my elected, staffed to embrace public vant concept

One of the reasons the department was formed was to address the dysfunction between departments when it came to obtaining permits, as stated by Clark County Council Chair Marc Bartel. Now the dysfunction has been mitigated and has improved, Bartel said, adding the culture has changed and there’s better communication.

Before the elimination of the department, Bartel had started investigating financial improprieties at the county. As a result, he felt his job being threatened so he filed a whistleblower complaint.

It’s just a little ironic the department was created to resolve dysfunctions between departments regarding permitted creating more dysfunction by looking into financial improprieties. Does this really come down to who likes and dislike whom or is there valid substance by both parties.

Bartel said he has filed his complaint with the state, so we may find out more if an investigation is authorized.

This tale will continue to unfold and I imagine we’ll be seeing more surprises from all sides, accompanied by more front page headlines. I suspect, as in most stories, there are two sides to tell.

My hope is the staff and representatives of Clark County can, at some point soon, figure out how to get all along, stay accountable and begin to gain back respect not only at the community level but the state level as well. We have some amazing minds at this county and I have faith that great government can be accomplished.

My simple request is that all parties embrace the concept of being a public servant and put aside any personal agendas for the common good of Clark County.

Laura Vennerf
Governor's Affairs, The Reflecter

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The Reflecter Newspaper and Printing
Serving North Clark and South Cowlitz Counties, Washington

Office Location
208 SE 1st B, Battle Ground, WA 98604

Office Hours
Monday - Friday, 9 a.m. - 5 p.m.

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Benton state statement in saving millions of dollars

It appears Sen. Don Benton, R-Vancouver, has led The Reflector to believe you’re the “promising path” during his recent interview. The presentation is ridiculous beyond belief. Benton, based on Benton’s record in Olympia and Clark County, this state should never have been printed without independent verification. His claim, “I saved the county millions and millions of dollars since I took over the department” is beyond belief. Were this anywhere close to the truth, any experienced politician would have been bragging loudly. Benton has conspired to restructure Benton.

I challenge Benton to bring forth verifiable facts to support his claims.

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George Young
Vancouver

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Letters to The Editor

The Reflecter readers are encouraged to express their views by writing to the editor of the Reflecter Letters are limited to 400 words. Writers are limited to two letters per calendar quarter at letters must be typed with a typewriter, pit or computer with return for verification. Letters may be edited for length and clarity, and are subject to publication. Opinions expressed in the letters to the editor section of this newspaper do not necessarily reflect the views of The Reflecter or its staff.

Mail to: Letters/TheReflecter.com

Matt, The Reflecter: Letters to THE Editor, P.O. Box 295, Battle Ground, WA 98604

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County planning staff just wants the land

Clark County Citizens United, Inc. (CCCU) opposes the Cluster Ordinance and Alternative 2, discussed in a recent Reflector article The affected parties are currently working together to choose the most suitable location for the new density. It is well-documented that all resource land in Clark County was determined through aerial photo and staff interpretation. The Western Washington Growth Management Hearing Board’s illegal activities lost court, but the county ignored the court orders, continued to press CCCU that corrections would be made, after the urban areas were complete. That never happened.

The old agriculture forest was just a diversion, while the county granted thousands of acres into a resource zone and lumped those appeals with the agriculture forest appeal. This presented landowners from their day in court.

Before 1994, most of that land was zoned 1.5 and 5 acres. Nan Hendrickson, of Camas, was on the Hearing Board at the time. The court said the county used an illegal unauthorized formula for the rural lands, and had the Hearing Board at the time. The court said the county was paying the Natural Resources Conservation Services soils manual for prime soil, even though they said they did. Staff is doing the same, all goes on the 1994 plan, and more.

The manipulated planning assumptions said what the Financial Management population projection numbers had enough land, according to the court. But the mark was missed. When correct assumptions were used, it was discovered the county is only planning for half of what is required by law.

Clark County Council Darel Madore discovered this deception in his research and county staff does not want the public to know or understand any of this information. Community Planning Director Oliver Oyakoja said the county is using Alternative 2 clusters to comply with state law, but that is not true. The county does have to follow the GMA state law

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When creating the 2016 Comprehensive Plan

But, there is no law saying what that must look like. The majority of the county’s population is over 75. One has the same rural and resource zones as the proposed Alternative 4 option. One county doesn’t have resource zones at all, because the county has prime soil. The other counties were researched very carefully, before they were mapped. It was proposed. All of their designations passed muster at the Hearing Board level and in the courts. In many instances, the courts gave even more, and that is what happened in CCCU’s 1995 through 1999 court cases.

Court is used and has always been a GMA allowed option, but Clark County is using it as a mandatory large scale zoning one year in advance of the Alternative 2 proposal and the devil is in the details. But, it gives an idea as to what the county is not telling the people.

Clustering requires design standards, building envelopes, scenic view preservation, 5 percent remainder lot covenants, special water requirements, homes next to the road, and much more. Planning staff is good at making the proposal look warm and fuzzy, while seeming to believe that rural people are too unsophisticated to see through it. To accomplish that, the county limits the right information, gets at the end.

The Reflector has had very informative articles about the County Comprehensive Plan and we hope you will continue. Former Publisher and Editor, John Carver, was getting important information out to the people in a timely fashions and people came to the hearings in the hundreds to protest the 1994 plans. Today, usually admits they want the land preserved for the cities and refuse to listen. The League of Women Voters has concerned about preserved land, and constitutional property rights Planning staff is not concerned about preserved land. If you want the land preserved, they just want the land. The whole process was is illegal. Recommended that preserved land, Inc will have to go back in court to prove it

Carol Levazen
Executive Secretary, Clark County Citizens United, Battle Ground

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