

Notes from Accessory Dwelling Discussion

1. Many residents are concerned about the proliferation of unpermitted dwellings and short-term rentals in the National Scenic Area. (County enforcement is complaint-driven and relies on the public to report these violations, or they are discovered through the development review process).
 - a. Corbett residents report RVs being used illegally as dwellings.
 - b. Many rooms in residences and accessory buildings are being used as unpermitted vacation rentals.
2. There was discussion about short-term rentals (STRs) vs. bed and breakfasts, and questions about why BnBs are allowed and STRs are not.
 - a. Because vacation rentals or short-term rentals were not popular when the Management Plan was first written they did not include allowances for them, but since Bed and Breakfast establishments did, they were included.
 - b. Some believe that there should at least be a provision for STRs to be a conditional use if they cannot be considered an outright allowed use.
 - c. Allowing short-term, vacation rentals in the NSA would allow landowners to have a means of supplemental income without having to satisfy the requirements of a Bed and Breakfast.
 - d. The definition of bed and breakfasts could be expanded to include vacation rentals.
3. There is general agreement that the definition for “travelers accommodations” in the Management Plan needs to be better defined.

(Definition of *travelers accommodations* in the Management Plan: “Any establishment having rooms rented or kept for rent on a daily or weekly basis to travelers or transients for a charge or fee paid or to be paid for rental use or use of facilities.” Travelers' accommodations, including bed and breakfast inns, may be allowed in Rural Centers and Commercial designations.)

- a. This definition could be updated to clarify that it is referring to short-term rentals and vacation rentals, if that is what was first intended.
- b. Many agree that the word “transients” should to be removed from this definition. Concern that this implies that transients are welcome in the Gorge- residents do not want to imply this.
- c. Some think this provision should be taken out altogether- and to make clear that vacation rentals, aside from bed and breakfasts, should not be allowed in the NSA.
- d. Others are in favor of changing this to “vacation rentals” and allowing it in all land use designations (not just Rural Center and Commercial).

4. Some participants think that the provisions for hardship dwellings need to be updated.
 - a. In addition to mobile homes, RVs and camper trailers should explicitly be allowed to be used as hardship dwellings.
 - b. There is general concern that hardship dwellings might not be used for an actual hardship as defined in the Plan.
 - c. Concerned about the follow-up: are these dwellings being removed at the end of the time permitted? How do we know they are not being used as accessory dwelling units after the hardship?
5. Many expressed concerns about allowing accessory dwelling units in the NSA.
 - a. There is some agreement that accessory dwelling units and short-term rentals will not alleviate the Gorge's affordable housing problem.
 - b. Some suggested that accessory dwelling units, if allowed, should only be permitted in Rural Center land use designation.
 - c. Some people are concerned about the impacts of accessory dwellings to water resources.

Notes from Agriculture-based Tourism Discussion

Residents from Corbett, Washougal, Wasco and Skamania Counties participated, and discussed the following questions:

Are there commercial events or activities that should be permitted that aren't currently addressed in the Plan?

What are the benefits/drawbacks of agriculture-based tourism, events and commercial facilities on agricultural land use designations?

1. Commercial events that should be permitted: u-cut Christmas trees, pumpkin patches, corn maize, cooking classes, or ag teaching/education ...the types of activities that can make a landowner some revenue but does not involve lots of noise, alcohol and traffic issues.
2. What are the drawbacks of ag based tourism (defined very broadly)—the participants shared personal stories about neighbors with large acreage having weddings and other events that attracted many people (more than 100) and the problems have been:
 - a. excessive amplified noise/music, traffic congestion, public safety, alcohol abuse and rowdiness, parking, trespassing, litter/garbage, sanitation, and fire hazards/safety with that many people in a venue.
 - b. They believe that an occasional family wedding is fine, but 18 events in one year most likely means 18 summer Saturdays which in their opinion is too much for one landowner with impacts to neighbors.
 - c. They thought that the impact of these events goes further than 500 feet from the property so neighbors further away need to be notified further in advance. 10 days is inadequate notice and the neighbors have no influence if the event will or will not be allowed based on impact to their livability.
 - d. They questioned how a vineyard that then turns into a winery that then builds a tasting room that then hosts commercial weddings can be allowed, There needs to be stricter standards that, for example, 50% of the grapes used to make the wine and sold at the winery come from the vineyard rather than having a winery with grapes from all over the region.
 - e. Often the land is owned by one person but leased out for the vineyards and winery production which does not seem fair as an ag use with an ag landowner making a living from the land other than the lease fees.
 - f. Landowners that want to have commercial events should get a business license and pay business taxes.
 - g. Permits need to restrict music so there are no amplifiers and should not go late into the night; restrict parking, restrict number of events per year, and notify more neighbors of potential impacts with an ability for a neighbor to have an opinion on the event if they are adjacent.

