1	BEFORE THE LAND USE BOARD OF APPEALS
2	OF THE STATE OF OREGON
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4	ROBERTA STEWART,
5	Petitioner,
6	
7	VS.
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9	COOS COUNTY,
10	Respondent,
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12	and
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14	KAETLYN ROSS,
15	Intervenor-Respondent.
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17	LUBA No. 2003-103
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19	FINAL OPINION
20	AND ORDER
21	
22	Appeal from Coos County.
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24 25	Roberta Stewart, Bandon, filed the petition for review and argued on her own behalf.
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26	No appearance by respondent Coos County.
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28	David R. Lundgren, Bandon, filed the response brief and argued on behalf of
29	intervenor-respondent.
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31	BRIGGS, Board Member; BASSHAM, Board Chair; HOLSTUN, Board Member,
32	participated in the decision.
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34	AFFIRMED 10/22/2003
35	West and and the day in divide and an effect of the Ondon Tradicial and
36	You are entitled to judicial review of this Order. Judicial review is governed by the
37	provisions of ORS 197.850.

NATURE OF THE DECISION

Petitioner appeals a county decision not to revoke a zoning compliance letter authorizing a home occupation.

MOTION TO INTERVENE

Kaetlyn Ross (intervenor), the applicant below, moves to intervene on the side of respondent. There is no opposition to the motion and it is allowed.

FACTS

In July 2002, intervenor moved her residence and business from the City of Bandon to her present location approximately three miles southeast of the city on Geiger Creek Road.¹ Intervenor's property includes 5.16 acres, and is developed with a main dwelling, a guest house and a small parking area. The property is zoned Rural Residential, 5-acre minimum (RR-5). Petitioner's property is located across Geiger Creek Road from intervenor.

Intervenor advertises herself as a Certified Pilates Instructor, ACE Certified Personal Trainer, Nia Blue Belt, Yuen Energetics and Reike Practitioner. Intervenor offers personal training sessions and group classes, as well as workshops. In a typical week, six group classes and seven personal training sessions are scheduled between the hours of 9:30 AM and 7:00 PM. Intervenor conducts the classes inside her residence, does not have employees, and does not engage in retail sales. Clients travel to the subject property via Geiger Creek Road and park in intervenor's parking area.

In August 2002, petitioner and other neighbors became concerned about the increase in traffic on Geiger Creek Road. Petitioner asked intervenor whether she had obtained county approval for a home occupation permit. Until that time, intervenor was not aware that a home occupation permit was necessary to conduct her business at her home. Intervenor then

¹ Geiger Creek Road is a narrow, private road that serves seven properties. It is graded and improved with a gravel surface that varies in width from between 12 and 14 feet.

applied with the county for approval of her home occupation. The county issued a zoning compliance letter approving the home occupation on September 27, 2002.

After continued complaints from petitioner and other neighbors, the county initiated a revocation hearing to determine whether the home occupation permit had been properly issued. On February 6, 2003, the county planning commission (PC) held a hearing and on February 13, 2003 voted to allow the home occupation to continue, after concluding that intervenor had demonstrated that she continued to comply with the county's home occupation permit requirements. Petitioner and others appealed the PC decision to the board of county commissioners (BOC), which held a hearing on the appeal on April 24, 2003. On June 10, 2003, the BOC adopted a decision upholding the PC's decision. This appeal followed.

INTRODUCTION

ORS 215.448 authorizes counties to allow home occupations and parking of vehicles in any zone.² Under the Coos County Zoning and Land Development Ordinance (CCZLDO), the planning director is authorized to issue a zoning verification letter allowing a home occupation, provided the home occupation is allowed within the zoning district where the home occupation is to be located, and the proposed home occupation falls within the definition of that term set out in CCZLDO 2.1.200.³ CCZLDO 4.2.400 Table 4.2c specifies

² ORS 215.448 provides in pertinent part:

[&]quot;(1) The governing body of a county or its designate may allow, subject to the approval of the governing body or its designate, the establishment of a home occupation and the parking of vehicles in any zone. * * *

^{*****}

[&]quot;(2) The governing body of the county or its designate may establish additional reasonable conditions of approval for the establishment of a home occupation under subsection (1) of this section."

