

# OUR TOWN

## **Harrisburg Confronts Urban Growth Boundary Issues**

Our city is involved in a lengthy process to expand our urban growth boundary. It is anticipated that there will be public hearings this spring as the process nears completion. You should know what is going on.

An urban growth boundary, or “UGB”, is the result of our state land use laws that were created in the 1970’s. It is intended to slow urban sprawl and to save valuable farm land and green spaces. It consists of a line drawn on a map that circles our city. In some places the UGB is the same as the city boundary line, but in other locations it includes more land than the city boundary. Land that is outside the city boundary but inside the UGB is eligible for annexation to the city and for development, but land outside the UGB cannot be annexed and made a part of the city. Most of the land outside the UGB is farmland and it is required to continue to be used as farm land.

By state law, each city is supposed to have enough land in their UGB to allow for 20 years of growth. Of course, once a UGB has been established and growth happens, the amount of land for growth decreases until it becomes necessary to expand the UGB (move the UGB line on the map outwards) to again have a 20 year land supply.

There has not been much growth in Harrisburg since the downturn of the economy about four years ago, but in the decade before the downturn Harrisburg was the fastest growing city in Linn, Lane and Benton County. During that rapid growth, much of the available land inside the UGB was developed for new residences. It became necessary to go through the process to expand the UGB, so that process was begun more than six years ago. The process has moved slowly forward since then., in part because the state required a Wetland Inventory and an updated Urbanization Study as part of the UGB expansion, and it took a while to get a grant to help pay for consultants to assist with these tasks.

The Wetland Inventory was completed over a year ago, and a draft of an updated Urbanization Study has now been completed. The Urbanization Study uses historic growth rates and expected trends to anticipate how much growth to plan for in the future, and therefore how much land will be needed for growth. Our Planning Commission will soon begin reviewing the Urbanization Study and will make a recommendation to the City Council for a revised zoning map sometime this spring or summer. The new map will show proposed zoning changes to some of the land currently inside the city, as well as proposing some land that will need to be brought inside the UGB.

This is an important process that can have major impacts on how land can be used in the future. The owners of property that will be rezoned or that is proposed to be included in the UGB will be notified by mail of meetings involving their property. It is unlikely that the Planning Commission will recommend bringing any land into the UGB unless the owner of the land wants to be included. If the process results in any unhappy property owners, it is likely that they will be property owners who want their land inside the UGB but are not selected at this time. The amount of land that can be added to the UGB is limited by the Urbanization Study results.

The Planning Commission, and eventually the City Council, will look at a variety of established criteria in deciding which land to bring into the UGB. This will include factors like the types of soils, the ability to get city services to the land, and the amount of wetlands.

After the Planning Commission makes a recommendation to the City Council, the City Council will review their recommendations and make a final decision. The decision then has to go to Linn County for review and finally to the State of Oregon for final review and approval. It is not uncommon for a land use watchdog group or property owner to file a legal challenge to the UGB expansion along the way, so it is hard to say for sure when the process will be completed. When finished though, our city will better be able to plan and prepare for the growth that will inevitably come to our city.

## Circus Returning

The Culpepper & Merriweather Circus that thrilled and entertained us in 2010, will be returning this year for one day, Saturday, May 25th. Lions and tigers, clowns, high flying acts, and dog acts are just some of the fun that will be coming. You will be amazed. You will laugh. You will have fun.

Local sponsoring organizations will receive a part of the ticket sales to support their nonprofit activities.

Harrisburg residents packed the Big Top last time. Let's do it again. Watch for more information in a future newsletter.



## Meet Councilor Mike Caughey



Mike Caughey was elected to the City Council in November and will soon take office. He was born in Portland, Maine, and lived in Hawaii and Washington before moving to Harrisburg with Kay in 2011. A Navy veteran, he has worked as an electrical engineer and as a realtor before retiring in 2011. Mike has done considerable fundraising and lists his hobbies as travel, cruising, science, space exploration, alternative energy, electronics and computer applications. He and Kay were attracted to Harrisburg by its size and location. They soon began attending many city meetings as a way of learning about their new community. Mike thinks our city should "continue on the current path". He would like to get a new library, continue to support the HART Family Resource Center, develop parks as we are able and prepare for some healthy growth in the business and residential sector.

Most importantly, Kay sometimes brings fudge to the meetings.

## H.A.R.T. Family Resource Center News

1. WIC meets here at H.A.R.T. by appointment on most Fridays. This is for qualifying families with children under 5 years old or pregnant women. Call H.A.R.T. for more information.; or, call Pam to transfer your case or for an appointment: 1-541-967-3888 ext 2316, or toll free 1-800-304-7468.
2. We have one opening for a 4 year old in our parent cooperative pre-school. Contact H.A.R.T. at 541-995-7700.
3. January 3rd: Energy Assistance will be here. Call CSC at 541-926-7163 to make an appointment. We are hoping to add another energy assistance day in February.
4. Medical Teams International's dental van will be back sometime in early 2013. No cleaning or screenings. The van clinic is for those in pain or with visible decay. Please call H.A.R.T. at 541-995-7700 to see if you qualify and to schedule an appointment for this free dental care.
5. February: H.A.R.T. will be celebrating our 15th year! More news to come.

## Your 2013 City Council

### Mayor

Robert ("Bobby") Duncan

### City Council

Kimberly Downey

Roger Raven

Robert Boese

Don Shipley

Sarah Puls

Mike Caughey

### Youth Advisor

Phoenix Null