

Save Helvetia

From: Cherry Amabisca
13260 NW Bishop Road
Hillsboro, OR 97124

Date: June 9, 2010

To: Chair Brian and Washington County Board of Commissioners

RE: Limiting Citizen Involvement in Reserves Hearings

This letter is to document for the record the difficulties that residents of Washington County experienced in trying to testify at your hearings regarding urban and rural reserves on December 8, 2009 and December 15, 2009. The limitations you placed on citizen involvement at these two hearings violated Goal 1 of Oregon's Statewide Planning Goals and Guidelines, OAR 660-015-0000(1).

These two hearings were the only opportunity the public had to express our views to you in a public hearing in 2009 about reserves. You chose not to hold hearings about the reserves maps and acres and allowed the Washington County Reserves Coordinating Committee to forward their recommendations directly to Metro without your vote.

The urban reserves and rural reserve recommendations and decisions you make have a significant impact on land owned and farmed by many of our residents. For those of us who live in unincorporated Washington County, you are our *only* elected representatives. We cannot vote for Metro councilors and we cannot vote for Hillsboro city councilors. So, being able to testify to you about urban and rural reserves was very important to many people.

The first hearing you had on December 8, 2009, was at 10:00 in the morning. Many citizens work and could not attend this hearing. You limited the time allotted for this hearing. You lectured the citizens that did attend to not repeat information, yet this was the first hearing you had held.

The second hearing you had on December 15, 2009, was at 6:30 p.m. There was tremendous interest by citizens to express their views about the Core 4 map of urban and rural reserve designations in Washington County. At the beginning of the hearing, Chair Brian surprised the crowd by announcing that you were no longer considering the Core 4 map and you would only be considering testimony about the new Bragdon-Hosticka map. You failed to give citizens advance notice that you had moved on to another map. The first time citizens saw the new Bragdon-Hosticka map was when they arrived at the hearing. This caused considerable confusion. Chair Brian used 8 minutes giving "instructions" to testifiers about the process for

the hearing, followed by Metro Councilor Carl Hosticka speaking for 17 minutes about the value of his proposed map. Mayor Willey spoke for 5 minutes. So, the first 30 minutes of the hearing was taken by elected officials.

You then allowed 30 citizens to testify, before cutting off public testimony. That left 35 citizens who had come out on a wintry December night, signed up to testify, changed their prepared testimony to address a new map they had not seen before and were told after an hour and a half of waiting that they would not be able to speak to their elected officials. Your decision to cut off testimony, with less than half the citizens being able to speak, violated Goal 1, OAR 660-015-0000 (1).

Respectfully,

Cherry Amabisca
Save Helvetia

Attachments

Log of 12/15/2009 hearing timetable

Email announcement from Washington County “Public Welcomed to Testify on Urban and Rural Reserves in Washington County” dated December 1, 2009