public -- the entire public, not just his buddies -- be informed and be involved in the whole process of developing the update of the growth plan. There must be no funny business with maps appearing and disappearing and there must be no favoritism with a single group

allowed to have total access and the rest of the public kept in the dark. Above all, the planning staff must be involved from beginning to end.

- Councilor Madore in his capacity as chair of the county council has conducted unfair and biased hearings, giving great leniency and favor to those who support his alternative -- his creation -- and treating those who oppose his alternative abruptly and giving them the bare minimum chance to comment.
- Councilor Madore has certainly violated the public trust. He has prattled on about being "open and transparent" when, in his actions, he has actually been as open as a locked safe and as transparent as a wall of mud. He has been secretive, springing surprises on the staff and the public. He has ignored the advice of the planners and of the legal staff. He is trying to get the best advantage possible for his rich buddies, never mind what nightmares he produces for the rest of us. His vision of Clark County seems to be the luxurious country life for the extremely well off and nothing but higher taxes and/or third world public services for the rest of us. In words and deeds, he has shown contempt for the ordinary citizens of Clark County.

Sincerely,

Gretchen Starke
Conservation Chair,
Vancouver Audubon Society

Schroader, Kathy

From: Tilton, Rebecca
Sent: Thursday, October 29, 2015 10:48 AM
To: Orjiako, Oliver; Schroader, Kathy
Subject: Oct. 20 Comp Plan Comments
Attachments: Alexander_Valerie_10-20-15 Comp Plan Comments.pdf; Allen_Milada_10-20-15 Comp Plan Comments.pdf; Boynton_Stephen and Lissa_10-20-15 Comp Plan Comments.pdf; Edwards_Ron_10-20-15 Comp Plan Comments.pdf; Levanen_Carol_10-20-15 Comp Plan Comments.pdf; Levanen_Carol_10-27-15 Comp Plan Comments.pdf; Marshall_Sue_10-20-15 Comp Plan Comments.pdf; Rasmussen_Susan_10-20-15 Comp Plan Comments.pdf; Reisbick_Margaret_10-20-15 Comp Plan Comments.pdf; Starke_Gretchen_10-20-15 Comp Plan Comments.pdf; Tweet_Margaret_10-20-15 Comp Plan Comments.pdf

Hello,

Here are your copies of written testimony submitted during the Oct. 20 Comp Plan hearing. There's also one from Carol Levanen that was submitted on Oct. 27 during general public comment.

Also, I've mailed a packet of information to Cindy Holley (sign-in sheets, written testimony, maps, etc.).

Thanks and have a great day. :)

Rebecca Tilton, Clerk of the Council
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Vancouver, WA 98666-5000
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