

Jenna Kay

From: RANDAL FRIEDMAN <randalfriedman@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, January 25, 2025 7:37 AM
To: council@cityofcamas.us
Cc: Steve Hogan; Doug Quinn; David Stuebe; Trang Lam; Mitch.Kneipp@cityofwashougal.us; Jenna Kay; Rebecca Small; Anzalone, John A.; Denis Hayes; Kelly Moyer; Shari Phiel; Carrie Schulstad; Bradley Richardson; Donna Sinclair; Ellen Burton; Elena Ramirez Groszowski; Natalie Swan; kate@columbiariverkeeper.org; mady.lyon@ecy.wa.gov; Alan Peters
Subject: THE MAYOR SAID IT CORRECTLY: YOU SHOULD HOLD HIM TO IT
Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

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Council — Some magic happened at Tuesday’s Council Workshop. The mayor reported he had sent a multi-page formal request to Ecology and indicated the city had received a decision from Ecology granting the highest level of cleanup including housing and parks/trails.

The amazing thing? The news spread quickly and there was jubilation. Many took off the “what mill” staff policy having been told in the past to not bring up the mill. It was as though a dream had come true.

For a couple of hours there was unbridled joy at this policy change. People were finally free to speak their mind having not been allowed to speak until now. This was historic in Camas.

I saw Administrator Quinn at the Chamber lunch the next day and asked about this development. It was now known that the city has not heard back from Ecology and the letter not seen by council. It was shared with mill management. Administrator Quinn told me this was misinterpreted and was not what was said, and to watch the video. I did and include a link to the segment.

What did I hear? The mayor said a “formal request’ was made to Ecology for a requirement for the highest level cleanup at the Georgia-Pacific mill. “They [Ecology]have granted and we are adding housing to the requirements” as well as parks and trails. This in addition to schools already allowed under the zoning [heavy industry that conflicts with state’s industrial cleanup]. The mayor went on to say we will have the highest cleanup level. Councilor Boerke sought clarification asking directly “That decision has been made by Ecology? The answer was “yes.”

This Council is our city's legislative body and sets policy. The transmission of official city policy would have more meaning were this council to approve a motion to send to Ecology. That transparency would allow NGO’s and the Yakama Nation to consider voicing support if they were so inclined. The Yakama Nation's cleanup goals are mutual to what Camas’ should be. They have a unique relationship with Ecology complimentary to the city. The official submission by the city council opens the door for our

neighbors to support. The prior email talks to how the mill as a Historic Regional Employment Center could help Washougal and Vancouver meet imposing climate and housing mandates. It wouldn't surprise me if the Columbia Riverkeeper for example would consider support.

After discussion with some stakeholders, here is a simple motion. This motion recognizes the Yamaha Nation's work and vision that has kept the public's interest alive. They have been a strong ally. Is there anything council wouldn't agree with their statement?

Motion — The Camas City Council supports the unrestricted cleanup of the Camas Mill per Agreed Order 18201. The City of Camas shares the goal expressed by the Yakama Nation of “[T]he restoration of natural resources impacted by the past, current, and future releases of hazardous waste in order to make the public whole and further tribal Treaty rights.”

Here's the link to the entire workshop. <https://www.cityofcamas.us/citycouncil/page/city-council-workshop-275> The mayor's report begins at 1:51:30.

This is similar to something wonderful that happened when May 17, 2021 became the focal point for efforts to establish a Community Advisory Group (CAG) for the cleanup, Staff was resisting and the public comment period for the Agreed Order was closing. I spoke at public comment and pleaded for the council to instruct the mayor to send a support letter. What unfolded is part of Camas history. Per the minutes <https://mccmeetings.blob.core.usgovcloudapi.net/camaswa-pubu/MEET-Minutes-42bbcfa6688f47808c194fa084aa1879.pdf>

Chaney commented about the GP Camas Mill and the Department of Ecology.