³ CCZLDO 2.1.200 defines "Home Occupation" as follows:

1 1	that	a	home	occupation	is	allowed	within	the	R-5	zone,	subject	to	CCZLDO	4.2.900,
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- 2 condition 103. That condition provides that
- 3 "[T]he county shall review a permit allowing a home occupation * * * every 4 12 months following the date the permit was issued and may continue the 5 permit of the use continues to comply with the requirements of the use's
- 6 definitions."
- 7 The planning director's September 27, 2002 zoning clearance letter concluding that
- 8 intervenor's business is a home occupation that may be allowed on the subject property was
- 9 not appealed and is presumably final.
- However, CCZLDO 1.3.300 allows the county to revoke any permit or verification
- 11 letter:
- "The Hearings Body or Board of Commissioners may revoke any permit or verification letter (also referred to as zoning compliance letter or zoning clearance letter) if it is determined that the permit was issued on erroneous information or issued in error."
- Revocation hearings are conducted pursuant to standard county public hearing procedures
- and may be held on motion of the hearings body or BOC or at the request of an interested
- person when there is reasonable cause to believe the CCZLDO has been violated.⁴

"Home occupations constitutes businesses that are operated entirely within a dwelling by a member of the family residing in the dwelling. Home occupations shall not employ more than five (5) full or part-time persons. Examples of home occupations include but are not limited to: beauty shops, engravers, professional offices, etc.

"Home occupations must be conducted in such a manner so as not to give an outward appearance nor outwardly manifest any characteristic of a business in the ordinary meaning of the term. Home occupations must not interfere with existing uses on nearby land or with other uses permitted in the zone in which the property is located. Home occupations shall not involve the retail sale of a product on the premises. Home occupations shall not occupy more than 30% of the usable floor area of the dwelling, nor shall occupations use any detached accessory building. On premise signs advertising home occupations shall not exceed six (6) square feet of copy area."

"A revocation hearing may be held by the Hearings Body or the Board of Commissioners. The Hearings Body or Board of Commissioners may hold a revocation hearing on its own

⁴ CCZLDO 1.3.600 provides:

1	County staff scheduled the revocation hearing before the PC based upon the issues
2	raised by petitioner to determine whether the zoning clearance sheet was issued in error.
3	Record Volume I, 42. ⁶

FIRST ASSIGNMENT OF ERROR

The revocation hearings before the PC and the BOC were conducted pursuant to the county's quasi-judicial public hearing provisions. *See* n 4. CCZLDO 5.7.300(4) establishes the burden of proof in such hearings:

"Each land use decision shall be supported by substantial evidence satisfying applicable review criteria. The applicant shall be responsible for presenting said evidence. *The burden of proof rests with the applicant*." (Emphasis added.)

CCZLDO 5.7.300(4) is consistent with the general principle that an applicant for quasi-judicial land use approval has the burden of proof throughout the quasi-judicial process to demonstrate that all applicable approval criteria have been satisfied. *Rochlin v. Multnomah County*, 35 Or LUBA 333, 348 (1998), *aff'd* 159 Or App 681, 981 P2d 399 (1999). The pertinent question appears to be who is the "applicant" in revocation hearings under the CCZLDO.

The PC interpreted CCZLDO 5.7.300(4) to impose the burden of proof on intervenor, as the initial applicant for the home occupation permit. Record Volume II, 8. When the matter was appealed to the BOC, however, the BOC rather clearly shifted the burden of proof

motion or at the request of an interested person when there is reasonable cause to believe that the provisions of this Ordinance have been violated."

CCZLDO 1.3.500 provides:

"No permit or verification letter shall be revoked without a public hearing held pursuant to the provisions of Article 5.7 (Public Hearings)."

