

February 17, 2010

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Lane County Planning Commission
City of Springfield Planning Commission
c/o Development Services Department
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Dear Commissioners:

Please enter this letter and its attachment into the official record for the upcoming public hearing regarding the co-adoption of the Eugene –Springfield Metro Plan Amendment, Springfield Case Number LRP2009-00014 and Lane County File Number PA09-6018 - more generally known as Springfield's 2030 Refinement Plan.

In the attachment dated 11/25/09, concerns and reservations are stated regarding Springfield's lack of enthusiasm for doing everything necessary to assure existing and future residents that they will have ample choice in their future housing type and location preferences. Since drafting that letter, this matter has become even more worrisome to us because of a revision in the findings of Springfield's Residential Lands Study (RLS) which now shows a technical surplus of residential inventory thru 2030.

While we understand that the topic of the February 17th hearing is more comprehensive than just the matter of a revised Urban Growth Boundary (UGB), its important to remember that having autonomy over Springfield's growth boundary was the driving force behind HB 3337. Hundreds of thousands of dollars have been spent on all the related studies and reports over the past two years, including in part the proposed 2030 Plan. After ten years of effort and significant sums paid to create a preferred future – one which allows moderate economic and housing opportunities – are we truly willing to accept no single family residential growth outside of our current growth boundary for twenty years? How is this having an increased autonomy over our future?

One explanation for Springfield's lack of apparent concern over residential inventory is that Springfield is much more focused on future commercial and industrial opportunity areas because they create needed jobs. While we appreciate Springfield's continuing focus on jobs, how much planning sense does it make to seek large expansion areas for

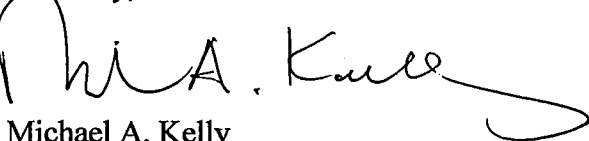
jobs in the North Gateway and Seavey Loop areas (which are both located on Springfield's extreme western boundary) while only giving a passing glance to the fact that, unless challenged by Springfield officials, most single family residential growth over the next twenty years is only going to occur on the hillsides of very eastern Springfield located within Springfield's existing UGB?

Isn't the concept of "new jobs in the west and new residential in the east" the opposite thinking from a "nodal" smart growth scenario? Will the majority of new people filling these jobs truly want and be able to afford expensive hillside lots, or will they be forced to look at other close-by cities for single family housing opportunities, or will they simply rent an apartment at one of Springfield's infill multiple family complexes? A strong focus on jobs may indeed create an improved Springfield economy, but will do so at the expense of our future citizen's liveability by eliminating housing type and location choices for people filling these jobs.

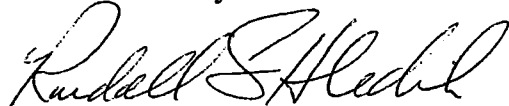
We strongly encourage Springfield officials to work with the County Commissioners and DLCD staff to seek a balanced solution to Springfield's twenty year future - one which encourages infill, but one which allows some residential and commercial/industrial expansion on lands which truly have no viable agriculture future. A balanced approach is the best way to keep housing affordable by providing various housing types, styles, locations and price points. Even though a balanced approach seems like the "common sense" thing to do, we know it will be politically difficult, time consuming and costly. It may involve challenges to the adopted population figures for 2030 and/or it may involve challenges to other assumptions utilized in the RLS (such as using a density of 7.2 dwelling units per acre when most new lots will be hillside lots averaging less than four dwelling units per acre, or questioning whether building on 25% slopes is advisable). It may even have to await newly elected County Commissioners in 2011 or await a court verdict sought by folks who, throughout Oregon, routinely substitute their judgment for the will of the local citizenry and their elected Mayors and Councils. However difficult the journey, we believe that the long term prize will be well worth the short term perils.

Please keep the above thoughts in mind as you deliberate on Springfield's 2030 Plan over the following months. We are still hoping Springfield's spunky attitude towards balanced growth emerges before the final 2030 Plan is seriously considered for adoption.

Sincerely,



Michael A. Kelly



Randall S. Hledik