

Opinions shift on land planning

OREGON CITY — Appearances are deceiving — especially, it seems, when it comes to opinions on land-use planning.

At a series of informational hearings in May, spoken comments on amendments to the county's rural plan overwhelmingly favored freer use of land.

But results of a written survey distributed at the same meetings shows a nearly even split between freer and more restrictive uses of land.

Of the 525 county residents who attended meetings in Sandy, Molalla, Estacada, and Canby between May 3 and May 10, 94 answered a survey put together by citizen involvement coordinator, Ardis Stevenson.

The key question on the survey probably was the choice between — map

Alternative A and Alternative B. Map A specifies 65 parcels of land that the county would try to change from farm or forest designation to rural-residential. This would reduce the planned minimum lot size from 20 to 10, 5 or 2 acres and allow houses to be built. Most of that land already has been developed or already is in small parcels.

Map B would extend the same change to another 38 lots. While county planners are not sure they could push looser restrictions on these lands past the Land Conservation and Development Commission, this alternative received far more vocal support than Map A at the informational meetings.

However, on the survey returns, 29 respondents favored Map B while 25

favored Map A. Thirty-six respondents had no comment.

Stevenson said of the written comments she received, 12 persons favored looser policies while 10 favored tighter restrictions on building. One person wrote, "No cluster developments except in urban areas."

Generally, the most conservative of the spoken comments have been in support of Map B, while the most radical have called for abolition of LCDC and an end to land-use planning.

Why the discrepancy between the oral and written comments? "At public meetings," Stevenson said, "you hear people who object, not support" the government's proposals. "I've heard some comments that the policies may be too loose."

While comments in general have been more supportive of the planning effort than they were last fall, Stevenson

is dissatisfied with the response so far. "We're not hearing very much," she said. "People may not understand where the decision is made. We're not hearing specific kinds of factual comments."

More specific questions have been raised since the planning commission hearings began at the end of May.

Other results of the survey:

— Respondents generally approved by 2-1 ratios new definitions of farmland, forest, rural-residential land and rural centers. Land-use policies for those same categories were approved by similar margins.

Overwhelming majorities approved of optional additions to the county's land-use policies. Generally, these policies would make it easier for property owners to acquire small lots and develop them, even if they were designated farm land.

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Mountain picnic set

The mountain folks are getting together with their neighbors for a July 4th picnic at the Hoodland Women's Club picnic area.

The festivities will get underway at 5 p.m. Picnickers are asked to bring their favorite dish or dessert.

Musicians are urged to bring their instruments (with

or without collection cup) for an impromptu jam session. Games will be played throughout the evening.

Fireworks will be provided by the Hoodland Chamber of Commerce. Further information on the gala event may be obtained by calling 622-3397.



Extra horsepower

FOUR-YEAR-OLD got a little extra horsepower riding her inner tube at the Sandy River Monday when Leslie Snyder, 6, decided to give her a tow.

Clackamas to get facelift

OREGON CITY—Houses and neighborhoods in Clackamas County may receive as much as \$8 million in improvements from the federal government over the next three years.

The county's fledgling Housing and Community Development Agency expects to receive a \$2.1 million grant from the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development in early July. HCD administrative assistant David Cooper said if the county spends that money wisely, it will be eligible to receive more in 1979 and 1980.

While the HUD grant is intended to attack "the housing and neighborhood level problems of the handicapped, low income and moderate-income residents and senior citizens," Cooper said, it could have an impact

in nearly every area of the county.

Projects included in the grant for the coming year include low-interest loans for house rehabilitation and repair, a \$150,000 improvement of storm sewers in Estacada, construction of a neighborhood park in Damascus and paving of the parking lot for the Sandy Senior Center.

While the grant so far has been approved by the county commissioners the Columbia Region Association of Governments and the State of Oregon, it still needs final approval from HUD. Cooper is optimistic.

"There doesn't seem to be any reason why it wouldn't be approved," he said. "We are entitled to a certain amount of money if we put the application together

properly."

Anticipating approval of the grant, the agency's citizen advisory committee will meet Thursday at 7 p.m. in room 204 of Barlow Hall at Clackamas Community College. It will formalize the committee's membership and discuss ways of increasing neighborhood participation, with an eye to preparing the 1979 grant application. All interested citizens are invited.

Cooper said the HCD agency was established last year to set up a housing and community development program along HUD guidelines. Only urban counties, representing at least 200,000 persons, are eligible for the HUD grants. Cooper explained that 1977 was the first year Clackamas County, together with the major cities of the county, was able to clear the 200,000 minimum.

The HCD advisory committee was formed in January, when the staff was beginning to draw up a proposal. Cooper said the committee barely had a month and a half to decide on a proposal that could clear the county, crag and state

hurdles by the April HUD deadline.

Larger groups, such as cities, didn't have enough time to prepare proposals, Cooper said, leaving space for smaller, less formal groups such as the county's senior citizens. More than half the 1978 grant is planned to be used for the construction or improvement of senior citizen centers in Milwaukie, Oregon City, Gladstone, Buena Vista and Sandy.

"The seniors of the county lobbied very strongly for the centers," Cooper said. "They had their proposals ready."

"The citizens' advisory committee is getting very good grassroots, people-type projects," said Cooper, citing the Damascus park project. The Damascus Community Association donated land it owned and volunteered labor for the park. "With that kind of community spirit," Cooper said, "we couldn't hardly say 'no.'" HCD then agreed to contribute \$20,000 for an architect's design and equipment.

Cooper expects rural areas to get their fair slice of the HUD pie. "We're spreading the money around better," he says. "We're trying not to concentrate it in the cities." Currently, representatives from all areas of the county sit on the advisory committee, which Cooper says has a strong voice in the proposals.

The committee also can suggest projects for the HCD staff to consider.

Rhodies require fertilizer

When rhododendron blooms arrive, it's time to give rhododendron plants an application of fertilizer.

Fertilizers containing nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium are especially important soon after flowering in the spring. Nitrogen is a key nutrient for spring application. Too much nitrogen after mid-July could cause problems next winter.

A recent study of nutrients in rhododendrons conducted by Robert Ticknor, OSU Agricultural Experiment Station horticulturist, indicated that healthy rhododendrons have higher levels of nitrogen and phosphorus than poor specimens.

Ticknor found soil pH levels were extremely low (3.9) around the rhododendrons in poor condition. Although these plants do well in acid soils, too much acidity will have an adverse effect on their growth and appearance.

A pH of 5.2 to 5.4 is desirable. Ticknor's study also found boron to be important. Thus, a tablespoon of laundry borax around a large rhododendron might be advisable.

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