⁵ Although intervenor's response brief questions whether there was reasonable cause to hold a revocation hearing in the first place, intervenor did not independently appeal the county's decision and did not file a crosspetition for review. Therefore, that issue is not before us.

⁶ The county filed a record consisting of two volumes, each of which begins at page one. We therefore refer to pertinent parts of the record as Volume I or II, and then cite the page.

- 1 to petitioner. Petitioner argues that the BOC erred in shifting the burden of proof to her.
- 2 According to petitioner, intervenor is the "applicant" in this proceeding and, therefore,
- 3 intervenor bears the burden throughout the local proceedings of demonstrating that her
- 4 business falls within the county's definition of "home occupation."
 - The BOC concluded that petitioner is the "applicant," because she appealed the PC's decision not to revoke intervenor's home occupation permit, stating:
 - "* * During her initial application for a Zoning Compliance Letter, [intervenor] bore the burden of proving that her business met the requirements of a home occupation. Then, during the Planning Commission's revocation hearing, [intervenor] again was shouldered with the burden of proving that the initial Zoning Compliance Letter had not been issued in error. Now, the petitioner[] seek[s] our review of the Planning Commission's decision and ask[s] that we reverse this decision. Thus, the burden of proof [now] shifts to * * * petitioner[] to demonstrate by substantial evidence that [intervenor's] business fails to meet the definition of a home occupation set forth in the CCZLDO." Record Volume II, 8.
 - "As noted previously, * * * petitioner[] bear[s] the burden of proving that [intervenor's] business fails to meet the standards necessary to qualify as a home occupation. * * * " Record Volume II, 12.
 - The BOC's findings are somewhat confusing. However, unlike more typical land use proceedings, where it is generally obvious who is the applicant and therefore who has the burden of proof, the revocation proceedings that led to the challenged decision was initiated by petitioner, who believes that the county erred in its earlier decision to permit the home occupation. In that situation, we do not believe that, as a matter of law, the county must require the successful permit applicant to again carry the ultimate burden of demonstrating compliance with the criteria that led to approval of the initial permit. The county could, as it apparently did here, conclude that the proponent of the revocation has the ultimate burden of demonstrating that the home occupation permit was issued in error.
- The first assignment of error is denied.

SECOND ASSIGNMENT OF ERROR

Petitioner challenges the county's interpretation and the evidentiary support for CCZLDO 2.1.200(4) and (5). ⁷

A. CCZLDO 2.1.200(4)

CCZLDO 2.1.200(4) provides:

6 "[Home occupations] must be conducted in such a manner so as not to give an outward appearance, nor outwardly manifest any characteristic of a business in the ordinary meaning of that term."

According to petitioner, the increase in traffic on Geiger Creek Road makes it obvious that some sort of business is occurring on intervenor's property. Petitioner argues that it was petitioner's initial observations of activity on the property that led to the revocation proceeding. According to petitioner, those observations demonstrate that the home occupation is being conducted in such a way as give an outward appearance of a business. Petitioner emphasizes that the number of additional trips or the types of activity occurring on the property may not demonstrate the "outward appearance" of a business in a more populated area. However, petitioner argues, in this very rural area, with a single-lane graveled road used for access for a small number of residences, the business is very noticeable. Petitioner argues that CCZLDO 2.1.200(4) should be interpreted to prohibit a home occupation if *any* aspect of the home occupation would lead to a conclusion that business activities are occurring on the property.

In its decision, the BOC rejected petitioner's interpretation. Instead, the BOC interpreted CCZLDO 2.1.400(4) to allow for some business-related features, such as a small sign and business-related parking, provided that the activities of the home occupation as a

⁷ CCZLDO 2.1.200 is not broken down into individual subsections. *See* n 3. The parties, however, both at the local level and here, treat CCZLDO 2.1.200 as though it had nine separate subsections, with each subsection setting out an individual approval criterion. We similarly adopt the parties' designations for purposes of addressing the second assignment of error.

whole does not give the outward appearance of the dwelling being used primarily for commercial rather than residential purposes.⁸

