

VERBATIM TRANSCRIPT
BCC Meeting - 7:00 p.m.
7/14/92

Cornacchia: Okay. So I would move approval with -- of PA 1019 with the following amendments and modifications. To go back to some things we dealt with seems like long ago. I want to be sure that we have policy modification of revised Exhibit A, Part 3 of 3, Attachment 1, that that be -- I know that staff knows what I'm talking about here. And this is just some verbiage. This is not site specific. I would then add with those amendments and modifications that we remove the secondary study area from this plan using Alternative 3.

The reason I think Alternative 3 is the right way to go is that there has to be some mention, at least, in the plan for opportunity for mitigation or we fail in other exercises including permitting - the permitting process down the road. So while nobody will be on the map, their properties will not be on the map or noticed -- including the Ringsdorfs. I know that that -- they're the only ones I know of that -- that I know specifically are in the secondary area. There is language in there that talks about, that the areas to be -- that can be served as mitigation lie in that area with no specific properties being set out by maps.

I would also add all of the proposed amendments relating to the secondary study area, and those are in a memorandum and it had -- it was dated 5/20/92. If I could get a nod from somebody over there in that bank of staff, that they know what I'm talking about here so I -- let's see here, if I can find it myself.

Dumdi: 5/18.

Cornacchia: It came with the discussion of the four alternatives. Here it is.

Dumdi: 5/20.

Cornacchia: Yeah. It says proposed amendments to the draft, West Eugene Wetlands Plan. It's got 5/20/92 over -- okay. I got some nods out of the bank, so --

Roberts: Mike or Steve, --

Cornacchia: -- you know what I'm talking about.

Roberts: -- just come on up and acknowledge on the record here so we --

Copely: The -- excuse me. The item to which you just referred is also cited in your memo of June 18th as Exhibit A, Part 4.

explanation of the proposed real estate transfer tax. (See material on file.)

Rust read the Ordinance into the record and opened the Public Hearing.

Rob Laney, 36765 Immigrant Road, Pleasant Hill, commented that he has no vested interest in this matter except as a Lane County citizen. Laney stated that this tax is not his preference, but noted that he enthusiastically supports the tax as the first prong of a multi-prong approach to replacing dollars lost through declining O & C timber receipts. Laney noted that he is a citizen member of the Lane County Budget Committee and has been chair for the last two years. He stated that, in that position, he has presided over the gradual dismantling of the service delivery system of Lane County. Laney stressed that there is no "fat" in Lane County's budget. He emphasized that without a new revenue source this year, there will be severe cuts.

Judge Kip Leonard, Circuit Court Judge for Lane County, urged the implementation of the transfer tax. He indicated that as the juvenile judge, he sees the need for revenue in the juvenile justice system. Leonard remarked that charges against juveniles have increased 77.5% in the last five years. He noted that property crimes involving less than \$500 are not being filed because the juvenile department does not have the money to do so. Leonard expressed concern about the potential for a decrease in the number of detention beds, etc.

Sheriff Bob McManus, 24787 Highway 36, listed the number of responsibilities under his jurisdiction. He stressed that programs are at risk that are valuable to the community. McManus remarked that the Lane County budget is lean and cost-effective. He stated that if citizens want to retain life-sustaining services, a new revenue source must be implemented. McManus noted that the State Police patrol division has been cut in half and are basically no longer available in Lane County. He explained that additional resources are needed just to keep present services.

Councilor Shawn Boles, 105 N. Adams, commented that he is expressing his personal opinions and not those of the Council as a whole. He stated that he unequivocally supports Lane County efforts with regard to this tax. Boles stressed that growth has its attendant costs, that we are in the midst of a growth cycle and that growth should pay for the costs attendant upon its occurrence. He also suggested increasing the percentage to cover two additional arenas: 1) coordinated land use planning; and 2) social services.

Assessor Jim Gangle, stated that everything in Assessment and Taxation revolves around compliance with state law. He expressed concern about potential cuts which will increase his backlog, thereby jeopardizing compliance with state law, which in turn will affect receipt of a \$1 million annual grant from the state. Gangle urged support for the transfer tax.

District Attorney Doug Harclerod, 33830 Oak Springs Lane, observed that Lane County's population has grown from 282,000 in 1990 to 298,000 in 1993. He noted that more people increase the demand for more services. Harclerod stated that in 1979 there were 76 employees in the District Attorney's office. He indicated that there are now 62 employees doing increased work, in addition to providing more services for victims. Harclerod stressed that he needs 7 additional attorneys and support staff to handle the workload existing today. He urged support for the transfer tax.

Mayor Bill Morrisette, 348 G Street, Springfield, stated that he was representing his personal views and not necessarily those of the City of Springfield. He strongly urged the Board to implement the transfer tax. Morrisette remarked that his standards for a good tax are: 1) it is related to the problem, in this case growth; 2) it is not excessive, in this case only .35 of one percent; 3) it is easy and inexpensive to collect; and 4) it is fair and equitable, in this case it is gauged to the market conditions. Morrisette noted that it is Lane County's liveability that attracts businesses like Sony.

