

Mark Davis
652 SE Washington Street
McMinnville, OR 97128

December 4, 2020

McMinnville City Council
230 NE Second Street
McMinnville, OR 97128

Dear Mayor Hill and Members of the Council:

Please accept these additional comments in the record for the UGB expansion hearings that were held on December 1, 2 and 3. I did not have time to complete my comments during the five minutes allotted last night, and I would also like to respond to the Planning Director's characterization of the 2003 public process that led to the approval of the Neighborhood Activity Centers (NACs) with their related ordinances and comprehensive plan amendments.

The NACs were not the result of an extensive community dialog, as the Planning Director tried to suggest last night. They appeared fully formed near the end of the process and were not the subject of public hearings specifically called by the Planning Commission or any other body to take public input or comment on the details.

Of course, they were subject to comments in the general hearings held then about the overall plan. Take the divergent commentary you have heard the past three nights and multiply it by ten and you'll have some sense of the atmosphere of the 2003 UGB hearings (which were not held on Zoom). Most comments by that point were about the land that should or should not be brought into the UGB. Those who did comment about NACs seemed to think they wouldn't function as proposed. Even persons like me who thought they were a great idea (very progressive for the time, as the Planning Director noted) were skeptical about the City's commitment to making them happen.

My feeling was the NACs were solely a creation of the consultant (EcoNorthwest) to meet certain legal obligations and that neither the general public nor the City Council felt any ownership of the idea. Even though development continued during the period between their adoption and the repeal in 2013 there did not appear to be any City effort to promote the concepts they embodied.

That is why I regretted the decision to cut the Planning Commission out of this process. Yes, the Planning Director twice briefed the Commission on the process, but that is no substitute for studying the proposal in detail in preparation for a public hearing. I have been impressed with this current group of Planning Commissioners who come to the meetings having done their homework and are not afraid to ask questions and make suggestions for improvements to draft proposals. Even if they chose to make no changes, they would better understand all the intricacies of the NACs and the Area Plans (not a part of the original NAC process so never subject to any public comment before this

week). The Planning Commission would have been better informed and ready to deal with the NACs as we move forward.

I remain confused and upset that affordable housing (and specifically the R-5 housing) was called out in a Technical Memorandum 17B as needing to be limited when no limitations were placed on R-1 housing (or any other land). And if, as the City Attorney pointed out last night, the Plan itself calls for 36 acres of R-5, why even try explain why we don't need 72 acres.

Regardless, the spreadsheet in the Technical Memorandum clearly shows that we need far more land for affordable housing. As our population increased from roughly 28,500 to 34,000 (about 5500 people) over the past 17 years we have used (or reserved) 50.73 acres. It is only logical that it is going to take at least that much land to add another 10,000 persons to the City limits.

The draft Housing Needs Analysis and draft Economic Opportunities Analysis that were recently completed both show incomes and related affordable housing needs that are far greater than those in the similar documents submitted as part of the 2003 Plan. Instead of staff writing memos trying to figure out how to limit the amount of R-5 land included in this expansion, they should be expending that effort to meet the real and growing need for more land for affordable housing in the community.

I would also point out that during the work sessions you were told that the reason you shouldn't consider sloped land is because affordable housing would be more expensive to construct on such land. If less than 5 percent of the land to be brought into the UGB is to be for affordable housing, perhaps you should revisit the criteria for land selection.

What I didn't have time to say last night is that I do appreciate the effort that staff and the Council have put into this document. While I do not believe in the top-down planning process that this revised Plan represents, it is by and large a quality document that meets the legal requirements.

My primary objections to the Plan (a bloated park land number and insufficient land for affordable housing) are not relevant to the main decision of what land goes into the UGB. We have all learned a lot since 2003. I believe both staff and the Council are committed to building parks and providing land for affordable housing (adjacent to one another in an ideal world). I look forward to supporting those efforts in the future.

Sincerely,

//S//

Mark Davis