

FRIENDS OF



CLARK COUNTY

SMART GROWTH

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www.clarkfriends.org

(360) 695-5570

November 2007

President's Message

By Val Alexander

After more than two years of effort to convince the current board of commissioners to modify their huge expansion of the urban growth boundaries in Clark County, Friends is ready to move forward to another project that might not be as frustrating.

We are excited to help promote the Legacy Lands Proposal set forth by Advisory Board member Bill Dygert. Bill was the inspiration behind the Conservation Futures Program that has already preserved hundreds of acres in Clark County.

This includes much of the riparian areas of the East Fork Lewis River. The public has access to these areas – one is the wildlife area of the La Center bottoms where bird watchers can walk on the dike and see the hundreds of Tundra swans that winter there.

As more and more of open space in Clark County is being developed, it is extremely urgent to procure these lands now before they're lost forever. The Conservation Futures fund has been used up for now, so Bill has been developing a new program that we will help promote by putting on forums and discussion meetings and trying to involve all of the environmental groups in the area.

Advisory Board member Mike Houck, of the Portland Greenspaces Institute, will be working with Friends as well, in order to connect the Legacy Lands with the Metro Greenspaces. Our board member Kelly Puntney has been instrumental in developing trails and parkland in Clark County and will be helping coordinate our efforts.

Stay tuned for the announcements of events. We hope more people who care about the quality of life in Clark County will step forward and join us..

FRIENDS of CLARK COUNTY

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MISSION STATEMENT

Friends of Clark County is a nonprofit, membership-based organization creating, educating and empowering advocates for Smart Growth.

Our mission is to conserve and protect Southwest Washington's quality of life.

FoCC MEMBERSHIP

Please join/renew your membership using the order form in this newsletter. We need your support to help cover the costs of our meetings, newsletters, public forums, research and to continue our vital work protecting your quality of life in Clark County.

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LEGACY LAND PROPOSAL

By Bill Dygert
FoCC Advisory Board

Friends of Clark County has endorsed a proposal to submit to voters sometime in 2008/09. It is a ballot measure that would provide funds for the purchase of our highest quality Legacy Lands.

The proposal includes four main elements: shorelines, urban natural areas and greenways, farmland, and regional trails.

If approved, funding will help implement a countywide vision to preserve for all generations an interconnected system of clean rivers and lakes, urban natural areas, and farm and forest resource lands.

The specific amount of the measure and timing are still being developed. However, the ballot measure will establish a specific levy rate for a limited period of time, so voters will know well in advance of voting exactly what is the cost, how long the levy will be in place, and how funds will be used.

Several factors are causing an urgent need for new conservation lands funding, including especially rapid growth.

In December 2002, city planners noted that at current growth rates, with the exception of the Columbia River Lowlands and Cascade foothills, urban growth will expand north to the East Fork of the Lewis River by 2040 and to the North Fork of the Lewis by 2060.

Commissioner Steve Stuart highlighted the impact of rapid growth in this year's State of the County address: "If we continue growing in the same way, every acre of dirt in Clark County, except the northeast hills, will be developed in a city. The county must prevent this, or it will no longer be a place worth moving to."

In addition to meeting the challenges of rapid growth, new funds are needed to respond to acquisition opportunities in several key watersheds.

(continued on next page)

COUNTY GROWTH PLAN APPEAL

By April Putney
Futurewise

Futurewise is a statewide nonprofit group working to promote healthy communities. Clark County Natural Resources Council is a group working to protect, preserve, and enhance the natural resources and environment of Clark County.

They have filed an appeal asking the Western Washington Growth Management Hearings Board to invalidate Clark County's recently adopted Comprehensive Land Use Plan. The appeal is based on the groups' concerns that the County violated state law by:

- De-designating 4,218 acres of agricultural land through the expansion of the Urban Growth Areas (UGA) into agricultural land;
- Failing to include a "no-action" alternative and failing to include an adequate range of alternatives to adopting an increase in the population growth targets and expanding the UGA in the Environmental Impact Statement released in May; and
- Having inadequate public involvement, stemming from a failure to provide a public participation plan, untimely and incomplete public notice of hearings and relevant documents, and failing to allow public testimony.

The litigation is the end result of a long process of negotiation with Clark County.

"We worked with local partners every step of the way, asking the County to make smarter choices about where it focused its growth in order to better protect its farmland from the pressures of encroaching development," noted Keith Scully, Futurewise's Legal Director.

One such local partner is Friends of Clark County. FoCC worked to educate and involve the public in decisions involving quality of life issues.

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FUND RAISER Saturday, December 8

Please join us for an evening dedicated to a better future for Clark County!

Friends of Clark County is helping Futurewise raise money to pay legal expenses for their appeal of the Clark County 2007 growth management plan.

Enjoy the music of Singer/Songwriter Tom May.

A gourmet dinner will be catered by Val Alexander.

