

Mitch Rohse, AICP

EXHIBIT: _____
LAND CONSERVATION & DEVELOPMENT
COMMISSION
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SUBMITTED BY: Jack Johnson

July 13, 2007

The Honorable Richard H. Lee, Chair
Clatsop County Board of Commissioners
800 Exchange Street, Suite 310
Astoria, Oregon 97103

Dear Chair Lee:

Your planning commission's July 10 public hearing on the Bradwood LNG proposal was a remarkable event. Having been a planner since 1973, I have attended hundreds of hearings before city and county commissions, the Land Conservation and Development Commission, and state legislative committees. The July 10 hearing was the fairest and most effective I've seen.

Your planning commission faced the formidable task of holding a day-long public hearing on a controversial issue on a hot summer day with record-breaking temperatures. The potential for problems was great, but few occurred. The meeting started on time, at 10:00 a.m. It ended as scheduled, 12 long hours later, at 10:00 p.m. County planning staff and Commission Chair Bruce Francis used a carefully organized sign-up system that alternated testimony from proponents and opponents and gave each person three minutes to speak. The result was a balanced, efficient hearing that enabled some 115 people to testify over the course of the day.

Chair Francis did an outstanding job of chairing a long, difficult hearing. He was firm but fair in wielding the gavel. I heard considerable praise for his performance from both supporters and opponents of the proposed LNG plant.

Three groups also distinguished themselves on July 10. First, the planning commission's performance was commendable. All were present, from beginning to end. All were polite and attentive throughout the day and evening – no small task, given the stress, heat, and duration of the hearing.

Second, the county's Community Development Department, under the direction of Ed Wegner, Jr., worked carefully and quickly to make a long, complex hearing run smoothly. Good hearings don't happen by chance. They happen as a result of careful planning and constant attention to myriad details. Your planning staff provided both.

Finally, the many citizens who participated in the hearing distinguished themselves by presenting testimony that was generally articulate, reasonable, and respectful.

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Some hearings are little more than shouting matches. This, however, was civilized discourse.

Please recognize your county's planning commission, planning staff, and citizens for their exceptional performance on July 10. This was citizen involvement at its best.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mitch Rohse". The signature is written in black ink and extends across the width of the page.

Mitch Rohse, AICP

cc: **State Citizen Involvement Advisory Committee (CIAC)**
Bruce Francis
Ed Wegner, Jr.