

Katherine Daniels, AICP
Community Services Division
Oregon Dept. of Land Conservation and Development

January 7, 2015

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LAND CONSERVATION
AND DEVELOPMENT

RE: Primary Forest Processing RAC Committee

Ms. Daniels,

My name is Lon Welsh, and I am one of several neighbors who have been negatively impacted by the Mark Fritch Log Home Manufacturing business which has operated on a site across the street from my property since September 2011. Because of those negative impacts, I joined a coalition of neighbors in publicly opposing the permitting of Mr. Fritch's business on that site, and members of that coalition have been present at the first two primary forest processing RAC committee meetings. From their observations we are speculating that in spite of only minimal support from Oregon's thirty-six counties for any state-level definition of what constitutes primary forest processing on timber zoned lands, the committee still feels compelled to take control for forming those definitions of primary processing away from individual counties and give it to the state.

If that is the case then it would also make sense that the decisions for developing locational siting standards for such primary forest product activities be defined and controlled at the state level as well to minimize the inevitable negative impacts of those activities on nearby rural residential areas, urban residential areas and residential subdivisions. If the committee feels that consistent clear standards for primary forest processing must be developed at the state rather than county level, then it follows that the state should also regulate how close those activities can be to residential areas.

Mr. Fritch contends that his industrial activities have minimal impact on the environment and his neighbors, and that he is doing little more than shaping and stacking logs. We have a different perception having experienced the negative impacts of noise, pollution and visual blight for the last three plus years. And Mr. Fritch's operation does more than simply shaping and stacking logs, the latest activity being the manufacturing of what appear to be structural support posts with definite engineered features including precision diameters and what appear to be mortise and tenon-like joints on the ends. If industrial operations like Mr. Fritch's are defined by the state as primary forest processing activities, then the state must also create siting location standards to minimize the negative impacts we have experienced. Based on our experience with Mr. Fritch's business those standards should include siting distances that minimize the levels of noise heard from the site, the smelling of diesel fumes and other odors emanating from the site and the visual blight. Although it is a somewhat arbitrary number I recommend 1500 feet from a residential area and a required visual buffer as a minimum distance standard for siting such activity.

Sincerely,



Lon Welsh
59980 E. Marmot Rd, Sandy OR 97055