Featuring Guests Speakers:

- Senator Craig Pridemore
- April Putney, Futurewise

Cost is \$30 per person; \$100 to host; \$150 2 hosts.

See you Saturday, December 8 at
Fire Fighters Union Hall
2807 NW Fruit Valley Road
Vancouver, WA 98660
(Fruit Valley Road
and 4th Plain Boulevard)

Contact April Putney at
206.343.0681 X 120 or
april@futurewise.org for more
information or to RSVP.

If you can not attend you can still
contribute by sending a check
marked Clark County Appeal to:
Futurewise
814 2nd Avenue Suite 500
Seattle WA 98104-1543

LEGACY LANDS PROPOSAL

(continued from page 2)

These include the Washougal, Lewis, Lacamas, and Salmon Creek. Without new funding, key opportunities are going to be lost.

A campaign committee and structure are now being organized. Many individuals and groups are now joining the effort, including FOCC, the Columbia Land Trust, and the Confluence Project.

For more information, please call Bill Dygert at (360) 696-1388 or billdygert@gmail.com.

Friends thanks Bill Dygert for taking the lead on the Legacy Lands project. FoCC will be actively involved in the process to bring Legacy Lands to a vote of the citizens in 2008-2009. Bill will provide regular updates for our newsletter readers.

COUNTY GROWTH PLAN APPEAL

(continued from previous page)

FoCC held community forums, published newsletters, and contributed extensive testimony to persuade the commissioners to scale back the plan.

"Unfortunately the County chose not to make these decisions, leaving the community at risk of costly and unnecessary sprawl," added Scully.

"We tried to get the County to do more to protect the farmers that wanted to farm and to grow as fast as we can afford," noted John Karpinski of Clark County Natural Resources Council. "Instead, the developers won the land use lottery."

The Western Washington Growth Management Hearings Board has 180 days to decide the case.

For additional information please contact:
Keith Scully, Futurewise, (206) 343-0681x114
John Karpinski, CCNRC, (360) 909-9163

See the sidebar at left for information on our fund raiser to help Futurewise and CCNRC with legal expenses.

L.E.E.D.

By Linda Wolfe
FoCC board

You see this term everywhere these days in regards to "Green Built" properties. But what is it exactly?

It stands for **Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design**. The goal is to create dwellings as well as neighborhoods that are comprehensively energy efficient and sustainable from the ground up.

I'm not sure that everything listed as LEED fits that description. But I am happy that Clark County is moving in that direction.

When my husband and I got serious about wanting to build a sustainable home it was a wonderful idea. But after reading many of the materials on the subject, and visiting several sites, we were overwhelmed.

There are many steps to learn along the way – from site selection, design, materials used, and dealing with construction waste. We are still looking for the right piece of property.

Here are some of the things we are currently taking into consideration:

1. Co-housing – a new model for the 21st Century. This is a cluster of small homes with a large community room for all of the residents. Sharing of meals is sometimes done. Each family owns their own home, but the group owns the common house and area. The community room is shared for guest use, library, meetings, etc. Community members share equipment such as ladders and yard equipment.
2. Choosing a building site – a big part of this is to reduce reliance on automobiles. This is a little more difficult in Clark County currently.
3. Solar energy – need a generally unobstructed view to the south. Also the wind on the site must be considered - particularly areas exposed to cold winter winds.
4. It is important to check regulatory constraints. Some of the best green home strategies -- such as clustering homes together, and leaving the rest of the land undeveloped for gardens, etc. – may not pass muster with zoning laws.
5. Choose sites with a moderate grade – sloped sites provide better drainage.

These are some of the important things to consider even before you start making decisions about house design, etc. I will follow up with the next steps at some future date.

(We are very pleased that Linda will share her progress with this project in future articles!)

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

FRIENDS MONTHLY DISCUSSION MEETING

Last Wednesday of the month

Join the board at 6:30 at the Clinic for Optimal Health (3506 Main Street) for a lively discussion of issues that concern you.

FUND RAISER TO APPEAL GROWTH PLAN Saturday, December 8

Details in the sidebar on page 4.

ENVIRONMENTAL ROUNDTABLE

Join other active members of local environmental groups for our quarterly networking meeting.

Monday, February 25 from 6-8 pm in the 6th floor training room at the Clark County Public Service Center, 1300 Franklin.

FRIENDS ANNUAL FUND RAISER Friday, February 29

Join us for a gourmet dinner. Come prepared to *leap* at all the great bargains offered in our Silent Auction. Location TBA.

COMMUNITY REPORT CARD

Community Choices 2010 was formed in 1993 to create a 20 year vision. It is a nonprofit organization helping to make Clark County the healthiest community in Washington.