Under ORS 197.829(1), *Clark v. Jackson County*, 313 Or 508, 836 P2d 710 (1992), and *Church v. Grant* County, 187 Or App 518, 524, 69 P3d 759 (2003), LUBA must sustain a local government's interpretation of its own legislation unless that interpretation is inconsistent with the express language of the plan or regulation, is inconsistent with the purpose of the plan or regulation, is inconsistent with the underlying policy providing the basis for the plan or regulation, or is contrary to a state statute, land use goal or rule that the comprehensive plan provision or land use regulation implements. ⁹ In reviewing a local

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⁸ The BOC's findings interpreting CCZLDO 2.1.200(4) state, in relevant part:

[&]quot;* * * [P]etitioner[] allege[s intervenor's] business is conducted in such a manner so as to give an outward appearance and/or outwardly manifest the characteristics of a business in the ordinary meaning of the term. * * *

[&]quot;Before we can consider the evidence in this case, we must first determine what is meant by these terms.

^{**}****

[&]quot;* * * [P]etitioner[argues] for a strict and literal interpretation of the 'outward appearance' language that would require us to disqualify a business for showing literally any outward appearance. [Intervenor] has argued, and the Planning Commission agreed, that such a literal interpretation would render meaningless the language allowing up to five employees and on-premise advertising signs.

^{&#}x27;*****

[&]quot;* * * [W]e find that the ordinance does not prohibit a home occupation from giving any outward appearances [of a business.] * * *[U]nder the ordinance[,] a home occupation is prohibited from manifesting characteristics of a business that, when considering the totality of the circumstances, give the outward appearance that the premises [are] being used primarily for commercial rather than residential purposes. Thus, where a business utilizes an onpremise sign of no more than six square feet of copy area, employs no more than five employees who must commute to and from the business, and receives clients during the course of the day, it will not be disqualified from meeting the definition of a home occupation under the 'outward appearance' standard. In fact, such characteristics would presumably be unavoidable for businesses such as beauty shops and professional offices, two home occupations expressly endorsed by the CCZLDO definition of a home occupation." Record Volume II, 8-10.

⁹ ORS 197.829(1), provides, in relevant part:

1 government's interpretation, we consider both the text and context of the ordinance at issue.

2 PGE v. Bureau of Labor and Industries, 317 Or 606, 610-612, 859 P2d 1143 (1993); Beaver

3 State Sand and Gravel v. Douglas County, 43 Or LUBA 140, 143-44 (2002), aff'd 187 Or

4 App 241, 65 P3d 1123 (2003).

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As the BOC recognized, CCZLDO 2.1.200 specifically allows for up to five employees, for on-premises signage, and for parking on the premises. CCZLDO 2.1.200 specifically identifies beauty shops, engravers, and professional offices as examples of home occupations. Under petitioner's proffered interpretation, it would be difficult or impossible to approve the types of businesses with the number of employees, signage and parking that is expressly authorized by CCZLDO 2.1.200. The authorized home occupations, signs, employees and parking would almost always exhibit some characteristics of a business. While the county perhaps could have interpreted its home occupation requirements in the manner petitioner advocates, that interpretation is not compelled by the text or context of the home occupation provisions. The interpretation the BOC did adopt is not inconsistent with *Clark, Church*, or ORS 197.829(1).

Petitioner also argues that the county's findings with respect to CCZLDO 2.1.200(4) are not supported by substantial evidence. According to petitioner, the evidence shows that the increase in traffic traveling to intervenor's property is clear evidence of business activity on intervenor's property, in that the travel occurs during business hours, and at relatively constant intervals. The county concluded, based on other evidence, that the number of

[&]quot;[LUBA] shall affirm a local government's interpretation of its comprehensive plan and land use regulations, unless the board determines that the local government's interpretation:

[&]quot;(a) Is inconsistent with the express language of the comprehensive plan or land use regulation;

[&]quot;(b) Is inconsistent with the purpose for the comprehensive plan or land use regulation;

[&]quot;(c) Is inconsistent with the underlying policy that provides the basis for the comprehensive plan or land use regulation[.]"

additional trips generated by intervenor's business did not rise to the level of showing an "outward appearance" or "manifest characteristics" of a business because the vehicles did not all travel on Geiger Creek Road at the same time. In addition, there is evidence that intervenor does not post a sign advertising the business on the property, as would otherwise be allowed under the ordinance, and activities are all conducted within intervenor's residence, which is set back some distance from Geiger Creek Road. The county could, based on that evidence, conclude that intervenor's business does not violate the "outward appearance" standard as the BOC interpreted it.

