

**Morrow County Land Use Hearing
Bartholomew Building
Heppner, Oregon 97843**

Present In-Person Chair David Sykes, Commissioner Roy Drago Jr., Commissioner Jeff Wenholz, Valerie Ballard, Tamra Mabbott, Daisy Goebel; Non-staff: Mary Killion, Stacey Eckstrom, David Ameneiro, Megan Lin

Present Via Zoom Gregory Goebel; Non-Staff: Dan Kearns

Call to Order 1:37 p.m.

Public Hearing

Code Amendment AZ-154-24

Chair Sykes called for abstentions or conflicts of interest. None were made.

Commissioner Wenholz declared ex parte contact as he met with Amazon Web Services (AWS) individually and it hasn't influenced his decision.

Chair Sykes stated he also met with Amazon Web Services (AWS) individually.

Commissioner Drago stated he also met with Amazon Web Services (AWS) individually.

Staff Report

Tamra Mabbott, Planning Director; Daisy Goebel, Principal Planner

This is a continuation of updates in a process which started over a year ago concerning data centers, land use review, and site plan review, staff returned to the Planning Commission, holding a series of meetings and consultations with large development groups. With public participation and staff efforts, this is seen as a strong middle ground.

Updates in the amendment include separating administrative and ministerial processes, cleaning up language, allowing the conversion of eligible existing dwellings on Exclusive Farm Use (EFU) land to non-farm dwellings, specifying vesting requirements, comment period and appeal period changes, Conditional Use Permit (CUP) discussion, data center use clarification, and other changes.

Chair Sykes opened the public hearing for testimony

Stacey Eckstrom, Morrow County Planning Commission

Ms. Eckstrom states she is not anti-data center or trying to harass anyone. The discussing started a long time ago and she saw the need for clear and concise language. People don't always see the Planning Commission as being open and upfront and as a commission, they are trying to protect the public, County, and developers.

Mary Killion, Planning Commission

Many conversations have occurred over the last year over how data centers are approved and County's role in it. The commission's priority is Morrow County, and they want to ensure impacts aren't negative.

A letter from Port of Morrow (POM) was provided to the Board and a copy is included at the end of the minutes.

A letter from Amazon Web Services (AWS) dated October 2, 2024 was provided to the Board and a copy is included at the end of the minutes.

David Ameneyro, AWS

Mr. Ameneyro has been with AWS for six years. Amazon is a part of this community and has invested \$18 billion in Morrow and Umatilla Counties. AWS is the largest taxpayer in Morrow County and supports childhood education, sustainability initiatives, senior programs, food pantries, and provides \$100,000 in scholarships to Blue Mountain Community College for students pursuing careers in data centers without requiring the recipients to work for AWS or Amazon.

Mr. Ameneyro is asking the Board to help clarify and set policy for County through three specific asks:

1. Adopt the consensus draft presented with data center allowance outright.
2. Reject conditional use for data centers
3. Adopt changes recommended by AWS

Megan Lim, Amazon

Referencing an area zoned as Space Age Industrial (SAI), Ms. Lim said that land has not been developed for industrial use or farmed and has features which would suit it well for data centers. The land could be rezoned or brought up in a text amendment which is why she is addressing it here. Moving data centers to conditional use negates work that went into developing site plan review criteria.

Commissioner Wenholz motioned to adopt with the changes to move data centers back to administrative review and add the language as suggested MCZO 5.02(D)(2), 5.020(F)(7), and 5.020(E)(9).

Commissioner Drago seconded. Vote: Unanimous approval

Adjourn 4:15 p.m.