Clark County Board of Councilors  
P.O. Box 5000  
Vancouver, Washington 98666  

June 20, 2016  

For the Public Record  

Dear Councilors,

The rural and resource landowners of Clark County have watched county government destroy the character and culture of first, second, third and fourth generations, using growth management planning and large lot zoning. Blocking up their land for cities and preservation and preventing them from living there, is discrimination. Many of these folks are of a certain religion and have experienced an even greater impact to their way of life.

For the 2016 Comprehensive Plan update, the November 24, 2015 Preferred Alternative, was a composite of All 1, 2, 3, and 4, that gave something to everyone, while complying with the GMA. The Clallam County court actions, the Poyfair Orders, the Court of Appeals Division II Published Opinion, and many other similar court decisions, support the content of this Alternative. Alternative 4, was a composite of opinions from the public over rural and resource land densities. For Clark County Citizens United, Inc., representing approximately 6,000 people, Alternative 4 zoning designations was a substantial compromise from what was originally requested and substantiated, at the onset of the 2016 Comp Plan update.

The courts awarded CCCU, Inc. with a mandate to the county to comply with court Orders in the update. This would have allowed for the original request from CCCU, for particular zoning in the rural and resource lands. CCCU believes the rural and resource zoning, contained in the November 24, 2015 Preferred Alternative for the 2016 Comp Plan update, must be the choice the Councilors should be obligated to make.

CCCU, Inc. continues to believe all of the resource land designations were erroneously created in 1994 and have been kept in that erroneous state until today. The Record confirms that very little of those lands meet the definitional criteria for resource land, under the mandates of the GMA. CCCU, Inc. will not subscribe to the current erroneous resource lands designation. Those lands were arbitrarily created, capricious in the manner they were designated and do not legally comply with the directives and mandates set forth by the GMA. Clark County should be compelled to revisit all of the resource lands and correct the erroneous designations, created and perpetuated in the Plan, since 1994.

The arbitrary and capricious manner in which staff, on behalf of Clark County, manipulated the policies in the 2016 Comprehensive Plan update is erroneous. To once again use a biased unauthorized formula to create a Plan that was not a prescription of the citizens it will serve, is again clearly erroneous. History is repeating itself, as Clark County plans for the future. Clark County Citizens United urges the Board of Councilors to not go down that road again, as it will have a very different ending.

Sincerely,

Carol Levanen, Exec. Secretary  
Clark County Citizens United, Inc.  
P.O. Box 2188  
Battle Ground, Washington 98604
Median households losing hope for MEDIAN HOUSES

Fewer lenders will OK mortgages as fast-rising payments take more of income

By BROOKS JOHNSON
and PATTY HASTINGS
Columbian staff writers

If you're an average family in Clark County, you can buy an average house — at least, according to the numbers.

Sadly, the real world of housing and finance can be a much bleaker place.

The Columbian's analysis found that a household earning the county's median household income, about $60,000 per year, can just manage to get into a median-priced home, which in May had a sale price of $293,000. Monthly payments on that house would devour just over a third of the household's income, the standard recommendation for spending on housing.

Given the strong public concern about housing affordability in Clark County and the larger metro area, that seems like good news. But looking at a continued rise in prices and demand, a potential interest rate hike, a lack of housing supply and stagnant wages shows the median home slipping out of median earners' reach as soon as next year.

"Homes will start to get more expensive, which will affect affordability, which will affect the number of people who can purchase homes, which will slow activity in the market and stem appreciation," said Terry Wollam, managing broker for Wollam & Associates in Vancouver.

"Every household has its own financial situation, so it's hard to say what percentage of income should go toward a mortgage payment..."

"Only you can determine what you can afford."

By LAUREN DAKE
Columbian staff writer

After a fiery derailment in the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area earlier this year, the U.S. Department of Transportation has decided to join a call for a moratorium on oil train travel through the state.

However, a Washington state representative says rail safety inspectors' ability to ensure rail laws are in compliance is critical.

Amanda Maxwell, a spokesperson for the Department of Transportation, said that rail safety inspectors do not have the authority to stop trains from moving on their own.

"Our role is to bring attention to rail safety issues, not to stop trains," she said.

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