

HOOD RIVER VALLEY

RESIDENTS COMMITTEE



Issue Number 53

November, 2004

Bill Sturman, Editor

HOLIDAY FUNDRAISER

Help Keep Cooper Spur Wild and Free!!!

PLEASE support the Cooper Spur Wild and Free Coalition's activities to protect the North side of Mt. Hood from development

Christmas Wreathes \$15.00

20 inch, noble fir wreathes with cedar and juniper accents, pine cones and a red (or blue) bow

Fruit Gift Boxes \$15.00

12 delicious premium pears – 4 comice, 4 bosc, 4 red Anjou – from the Hood River Valley's Trout Creek Orchard in an attractive gift box

Cooper Spur Wild and Free Coalition

by Ken Maddox

The CSWF Coalition has been closely following a number of developments concerning the three reasons for the Coalition:

1. The destination resort proposal for the Cooper Spur area
2. The expansion of the Cooper Spur Ski Area
3. Timber sales planned for the Cooper Spur part of the Mt. Hood National Forest

Destination resort activities are paused, while the county holds off on further Goal 8 (destination resort) actions, and discussions continue on how best to prevent development in the forestland around Cooper Spur. The destination resort has been connected with ski area expansion, which also appears to be on hold. (A master plan for the Cooper Spur Ski Area is required and is even overdue, but it has been indefinitely postponed.)

Timber sales are still planned, but may be affected by the proposal Senator Ron Wyden has advanced for additional wilderness protection in the Mt. Hood and Columbia River Gorge areas. That proposal has apparently temporarily delayed immediate action on the sales, but sales could be reinitiated if the proposal doesn't appear to be going anywhere.

In the meantime, the Coalition is trying to prepare for any eventuality. A successful fundraiser was held October 10, with about 80 supporters enjoying a beautiful day, an animation of past and proposed future development on Mt. Hood, and reports on other hot spots (including a recent proposal to develop a ski area on Mt. Adams). Coalition members hope that the New Year brings an end to many of the threats to the wild and free Cooper Spur.

County monitoring report
by Peter Frothingham

Much of the monitoring effort over the last six months has been focused on the Odell boundary issue. The County Planning Department and Planning Commission voted to omit more than 50 acres that most obviously did not meet requirements. At a subsequent meeting to finalize the proposal and without a full commission in attendance, a vote was taken to reverse the previous decision. It was apparent to those in attendance that this shift was the result of personal lobbying by one of the landowners. The rationale for the shift will not hold up under subsequent review.

The County Commission had scheduled its hearing on the Odell boundary for November 1st but has postponed that hearing indefinitely in the face of the then pending vote on Measure 37.

Other matters currently under review are an effort to gain approval for a road on the west side put in without permits and, apparently, in violation of zoning code requirements. What on the face of it seems to be a "simple" lot line adjustment appears to be the camel's nose to remove 30 acres of very productive orchard from farm use and convert it to costly single family dwellings. If successful, this strategy could be used to convert most orchards in the valley to McMansions, destroying the agricultural economy of the valley and forever changing the nature of the area. More about this will be learned at the Planning Commission hearing on December 8th.

It is rumored (I have calls out to try and clarify the rumor.) that Wal-Mart is taking up its options (to buy) on the properties along Country Club and Frankton Roads. Despite measure 37, this writer does not see how the super store could be built unless there was a major re-design resulting in separate, connected buildings. Even then there would be multiple challenges to be met having to do with the site and the flooding issues.

The consequences of measure 37 are still to be discovered. They do not bode well for the quality of life in the valley that HRVRC has worked so consistently to protect.

City Beat
by Jeff Hunter

The city and urban growth boundary experienced record growth and price increases in 2004. The average home price now hovers just under \$200,000. Though a precise figure is not known, belief in the real estate community is that prices rose this year by more than

12%. A quick drive around the edges of town will give all the visual confirmation of this growth required.

Of the many challenges growth brings, its meaning for our land use planning system will be profound. New Valley residents, mostly from other states and countries, generally approve of the results of our system. They can see and experience that Oregon is different -- a bit greener around the edges with a bit less sprawl. But they have little knowledge of how the system works, of the reasoning and history since passage of Senate Bill 100 in 1973. The passage of Measure 37 may shock these new residents, as well as the large number of voters who did not bother to educate themselves on its likely consequences, into a greater appreciation of the system that was in place prior to its passage.

As we meet and get to know our new neighbors, please be thinking of this gift we have and tell them about it. Maybe it is time in 2005 to think up a public event focused on the history and workings of this Oregon System. Can we, as supporters of the Residents Committee, plan a happening to refresh both ourselves and bring more new people under the land use supporter umbrella? Share your thoughts with the Board.