Benjamin Chambers, 1465 Coburg Road, stated that he was here representing Aslan Counseling Center, a social service organization. He indicated their support for this tax as it is affordable, fair and desperately needed to maintain a stable community. Chambers urged the Board to implement the transfer tax.

Joanne Hodson, 4863 Darlings Loop Road, Florence, stated that she definitely supports the transfer tax. She noted that Dunes City's population had increased last year by 1.3%, Florence by 4.2% and Lane County by 1.5%. Hodson indicated that she had contact two major realtors and the sales managers of two manufactured homes sales offices in the Florence area. She stated that between them they had sold 544 homes inside and outside of Florence in 1993, for approximately \$38 million in sales. Hodson remarked that people who are moving to western Lane County are not welfare recipients and they expect good quality of life. She urged that the transfer tax be enacted by Board action.

Dave Carlson, 2833 Hayden Bridge Road, Springfield, spoke in opposition to the transfer tax and asked that it be referred to the voters. He stated that it is an additional property tax and he is leery of creating a new tax collection system not governed by existing limitations. Carlson remarked that the tax is narrowly based. He stressed the need for affordable housing and noted that this adds an additional financial burden. Carlson questioned the political viability of enactment of this tax without a vote.

Michael Graham, 1490 Jefferson, stated that he is affiliated with the Lane County Democrats who endorse this tax, but he indicated that he is speaking as a homeowner. He spoke in favor of the transfer tax in order to stop the erosion of basic services. Graham stressed that the Board is elected to make decisions and should enact this tax now.

Evelyn Anderton, P.O. Box 5485, noted that she is the Executive Director of Womenspace. She stated that this tax will help ensure that services will grow proportionate to growth. Anderton remarked that it is rare to see true leadership and she encouraged the Board to enact this tax without a vote.

Robert W. Nelson, 3182 Beech Street, commented that he was representing the Eugene Association of Realtors, the Springfield Board of Realtors, the Cottage Grove Board of Realtors, the Lane County Homebuilders and the Rental Owners Association, who stand in solid opposition to this particular tax. Nelson remarked that this is a very narrow-based tax and is not related to wealth or profit being generated. He expressed concern that this allows the County an "open checkbook" to balance to their budget. Nelson stressed that if this tax is enacted by the Board, his organization will pursue a referendum to put this issue before the voters. Roberts asked Nelson if he agreed that it would be inappropriate for state-level realtors' and homebuilders' organizations to put tens of thousands of dollars into trying to defeat this tax and that it should be decided by the people of Lane County only. Nelson replied that this is a sales tax that people in Oregon have voted down solidly in the past and that the people have to understand what they are voting on.

Cynthia Kokis, 2465 Jefferson, indicated that she is affiliated with the Eugene Church Women United and stated that they have a long history of pushing for basic changes in the economic system. She stated that this tax is a fair and reasonable way to deal with social issues. Kokis stated that enactment of this tax is valid and honorable.

Phyllis Barkhurst, 630 Lincoln, stated that she was the Executive Director of Sexual Assault Support Services. She noted that in some incidences of accidents, crimes, rapes, etc., there is no one available to respond in a timely manner. Barkhurst remarked that the District Attorney's office responded to 407 cases of sexual assault last year. She stressed that it is hard to explain to people that there is no one available for them. Barkhurst indicated that this tax is extremely reasonable and asked people to accept responsibility.

Gail Newton, 59 East 14th, stated that she is a real estate broker with Unique Properties and does not support this sales tax. She noted that in 1988, this same tax was defeated by voters 7-1.

Barbara Boye, 2551 Madison, stated that she also has a home in Florence and is a board member of Options Counseling Services which primarily serves rural Title XIX consumers. She stated that Options Counseling Services wishes to go on record as supporting this transfer tax. Boye indicated that as a private citizen, she agrees that it is entirely fair to pay for services received and be part of the larger community which sustains our liveability.

Julie Adams, 32468 Dillard Road, remarked that she is a realtor and perceives the transfer tax as a sales tax. She commented that the public does not support sales taxes and asked that this be put before the voters.

Minalee Saks, Executive Director of Birth to Three, 3411-1 Willamette, spoke in favor of enactment of the transfer tax. She remarked that families need security and a safe place to live. Saks stressed the need for police and human services. She observed the need for increased revenue and indicated that the transfer tax makes the most sense.

Steve Hammerquist, 2782 Sarah Lane, commented that he is a realtor and represents many people who buy \$80,000 homes, usually first-time buyers. He observed that these people usually both work and scrape to get into a home. Hammerquist noted that \$280 is not minuscule and asked the Board to consider these people.

Wayne Ford, 1019 Fillmore, #1, stated that he is co-chair of the Eugene-Springfield Homeless Action Coalition. He urged the enactment of this tax by the Board. Ford stressed that it will be a disaster if there are more budget cuts. He suggested the possibility of raising the tax percentage to provide a stable funding source for health and human services.

Gordon Boltz, 45871 Goodpasture Rd., Vida, indicated that he understands the need for additional funds, but stated that real property owners have already given substantially. He questioned the selectivity of the tax. Boltz urged that the law include a "no increase" provision, or at least no increase until all other areas of business are equally taxed, and then he would not object. He requested that the Board submit this issue to the voters.

