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SPORTS, B1

Spurs beat Blazers in LaMarcus Aldridge's return to Portland

Future of growth plan still clouded

County Councilor Madore's additions affecting process

By KAITLIN GILLESPIE
Columbian staff writer

What's the future of the Clark County Comprehensive Growth Management Plan update?

No one really knows. Councilor David Madore late last week and on Monday presented a series of new planning assumptions that could change the framework of the update, resulting in a dramatically different plan than previously introduced, with significantly fewer lots than originally projected.

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The board originally heard the planning staff's assumptions in 2014, and the plan's four alternatives were developed using those assumptions. However, Madore said at a Monday work session that those guidelines "have not been vetted."

"Those ... assumptions establish the facts," Madore said.

The public will have the opportunity to view and comment on those changes, as well as an updated Alternative 4, a zoning plan Madore developed that would make sweeping changes to rural zoning, at a series of meetings and open houses in the coming days.

The problem is, county planning staff don't exactly know what Madore's proposed changes mean for the process, its timeline or how it could change the already delayed growth plan update, said Gordy Euler, deputy director of the county's Community Planning department. Euler said he isn't completely sure what's going to be presented at either open house next week.

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"Councilor Madore has not really shown his work. What's the effect of each one of these changes? How many lots does that dig up? We need to see him show his work on this."

John Blom, member of the Clark County Planning Commission

Growth plan

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"We're scratching our heads," Euler said.

And as for the hearing on Nov. 24, when the council is supposed to finally choose its preferred alternative, "we're not actually sure what they're going to do on that day," Euler said.

According to a Draft Environmental Impact Statement, there are 7,073 potentially buildable lots under current zoning rules. Madore's Alternative 4 could potentially create 12,401 lots.

Madore's assumptions, meanwhile, reduce the number of buildable lots by arguing that some lots should not be considered buildable at all, such as forest lots far from urban centers. Under Madore's assumptions, there are only 3,076 potential buildable lots under current zoning rules, and 6,140 under Alternative 4.

Madore also created new maps for Alternative 4, but whether those changes mean the county will have to redevelop its alternatives or do a second environmental impact statement is uncertain. That will be up to county legal staff to decide, Euler said.

"We'll roll as we can and try to comply with what (Madore's) asking us to do," Euler said.

John Blom, a member of the Clark County Planning Commission, said that while Madore's theories about the planning assumptions may not necessarily be incorrect, there isn't enough time at this point to thoroughly analyze each one.

"Councilor Madore has not really shown his work," Blom said. "What's the effect of each one of these changes? How many lots does that dig up? We need to see him show his work on this."

The Comprehensive Growth Management Plan update already has been punctuated by interruptions by Madore. At the urging of Clark County Citizens United, a group of rural landowners pushing for a plan that would allow greater subdivisions of existing lots, Madore developed Alternative 4.

The plan, which Madore

developed without input from county staff, would allow for smaller agriculture, forest and rural lots in unincorporated Clark County, and has been criticized by local land use attorneys as potentially being in violation of the state Growth Management Act. An updated version of Alternative 4, as well as Madore's planning assumptions, were presented at the council's Oct. 20 hearing, again without input from county staff.

Blom, who said the public process of developing the comprehensive plan may be more important than the finished proposal, said he is frustrated with the continuing challenges.

"I think there's definitely some frustration about the changing target that seems to be ongoing," Blom said.

The final plan must be submitted to and approved by the state by June 30. Euler said the county must be done with the plan by April in order to meet that deadline.

KAITLIN GILLESPIE: 360-735-4517; kaitlin.gillespie@columbian.com; twitter.com/news ladykatie

Public Meetings

There are several meetings and open houses in the coming weeks about the Clark County Comprehensive Growth Management Plan update:

■ **5:30 to 7 p.m. Monday:** Open house at Hockinson High School, 16819 N.E. 159th St.

■ **5:30 to 7 p.m. Tuesday:** Open house at Ridgefield High School, 2630 S. Hillhurst Road.

■ **6:30 p.m. Nov. 19:** Planning Commission hearing to review the new recommendations at the Public Service Center, 1300 Franklin St., Vancouver.

■ **10 a.m. Nov. 24:** Clark County council meeting to vote on preferred alternative at the Public Service Center, 1300 Franklin St., Vancouver.