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July 11, 2005

Derrick Tokos, Principal Planner
Multnomah County Transportation and Land Use Division
1600 SE 190th Ave.
Portland, OR 97233

Subject: Process Summary for Viewpoint Inn Plan Amendment (PA-05-02)

Dear Derrick:

Thank you for inviting representatives of Gorge Commission to the July 14, 2005 Multnomah County Board of Commissioners meeting to discuss the Plan Amendment application and process for the Viewpoint Inn Plan Amendment application. The following is a summary of our process for reviewing that application, based on the Commission's rules for Plan Amendments (350-50). This process includes the key dates and opportunities for input from Multnomah County.

Process Steps:

Preliminary Review. The Gorge Commission held an initial discussion of the Plan Amendment application at its April 2005 meeting. Because the Commission had several questions, including one related to whether Multnomah County supported review of the application, they continued their deliberation to their May meeting. On May 10, 2005 the Commission voted to:

- 1) Commence review of the application as submitted; and
- 2) Grant an extension of 30 working days for the Director's Report, for a total of 60 days after the end of the public comment period; and
- 3) Direct staff to conduct an abbreviated study of how well the Management Plan supports preservation of historic buildings, including an historic buildings inventory for the Scenic Area, and consideration of potential uses for such buildings. The Commission also directed staff to prepare an alternative amendment to the Management Plan if this study suggests that there is a way to address the issues raised by the applicant and issues for all significant historic buildings.

Public Comment Period. The Commission provided formal public notice for the application on June 6, 2005. Under Commission Rule 350-50-85, the public comment period must be at least 20 working days long. The comment period ended on July 5, 2005.

Consultation with affected parties. The Commission's rules also require that the Commission seek the input of the four Gorge Tribal Nations, the USDA Forest Service, the State of Oregon and Washington and will the affected counties. We received the June 17, 2005 letter from the Multnomah County Board of Commissioners expressing support for examining this application in the context of how well the Management Plan addresses all historic structures.

Director's Report. The Executive Director is required to issue a report that analyzes whether the proposed plan amendment responds to a significant change in the National Scenic Area (as required by

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the Scenic Area Act), has no practicable alternative, and is consistent with the purposes and standards of the Act. This report, under direction given by the Commission, will be due on September 27, 2005.

Public Hearing. The earliest the Public Hearing and deliberation on this application can be scheduled is the Commission's October 11, 2005 meeting. This provides for limited public review of the director's report. The Commission must provide a formal public notice of hearing 30 days prior to the public hearing, which means the public notice will occur by September 9, 2005.

Progress to Date

Since the Commission acted in May, we have begun the staff work needed to respond to the Commission's direction. In addition to beginning our analysis of the application submitted by Mr. Groen on behalf of Mr. Thompson, we have begun the new inventory and a discussion of potential new uses. We appreciate your work in attending our meeting with the other county planners and two state historic preservation officers on June 10. Staff also appreciates your help in helping with our inventory buildings in Multnomah County that are on or eligible for the Historic Register.

Other Opportunities for Input


Commission staff will continue to solicit input from County staff and the County Board of Commissioners prior to issuance of the Director's Report. Once the Director's Report is issued, Multnomah County may comment on the recommendations of this report at or before the plan amendment hearing, both verbally and in writing.

After Commission Action

If the Gorge Commission adopts an amendment to the Management Plan, we will forward any new provisions to the US Secretary of Agriculture for concurrence. The Secretary – or the Regional Forester as his delegate – has 90 days to decide whether the new provisions are consistent with the National Scenic Area Act. After the Regional Forester concurs, the new management Plan language is transmitted to any affected Gorge county, and the County must then amend its land use ordinance to include the new provisions. Revised ordinances are then reviewed by the Gorge Commission and Regional Forester, a process that can take as many as 180 days, to ensure that the ordinance is consistent with the new Management Plan. Once this process is complete, then a person can apply for a land use permit under the new provisions. These timelines are spelled out by the National Scenic Area Act itself.

I hope you find this information helpful. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,


Martha Bennett
Executive Director

c: Multnomah County Commissioners
Commissioner Anne Squier
Brian Litt, Senior Planner