B. CCZLDO 2.1.200(5)

CCZLDO 2.1.200(5) provides:

"Home occupations must not interfere with existing uses on nearby land, or other uses permitted in the zone in which the property is located."

Petitioner argued before the county that the county's "interference" standard includes the interference local residents encounter on Geiger Creek Road with the intervenor's clients as they travel on the road to intervenor's property. In particular, petitioner argued that the increased traffic on Geiger Creek Road interferes with her use of her property because, at times, she has had to slow down or stop along the side of the road to allow intervenor's clients to pass. In addition, petitioner argues that the increase in traffic, and the associated need to pull off the road to let others pass, has caused deterioration to the road. Finally, petitioner argues that the dust generated by the additional traffic interferes with the permitted agricultural use of her land.

The BOC found that the use of Geiger Creek Road by intervenor's clients constituted a *de minimus* impact on neighboring properties that did not rise to the level of "interference" as that term is used in CCZLDO 2.1.200(5). The BOC concluded that the number of vehicles using the road to reach intervenor's property did not unreasonably delay travel on the road,

- did not cause an large amount of dust, and did not otherwise limit the activities that could
- 2 otherwise be conducted on neighboring properties. ¹⁰

"* * * [W]e find that petitioner[] occasionally pass[es intervenor's] students while traveling
* * * along Geiger Creek Road. Geiger Creek Road is a private road that is governed by a
series of private easements. Along some parts of the road it is difficult for two vehicles to
pass, especially if one of the vehicles is large. On occasion, one of the passing vehicles is
required to either encroach by several inches upon the shoulder of the road or pull into one of
the few driveways along the road, so that the other vehicles may pass. By all accounts, this
occurs no more than a few times each month. The road is unable to be widened in some areas
due to the topography of the area and petitioner[is] * * * opposed to widening the road in any
event.

"We do not believe that these facts support [petitioner's] allegation that [intervenor's] business impermissibly interferes with [her] use of [her] land. First, as we have discussed, Geiger Creek Road is a private road governed by private easements. Issues relating to the use and development of this road are private matters to be worked out among the various easement holders and irreconcilable differences between these holders are the proper consideration of the civil courts, not [the BOC]. Second, this alleged interference relates primarily to the petitioner['s] use of the private road, not [petitioner's] use of [her] land. Third, where travel by [intervenor's] students is clearly within the right-of-way of Geiger Creek Road, the fact that this travel sometimes encroaches the shoulder of the road cannot be the basis for finding any interference with land use." Record Volume II, 11-12.

"** * We [also] find that * * * petitioner * * * uses a portion of her land to grow an organic garden. Within an RR-5 zone, agricultural uses are allowed outright, whether they be for profit or not for profit. [Petitioner] grows organic strawberries in her garden, and testified that she relies on these strawberries and other produce fro her garden for sustenance. This past summer, the weather was particularly dry in Coos County. Vehicles traveling on most unpaved roads in the County generated an above-average amount of dust. [Petitioner] testified that due to the proximity of Geiger Creek Road to her garden, this road dust settled onto her strawberries. Apparently, strawberries cannot be washed prior to being frozen and preserved, and [petitioner] testified that she was unable to harvest and preserve her strawberries this past winter as she has in the past.

