

Cherry Amabisca (Ah-ma-bee-ska)

August 16 2010

13260 NW Bishop Road

20:12: Cherry introduces herself. She lives in the historic part of Helvetia, works for Intel. For the 20 years she worked in high tech before coming to Oregon, she worked in the Bay area and Phoenix, "saw a lot of areas with urban sprawl with no restraints."

22:16: Cherry describes her first experiences with Save Helvetia, and the last major expansion of the Urban Growth Boundary north of highway 26. She also describes this phenomenon of high tech businesses buying large tracts of land and then just leaving it when they realize they can make more money outsourcing to Asia.

25:50: Cherry moves to talking about Washington County buying this vacant land and transforming it to Urban Reserve, and the confusion and frustration that went along with this decision.

27:04: "It doesn't make sense. Why so much, why all the way up the hills? We have a lot of history, we have a lot of foundation farmland, we have farms that have been in existence for 150 years, and they're doing fine; it's not like there's nothing there. There is industry there, it's called farming industry."

28:00: Save Helvetia's first moves, Cherry's involvement, neighborhood involvement.  
(problem with the file at 28:25, skip ahead to ~28:35) Washington County plans showed a large town center and light rail etc

32:08: Cherry begins talking about a large DC company called NAIOP, a developer company that acquires land to the exact specifications of the land north of highway 26: Flat, near a freeway, with water." Save Helvetia got very scared when they found out about this; NAIOP had already performed thorough analysis on the area in question, and they had a lot of money- something Save Helvetia did not have.

34:41: Save Helvetia prepares for public hearing in August. But everyone on the Recommending Committee was a mayor- 12 or 13 members, all mayors of cities within Washington County, all looking to expand.

37:53: Cherry talks about the fact that in the unincorporated parts of Washington County their only top elected officials are county commissioners; they can't vote for Hillsboro city council. This was a problem because they were shut out of the process and Hillsboro was driving a lot of demand for the land. They already had a ton of high tech companies and they wanted more land for more companies.

40:00 The word started to be spread through the community by the cyclic and walkers and marathon runners going through the area. Lots of information was spread during these special occasions and meets. They also went to the farmers markets in the areas with postcards and maps and information.

So many letters and emails were sent in to Washington County that Save Helvetia received complaints that their mail was overloaded and the emails were clogging up their inboxes and they were frustrated. Save Helvetia just told them they it was community opinion that what they were doing was wrong.

Washington County held most of their hearings during the day, early afternoon, making them discriminatory to farmers who are extremely busy working at that time, whereas the other counties held their meetings at night so the community could attend.

43:43: Cherry talks about further outcomes of the movement- petitions and signatures were sent to metro and Washington county showing everyone wanted the land re-zoned to rural reserves.

Lots of the people who use the land in question came from outside the county- it's not just people in the town that would lose this land- they make a lot of money on agri-tourism and such.

46:41: By the late fall 2009 Washington County hadn't changed their decision on the zoning, but Metro had- they greatly reduced the zoned acreage north of hw26- from 10,000 to 1,000 acres of urban reserve. Washington County voted and passed this idea. "Metro took a regional approach to looking at the land."

"Why is the land north of highway 26 so special? Personally, to you (Cherry)?"

49:50: Cherry says she felt committed to preserving farmland for a few reasons:

She's seen the spread of urban sprawl across the world

She appreciates the historical heritage that this area has.

The people of the area have preserved the quality of the land itself, and also Native American sites.

53:37: Cherry talks about the slippery slope initiated by the simple act of just designating land to urban reserves:

It discourages farmers from investing more money in further seeds and machinery

Lots and lots of money is offered to them for their land by developers so they move further back

People that lease land are less inclined to continue to lease it- they shorten the leases

Farmers sell out more and more, and suddenly the prices of land go sky high so the farmers that stay aren't able to buy any more land.

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On video file VTS\_01\_4 in Amabisca, Cherry -> Cherry Amabisca 16<sup>th</sup> of August, 1 of 2 starts at 18min and 18 sec

59:51: Cherry describes the unique drainage system of the farms in the entire area, all the way down to south of hw26: There are lots of small tiles made of ceramic or plastic that direct excess water away from the fields. The farmers all over the area have built an interconnecting system of drainage that goes through property lines and they all hook together. If one property plot is developed heavily (i.e. urbanized) the drainage will be disrupted and the system will back up. When Intel did this the fields north of hw26 all flooded because the system was disrupted.

Cherry's overall point seemed to be that the farming community of North Plains / Helvetia is essential to the area because of its uniqueness. There are thousands and thousands of people who run and walk and bike the area every year, they come from places all over the state, and compete in marathons and half marathons within the area. There are fairs and farmers markets and festivals in the area too, that would be lost if it was urbanized. Argi-tourism is a huge source of money for Helvetia, as well as, well, agriculture itself. "It's not like there's nothing there. There is industry there, it's called farming industry." Although Cherry isn't a farmer, she wants to see the land kept open and rural for as long as possible because that's the way it's been forever. Generations of people have been working the farms for 150 years and there's no reason this pattern should be disrupted.

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May 13 2011

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I'll get back to watching this video on Tuesday, but this one is pretty much about the uncooperative nature of the government with this issue, and how the two sides are completely butting heads. It's also over half a year later and the outcomes have changed for Save Helvetia, different statistics now.

