

## Business Notes

# UGB development procedures under scrutiny by City and County

Columbia County and the City of St. Helens are studying ways to improve the development approval process for land that is within the urban growth boundary, but outside of city limits. With a \$67,000 grant from the Oregon Transportation and Growth Management program, the City and County have hired a consultant team to help develop new rules. It is hoped that the rules will become a model for other communities in Columbia County and elsewhere.

At issue is how land is converted from rural to urban uses. By law, the land within an urban growth boundary is set aside for future urban development, but what happens between the time the land is included in the boundary and when full urban development occurs? Typically, there are restrictions on interim development.

As in most areas of the state, Columbia County re-

quires that property subdivided in the unincorporated area of the urban growth boundary, must meet city development standards. "That's fine for large developments," said County Planning Director Todd Dugdale, "but it is not very appealing to someone who only wants to sell off a few building lots."

The result has been widespread use of partition rules. Under those rules, a land owner can split one tax lot into two tax lots, with up to three partitions allowed each year. This has led to a practice called serial partitioning, in which one large tax lot is converted into many small tax lots over the course of two or three years.

"By itself, that's not a bad thing, but serial partitioning complicates the job of building and paying for city streets and utilities," said Skip Baker, St. Helens Planner. When a city has to weave through a maze of small tax lots, infrastructure

costs go up and the number of people served goes down, Baker explained.

To address the problem, the City and County are forming a task force to study the issue and advise elected officials. The consultants, Cogan Owens Cogan LLC and Pacific Rim

Resources are conducting interviews and will meet with the advisory group several times over the next six months. One task force member is the McNulty Water Association whose service boundary crosses into the urban growth boundary. It is hoped that the task force can

recommend a new process that lets individual property owners partition their land while preserving options for future urban development. For more information about the task force, call Dugdale at 503-397-1501 or Baker at 503-397-6272.

## Rep. Wu field office schedule set

Congressman David Wu will hold community office hours again this fall, with field representative Ann Richardson available to provide constituents an opportunity to share concerns, express opinions or discuss problems with federal agencies.

Appointments are not required, but may be made by calling the Portland office at 503-326-2901 or 1-800-422-4003. Anyone requiring special accommodations should contact the Portland office at least 48 hours in advance.

Community office hours will be held at the following places, dates and times:

- Vernonia City Hall, 1001 Bridge Street, Oct. 25 and Nov. 15, 4:00 to 5:00 p.m. both days.
- Clatskanie PUD, 423 N. Nehalem, Meeting Room, Oct. 24 and Nov. 14, 2:30 to 3:30

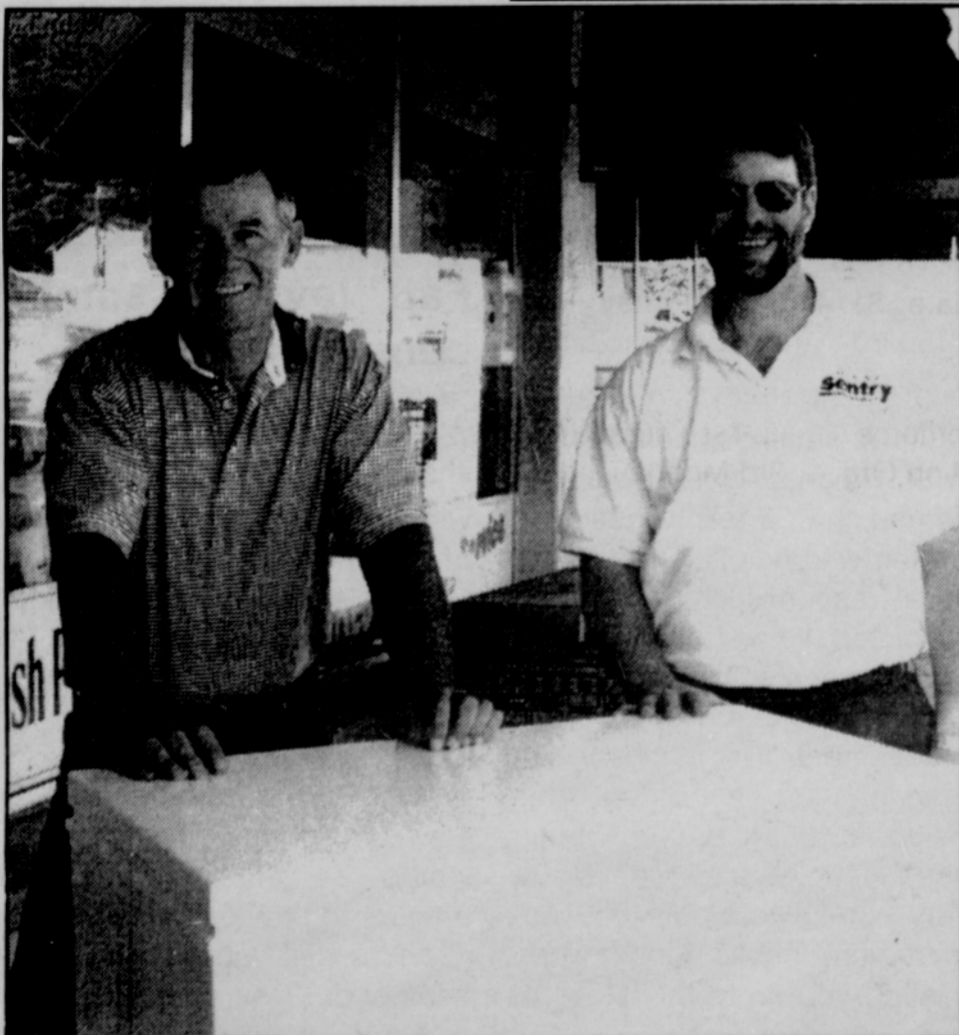
p.m. both days.

