

Zoning laws protect rural space

A recent guest contribution in The Register-Guard from Bill Moshofsky of "Oregonians in Action" was hard for me to read. All through his essay I searched for some mention of Oregon's beauty: our diverse wildlife, our mountains' slopes, our wild flowers. I looked for some reference to the quality of life so many of us treasure: a walk around the block, the view from Mt. Pisgah, the great music around town. I couldn't find any.

GUEST COMMENTARY

Instead I saw the objective to preserve open space described as being "under the guise of preserving farm and forest land." It's not a guise, it's what the land use laws do. And what is wrong with people wanting to preserve open farm and forest land? I want to be able to go out of town. And so do most of the people in Oregon. We want to say, "Those woods are the same woods I played in as a kid, back in '03." That has real value to very many of us.

And part of that is keeping the city in the city. It gives the city value, too. I live in a house in back of another house. This house was "infill." It's quiet back here. Things are close, my partner rides her bike to work downtown, we shop close by, we're part of a neighborhood. And sometimes we can go to the country.

Higher urban densities help create a lot of things — more concentrated markets for retailers and restaurateurs, exciting environments for work and play, tight-knit neighborhoods and better mass transit that reduces traffic. It's all the cars coming in from far-flung development that create much of the congestion. Remember all the studies done about West Eugene's proposed new wetlands highway? All of them said the new road would not reduce traffic, but increase it.

Throughout his essay Mr. Moshofsky addresses only one value: economic value. Perhaps some people lose control over their land's development resulting in economic loss. I'm sorry. I hope the survey his group is preparing asks how much economic gain people have real-

ized due to planning rules, as well. After all, innovative business people play by the rules and learn how to win with them, instead of opposing them.

There are a lot of us humans. We need regulations so we aren't getting in each other's way all the time. I don't want my neighbor to turn his yard into a feed lot, for example. So zoning laws say he can't — my home is safe. I want my representatives in government to help keep the things I value safe from people who don't value them. When another's desire for "economic gain" or "productivity" tries to trample the things I value, I call out to my friends, to representatives and to those people themselves. Even in hard economic times, there are still values beyond money.

All of us — rich, poor, in-between — value the great view from our car window on Highway 58, the smell of the ocean, the taste of fresh corn grown down the road. There really are things more important than economic value. And I bet Mr. Moshofsky knows it, too.

Tim Mueller lives in Eugene.

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LETTERS

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... places that we might have once loved and are appalled by now."

It appears, though, that Meisner sees no connection between his "concern" and his actions as a city councilor. For how else do you explain his vote, with the pro-development majority, for the West Eugene Parkway. Or, how else do you make sense of his decision to side with that same pro-growth majority and do only the minimum necessary to preserve Eugene's natural resources?

"Legal eagle" Meisner would likely retort that he made his decisions after a good deal of thinking and analysis. Maybe so, but the truth is Meisner simply votes with the majority the majority of the time. Perhaps, then, he deserves our sympathy rather than our disgust. For his obviously chronic need to curry favor with his council vote and with shameless pieces of self-promotion like your recent article strongly suggest that the boy just can't help it.

Robert Emmons, D.A.
1974 University graduate

And they were all yellow

I didn't think it was possible, but the year I complained bitterly about the Ducks' blackish, green-on-green uni-

forms. I thought they looked like ducks caught in an oil spill.

Well, you know, I had decided during the summer that they weren't so bad, and hey, the helmets look good. Besides, it could be worse. And it is!

I flicked on the television, not knowing what was on, and there it was — the Oregon-Mississippi State game. You know, a person needs preparation for these kinds of things. Man, all YELLOW ... I'd be embarrassed to get into that uniform. Hey, if we play UC-Santa Cruz, we'll be the Unripe Bananas vs. the Banana Slugs (their official name). And, we can make Coldplay's "Yellow" the official song at game time (if they don't file a court injunction to block it).

No self-respecting team that expects to get into a bowl game of any kind ever, ever, pulls on a uniform where the LIGHT color is the predominate shade. Especially when it is the ugliest uniform ever paraded on a football field. And that includes the Beavers'.

Erik Walker
San Francisco

ASUO is nonpartisan

As the recognized voice of University students, the ASUO Executive serves to improve the lives of students by doing such things as placing students in decision-making bodies in campus and going to Salem to lobby legislators on key issues that affect students. On the

latter, a recent letter to the editor ("ASUO must include Republican voices," ODE, Aug. 14) and guest commentary ("Republican voices make message stronger," ODE, Aug. 20) have stated that the Executive did not contact student groups on campus, specifically the College Republicans, to obtain a bipartisan cross-section of students for the Aug. 11 lobby day.

By law, the Executive is a nonpartisan organization; therefore, when the Executive lobbies on behalf of students, it must lobby on behalf of all students, regardless of political affiliation. When the Executive plans to lobby legislators in Salem, it informs students through the normal channels and invites them to participate.

The Executive invites any and all students to participate in each of its events and encourages students to contact any Executive staff member to voice opinions or inform the Executive of an issue that affects them. The Executive also has an internship program for students who are looking to get more involved; please contact ASUO Intern Coordinator Erika Brakken at 346-0619 for more information on the internship program.

Eddy Morales
ASUO Vice President
senior
Spanish; planning, public policy and management



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