



Save Helvetia
13260 N.W. Bishop Road
Hillsboro, Oregon 97124
www.SaveHelvetia.org

*Advancing policies, leaders and actions
that protect Helvetia's treasured resources*

February 13, 2018

Subject: HB 4075 - Clarification to Testimony Comments of Mr. Tom VanderZanden

TO: Honorable Members of the House Agricultural and Natural Resources Committee

While not present to air his views at the committee hearing on February 8, 2018, we see from the OLIS testimonial record that Mr. VanderZanden has critiqued our organization. If we understand this accurately, he asserts that we are acting beyond our boundaries, that we are not representative of the residents of the Helvetia area, that we make ourselves unavailable for him to attempt any negotiation, and that what he planned for land on the south side of US-26 is not a threat to the Helvetia area.

We take this opportunity to clarify the record. We met with Mr. VanderZanden in June, 2016 when he requested an audience. We reviewed his presentation about urbanizing the 1,700 acres as a "complete community" in northwest Hillsboro and we determined that we were not in support of his development proposal. We were opposed for three foundational reasons: Legislative land use violates Goal 1 of SB 100, it violates SB 1011 and its associated Administrative Factors and it violates the legislative settlement of HB 4078 (the Grand Bargain). (See Save Helvetia testimony dated February 3, 2018 entitled "Opposition to HB 4075 - Violation of Principles of Oregon Land Use Process" for further details.) In addition, in the spring of 2017, one of our Board members organized a public debate on the Northwest Hillsboro Alliance's 2017 legislative initiative, SB 186. This Citizen Participation Organization meeting was open to the broad public, brought out over 50 attendees, and lasted 2 hours. A Save Helvetia representative presented our perspectives, Mr. VanderZanden presented the viewpoints of the Northwest Hillsboro Alliance, and then we took questions from the audience. Save Helvetia has been consistent and clear about our history and the basis for our disagreement with SB 186 and now HB 4075.

Save Helvetia is a 501 (C) 4 advocacy organization. We are registered with Oregon's Department of Justice and we are compliant likewise with the U.S. Internal Revenue Service. We formed in 2009 when a group of area citizens were alarmed at Washington County's stance during the urban and rural reserves process. We understood early on that the reserves process might be a long struggle and that we were up against well-funded, well-staffed jurisdictions. At times we have hosted community-wide events to celebrate our area, to fundraise, and to educate the public about our organization and the threats to development our area has faced. Our efforts garnered hundreds of supporters throughout the region. We have conducted a community-wide mail outreach to solicit involvement and ideas to all addresses in our area. We are not a CPO for Helvetia nor do we conduct focus groups of area residents to determine our advocacy agenda. We maintain a web presence and we can be contacted readily. As we have shown in previously meeting with Mr. VanderZanden, we are not closed to exploring proposals and ideas but we are not open to negotiating away Oregon's principles of land use laws.

We are not a membership organization nor do we claim to represent the interests of all who reside in Helvetia. We organized around a mission of protecting Helvetia's farm and forestlands against Washington County's violation of our land use laws. During this land struggle, we expended \$60,000 in legal expenses and devoted some 10,000 volunteer hours to testimony, fundraising, and community education. Not many have the time or passion for this level of community service. Through this struggle, we have come to value the role of citizens in Oregon's land use process. We have learned that citizens can provide on-the-ground detail that governmental assessments might lack or seek to overlook. Through our struggle, we came to honor citizen participation principles as expressed in SB 100, Goal One. We observed substantial conflicts of interest in the reserves land use proceedings. We expressed these to Metro, DLCD, and LCDC. We witnessed the manipulation of information and the creation of pseudo-factors in our county government's attempt to shape a vision of expansive urbanization that did not adhere to the law or to Oregon's land use processes as set forth in SB 100 and SB 1011.

Thus, our advocacy mission has come to embrace speaking up for Goal One citizen participation goals. We have expressed this multiple times as we opposed legislation that sought to have the legislature conduct local land use, such as our opposition to SB 716 in 2015, our opposition to HB 4079 in 2016, our opposition to SB 186 in 2017, our opposition to HB 3231 in 2017 and our opposition to SB 418-A7 in 2017. We see citizen participation as foundational to our own struggle. We also experienced the value of citizens' rights of review and appeal as central to our history.

We abstract the dangers to Helvetia farm and forest lands from the weakening or violation of Oregon's land use laws. We understand that a vibrant infrastructure for agriculture and forestry is vital and integral. We fight to help preserve that infrastructure. We understand that

parcelization and insulation can become a threat to agriculture: we fight to prevent Helvetia from becoming an island. We have come to understand the value of contiguous farmlands that facilitate the movement of machinery, that support the service providers of the agriculture industry, and that rely on common watersheds. We have seen multiple proposals come from the City of Hillsboro that would create a bypass here and a beltway there, all seeking farmland in the process. We see danger in the precedent (legislative land use) , and danger through the diminishing of local land use planning, of citizen participation, and of citizen rights of review and appeal.

As an advocacy organization, we have hundreds of supporters who reside all over the region. In fact, our by-laws provide for some board members to reside outside our area. People can contact us and get a hearing from us. We do not poll the public to determine our agenda, but we make our testimony readily available to the public through our website. We have a history of success in our reserves struggle and we perceive the Court of Appeals ruling as substantiating what we presented in testimony for over four years. We have developed considerable skill and expertise in land use matters and will express ourselves from time to time. We are proud to have become part of the Oregon land use experience.

Thank you.

Cherry Amabisca, President

Robert Bailey, Secretary