

For the record, my name is Eric Hoem, and I am a resident of Wilsonville.

Council President and members of the Council, I am here to speak against any changes to the land use designation of Langdon Farms Golf course.

A number of very good reasons for maintaining the Rural Reserve designation for the Langdon Farms Golf Course have been presented today.

And these reasons connect into a very strong logical chain leading to one conclusion.

The land is French Prairie is all excellent farm land. The Oregon Department of Agriculture calls French Prairie “foundational farm land” because the high quality of soil, availability of water, and benign terrain—all making it the foundation of a thriving & sustainable farming community that supports a billion dollar agricultural sector in our Willamette valley.

Because it is such high quality farm land, the land use process, including Core 4, which involved hundreds of hours of citizen involvement at many levels, designated this area as Rural Reserve. And this designation has been upheld in numerous challenges.

Altering that designation now would set a very poor precedent in policy making. Instead of having a long window of certainty, which both the agricultural sector and industrial planners need, it would become apparent that the process could be undone at any time with successful lobbying by interested parties. Lack of certainty, then, would seriously restrict planning options for all parties.

Lastly, today’s process comes at the behest of the Oregon Court of Appeals and the LCDC. Their direction is that a decision be made with respect to the Stafford area. Is it wise for this remand hearing to become an excuse for reopening the entire process? Ok, then, let’s talk about all of Clackamas County to reassessment. The Damascus area could just as easily be served with water & sewer and new roads as Langdon farms. Plus, industrial development in Damascus would not overload an already fully utilized, constantly crowded Boone Bridge.

These factors make a strong logical chain that very clearly supports keeping the focus today on the Stafford area and leaving Langdon Farms as is, Rural Reserve, until such time as the relevant legislation and administrative rules allow reconsideration .

The additional testimony I wish to add is that **there is something very stinky—very unseemly—about this issue coming to the fore now.**

As shown by their behavior, the owners of Langdon Farms bought the Golf Course with land speculation in mind. In a further indication, they have purchased additional land around their golf course nearly doubling their holdings. From the very start of their tenure as owners they

have tried numerous ways to get their land redesignated so it can be developed into a commercial industrial area. They have fought hard at the input level of the planning process & lost; they have taken one or more bills to the legislature every session and lost. Earlier this year there were five bills that directly impacted industrial development of their land and they lost. During the proceedings of the Oregon Court of Appeals and in the discussion of the “Grand Bargain” in the Legislature, they made their case and lost again.

This is not just capitalism. This is an example of trying to write the rules for yourself and not abide by the will of the majority. It is fundamentally undemocratic.

The owners of Langdon farms and adjacent properties have spent \$100,000 or more on lawyers and PR surveys. In addition they have given **more than \$60000 in political contributions to four Clackamas County Commissioners** – sixty thousand dollars.

One adage in politics is “**follow the money**” and if you follow the political donations in this case, you get yourself exactly to what we are discussing in today’s hearing. At the very least, this behind the scenes maneuvering is a form of **political payola**—and it is deeply offensive to anyone who believes in our democratic processes.

I strongly urge the council not to reward this sort of shady, underhanded, self-seeking, and very undemocratic attempt to undermine Oregon’s land use planning process.

Thank you.

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