

Clackamas County Board of Commissioners
Employment Land Need Decision
Study Session

(Edited portion of Verbatim Transcription re: French Prairie Rural Reserves)

Presentation Date: August 17, 2015, 10 AM

Attendees: Chair John Ludlow
Commissioner Jim Bernard
Commissioner Paul Savas
Commissioner Tootie Smith
Commissioner Martha Schrader
County Administrator Donald Krupp
[Treasurer Shari Anderson](#)
[District Attorney John Foote](#)
[Sheriff Craig Roberts](#)
[County Clerk Sherry Hall](#)
[County Assessor/Tax Collector Bob Vroman](#)
[Justice of the Peace Karen Brisbin](#)

Presenters: Dan Chandler, Martha Fritzie, Kirstin Greene, Cogan Owens, Facilitator

Other Invitees Barb Cartmill, Gary Schmidt, Gary Barth

Commissioner Smith: Mr. Chair, I would like to move the discussion ahead because we only have I don't know how many minutes to talk about one area that we have not talked about and that's 1800 acres in the French Prairie area. When I looked at that map presented by Staff, I says, "You know, that isn't even in the realm of my thinking, 1800 acres in French Prairie, and again I make the argument of prime farmland. You go down Airport Road and to the east of that is hundreds and hundreds of acres of prime farmland including our – what do you call it? [ENRAC](#), an experimental station for agriculture – you wouldn't want to include that. And then you cross and you go to the west, where we are bordering on Yamhill County on Boones Ferry Rd. You go out there, there's huge prime farmland [I not want to see, \[1:51:59\]](#) but you know what? There is some developable acreage there. There have been bills in the legislature to do it. There is interest of property owners to have that developed. And I want to make some statements about that, and then I'm going to make a motion. And [this is a statement 630 acres, \[1:52:20\]](#) and you've seen it on the presentation on your materials here today. I think there have been a lot of misstatements made about that property. For instance, water. I think it can be supplied with water. Wilsonville is going to currently expand their water system by the way, south of the river to Charbonneau. I don't see how that is an issue. Aurora Airport currently gets their water from the City of Aurora; that could be expanded just not very far up the road. And employment land: you don't need additional, huge sewer operations. It could have self-contained systems. Irrigation: The [sewer](#) that you have from industrial land can be applied to the irrigation of green lands around the property. And the transportation, to me the biggest selling point of that 630 acres is the transportation. Yeah, we know there's I-5 there, but did you know there's an additional – and I drove that this weekend – there's an additional seven roads in the area that can support that: Airport Road, Elan Road, Miley Road, Butteville Road, Orange Road, 99E, and Oregon 551. Also, it's supported by a railroad. I was kind of surprised in a recent analysis that we got by the Union Pacific Railroad,

which runs north and south. It has a short line and a main line. And when you talk about how we're going to get there, the people that would probably work at those locations would probably come from the south, as housing is cheaper in St. Paul, Hubbard, Woodburn, Aurora, and Canby compared to what is currently going on with the industrial workers in Wilsonville and Tualatin. So, they wouldn't even be using the Boones Bridge; traffic would be coming in the reverse direction. To say that the Boones Bridge, which is already seven lanes, needed to be expanded further – if we did expand it further, it would be the only bridge in the state of Oregon that is seven lanes. I move that we add 630 acres into the undesignated category with the borders of Airport Road to the east, Boones Ferry Road to the west, Marion County line to the south, and Miley Road to the north; it's approximately 630 acres.

Chair Ludlow: All right, there's a specific motion, is there a second?

[Commissioner Savas: \[1:55:10\]](#) Clarifying question. You said east of Airport Road.

Commissioner Smith: To the Airport Road to the east. Airport Road is the eastern boundary, so it's really encapsulated.

Chair Ludlow: Airport Road to the east, Boones Ferry to the west, south of the river, and north to Arndt Road, is that what you said?

Commissioner Smith: North to Miley Road because the river takes in Charbonneau; and it takes out Charbonneau, and then obviously, the Marion County boundary to the south.

Commissioner Savas: I thought it was Airport Road to the west, not the east.

Commissioner Smith: No, Paul. We don't cross Airport Road to the east because that is prime farmland. Airport Road is the boundary line.

Chair Ludlow: Is there a second?

Commissioner Savas: I'll second it.