Hogan requested to add to the current meeting an agenda item to discuss the GP Camas Mill and the Department of Ecology. Then Councilor Hogan asked to amend the agenda to add an item.

The item was instructing the staff to prepare a letter. The motion passed unanimously. Kelly Moyer was there. This action wasn't surprising. Most of the 2021 council had testified at the public meeting hosted by Ecology. Deep in the covid lockdown 50 people Zoomed into the public meeting they had requested. The sentiment was clear and overwhelming.

What happened after the amended agenda added the item? Per the minutes:

16. Georgia-Pacific and Washington State Department of Ecology Discussion

With Council consensus, Mayor Pro Tem will send a letter to the Washington State Department of Ecology requesting a citizen advisory committee for the GP Camas Mill clean up.

Councilor's Hogan and Carter voted for it. The letter was signed and sent by our Interim Mayor on May 27, 2021 including these words:

For reference, the current Mil site is zoned Heavy Industrial. Camas' municipal code allows for a full spectrum of uses within the heavy industrial zoning including schools, hospitals, and other land

uses. Our interest in an advisory committee is to ensure that any cleanup does not diminish any opportunities for a wide variety of future uses.

I understand the public comment period has closed. The public record contains abundant support for the formation of a committee, and we wish to make sure the Department of Ecology knows the City of Camas strongly supports the formation of an Advisory Committee.

The CAG was formed, wonderfully supported by DCA and an Ecology grant, and last year published a statement to Ecology providing in part:

The Greater Camas community seeks:

- An unrestricted future for the Camas Mill property which supports needs and opportunities for future generations.
- A cleanup plan that considers the needs of our natural systems, including groundwater resources, and in agreement with the Yakama Nation's request, considers the restoration of the natural systems of the Camas Slough and the Columbia River. <https://downtowncamas.com/wp-content/uploads/CAG-statement-final-20240524.pdf>

In 2021, this council established city support for the CAG. The CAG, after a number of events and thousands of interactions, reached consensus to the above statement. Now is the time for this Council to support the CAG's vision statement.

This is the future of our city for the next century. Please consider what the CAG, the Yakama Nation, and so many others including those who for several hours thought this long struggle was finally over. Ask them. Please follow what your planning consultant summarized for the Post-Record about what our community seeks.

Please consider placing on the agenda the above motion. As you did May 17th, 2021, at the request of our current mayor, place this on your agenda and have a public discussion. While you are at it, consider supporting DCA's request for funding in the next cycle. That decision will be made soon. The CAG has brought together a wide spectrum of the Camas community to reflect on the specific subject of the cleanup of the Camas Mill.

We don't have to go this alone. There are many waiting to join the effort. They are waiting for you to act.

Thank you, respectfully, for considering the very future of our city.

Randal Friedman,
Camas

On Jan 23, 2025, at 10:44 AM, Marilyn Boerke <MBoerke@cityofcamas.us> wrote:

I believe it was simply a misstatement. I don't agree that anyone is trying to deceive the council.

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From: Randal Friedman <randalfriedman@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 22, 2025 9:05 AM
To: Marilyn Boerke <MBoerke@cityofcamas.us>
Subject: Re: THE CAMAS MILL CLEANUP, REGIONAL JOBS/HOUSING AND PUBLIC TRAILS: CONFLICTS AT THE FOUNDATION OF OUR COMP PLAN UPDATE

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Jennifer heard what you said as well. I would hope that Doug's drive to not "offend" the mill would not go as far as to mislead the Council,

Randal

On Jan 22, 2025, at 8:34 AM, Marilyn Boerke <MBoerke@cityofcamas.us> wrote:

I texted you - I think it was actually the city requesting that, I'm awaiting confirmation. I may have misspoken.

<Outlook-by1zbntb.png>

From: Randal Friedman <randalfriedman@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 21, 2025 7:08 PM
To: Marilyn Boerke <MBoerke@cityofcamas.us>
Subject: Re: THE CAMAS MILL CLEANUP, REGIONAL JOBS/HOUSING AND PUBLIC TRAILS: CONFLICTS AT THE FOUNDATION OF OUR COMP PLAN UPDATE

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That would be amazing. Do you have a source? If that is the case why shouldn't the city start an overlay plan? 1,900 views in 8 hours and great comments.

