

Amy Herzog

From: Patrick Green <patrickgreen.or@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, July 3, 2023 5:34 PM
To: Planning Department.UserGroup
Subject: Don't make Clatskanie into Portland

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To whom it may concern,

I just moved to Clatskanie from Portland on Saturday the 1st of July. I'm sorry to hear that we might consider a new giant rail yard.

Rail yards with miles of trains covered in graffiti are all along the river in Portland. You hear trains clanking at night and in the day see the land between you and the river covered in asphalt and graffitied trains.

Please say no.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Patrick Green
PO Box 188
Clatskanie OR

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Land Development Services

Good evening planning commission,

My name is Jasmine Lillich I live at 1160 NE Wood Lane Clatskanie Oregon. I am writing this testimony as an individual and not as the Executive Director of the Clatskanie Farmers Market. I strongly encourage the planning commission to take a broader look at this application and to not solely focus on NEXT's attorneys' definition of "applicable criteria." I understand there are boxes that need to be checked and it is your job to operate under certain rules and regulations... however... there is significant testimony that has been submitted by the opposition that is applicable and should not be dismissed. What happened at the public hearing on June 26th was significant. Twenty-four in opposition to zero in favor. NEXT is trying to unfairly narrow the criteria - including all of the impacts of the rail yard and the train traffic it will create. Speakers gave detailed and specific testimony about the harms of the proposed modification of NEXT's project to include a rail yard. The rail yard was not part of NEXT's original proposal. NEXT also lacks permission to use the area for a rail yard. NEXT even went out of its way to tell state and federal agencies that PGE's land was unavailable to them, but they are telling the County the opposite (this is addressed in Columbia River Keepers written comments, with evidence). This conflict remains totally unresolved. Additionally, the local drainage district submitted strong comments highlighting its control over drainage ditches that NEXT cannot fill without their agreement. There is no agreement between NEXT and BDIC, and so NEXT cannot demonstrate that it has considered impacts or how they would be mitigated.

I also want to address commissioner Lynch's comments directed towards citizens that were simply questioning the financial ethics of this company. Let me remind you that the former Executive Director of the Port of Columbia County, Doug Hayes, invited this company into our county and soon after was fired for embezzlement. Lou Soumas was the former president and was arrested under child sex abuse charges. The current CEO, Chris Efird, has an incredibly questionable financial background. We as citizens, have every right to question the financial ethics of this company as well as our county for welcoming them in. I am proud of my fellow citizens for taking the unpaid time to give testimony and many staying for the duration of this four-hour long hearing. I am also incredibly grateful to the planning commission for all of their volunteer time and I apologize on behalf on Next Renewable Fuels for their lack of communication, inconsistency and "cart before the horse" approach.

Voting to approve Next's application would be going against the clear majority of constituents for whom you represent.

My verbal testimony for the record:

I'm going to use my time today to talk about agriculture in Clatskanie. My family has lived and farmed in Clatskanie for five generations. I am actively farming, operating a licensed food processing establishment and working with over 50 agriculturally based businesses to revitalize the agricultural economy in Clatskanie. There is a robust agricultural community here that believes regenerative agriculture is the future for Clatskanie. We have extremely rare fertile irrigated farmland and are seeking support from our local leadership to invest in local food

system infrastructure instead of high-risk industrial development. Port Westward has received millions of dollars of investment with little to no returns, I believe if that investment would have been directed to our farmers and the infrastructure needed to support a thriving food system, we would have already seen financial returns, job creation and built various pillars of wealth in our county. Food is nearly a billion dollar industry on the North Coast and we are importing 90% of it.

The local farmers and some supporting organizations have started an Agricultural Information Committee with the Port of Columbia County. Our mission is to identify a path forward to maximize the opportunities, agricultural sustainability and livability for the Port Westward area. We have been exploring various economic development opportunities for the Port and Columbia County as a whole. Some really good work is getting accomplished in these meetings.

I hope hearing about these advancements helps you understand the weight of the decision you are about to make regarding a bait and switch railyard that hasn't been approved by the governing drainage district or the lessee and is attempting to avert thorough and diligent evaluation from the county. When building a local food system, every farm matters and your recommendation regarding this permit will directly impact thousands of acres of farmland.

I have been to every single hearing, meeting, meet and greet, etc regarding Next Renewable Fuels for the past three years. It's always the same, the opposition to Next shows up in numbers with well researched testimony and the proponents of Next are the minority and most are being paid to attend. I have done my homework, 100's of hours of homework... have you? I can confidently say this project cannot coexist with the agricultural character of the Beaver Drainage District... the simplest explanation is Next's inability to respect the wisdom and authority of the Beaver Drainage Improvement Company. You all have received extremely thorough, well researched legal testimony from the Beaver Drainage Improvement Company, Columbia River Keeper and 1000 Friends of Oregon. I strongly encourage you to read these comments carefully and thoughtfully, keeping in mind the impacts this proposal will have on our rare and sought-after farmland.

I'd like to remind you we are not just a bunch of NIMBY environmentalists saying no to economic development opportunities... we are a group of individuals with a range of expertise, who are here on our own dime, trying to save our natural resources FOR economic development opportunities that will withstand the test of time. We will always need food over fuel.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Jasmine Lillich