

From: cvl
To: [JWMNR Exhibits](#)
Subject: HB 2007
Date: Thursday, June 22, 2017 4:33:11 AM

Please modify HB2007 so that it does not destroy our historic resources in the name of affordable housing. This is a false dichotomy and an unnecessarily destructive approach that will impact the entire state when a few changes recommended by RESTORE can save us from a serious breach of values and loss of significant resources.

The vested interest of developers is to satisfy the bottom line of their business concerns -- their focus does not include the larger policy issues involved in this situation; and as for 1000 Friends -- frankly I'm shocked that they're so focused on this narrow segment that they're blinkered to the unnecessary consequences of their stance on this issue.

I created the first historic district in Corvallis, a working class district in the oldest part of town next to the downtown area. Most of the homes are modest; when this district was first built about 50% of the homes were rentals and that pattern continues to this day. Local government codes determine what's allowed within any district in the state. Our district allows sensitive infill in keeping with the surrounding look of the district, in some cases actually being other historic homes that had to be moved. My point is that there are all kinds of historic districts and all kinds of wonderful historic resources that are useful for affordable housing that will not be protected under this bill.

In any case, how can anyone mandate affordability when the desirability of a place creates a sky-rocketing marketplace? Corvallis has not protected its historic resources outside of its two districts and the rapid-fire destruction of older housing in the past few years by developers has been astounding. Identical cookie cutter units have been slapped up all over town (the very same springing up all over Portland as well) to meet the so-called housing shortage but they're expensive, they cater to a limited demographic and the lack of affordable housing has not been the least bit alleviated and is still a serious issue. Corvallis has also lost many lovely old historic homes in formerly esthetically pleasing neighborhoods to oversized cuckoos in the nest, outsized things that stick out like sore thumbs. It is also extremely telling that 95% of the developers live out of town, so their investment in the town is strictly for their own monetary gain and not the well-being of the town -- they will not build or will not build to a compatible scale if it won't make them the kind of profit margin they want.

The fact that 1000 Friends and the OR homebuilders association are in bed together should raise red flags for all concerned. This is not about one or two fancy historic districts, nor about class warfare or elitism but about preserving something inherently worthwhile that informs a town and contributes to pride of place.

Municipalities encourage growth as the path to economic well-being, inviting overcrowding, without ever seeming to anticipate the attendant consequences of too many people for the infrastructure -- willing to sacrifice quality for quantity until they realize too late what they've lost. The housing crisis is really an environmental crisis -- a symptom of a far larger problem that will only get worse with time. The solutions must be more profound than the short-term ones currently on the table.

It seems heroic to rush in and supply housing for all, but it's up to you as a policy-maker to make the adjustments necessary to avoid a real fiasco -- to represent everyone's interests, all of which can be served without throwing a truly important segment of stakeholders under the bus. Our historic resources are terribly precious and irreplaceable -- and so many bad decisions regarding their preservation have been made in the past. Please don't make another unforgivable mistake by undermining this aspect of Goal 5 -- especially when so easily fixed.

Thank you for your consideration,
Carolyn Ver Linden
Corvallis



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