

Amy Herzog

From: Linda Horst <lindahorst45@gmail.com>
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To: Planning Department.UserGroup
Subject: Testimony for the NXT Public Hearing, January 10, 2024

Categories: PC

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January 8, 2024

Columbia County Board of Commissioners
230 Strand Street
Columbia County Courthouse Annex
St. Helens, OR 97051

RE: NXT's Conditional Use Permit and
Modification of Prior Approval

Columbia County Board of Commissioners,

My name is Linda Horst. I live in Kelso, WA part of the lower Columbia River communities located downwind from emissions from present and proposed industries at the Port Westward Industrial Park. I urge this commission to deny NXT's Conditional Use Permit and Modification of Prior Approval.

Columbia County Zoning Ordinance 683.1 B requires NXT to address and mitigate the "Physiological characteristics of the site (topography drainage etc) and the suitability of the site for the particular land use and improvements." However, because NXT incorrectly asserts that its previous applications contained this analysis, their current application is incomplete.

Everyone who works and lives at Port Westward knows groundwater is at or near the surface of the ground numerous times throughout the year. NXT fails to satisfactorily address if and how the rail yard and accompanying infrastructure could be impacted by these groundwater issues. In their Stormwater Report, NXT admits that they do not fully understand groundwater and surface water levels at the proposed site.

Furthermore, NXT does not explain how its proposal will avoid causing water level problems on the site and adjacent lands. They fail to provide sizing for necessary culverts, proposing instead, to monitor water levels "over the next year to evaluate seasonal fluctuations." NXT nonchalantly defines mitigation activities like culvert size by saying...."when more information about the wetland drainage conditions becomes available." NXT should complete its monitoring and study PRIOR to reaching conclusions about the impacts and the likelihood they can be addressed through mitigation.

In their application, NXT's cavalier attitude towards the monumentally important issues of water containment, distribution and management is extremely disconcerting! Anyone who ignores the inherent, myriad water issues at Port Westward does so at, not only their peril, but the peril of the entire Port Westward area!

NXT's assessments of impacts to surface or groundwater, or mitigation must be coordinated with BDIC. Their expertise and experience has served a vital role in ensuring the survivability of the Port Westward area for over a century!

Without careful analysis and thorough research, NXT's application is incomplete.

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Sent from my iPhone