Randal

On Jan 21, 2025, at 7:05 PM, Marilyn Boerke <MBoerke@cityofcamas.us> wrote:

I heard tonight that Ecology has approved the highest level of cleanup to include housing and trails, so great news!

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From: Randal Friedman <randalfriedman@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 21, 2025 3:25 PM
To: Marilyn Boerke <MBoerke@cityofcamas.us>
Subject: Re: THE CAMAS MILL CLEANUP, REGIONAL JOBS/HOUSING AND PUBLIC TRAILS: CONFLICTS AT THE FOUNDATION OF OUR COMP PLAN UPDATE

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Thanks Marilyn. The Nextdoor post has 1,100 views in five hours. It's not as lonely as it has been and I have growing support. Especially as people understand the complexity of the cleanup.

This discussion should be happening in Camas but there are alternative forums with the state and region. I told Doug that per Denis Hayes' prompting I've asked the Attorney General's office to consider the climate change/housing/transportation aspects as a state level issue for guidance on how the MTCA operates in our new era.

There is a new Attorney General and Ecology Director, not to mention a new Governor. With Denis' help that conversation is on the way. It still should be in Camas and I've let Doug know my door is open.

Randal

On Jan 21, 2025, at 12:40 PM, Marilyn Boerke <MBoerke@cityofcamas.us> wrote:

Thank you, Randal. I appreciate your continued advocacy.

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From: RANDAL FRIEDMAN
<randalfriedman@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 21, 2025 10:30 AM
To: City Council Members (GRP)
<CityCouncilGRP@cityofcamas.us>
Cc: Doug Quinn
<DQuinn@cityofcamas.us>; Mitch.Kneipp@cityofwashougal.us <Mitch.Kneipp@cityofwashougal.us>; Jenna Kay <jenna.kay@clark.wa.gov>; Rebecca Small <Rebecca.Small@cityofvancouver.us>; Anzalone, John A. <John.Anzalone@camas.wednet.edu>; Denis Hayes <denis@denishayes.com>; Kelly Moyer <Kelly.Moyer@camaspostrecord.com>; Shari Phiel <shari.phiel@columbian.com>; Carrie Schulstad

<director@downtowncamas.com>; David Stuebe

<David.Stuebe@cityofwashougal.us>; Trang Lam

<Trang@portcw.com>

Subject: THE CAMAS MILL CLEANUP, REGIONAL
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THE CAMAS MILL CLEANUP. I have reached out to our neighbors asking the question embodied in this proposal to Washougal's Community Development Director. I have provided the proposal to Clark County and the City of Vancouver. I'll explain why all three entities, not to mention our school districts, should care about how the emergence of the Camas Mill's cleanup can be a positive change for all. Most importantly, if not properly done the mill property will be an anchor against required low-carbon growth.

The Post-Record's article on Camas' planning update provided three conclusions from Camas' planning consultant: (1) "Many participants expressed a desire to limit the height of downtown buildings to two stories, preserving the traditional aesthetic of the area," (2) "There was strong support for broadening the tax base with more commercial and retail developments to limit the reliance on Vancouver and neighboring areas for goods and services." (3) "Most participants expressed a preference for the hub model over the corridor model. Hubs were seen as more conducive to building community,"

What's not found in the article or plan? The 660-acre Camas Mill's future, Camas' historical heart and soul. Consider this: in 1980, 2/3rds of the mill's 2,300 employees lived beyond Camas. The mill was 4% of Clark County's total work force. The mill was a County-wide powerhouse.

Towards Camas' future, a word search of the plan's updated map for "mill" yields two references. First, as part of the word "million" and second, as part of the "Mill Ditch Trail." There is no other mention. In a faded color you can barely see industrial zoning continues.

