

Bryan Colbourne - Fwd: Testimony for Land Use Actions CA16-4

From: Amber Mathiesen
To: Bryan Colbourne
Date: 10/12/2016 8:11 AM
Subject: Fwd: Testimony for Land Use Actions CA16-4

Amber Mathiesen
City Recorder
City of Salem
503-588-6097

>>> Jim Scheppke <jscheppke@comcast.net> 10/11/2016 4:54 PM >>>

Dear Salem City Council:

I want to document and amplify the verbal testimony that I gave to the City Council at your meeting on October 10, 2016.

My group, NO 3rd Bridge, objects to the passage of Ordinance Bill 14-16 making major comprehensive plan amendments pertaining to the Salem River Crossing Preferred Alternative. We believe that the City of Salem's process in this regard does not conform to Statewide Planning Goal 1: Citizen Involvement, as implemented in OAR 660-015-0000(1).

Goal 1 requires that the City "develop a citizen involvement program that insures the opportunity for citizens to be involved in all phases of the planning process." This has not been done. The last significant citizen involvement came from the Salem River Crossing Task Force which met from October 4, 2006 to August 15, 2012. At their final meeting, the Task Force, on a questionable plurality vote involving mostly interested staff members of various state and local governments, forwarded Alternative 4D to the Oversight Team. This alternative was eventually rejected by the City of Salem in June of 2014 and a new alternative was developed called the "Salem Alternative." This in turn was substantially modified by the Oversight Team to become the Preferred Alternative which is the subject of the current land use actions. So there has been no significant "citizen involvement" for over four years and the recommendation of the Salem River Crossing Task Force had been rendered moot by subsequent developments.

Goal 1 requires that "the citizen involvement program shall be appropriate to the scale of the planning effort ... [and] provide for continuity of citizen participation and of information that enables citizens to identify and comprehend the issues." As the largest public works project ever contemplated in the City of Salem, the Salem River Crossing project demands the highest degree of public involvement. This has not occurred. There has been no "continuity of citizen participation" since August of 2012. No efforts have been made for "citizens to identify and comprehend the issues" for four years. Most recently the City has posted 63 reports and documents since October 5, 2016, on an obscure and hard to understand web page. They total approximately 3,500 pages of information. No attempt has been made to summarize them for the public or make them easy to use or understand.

The Salem River Crossing is not even highlighted on the City's home page:

The screenshot shows the City of Salem website. The top navigation bar includes links for Home, City A-Z, Contact Us, Calendars, and Emergencies. Below this is a secondary navigation bar with links for How do I..., City Council, Departments, Residents, Business, Visitors, and E-Payments. The main content area features a large banner for 'Education' with a photo of two graduates. To the left is a sidebar with links for About Salem, Awards, Community Connection, Press Releases, Salem News, Your City, Mayor, City Manager, City Structure, City Government, City Charter, Revised Codes, Budget, Citizen Review Agency, Salem Housing Authority, SecretPlace Online, Mid-Waterworks Investment Initiative, and Salem Calendars. To the right is a 'What's New' section with several news items. At the bottom right, there is a 'City Highlights' section with three items.

There is just one small link in the lower right of the page.

Goal 1 requires that "the committee for citizen involvement shall be responsible for assisting the governing body with the development of a program that promotes and enhances citizen involvement in land-use planning, assisting in the implementation of the citizen involvement program, and evaluating the process being used for citizen involvement." Since the Salem River Crossing Task Force has not met in four years it is obvious that this requirement of Goal 1 is being ignored.

Goal 1 requires that "citizens shall have the opportunity to be involved in the phases of the planning process as set forth and defined in the goals and guidelines for Land Use Planning, including Preparation of Plans and Implementation Measures, Plan Content, Adoption, Minor Changes and Major Revisions in the Plan and Implementation Measures." Again, because the Salem River Crossing Task Force has been inactive for four years, none of this has occurred or is occurring.

Goal 1 requires that "information necessary to reach policy decisions shall be available in a simplified, understandable form. Assistance shall be provided to interpret and effectively use technical information. A copy of all technical information shall be available at a local public library or other location open to the public." None of this has been done.

Goal 1 requires that "citizens who have participated in this [citizen involvement] program shall receive a response from policy-makers. The rationale used to reach land-up policy decisions shall be available in the form of a written record." We believe this has not been done and the requirement is being ignored.

Finally Goal 1 requires that "adequate human, financial, and informational resources shall be allocated for the citizen involvement program." Since the Salem River Crossing Task Force held their last meeting on August 12, 2012, this has not been the case. There has been little or no resources allocated for the citizen involvement program.

In sum the City of Salem and the other partners in the Salem River Crossing Project are ignoring Oregon land use law and not following the requirements of Goal 1: Citizen Involvement (OAR 669-015-0000(1)). Before a

second reading is scheduled for Ordinance Bill 14-16 the City of Salem must remedy their failure to follow the law by conducting a citizen involvement program for the Salem River Crossing Preferred Alternative in accordance with OAR 660-015-000(1).

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