"Dust from Geiger Creek Road is generated because the road is unpaved. * * * [Petitioner] testified that [she is] opposed to improving and paving the road. Students began visiting [intervenor] at her home shortly after she moved to Geiger Creek Road in late summer 2002. In addition to [intervenor] and her students, five other RR-5 zone residences and at least one forest-zoned property is served by Geiger Creek Road. There is some commercial traffic that uses Geiger Creek Road to travel to and from the forest-zoned property.

"As noted previously, [petitioner] bear[s] the burden of proving that [intervenor's] business fails to meet the standards necessary to qualify as a home occupation. Where [petitioner has] alleged that [intervenor's] students have generated dust by driving on Geiger Creek Road, and that this dust has impermissibly interfered with [petitioner's] ability to conduct a permitted use on her property, * * * petitioner[] must produce substantial evidence to support this conclusion. Presumably, this would require, at the very least, some evidence linking the dust generated by the students' cars to the dust found on her strawberries. However, even this might not be sufficient where the evidence demonstrates that there were other possible

¹⁰ The BOC's findings state, in relevant part:

Petitioner challenges the evidentiary evidentiary bases for the findings quoted at n 10. Based on that evidence before it, the BOC could conclude that the intervenor's business does not violate CCZLDO 2.1.200(5). The evidence the BOC relied upon included testimony by intervenor's clients and other users of the road about the times that they had had to stop to allow other vehicles to pass; testimony and evidence regarding other dust generators, including logging trucks and construction vehicles traveling over Geiger Creek Road to reach other properties; and testimony that intervenor's business did not interfere with residential activities on neighboring property. Petitioner's evidence does not so undermine the evidence the BOC relied upon as to render the BOC's reliance on the evidence it did unreasonable.

The second assignment of error is denied.

THIRD ASSIGNMENT OF ERROR

Petitioner argues that the county misconstrued the applicable law and that the decision is not supported by substantial evidence because it failed to take into account traffic and road impacts. Specifically, petitioner argues that the county erred by: (1) concluding that Geiger Creek Road was not under its jurisdiction; (2) failing to consider impacts of traffic and the road on existing uses; and (3) failing to consider the county's Transportation System Plan (TSP).

The portions of the record cited to us by petitioner do not support petitioner's assertion that the county views the road as being outside of its regulatory jurisdiction. Rather, that evidence shows that the county concluded that it cannot impose conditions of approval that require right-of-way dedication or street improvements over private roads. As the

sources of the dust in addition to the students' cars. A review of the record before us shows that [petitioner] failed to meet [her] burden on this issue.

[&]quot;Based on our review of the evidence, we find that it is unnecessary to consider the parties' disparate views regarding how the [BOC] should interpret the 'interference' standard. Assuming, *arguendo*, [petitioner's] view that any interference, no matter how *de minimus*, disqualifie[s] a business from meeting the definition of a home occupation, petitioner[has] failed to prove by substantial evidence an interference caused by [intervenor's] business. Therefore, we find against petitioner[] on this point." Record II, 12-13.

findings quoted in n 10 indicate, the county did consider the impacts of traffic on use of the road and use of adjoining properties, and found that traffic generated by the home occupation does not interfere with existing uses, including use of the road.

Petitioner also argues that the county did not consider the impacts the home occupation may have on other existing uses besides traffic and agriculture. CCZLDO 2.1.200(5) requires that the home occupation not interfere with existing uses. However, as we explained in our discussion under petitioner's second assignment of error, the county did consider the other existing uses in the zone that were brought to the BOC's attention, but concluded that the home occupation did not unreasonably interfere with those uses. Petitioner does not identify any issues raised below regarding other types of existing uses that the BOC failed to address.

Petitioner also argues that the county misconstrued the law by not considering the county TSP in making its decision. Petitioner, however, does not explain how the TSP provides independent approval criteria in a revocation hearing on a home occupation permit, and we do not see that it does. To the extent petitioner argues that traffic and road impacts must be considered in the decision, those issues are addressed under the second assignment of error. Petitioner's arguments under the third assignment of error provide no grounds for reversing or remanding the decision.

- The third assignment of error is denied.
- The county's decision is affirmed.