To do so, they work with:

- Policymakers— to support a pedestrian friendly long range urban growth plan;
- Business and community leaders—to encourage health care insurance and worksite wellness programs for all employees;
- school leaders—to institutionalize school health advisory councils to advocate for school health policies and provide support for early childhood development;
- and citizens—to engage in public activity such as getting involved in your neighborhood association.

In 2006 Community Choices began researching the data to produce their 5th Community Report Card.

The Community Report Card is a report of the county's progress toward creating a healthy, livable community.

The report uses 36 environmental, economic, social, health care, educational, safety, adult and youth health indicators.

It details areas of progress and identifies areas for action.

Policy Watch sections suggest specific areas that need the attention of our leaders and citizens.

The Report lists priority goals for our leaders to address.

DEAR JOHN: THANKS

By Dave McDonald
FoCC Advisory Board

John S. Karpinski is a fighter and a realist who has served this county well. Any attempt to minimize his influence on county growth and environmental politics and policies turns a blind eye to the fact that he has had a hand in crafting, reviewing, scrutinizing and/or challenging most development regulations over the past two decades.

John's work, especially in the early years of growth management, helped set the stage for our local governments to enact more effective regulations. Never satisfied with the results, he has donated countless hours of legal assistance and advice at great personal sacrifice.

John continues to spawn interest and participation in the growth management process. He has recruited, encouraged, assisted and advised many in the community who toil in the trenches of city and county planning. He helped all of us who served on the never-ending string of community based citizen task forces to help construct workable policies across ideological chasms. Without John's presence, many community and environmental activists would have been shut out of the process.

The preservation of large natural areas, or the complete shut down of overly aggressive or destructive development projects, are among John's tangible victories. However, every citizen activist knows that success is not necessarily measured by those benchmarks.

In a world of sticks and carrots, John's major legal challenges acted as the stick while others offered up the carrot of compromise. Quite frankly, John made people like myself appear reasonable and thoughtful. John's "quotable" retorts may suggest he was an all or nothing activist but in reality his work prods others to act as watchdogs over, as well as participate in, this county's planning processes.

Development policies create clashes between those who wish to develop under the least possible restrictions and those who wish to shut off the flow of development unless or until the guiding regulations are in place. The interests of private property owners and small lot landowners emotionally collide with people seeking a safety net of environmental and development regulations.

John instinctively knew that someone had to be a lightning rod to get the attention of policy makers and the community. With respect to those within the development community with whom I have worked over the years, my

DEAR JOHN: THANKS

overwhelming experience was that initial proposals for projects did not come complete with a desire to comply with all of the rules. John made sure he shouted loud enough so people could hear him cry foul.

When Growth Management first came to this county, John worked on crafting the first Wetlands critical area ordinance. He used the state's model as a base and his proposal appeared to comply with the state model. But the ordinance ignited a firestorm that resulted in a flaming political battle across the county as the first Growth Management plan began to take shape.

John stepped into the punches coming from the other side with his chin out. At bottom, he was right about what the law required and the phrase "best available science" became his mantra.

Over the years, John may have engaged in what many considered bombastic doomsday bravado but many a project in this county was approved with a string of conditions that otherwise would never have been added.

When I first met John, I was new to this county and fresh out of law school. He convinced me to work with him to uphold the County's decision to preserve the Vancouver Lake Lowlands. Since that time, I have carried his papers, worked with him to craft arguments and write briefs, served on countless committees and task forces, attended thousands of hours of hearings, cajoled and argued with policy makers and spoken out for community activism.

I, and many others, would have done little or none of that without John's encouragement and passion. His legacy is not just the big projects, but just being there and making small differences that amount to better developments.

Some activists make a conscious choice to step back from the fray and the fight. I stepped back after the current board tossed the 2004 Comprehensive Plan. John, even with his deteriorating health, stayed on swinging.

I think the citizens' of this county owe him a debt for his efforts, both past and present. I am not sure even a Herculean figure could have stood in the way of the desires of this Board to approve this new plan but he still tried. Some may say that John's influence has been marginalized.

For some, the good news is that there is no other person like John Karpinski. For others, that is the bad news. However, I suggest that his impacts run deep within this community and that the rumors of his withdrawal from the fight are a bit exaggerated, drill press to his cranium or not.

KOOB DOOG A *

The Better World Shopping Guide

By Ellis Jones

Every dollar you spend is a vote for the world you want to create.

This is a comprehensive guide for socially and environmentally responsible consumers.

The shopping guide grades (A-F) products from Airlines to Wine. Corporate heroes and villains are identified.

Buying tips and Resources include lots of web sites.

New Society Publishers
ISBN : 978-0-86571-576-9

CLICK HERE *

We all have a role in our community's health. How are we doing?

For more of the Community Choices Community Report Card go to:

www.clarkcommunitychoices.org

For more information, contact:
Community Choices
Barbe West, Executive Director
1101 Broadway Suite 110
Vancouver, WA 98660
360.567.1087

* a web-site we recommend

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