- Rainier City Hall, 106 West "B" Street, Council Chambers, Oct. 24 and Nov. 14, 1:00 - 2:00 p.m. both days.

- St. Helens, Columbia Technology Center, 375 S. 18th, Armstrong Room, Oct. 24 and Nov. 14, 10:00 - 11:00 a.m. both days.

- Scappoose, Public Service Building, Council Chambers, 33568 E. Columbia Ave., Oct. 24 and Nov. 14, 8:30 - 9:30 a.m. both days.

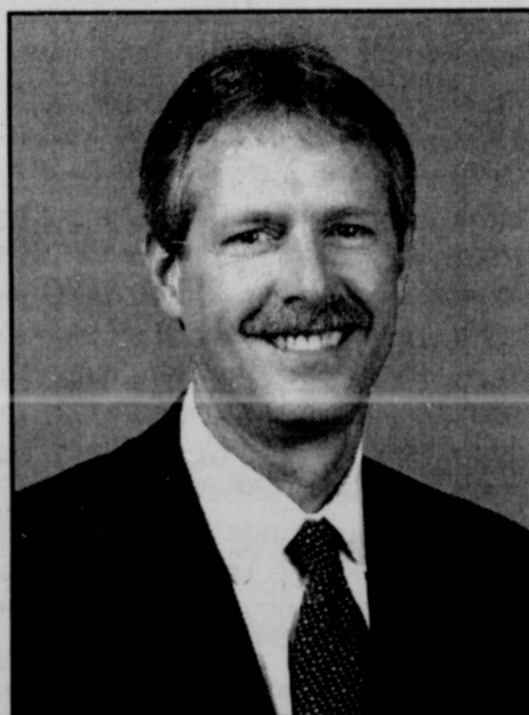
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Alan Coffey of Vernonia was the happy winner of a chest freezer given as a prize by Vernonia Sentry Market as part of a special frozen food promotion. With Coffey is Sentry manager Randy Parrow, at right.



A western theme marked Customer Appreciation Day at the Vernonia branch of U.S. Bank on Sept. 22, with the appropriately attired staff of, l-r, Carol Barker, Teresa Bernardi, Victoria Kirkley and Kelly Murray.



Re-elect  
**Tony Hyde**  
Columbia County  
Commissioner ☆ Position 3

Four years ago, when I first asked for your vote, I pledged to work for all of the people of Columbia County. It has been satisfying to help bring good, family wage jobs to Columbia County with US Gypsum, a result we are working to duplicate with an ethanol facility for Cascade Grain at Port Westward. It has been satisfying to restructure our Economic Development Committee and to participate in stabilizing the county's federal forest receipts...but

*There is more to be done and I will continue working for:*

- ✓ Good Local Jobs
- ✓ Affordable Local Housing
- ✓ Increased Local Business Ownership
- ✓ Improved Local Telecommunications
- ✓ Clean Economic Development

I will continue working for all of the people of Columbia County in order to retain our lifestyle and keep our communities healthy.

**Re-elect Tony Hyde**  
Columbia County Commissioner

Authorized by Committee to Re-elect Tony Hyde, 382 "A" Street, Vernonia, OR 97064