This conflicts with many of the workshops I personally attended. Most in attendance asked questions concerning the mill being part of the plan update as a new alternative aspiration. A pathway for Camas being reunited with its riverfront and creating the jobs, services and housing Camas needs to meet state requirements and stay competitive with its neighbors. Being a regional partner including the two miles of shoreline never available to Clark County residents.

Camas just released the Preferred Alternative Land Use Plan for the 2045 update as shown in the attachment. Curiously, two public trails are proposed on the mill property. One is along the

industrial shoreline and the second through the mill's heart, including along the heavily used railroad tracks. Public trails through the mill conflict with basic requirements of an industrial cleanup. This is pointed out in the Camas Mill District overlay plan. The city of Camas should understand this.

This isn't planning, this is continuing a slow decline of a great city.

Back to those three consultant quotes. They reinforce each other and demonstrate Camas' wrong direction. Olympia tells Camas 2045 requirements for how many dwelling units Camas needs to add: 4,226 housing units. Camas is told how many jobs to add: 11,645. That is a tall order for a town platted around an enormous mill. A mill today with just 5% of its work force remaining, 19 of 20 lines closed, and pulping operations shut down.

The Camas Mill today, extrapolating 1980 demographics, would have 10,000 jobs. 6,650 of those workers would live beyond Camas. The Camas Mill, remaining padlocked and having severe restrictions on its future use even after cleanup, might preempt 6,500 jobs going to Camas' neighbors including Washougal, Vancouver, Clark County and even Portland. Those jobs could link with developing major hubs in Washougal, (now including Pendleton Development), and the 192nd corridor. This is low-carbon development. This is a hub the community supported. This promotes transportation alternatives.

Camas needs more than 11,000 new jobs to meet state mandates. 3,500 of those potential Mill District jobs could go to Camas. A repurposed mill could represent 30% of these future jobs for Camas' state requirements. It hard enough to find a place for the 7,000 remaining required jobs on Camas' limited land. This, of course, beyond land needed for affordable housing.

For those who scoff at the mill's feasibility there is an element of wishful thinking to planning updates. There's no assurance in Camas, for example, that the North Shore will ever see grand, costly and impactful development now permitted in the plan. The North Shore's potential, regardless of feasibility, was used as the justification for the density in the North Shore plan. Sadly, the North Shore is no longer enough. Further urban growth expansions are proposed. All while the mill property can sit padlocked. When will Fern-Praire be the next victim? Where will it stop?

The Camas Mill District Plan checks all of the boxes expressed at the city's event. It excels in generating tax and fee revenue. The current alternative to make up for an padlocked mill will come from households and businesses. These businesses will be fighting new and upscale retail and services, with parking, coming from both of Camas' borders. Camas citizens intuitively know this having told the city's consultants "to limit the reliance on Vancouver and neighboring areas for goods and services." Why doesn't our city see this future most already see, including most residents, as the light of an oncoming train?

Please heed the words of Camas native and National Director of the first Earth Day, Denis Hayes. Denis wrote of his hometown: "It is impossible to exaggerate the importance to Camas of the remediation of the paper mill...As we have seen

throughout industrial America, nothing is more lethal to a community than a toxic abandoned industrial facility right at its core." This from a May 2021 Denis Hayes letter to Washington Department of Ecology's Director Laura Watson.

Which Camas do we want in Clark County? The dystopian one Denis Hayes wrote of, or a vibrant waterfront with public trails, not along an industrial shore and heavily used railroad track. A grand public trail through the restored shoreline and adjacent habitat envisioned by the Yakama Nation. We'll never know. Camas' planning consultants were told to not consider the Camas Mill. One told me so with a knowing shrug of the shoulders upon asking. This is wrong.

Thank you for considering this lengthy but hopefully conversation starting view of Camas', and SW Washington's future.

Randal Friedman, Camas, WA

Washougal Plan submittal
online.flippingbook.com

<81C274BE-96AB-4D03-9F00-1994229FB049.jpeg>

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