Chair Ludlow: Okay, motion made by [Commissioner Smith, seconded by Commissioner Savas. And again, east/west, east/west. Airport Road is the eastern boundary; Boones Ferry Road is the western boundary; the southern boundary is Arndt Road, and down to Charbonneau, which is Miley Road. That is the specific motion, further discussion?](#)

Commissioner Schrader: Yeah. Here's the difficulty I have, and I just want to state all the elephants in the room. We have Wilsonville here, and the City has been really more interested in the other areas that they want to develop. This has been a bone of contention with – I see the owners of the property here as well – and the difficulty I have is, and I've said this to the Charbonneau folks – I honestly think that that area, being left undesignated, would be the better compromise and choice, largely because, as I said, the acreage surrounding property that my children own is kind of in the same thing, where there is going to be a significant number of hurdles to actually bring that in. The political difficulty we have is we have a city that has been absolutely – it is not one of their priorities, and we also have folks in the Charbonneau area who have lobbied considerably hard down in Salem to prevent this from happening. I truly believe that there is a good compromise to be had. I am not particularly against anything happening there. I think that if, long term, even if we vote yes for this today, and I'm inclined to, which is going to put me on the hot seat, let's be perfectly honest. There are folks in

Charbonneau that will just absolutely be so upset, but I have been consistent that if I had been part of the urban rural reserves, I would have seriously looked at that as being an undesignated parcel. I need to be consistent; however, I'm going to caution everybody that there are considerable hurdles, and unless there is peace made between the folks who live in Charbonneau, who have a concern about their quality of life and what anything happening there would mean, and unless, frankly, there is a willing city – because we should not be, and I'll say this right now, as a County, doing anything at all to urbanize areas. That really is a city function. So essentially, you'd have to have the City of Wilsonville be willing to move forward with the infrastructure there. So, I'm going to vote yes on this, but with the caveat that this can be a poison pill. There's going to be considerable resistance to this. I'm willing to go to the Charbonneau folks and take the heat for what I will receive for this, but I think that it is important to be consistent. And, I will make a point of chatting with those folks sooner than later, but they will definitely be up in arms. And I would strongly suggest, if we move forward with this as an opportunity to ask, that we make sure everybody is at the table. I think this is a similar situation as Stafford. We don't know what it means; we don't know what it is going to be turned into; all the controversy – “Oh, it's going to be a distribution center.” “Oh, we are going to work with the tribes and get –” that all needs to be put behind, people. And, I will caution the folks if we make it undesignated, I do not see this as happening immediately at all. It is simply, actually, adding it to the lowest tier of a long term potential and it may very well take, not 20 years, but 50 years to bring it in. So, there you go. Mark, I love you guys. I'll come and have you guys yell at me, and the land owners here. I have been consistent with my message. I would prefer not to see the whole area brought in, but I think that one section could make sense if it is developed with input and appropriately with the folks that live there so their quality of life is not absolutely destroyed. It would be a beautiful opportunity. So, there you go. I have fallen on my sword today. And with that, can we get to the vote, because I have to go to another meeting.

Chair Ludlow: I've got two more Commissioners – they swear they will be short, right? Paul.

Commissioner Savas: I will be brief. I was going to say, I'm not familiar with all the 630 acres, so my caveat in supporting this will be based on, none of that land, I'm presuming is productive farmland; because if it is, I don't support it. So that's caveat #1. I just want to point out, Title 11 Section 3.07.1110, that really, any kind of urban planning in that area, if it ever happens, is the responsibility of the city, not the county. So the keys are in the hands of the cities in that regard. And, again, this is undesignated; [it hits a 75 percent rule \[2:01:22\]](#) so, it's not first to come in. And, I want to make sure, the other caveat is, that 630 acres is not computed into the 1100 some odd acres we need because that is not going to happen anytime soon, unfortunately.

Commissioner Bernard: I guess I have the benefit of having done a lot of this urban/rural discussion, and actually applying factors. I guess the positive thing about what you are talking about is that you have thrown out the factors, just exactly what Washington County did, so the legislature or the court will figure it out, but you can't just throw out the factors; they were applied. This is not only a poison pill, and thanks, John, it's a nuclear pill. Again, Tom McCall Senate Bill 100, great governor, he tried to prevent urban sprawl and protected some of the best farmland in the world. And so, whether it is being farmed or a golf course, this is what it is about. I like that golf course. It's a great golf course, but it will also make a great farm, so, I'm going to vote no on this.