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- h. There needs to be enforcement of the permits because the permit conditions are not followed at times and there are no consequences. Lack of law enforcement can lead to illegal drinking etc. and accidents on the rural poorly lit roads.
- i. Farm stands should be allowed but parking, traffic and congestion need to be planned for and size restricted so it is not a farmers market but a personal farm stand of products made or grown on site.
- j. Need to address the cumulative impacts on resources and communities and neighbors of all the new vineyards, wineries and commercial events allowed in the NSA.
- k. What is considered ag revenue vs commercial revenue? If a winery is not making money just off the tasting room, they need a better business plan so that commercial events are not needed to supplement the income. Restrict the wedding venues to places that have good roads, ample parking, and no neighbors in the area.
- l. Climate change needs to be considered (they were not specific about this)
- m. Rural communities are not the place for loud festivals and activities—people moved out into the country for peace and quiet not unregulated decibel levels.
- n. Make sure to get more accurate definitions for commercial developments/use and include events, not just buying and selling goods. Many definitions were created 30 years ago and those words can be interpreted differently today given the evolution of ag tourism, facilities and events into what it is today.
- o. Include stricter standards and assure county will enforce the noise and other conditions of a permit. How does an ag land use designation become an event center—why is this allowed?

Notes from Solar and Wind Generation Discussion

1. Everyone was in favor of allowing solar in some capacity for both residential (accessory) and agricultural uses.
 - a. There were more concerns about demonstrating the agricultural use, but still overwhelming support in favor of solar for agricultural uses. A couple people brought up solar farms as an agricultural use, and not as a serious consideration and more as an interesting discussion point.
 - b. No real serious concerns about the reflectivity of the panels, if the project can achieve the visually subordinate standard. Many folks noted that if the angle of the panels is towards the sun, they will not generally be directed at KVAs.
 - c. There were no objections to rooftop mounts vs. ground mounts, as long as the project is visually subordinate.
 - d. One participant has gone through the process twice in Multnomah County and said the process was very clear and recommends using their ordinance language.
2. In general, people thought there are too many impediments to wind power at all levels, including residential.
 - a. In general people felt “visual subordination” and “wind turbines” are not synonymous with each other.
 - b. Someone mentioned helical wind turbines, but visual subordination would still be required.
3. The Commission and Management Plan should promote and incentivize energy efficiency.
 - a. There was talk about including language in the management plan that promotes energy efficiency that also helps to address climate change.
 - b. We discussed energy audits and promoting companies locally that provide those services, because both solar panels and energy efficiency directly address climate change and stimulate the economy.
 - c. People mentioned energy efficient design guidelines for new development. Examples included orientation of the home, and including south facing roofs that are also built at the right pitch for solar panel roof mounts in this region.

Notes from Wineries and Tasting Rooms Discussion

1. Underwood residents expressed concern about the impacts from an accumulation of wineries in Underwood.
 - a. Short-term impacts to water resources
 - b. Intensification of commercial uses and activity at wineries
 - c. Change is an impact to established ag users in communities
2. Many participants do not agree with Management Plan guidelines that allow commercial events to occur on agricultural land use designations.
 - a. The path from approval of a vineyard to > a winery to > a tasting room to > commercial events (weddings) should not be allowed.
 - b. Traditional agricultural uses should be protected, and events restricted.
 - c. Hobby wineries do not deserve to have event facilities.
 - d. Commercial events are incompatible with ag use without more robust regulations.
 - e. Event facilities remove ag land from productive use.
 - f. Events held at tasting rooms can be disturbing to neighbors.
3. Participants agreed that the definition of wineries in the Management needs to be revised and/or new definitions need to be added to include cideries and distilleries.
 - a. Lack of clarity on the use of wineries
 - b. Add new definitions for Distilleries and Cideries these uses should be explicitly allowed.
 - c. New cideries and distilleries should not be allowed in R-10 zones
4. Many expressed general concern about the cumulative effects of wineries and tasting rooms across the National Scenic Area.
 - a. New development creates seasonal use impacts- increased traffic, noise, strain on water supply.
 - b. More specific language is needed for the aesthetic enjoyment of the Gorge
 - c. Concern for wineries' impacts to water resources overall
 - d. Need to restrict acreage allowed for grape cultivation
5. Participants agreed that the Management Plan needs to strengthen rules regarding local appellation and the amount of on-site or local grapes used for production.
 - a. Define what is meant by "local region" in the Management Plan's allowance of wineries: *"in conjunction with onsite viticulture, upon a showing that processing of wine is from grapes grown on the subject farm or in the local region."*