

Long Range

INDEPENDENT AND LOCALLY OWNED SINCE 1890

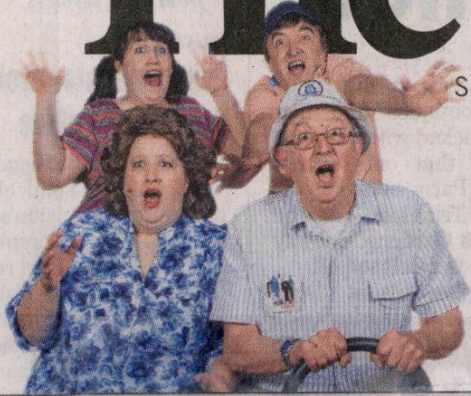
# The Columbian



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SERVING CLARK COUNTY, WASHINGTON

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## WEEKEND

Hold on to your hats!  
Spring theater is  
bursting out all over



## BUSINESS, C5

Cannabis 'Christmas'  
brings droves of buyers  
to marijuana retailers

## County appeals land use decision

By JAKE THOMAS  
Columbian staff writer

The Clark County council quietly decided this week to challenge part of a state land use board's decision that found fault with the county's update to its Comprehensive Growth Management Plan.

At its Wednesday afternoon board time meeting, the council voted to appeal three portions of the Growth Management Board decision issued last month that found the county's comprehensive plan violated the state's Growth Management Act.

Specifically, the county will appeal the board's determination that the county erred in expanding its urban growth areas, allowing Ridgefield and La Center to expand onto agricultural land and designating a rural industrial land bank on the Lagler Dairy property along Northeast 117th Avenue in Brush Prairie.

The council made the decision after emerging from executive session, a closed-door portion of the meeting intended to allow councilors and county staff to discuss sensitive legal matters. The council did not include the topic in the meeting's agenda posted online nor did it provide any other public notice that the item would be discussed or acted upon.

After the county approved its comprehensive plan last year, it was appealed by Seattle-based land use group Futurewise and local environmental group Friends of Clark County. The groups argued that the plan violated state law by expanding the county's urban growth boundary when developable land is available elsewhere, allowed development on farmland and facilitated sprawl.

GROWTH PLAN, Page A4

## Growth plan

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among other issues. Both groups declared victory after largely prevailing in the decision.

"We're disappointed,

of course," said Tim Trohimovich, Futurewise director of planning and law, of the county's move to challenge the GMHB's decision. "Historically, the county has appealed these sort of issues so I can't say I'm shocked, but I didn't know they were going to do it."

Steve Horenstein, the attorney for the Lagler family, said that the GMHB's decision regarding the rural industrial land bank is worth a second look and he welcomed the county's appeal. He said that state law makes it very difficult to change the designation of agricultural land and that

the GMHB typically strikes down attempts to do so. But he said that both the county and his client have conducted technical analyses of the land that support changing it from agricultural to industrial land.

"I think it's very easy for the hearings board to see agricultural land and not

go much further with their thought process, and it's worth the appeal," he said.

Christine Cook, civil deputy prosecuting attorney for the county, said she will file the appeals in Clark County Superior Court by the Monday deadline. She said that any decisions by the county to come into compli-

ance with the GMHB's decision will go through the normal legislative process that includes votes by the planning commission and county council.

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