Chair Ludlow: Real quickly, I read the report from the Port of Portland that said this is the best developable property in the region. Right now, what prevents it – let's all understand if it's undesignated, it would still need the City of Wilsonville to provide services and annex that property. So this great fear about it being undesignated, you know, undesignated still means it's a heck of a process to go through. What is the big fear of that? Let's also remember, and I was mayor there 25

years ago, and you know, we all had a different idea about that area at that time. This is temporary. This existing Wilsonville Council will not be around should this property ever be developed. Period. They won't be there. And Charbonneau will still be there, but let's not forget, Charbonneau opposed the safety tower at the airport. You know, these things change and attitudes change as they will. But it is extremely short sighted to not say this has great potential in the future, maybe beyond our lifetimes. I'm sorry, Martha, go ahead.

Commissioner Schrader: With that being said, I do think that the folks of Charbonneau need to be in intimate conversation with anything that happens there, and, I want to get that on record now. And I don't think anything is going to happen for quite a while. The other piece of this is that from my perspective, as I said, it's a really tough decision and my notion is, even if we go to Metro with this and we articulate, "Well, these are two areas we would like to take a look at and change", there is no guarantee that Metro will say yes, in which case, the way I see this, and we have our other positions where no change will happen, but I will tell you it will be very difficult to approach Metro and have this conversation and get it changed. So even though we want to say, "This is what our thoughts are" the caveat is that there is a city that I think will be very unhappy with us. I'm not convinced that Metro will be very happy with this as well, so I'm going to strongly suggest that the fallback position be those first three areas where there is no change. I'm more than willing to actually present some changes, but I think that there is going to be significant pushback, and you know what, that's public process in Oregon and people have a right to pushback, and I think it will happen.

Chair Ludlow: Time for the vote.

Ms. Hill: Commissioner Smith?

Commissioner Smith: Aye.

Ms. Hill: Commissioner Bernard?

Commissioner Bernard: No.

Ms. Hill: Commissioner Savas?

Commissioner Savas: Aye.

Ms. Hill: Commissioner Schrader?

Commissioner Schrader: Aye.

Ms. Hill: Chair Ludlow?

Chair Ludlow: Aye. Passes 4 to 1. Now, some people would think we kind of rushed through this, and we kind of did. Is there any buy in – we've actually skipped some areas in here to get to that important one in a timely manner so Martha could leave and everybody has other plans, probably.

Commissioner Savas: I can if we can make it quick. I move we consider the Springwater Road area and the Beaver creek area for consideration to urban or undesignated reserves.

Commissioner Smith: I could go with Beaver creek on that, but I don't think I can do Springwater.

Chair Ludlow: Is there a second. [*Silence.*] Yeah, Martha, I understand. I'll just say it. The number one problem I have with Springwater Road is its infrastructure: water, sewer, and that really crummy little bridge at Carver, and that really bad intersection up to Highway 224. I don't have any problem with Beaver Creek, I guess. Would you shorten your motion to that, right now?

Commissioner Savas: I was going to say that if you actually look at that, the infrastructure is not that far away, and there's not very much land. I'm not suggesting there's 1500 acres to serve, I'm suggesting there's much less than that, that it's feasible, so if you look at what is closest to – just passed Barton Park – if you look at what's close to that; some of that area already has some industrial uses right now. There's probably a couple hundred acres right there that's feasible; 50-acre large lots, that's what this is all about, and we don't have it anywhere. We need it. So, I think that we consider it. We are not actually moving it to change that, we are looking to have Staff consider that, is that correct?

Chair Ludlow: I would ask that we consider another session on this for the purposes of more information on Beaver Creek, Springwater, and Boring, specifically. So, in the interest of time, rather than trying to take a quick vote on this, is that okay with the Commission that we bring this portion back at a later time?

The Commission consented to discuss this at another time.

Chair Ludlow: Don did you have something to wrap it up?

Mr. Krupp: No, actually; I just wanted to thank you for this. We do have coming out of this particular session, direction involving two full columns and a specific proposal for the French Prairie Area, and then we will schedule some time to complete the discussion regarding the other areas that we have not had an adequate opportunity to go through.

Chair Ludlow: Kirstin, I think you've done as best you can in herding cats, and normally – this is probably the most controversial issue we deal with, other than marijuana, thanks a bunch. I really appreciate your patience in this, and actually, doing as good as you probably could at getting us to some decision making, so thank you for participating today. Any other business before us? Otherwise, I am adjourning this meeting. Thank you very much.