


JRH

March 28, 2006

Dale L. Keyes, Ph.D.
Senior Program Manager
US Institute
for Environmental Conflict Resolution
130 South Scott Avenue
Tucson, AZ 85701

Dear Mr. Keyes:

Thank you for your recent response to my letter of February 22, 2006. As your letter had no date and was marked "Draft", I assume someone wrote the letter for your signature, thinking you would add a date, make revisions, and remove the word "Draft". Your letter does clarify most of my questions.

I must disagree with the U.S. Institutes for Environmental Conflict Resolutions' position as to the term "controversy". As a transportation and land use planner, I understand and practice environmental impact avoidance, especially when it comes to wetlands. Fortunately, as provided for under Federal and State wetlands fill permit procedures, there are instances where there are no other alternatives and what is planned is the least impactful to the environment and provides for no net loss of wetlands.

The West Eugene Parkway is such a case. The project has been on the State Transportation Improvement Plan list for over 15 years. The various local Metro area government partners, including the Oregon Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration, have spent 14 years doing environmental reviews and tweaking the West Eugene Parkway alignment to avoid the best wetland areas, finally choosing agricultural wetlands adjoining an existing active railroad line. The proposed alignment placing the roadway construction along this railroad line avoids creating isolated wetland islands or pockets, etc.

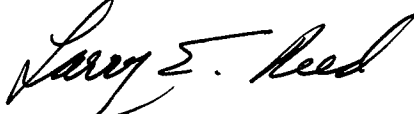
There is a small group of individuals who believe that under no circumstances should any wetlands be lost to any type of development, including needed public highways. Further, there is a subset of these individuals who want to stop all growth in the community and who will make any environmental statements even though this misuse of environmental issues undermines real and important environmental issues. Therefore, I believe the pretense under which the U.S. Institute is being used is a misuse of its good offices.

Letter from Larry E. Reed
March 28, 2006
Page 2

Yes, I along with numerous citizens, including the local MPC, was led to believe the use of the Institutes' process was to be a collaborative issue resolution process, meaning we would roll up our sleeves, look at aerial maps, and wetlands environmental evaluations to see whether another West Eugene Parkway route might exist that, in its totality, impacts less wetlands while achieving the community's transportation project objectives. This new process you have described appears to simply be a further delaying tactic and, if not its intent, will be used by this small group of objectors to further delay this much needed community project.

I have my doubts the process as described can bring forth any public good. Your statements relating to the results of the Institute's study can be used by the stakeholders "in deciding on next steps" is the foundation of my doubts. The next step is the West Eugene Parkway Environmental Record of Decision (ROD). As a stakeholder, and citizen of Eugene I want to be involved in your research process, hopefully to help avoid the misuse of the environmental issues and avoid any further project delays.

Sincerely,



Larry E. Reed
Principal, Land Use Planner

cc: Metro Policy Committee
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