



City Matters, Spring 2011

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In the last issue of Trail News, Alice Norris gave a great summary of the accomplishments during her incumbancy as Mayor. I am going to put forward the growth challenges that I feel are now before us.

Alice mentioned the Cove and River projects. The proposed Cove project, which would be near the south and east shores of Clackamas Cove, was given an extension by the Urban Renewal Agency (URA) Commission last year so that the developers could determine how to proceed during this financial downturn. The Rivers Project is a high-end retail mall proposed to be built on the landfill between Highway 213, Washington Street, and Abernethy Street. Through a motion put forward by City Commissioner Rocky Smith, the URA Commission invited CenterCal (the developers proposing the project) to present a draft Disposition and Development Agreement to the URA Commission. The motion passed with only five of the nine present members voting for it. Members of both the City and URA Commissions are divided on the merits and feasibilities of these two projects, and I encourage you to closely follow the discussions about these projects and to develop informed opinions as to whether you feel that these projects, the jobs they would create, and the taxes they would generate would result in a net benefit to the City.

Over the last four years, voters have rejected annexation requests from property owners in the Beavercreek and Park Place areas within our Urban growth Boundary (UGB), and the last City Commission unanimously rejected the inclusion of new areas into our UGB. Voter rejections of such expansions have rarely occurred before these more recent votes. I believe that the current failures stem in large part from the down-turn in the economy and the associated foreclosures of homes and failures of some large housing developments to be completed. We need to identify those areas within our City and its UGB that can support job creation. Most of the annexed and unannexed properties in the areas around Clackamas Community College and Oregon City High School are zoned as employment land. The administrative staff and board members of the City, the College, and the School District should come together to develop both short-term and long-term visions as to the kinds of businesses and industries that could be supported by the schools' programs and that could provide internships and jobs for our students and graduates. We then could bring property owners and business interests together to discuss those visions and to take actions to make those visions a reality.

In the recent past, Clackamas County citizens have come together to help the County Government and the Metro regional government identify lands that should be designated as rural and urban reserves. The urban reserves would be areas within which planned urban development could occur over the next forty to fifty years, and the rural reserves would be protected from such development. Not all land was designated into one of these two reserve categories. Much of the area within the Hamlet of Beavercreek was left undesignated. But lands on both sides of Henrici Road within the Beavercreek Hamlet were included in the urban reserve adjacent to Oregon City. It is important for the long-term growth and development in this area that the City and the Hamlet of Beavercreek have a dialogue to enable us to plan for development around the schools in a manner that meets the long-term goals of both communities and that ensures a quality of life desired by the citizens of both communities.

Related Information

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