Compassion on our Road Ahead
by Maui Meyer

I had an interesting discussion with a friend the other day. She was quite upset about "them". "Those People", she said, "I can't believe how stupid they are!" As we continued to speak, it became clear to me that the "them" was actually me. My first response was to counter accusations as baseless, since I had knowledge that what she was saying wasn't technically true. But I thought better of it. It didn't matter what I thought, she had heard something and she believed it. That's what mattered now. RIGHT NOW I should sit here and listen to her, I realized. And I did. And you know what? She shares the same fears, the same confusions and the same passion as I do. How is it that two people could sit on opposite sides of an issue and yet share the same framework that makes them have so much in common?

These days it's easy. We've been brought up in a world of such high contrast, been taught so many short cuts -- ways to game the system, reasons to stay within the box -- that we forget the subtlety of each and every action we take. There is too much texture and variability to every decision we make, and none more fraught with texture and variation than the essential decision about what we do with our land. In Hawaii we have a word for it; it is called Aina. And Aina is so much more than land. It means the connection to that which birthed you. It isn't the place you were born. It's YOU. Aina. I don't know

what we call it here in the West, but we have that same relationship here in Hood River. We not only have a connection with the land (in whatever manner we perceive that connection) but we also have a responsibility to that land. And that responsibility requires us to find a common ground. It requires us to ask more of ourselves in any argument and to dare not hide behind labels. It requires us to have compassion in all things, and for all things.

So here's to compassion on our road ahead. Let's challenge ourselves to make Oregon's land use laws stronger, not weaker. We may disagree about how we get there, but let's dare to try and go there. If Oregon's land use laws remain rigid and do not grow and adjust, they will break. And in breaking they will erase decades of vision and compassion. They must not become brittle and break; they must become supple and grow. That's the fight I want to fight, and that's the fight I want to win.

Ballot Measure 37
by Nancy Moller

The passage of Ballot Measure 37 on November 2 can become a major disaster to Oregon's progressive land use planning. Oregon's leadership in land use issues is well established and has become a model for other states to follow. Through 30 plus years many changes have been made to upgrade the plan and deal with issues of fairness. Unfortunately there are still some special interest groups that have long been working to eliminate the present planning laws entirely.

This is the second try for the sponsors of 37 – Oregonians in Action, Aaron Jones and others. By the content of the measure it appears these sponsors had no intention of offering a measure of fairness. However, as Bob Stacey, Executive Director of 1000 Friends of Oregon states "The voters of Oregon have spoken for fairness, as they understand it. They have not spoken against protection of our neighborhoods and landscapes." Stacey further states that the legislative assembly must "find ways to honor the call for fairness, or do greater harm to more property owners through the manifestly unfair process of waivers unleashed by 37." In other words, similar properties can be treated differently under this measure. He also believes that there is probably little chance for overturning 37 in the courts.

Most importantly the ballot measure does not provide for a revenue source to pay for the demands of the "aggrieved" property owner. Thus government jurisdictions will probably have no choice but not enforcing zoning ordinances that address most livability issues.

Your contribution would be appreciated
by Rich Garber

I hope you have all sent in your 2004 contribution. You can tell if you have by looking at the label. If it says 2004, you are set. If you haven't, or if I can twist your arm for a little more, this is the time. We have had an interesting year. We have been successful in some of our court dealings concerning Mt. Hood Meadows and have entered into some promising negotiations with Meadows and Hood River County concerning Meadow's plans for the area near Cooper Spur.

We still owe legal fees for the court battles and we are encountering both attorney's and mediator's costs for the negotiations. However, we are cautiously optimistic about the mediation and, regardless, our position is strong and we intend to see if the parties can find their way to a desirable settlement. If you can free up \$50 or \$100 at this time, it would be very helpful. It takes commitment to stay this course and we are counting on yours.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Board meets on the fourth Monday of the month at 5:30pm. If you are interested in attending, call for the location as it is different each month.

Ron Cohen 352-7092, taxsri@aol.com

Margo Earley 352-7669, drrearleys@aol.com

Scott Franke 386-3381, frankelaw@aol.com

Rich Garber, 354-1766,
RichGarber@hotmail.com

Judie Hanel 386-6221, judieh@gorge.net

Jeff Hunter , 386-5779, jhunterpc@gorge.net

Ken Maddox, 386-4526, maddox@pacifier.com

Kate McCarthy, 352-6228

Mike McCarthy 352-6476,
comicepear@aol.com

Larry Martin, 354-5844
pearpeople@gorge.net

Nancy Moller, 386-4764, nmoller@gorge.net



HOOD RIVER VALLEY
RESIDENTS COMMITTEE, INC.
P.O. Box 100
Mt. Hood, OR 97041
Return Service Requested

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Permit No. 4
HOOD RIVER, OR 97031