George Adams, 84614 East Lake Drive, Dunes City, remarked that Dunes City is not really a city and is entirely dependent on county services. He indicated that he supports this tax.

Charles Ellis, 84919 North Cloverdale, Creswell, stated that he is president of the Goshen Rural Fire Protection District, but is not here in that capacity. He spoke against the tax. Ellis commented that he was a realtor. He remarked that he does not question the need for more revenue, but expressed concern that the tax is a narrow, selective sales tax. Ellis noted that real estate is cyclical and that these are "banner years." He asked what will happen during periods of negative growth. Responding to Cornacchia, Ellis indicated that he would suggest a utility tax, with an exemption for people of low-income, as a broad-based alternative.

Merton Saling, 1510 Charnelton, commented that he was representing the Executive Committee of Oregon Fair Share and indicated their support of this tax. He remarked that new cuts would come from "muscle," not "fat." Saling stated that a graduated income tax would be preferred. He urged the Board to enact the tax without a referral to the voters.

Gretchen Pierce, 31434 Fox Hollow, indicated that she was a member of the County's Revenue Tax Force two years ago and that their recommendations had taken into account certain criteria for new revenue: adequate yield, equity, conflicts with other County policy goals, political chances for success, authorization to implement and ease/cost of collection. She noted that their recommendation had been for a combination personal/corporate income tax surcharge with a rebate of O & C revenues. Pierce explained that this real estate transfer fee option did not become legally available until this month. She indicated that she supports this option as it is connected to population growth and urged the Board to enact it without a vote. Pierce commented that elected officials must make tough decisions.

Peg Waite, 3499 Gilham Road, stated that she works for ERA Real Estate. She remarked that she works with low income people and finds this tax burdensome on a select group of people. Waite commented that this tax would make it harder for low income people to come up with a down payment.

Wendell Whittington, 795 West 26th Avenue, indicated that he is not against this tax and would even support it at 3%. He urged the Board to adopt this tax without a vote of the people.

Bruce Jackson, 3800 Bennett Creek Road, Cottage Grove, remarked that he worked for about six years as a real estate salesman. He stressed that the law and justice system needs a stable funding base. Jackson pointed out that this area is growing and with the growth come problems. He noted that the cost for consumers for realtors' commissions on an \$80,000 house ranges from \$4,800 to \$8,000. Jackson urged the Board to enact this tax now.

Darrell Seely, 451 Broadway, stated that he is principal of Elmira High School and is in favor of this tax. He remarked that he fears losing services from the Sheriff's Department.

Desiree Moore, 3212 Sorrel Way, commented that she is a professional, licensed realtor. She stated that this tax is unfair and urged the Board to be careful on how it proceeds.

John Van Landingham, 335 North Grand, remarked that he is an affordable housing advocate in favor of the real estate transfer tax. He stated that he spent a significant amount of time researching, drafting and lobbying for a statewide real estate transfer tax to be dedicated to the Housing Trust Fund. Van Landingham noted that it had received significant bipartisan support, but lost due to the powerful realtors' lobby. He indicated that he would prefer that some of this money go to affordable housing. Van Landingham stated that there is a demonstrated need for additional revenue, the tax is modeled after Washington County's and it is fair and reasonable. Noting that the real estate industry fears that this tax will discourage sales, he observed that until someone successfully implements a tax of this nature, the Oregon Association of Realtors will not discuss any compromise on the state level.

Vicki Walker, 1425 Ranchwood Drive, stated that she was chair of the Lane County Democratic Central Committee and reported that they fully endorse this proposed tax. She remarked that the County is woefully underfunded, but suggested that the Board consider an exemption for the first-time home buyer. Walker urged the Board to enact the tax without a vote.

Brian Jawad, 1282 R Street, founder and president of the People's Liberation Organization, spoke for three minutes on a topic unrelated to this issue.

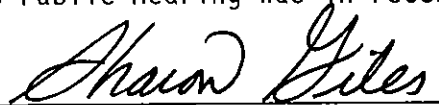
Richie Weinman, 55 West 31st Avenue, spoke as a private citizen and indicated he was in favor of this measure. He noted that the eight people who have spoken in opposition are all realtors. Weinman stressed that liveability is good for the housing business. He encouraged the Board to enact this tax.

John Saemann, 1775 Adkins Street, noted that he is a former member of the board of Oregon Fair Share and stated that there is wholehearted support for this tax as a means of funding necessary government functions.

James Phelps, 555 North Danebo, #32, stated that he is executive director of Lane County Aids Hospice Services, noting that their board urges Lane County to enact this tax.

Genevieve Brackebusch, 29141 Spencer Creek Road, observed that she is not a realtor and has six children. She indicated that her objection to this tax is that it taxes a very select group and unfairly impacts young people. Brackebusch stated that this is not a steady, secure tax and expressed concern on the impact on new businesses and people on limited incomes.

At 3:40 p.m., Rust announced that this Public Hearing was in recess until 7:00 p.m. tonight.



Sharon Giles
Recording Secretary