

November 18, 2015

Mr. Steve Morasch, Chair
Clark County Planning Commission
Clark County Community Planning
PO Box 9810
Vancouver, WA 98666-9810



Subject: Opposition to Chair Madore's Alt. 5

Dear Chair Morasch and Planning Commission Members:

My name is Sue Marshall. We have a 20 acre family farm in the Ridgefield area. With our daughter, we are beginning a third generation of farming on our land. The current zoning is AG- 20 and we would like to retain that designation as a means of protecting the long term use of our land as an agricultural resource to the community and as a family legacy. I am also a board member of Friends of Clark County.

I attended the meeting where you very thoughtfully deliberated and developed your preferred alternative recommendation. Subsequently, at the Council public hearing, rather than consider your recommendation, Councilor Madore distributed information on new assumptions and a new alternative. Although the Council was advised not to discuss this new information – the public, who had come to testify on the Planning Commission's recommendation, were left to feel that their input was irrelevant and the rules of the game had suddenly changed.

I attended the Ridgefield open house on Tuesday where Councilor Madore presented his new assumptions and new alternative (Alt. 5) without staff vetting but for a staff redlined copy of his assumptions that was distributed by Friends of Clark County.

This is no way to conduct a planning process.

PROCESS ISSUES

The planning assumptions were unanimously adopted by resolution by the Council in 2014 and twice in 2015 and were based in large part on the county's work vetting those assumptions during the last Comprehensive Plan updates. If we now have a new alternative based on new assumptions, those new assumptions should be thoroughly reviewed by public task force(s) charged with evaluating the efficacy of them with the assistance of staff, and then have them be formally adopted by resolution. Also, there should be at least a 14 day period in advance of a hearing on the new resolutions to give all of the public an opportunity to fully understand those assumptions and question their validity with a proper staff analysis.

This has not happened.

The documents distributed at the Ridgefield open house, refer to assumptions on what land Councilor Madore says is “likely” to develop but it is clear that is just based on what assumptions he personally has decided to insert into the GIS model. There is no support for any of his conclusions as to what is likely or not likely and it is not at all clear what this is based on and looking at the staff redlined version dated Nov. 4, 2015, some of the assumptions are deemed illegal.

This is disturbing.

Additionally, with new assumptions there should be a new draft EIS and SEPA for all of the proposed alternatives so that there can be a fair comparison of which alternative has the least impact.

90/10 POPULATION SPLIT

When the County finally started planning for the future, the rural-urban population split was approximately 84/16. Since that time, with a goal of appropriately managing growth in the rural areas, the county has used a 90/10 and watched the actual population of the area come close to the 90/10 split. Using the 90/10 split for *projected new* growth over the past 20 years (average has been 89/11 over the 20 year planning window) we have come closer to the goal of having an actual 90/10 split on the ground. Councilor Madore wants to change the split to putting 12.5% of the *projected growth* into the Rural area which will mean that the trend will reverse until we see 80/20 actually on the ground split. I would urge you to strive to achieve the 90 urban/10 rural population split. **Do not reverse our positive trends toward the goal of 90/10 and place a higher burden of development on the rural community, it is time to hold the line.**

The impacts of shifting the burden of development on rural lands is evident in the sprawling development patterns and number of large lot residential homes surrounded by a sea of lawn... not a good use of resources. We are squandering our natural resource and agricultural lands for 5 acre McMansions.

In light of this planning mess, I urge the Planning Commission, if you are to act, to simply affirm your original recommendation on the preferred alternative and disregard the unapproved new planning assumptions.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Sue Marshall, Co-owner and Operator Bours Corner Farm
4316 NW 169th Street
Ridgefield, WA 98642