

18 March 2025

Good evening Port of Hood River Commission,

I am speaking tonight about the Port's discussion of adding commercial development at Port Marina Park.

First I would like to point out an incorrect date being used for the Port Marina Park Ordinance. The ordinance was passed in November 1995. It was not 1994.

The public uproar over additional commercial development at Port Marina Park began in 1994 when a hotel alongside the Marina was proposed by the DM Stevenson Ranch. This project was soon shelved, but the public realized that unless all of Port Marina Park was completely protected, and not solely the Marina Green, future similar proposals would be inevitable. To this end, an initiative was placed on the ballot and passed by the Port of Hood River electors on November 7, 1995, that prohibited additional commercial development throughout Port Marina Park.

I note with a bit of irony that the first option listed on page 159 of your packet is to amend the ordinance created by the vote of the Port electors to "clarify" development restrictions. Upon reading the ballot measure, it is perfectly clear what the intent of the ordinance is and does not need to be "clarified". "Clarification" is nothing more than an attempt to completely void the spirit and intent of the ordinance without specifically saying so. If clarification means to determine what exactly can be done with the two existing buildings being discussed, Section 4 of the ordinance is abundantly clear. Section 4 states that the buildings may be maintained and renovated. To say that these buildings can be torn down and a boutique hotel put in their place is simply ludicrous and goes against the intent of the ordinance. The people knew what they were voting for and they have said no additional commercial development should be allowed at Port Marina Park, period!

In closing, the Port has said many times in the past that all port properties should pay for themselves. This argument is fatally flawed. Parks almost never pay for themselves. Were this the case, most parks would cease to exist. Parks benefit the community as a whole, adding to quality of life and make the community a desirable place to visit, live, work, and play in.

Brian Robb

