



WASHINGTON COUNTY OREGON

Steve Sparks, AICP
Planning Manager
City of Beaverton
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November 23, 2011

RE: TA2011-0003 / CPA2011-0003 / CPA2011-0002 / ZMA2011-0003 / ZMA2011-0002

Dear Mr. Sparks:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the above-referenced plan amendments. Please enter this letter into the December 7, 2011 Planning Commission public hearing record.

As background, the County and the surrounding Cedar Mill community went through a very comprehensive planning process in the mid-1990's. This planning effort resulted in the County's Plan for the area. The plan was a product of more than 15 open houses/design workshops with the community. Formal adoption of the plan only occurred after six Planning Commission hearings and 10 County Board of Commissioner Hearings. Because of the competitive transit and locational advantage of the Sunset Transit Station, we believe the level of effort that went into planning this site and surrounding area reflects the belief that it provided the best opportunity in all of Washington County to create a dense, vibrant mixed-use urban development. It was a long, expensive and rigorous process that included broad regional and local discussions, significant compromises and balancing of important community issues. In order to garner support from local stakeholders, the County worked directly with many property owners, including the Peterkort family.

At this time, the County is not prepared to undertake a comprehensive review of the details of Beaverton's proposal and how it might compare to the County's plan adopted in 1997. Nor are we in a position to offer specific recommendations on refinements. However, we completed a cursory review of the proposal. Based on our review, we offer up the following discussion points for Beaverton's consideration as you go forward. The following comments reflect some fundamental issues that were germane when the plan was adopted in 1997:

- **PROXIMITY TO THE STATION IS IMPORTANT**

Much of the County's planning process focused on what happened within one-quarter mile of the transit station. The reason for this was a recognition that beyond that distance, the probability that an individual would choose to walk to the station decreases. Ensuring density, especially residential density close to the station, was a critical guiding principal. The County Board determined that establishing minimum floor area ratios (FAR) was also very important (e.g., minimum 1.0 FAR in the Sunset District of the Peterkort Station Area as well as minimum number of dwelling units in each district of the Peterkort Station Area).

Department of Land Use & Transportation • Long Range Planning Division

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- **RETAIL DEVELOPMENT NORTH OF BARNES ROAD**

There was recognition that Barnes road would be very congested in the future, but such congestion was acceptable given the benefits of dense, mixed-use development close to the station. Farther from the station, the County regulations specifically limited retail development north of Barnes road. It was recognized that there were significant retail opportunities south of Barnes Road as well as in the Sunset District of the Peterkort Station Area. Allowing a significantly greater amount of retail uses that would draw trips from outside the area to Barnes Road was not viewed favorably. As Beaverton continues with discussions regarding how the area develops, considering how much, if any, retail will be allowed north of Barnes Road will be important.

- **IMPORTANCE OF URBAN DESIGN AND PROVISION OF A PARK/CIVIC SPACE NEAR THE STATION**

Previous discussions about how to create a vibrant area around the station included a robust dialogue about urban design and provision of a strategically located park/civic space. This led to detailed site design and park/civic space regulations (e.g., The Green) that were adopted in 1997. We believe the Board at that time was concerned that if such details weren't included into the plan, it would be very difficult to ensure they were incorporated at the implementation stage.

- **HOW HOUSING WOULD BE PHASED IN OVER TIME**

Mixed-use zones that require a minimum amount of housing have challenges as to when that housing will be provided. As part of the discussions in the mid-1990's, the County Board of Commissioners was concerned about too much non-residential development occurring prior to required residential development. Finding a balanced approach to this issue was important. As Beaverton continues with discussions about how the area develops, it will be important to consider how much non-residential floor area can be constructed prior to residential development.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. If you have specific questions regarding previous Washington County actions regarding the subject properties, please let us know, and we will attempt to provide timely written responses.

Sincerely,



Brent Curtis,
Planning Manager

C: Andy Duyck, Chair, Board of Commissioners
Andrew Singelakis, Director, Department of Land Use & Transportation
Andy Back, Principal Planner
Joanne Rice, Principal Planner