

EFFECTIVE LAND USE TESTIMONY

Handout/Overhead

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Sponsorship

Good Morning. My name is Mike Walker. This morning I am a representative of three sponsoring groups for a workshop on effective land use testimony.

Rogue Advocates

Goal One Coalition

Hugo Neighborhood Association & Historical Society

My presentation represents the sponsors view about *Effective Land Use Testimony*. In a nut-shell *Effective Land Use Testimony* is taking responsibility. Verifying the proposed land development activity. Identifying the potential impacts of the proposal. Discussing any concerns with planning staff. Being sure of your facts when presenting or preparing comments. Sticking to the issues, standards, and/or criteria applicable to the land use application. Critically, testimony that does not address the issues and standards and/or criteria for approval may not be considered by the decision makers.

Please ask your questions as we go along. I know I hate holding questions until the end of a presentation.

B. Citizen Involvement

One of my passions is to have meaningful public involvement and, therefore, an “informed public” and “informed decision-makers” when it comes to land use decisions in the Rogue Valley. In a nut-shell I think an effective citizen involvement program would facilitate planning decisions which better reflect the desires of the community. I believe an effective program will also decrease later conflicts and appeals.

C. Why am I here? Qualifications?

What are my qualifications to give this presentation? First, and most important, I am a proud 1958 8th grade graduate of the Hugo Elementary School in northern Josephine County, Oregon. We used to have some of the best fruit orchards in county and I would love to see this agricultural enterprise thrive again.

I am a citizen like you. After 15 years of land use activism in the trenches I have developed some firm opinions.

My journey started in 2000 after I retired self-teaching myself about Oregon Statewide Goal 1, Citizen Involvement. I provided local testimony on different local land use applications until another watershed was reached and in 2003 I represented myself at the Oregon Land Use Board of Appeals (LUBA) for the first time. After that I have scored 7-1 at LUBA: won 7, lost 1.

For me local land use testimony, written or oral, local land use appeals, and appeals to the Oregon Land Use Board of Appeals all have the same methodology, style, and form standards. This process and these standards are based upon LUBA's rules and regulations. For me they are the same if I go before a hearing officer, a local planning commission, the government's elected decision makers, or LUBA.

I was greatly assisted in my self-education of the land use process by my Land Use Advisor, Jim Just, Executive Director of the *Goal One Coalition*. Jim became my mentor and friend. He is now retired and I miss him. The point here is get help if you can and are serious about representing yourself in Oregon's land use process locally and at LUBA. To be successful you need to provide effective land use testimony.

You can represent yourself, but you can not represent a group or anyone else. Only a lawyer can do that.

What do I get out of being involved? Nothing by the traditional standards of quality time with family, job, salary, awards, official recognition, etc. In fact, I usually become a target for those that believe I am an obstructionist. I have thought about this question for many years and never came up with a satisfactory answer as I generally do not believe in altruism as applied to me. I tend toward ideas like survival of the fittest and natural selection. Sometime after highschool, I used to think it was some genes I inherited, but mostly my environmental setting that developed my cultural values. In old age I wonder if I got it wrong. Instead of approximately 70% environmental setting to 30 % dna (70/30), I now wonder if it is instead 30% environmental setting to 70 % dna (30/70). I do know that what I get is a self-reward in feeling good, and feeling good is intoxicating whether it is being in love; your health; connections with family, friends and community; a good job; beautiful scenery, clean air and water; or respecting yourself. I also know that my answer when asked the question is “Bad genes.”

D. Why Are You Here?

Depending on the number of participants and time available, give each a opportunity to identify themselves and their reasons.

E. Handouts

I understand that you have been provided some handouts from us by [name of local sponsor] (e.g., John Ahlf, 1776 Placer Road, Sunny Valley, Oregon, 541-956-2013).

F. Small Group Follow-up Session

If interested, I will meet with a small group of 4 - 6 individuals as a followup to this session in my Hugo, Oregon home. More importantly, I am available for email and/or telephone follow-up consultations.

However, this followup is not about representing you, doing research for you, or quality controlling your testimony products. It is about the front end: an

attempt to make available to you some of the tools to effectively represent yourself.

G. Not Legal Advice

This presentation is as much about providing information and provoking questions as it is about my opinions. It is not legal advice and does not take the place of a lawyer. If citizens use information contained in this presentation, it is their personal responsibility to make sure that it is applicable to their situation. I and the three sponsoring groups assume no liability for the information provided.

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