

HOOD RIVER NEWS

Second hearing set on draft resort map

Large crowds, lengthy testimony expected, so Jan. 29 date added

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By RaeLynn Gill

The Hood River County Planning Commission is looking ahead to accommodate the large volume of public testimony that is expected on a controversial destination resort map.

The commission will begin looking at the draft map and ordinance at 7:30 p.m. tonight in the Gorge Room at the Hood River Inn – but on Tuesday the county scheduled a second hearing for Jan. 29.

Chair Bill Lyons and Mike Benedict, director of the county planning department, decided to make that move after looking at the agenda of speakers. They believed that by the time the consulting team and expert witnesses on both sides of the issue finished with their presentations it would be about 10 p.m. and citizens would have only an hour to make remarks.

In order to guarantee that all interested people are given the opportunity to speak, the officials decided to reserve the same room for 7:30 p.m. on Jan. 29.

“The Planning Commission wants to make sure that all people who want to testify have the opportunity to do so, and scheduling a second hearing day now will hopefully permit them to plan ahead,” Lyons said.

He said that individuals who sign up to testify tonight but are not called cause of time constraints will automatically be listed on the roster to speak at the second hearing. In addition, he said written testimony will be included in the official record and can be submitted to the planning department during regular business hours until the hearing has been officially closed.

Two opposing camps are planning to speak out at the legislative hearings. Members of the Cooper Spur Wild and Free Coalition are seeking to stop commercial development on private property owned by Mt. Hood Meadows, Ltd. Conversely, Friends of Cooper Spur Mountain Resort are backing Meadows stated plans to build a recreational facility.