



LUP Hearings <lup-hearings@multco.us>

Argument Against the Proposed Filtration Plant Based on Zoning Designation

1 message

Susan Swinford <john.and.sue@frontier.com>
Reply-To: Susan Swinford <john.and.sue@frontier.com>
To: "LUP-Hearings@multco.us" <LUP-Hearings@multco.us>

Mon, Mar 31, 2025 at 8:20 PM



External Sender - Be Suspicious of Attachments, Links, and Requests for Payment or Login Information.

Argument Against the Proposed Filtration Plant Based on Zoning Designation

The proposed Portland Water Bureau filtration facility on **SE Carpenter Lane** is situated in an area zoned **MUA20 (Multi-Use Agriculture, 20-acre minimum lot size)**. This zoning designation is intended to preserve a **rural, agricultural character** while allowing for limited residential development. According to **Multnomah County Code (MCC) 39.7515(B)**, a community service use such as this facility must not **"alter the character of the surrounding area in a manner which substantially limits, impairs, or precludes the use of surrounding properties for the primary uses listed in the underlying zoning district."**

How the Filtration Plant Alters the Character of the Area

1. Incompatible with Agricultural and Rural Residential Use

- The MUA20 zoning designation is meant to support **small-scale farming, livestock operations, and rural homesteads**. A large-scale industrial water filtration facility introduces **urban infrastructure into a rural setting**, fundamentally changing the area's landscape and function.
- The plant will require **extensive pipeline construction, road expansions, and utility upgrades**, which are more characteristic of industrial or urban development rather than a rural-agricultural zone.

2. Increased Traffic and Heavy Equipment Operations

- The facility will generate **frequent large truck traffic**, including delivery of materials, sludge removal, and maintenance activities.
- Rural roads such as SE Carpenter Lane are **not designed for high-volume or heavy-duty traffic**, leading to **potential road degradation, dust pollution, and safety hazards** for local residents and agricultural equipment.
- Increased traffic would **disrupt the quiet, rural nature** of the area, making it less suitable for farming and residential life.

Exhibit N.4

3. Noise and Light Pollution

- Water treatment facilities operate **24/7**, producing **constant mechanical noise** from pumps, aerators, and chemical processing.
- Outdoor **security lighting and operational illumination** will disrupt the natural darkness of the rural landscape, affecting local wildlife and the peaceful environment expected in an MUA20 zone.

4. Potential Environmental Impact on Local Agriculture

- Water treatment processes often involve the use of **chemicals such as chlorine and coagulants**, which, if improperly managed, could **affect groundwater and soil quality**.
- The **construction and operation of pipelines** could disrupt natural drainage patterns, potentially affecting the viability of nearby farmland.

5. Property Value Decline and Resident Displacement

- Industrial-scale developments in rural zones often lead to a **decline in surrounding property values**, as the appeal of agricultural and rural residential land diminishes.
- Some landowners may feel pressured to **sell their properties** due to increased noise, pollution, and changes to the area's rural atmosphere.

Conclusion

The proposed filtration facility **fundamentally changes the character of the area** by introducing industrial-scale infrastructure into an **MUA20-zoned rural landscape**, contradicting the intent of the zoning designation. The **increased traffic, noise, pollution, and environmental risks** would **limit, impair, and preclude the ability of nearby properties to function as intended under the zoning code**.

Therefore, based on **MCC 39.7515(B)**, this facility **does not meet the approval criteria** and should not be permitted in its current proposed location. A more suitable site within an industrial or urban-zoned area should be considered instead.

Susan and John Swinford
7428 SE Cottrell Rd.
Gresham, OR 97080

john.and.sue@frontier.com