

## **The Portland Tribune**

### **Propane terminal gets nod, moves to City Council**

*By Steve Law  
April 7, 2015*

The Portland Planning and Sustainability Commission approved a zone change Tuesday that would enable Pembina Pipeline Corp. to build a propane export terminal at the Port of Portland.

The decision, which came in a 6-to-4 vote after a marathon six-hour public hearing, sends the issue to the Portland City Council, which will make the final call.

Commissioners included a provision that Pembina must pay to offset some of the carbon emissions stemming from combustion of the propane when it's used in Asia. That would cost Pembina \$6.2 million a year, with the money going to reduce carbon via projects such as tree-planting, solar and wind power subsidies and carbon sequestration.

Nearly 100 people testified during the hearing, the overwhelmingly majority of them opposed to the propane terminal.

### **Hales, mayors lift Indiana travel ban after changes to religious freedom law**

*By Pamplin Media Group  
April 7, 2015*

Portland Mayor Charlie Hales joined mayors from several West Coast cities Tuesday in lifting a ban on travel to Indiana after that state's lawmakers adopted a bill some considered discriminatory toward gay people.

Hales and mayors in Oakland, San Francisco and Seattle said April 7 that they were dropping the travel ban because the Indiana Legislature had adopted changes to the controversial law that protected gay people from possible discrimination.

"Indiana as a state should follow the leadership of the great city of Indianapolis, and of Mayor Greg Ballard," Hales said. "In Indianapolis, protections for LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender) residents are clearly delineated. Indianapolis understands that which so many other cities and states know: that protecting all residents, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity, is sane, smart, practical and ethical."

"While the most egregious parts of the law were changed, LGBT people still face a tough reality in Indiana and in many other places throughout the country," said Seattle Mayor Ed Murray. "Indiana needs a comprehensive civil rights law like Washington's, which protects people from discrimination regardless of who they are or who they love."

The issue came about after the Indiana Legislature adopted Senate Bill 101, known as the Religious Freedom Restoration Act. According to lawmakers, the law provided that "a state or local government action may not substantially burden a person's right to the exercise of religion unless it is demonstrated that applying the burden to the person's exercise of religion is: essential to further a compelling governmental interest; and the least restrictive means of furthering the compelling governmental interest."

After Gov. Mike Pence signed the bill in late March (it officially becomes law in July), critics of the proposal raised their voices, calling for a boycott of the state. Hales and other mayors around the nation condemned the law and refused to spend public money for travel to Indiana.

Hales announced his travel ban on March 30, four days after Pence signed Indiana's Public Law 3. He sought a City Council resolution supporting the ban, and asked local business and civic leaders to avoid travel to the state.

On Tuesday, mayors decided that changes adopted to the legislation were "a good first step," and enough to lift the travel ban, Hales said.

Multnomah County Chair Deborah Kafoury also joined the wave of elected officials banning government-funded travel to Indiana, saying last week that she too would impose a ban on county-funded travel to Indiana because of the law.

Kafoury has not yet lifted that ban.

## **Willamette Week**

### **Smoke Screen**

**Why won't the Portland Fire Bureau give a whistle-blower documents that have already been made public?**

*By Nigel Jaquiss*

*April 8, 2015*

Rob Crusier enforces rules that save lives.

Crusier, 51, is a fire inspector for Portland Fire & Rescue. That job takes him into buildings where the public gathers for big events—such as nightclubs and music venues—to guarantee patrons can exit safely in an emergency.

Last summer, Crusier found problems at Club Sesso, a downtown swingers club. The club lacked proper exit lighting and had failed to complete renovations as scheduled.

Crusier blew the whistle on a supervisor who turned a blind eye to Club Sesso's violations and was later untruthful about his actions.

Now, Crusier finds himself in a Kafkaesque situation. He wants to see documents the city collected in an investigation that he prompted. The city has made the records public for media outlets, including WW, but refuses to give them to Crusier.

"I thought it was fair that since I was involved in an investigation as a whistle-blower that I have a chance to look at the results of that investigation," Crusier says. "The city doesn't see it that way."

City officials claim that releasing the documents Crusier wants could invite "retaliatory" actions against fire bureau officials interviewed in the investigation.

The target of the city investigation was Assistant Fire Marshal Doug Jones. Jones effectively told Club Sesso's manager to proceed with a large bash on the night of June 28, 2014, even though the fire marshal had told the club it couldn't hold the event. The manager, Paul Smith, captured the conversation with Jones on tape ("Hot Tip," WW, Aug. 20, 2014).

Club Sesso went ahead with the party. Crusier showed up and told the club it was in violation of fire safety codes. To Crusier's surprise, Jones, his boss, showed up to intervene. Jones wasn't on duty but drove in from his Sandy home and overruled Crusier.

Crusier reported the event to supervisors, who he says ignored him. City Ombudswoman Margie Sollinger last August convinced the city's human resources department it should investigate.

The investigation, finished in January, found that Jones had been "less than truthful" in the report he wrote about his interaction with Club Sesso. Despite this, Jones escaped with only a reprimand, a light punishment.

WW and The Oregonian requested and received a copy of the investigation report, and The Oregonian wrote about it Feb. 13, with a Web link to the report.

Now, the city won't give Crusier that report or, more importantly, hundreds of pages of interview transcripts from the investigation, even though they have already been released to the media. Crusier appealed the city's denial of his request for public records to the Multnomah County District Attorney's Office.

Fire & Rescue Chief Erin Janssens is fighting the release.

"Based on my conversations with personnel, I believe that releasing the interview transcripts to Inspector Crusier would undermine morale and the integrity of future internal investigations at PF&R," Janssens said in her declaration, dated April 1, 2015. "Releasing the transcripts (even those with redactions) would risk

retaliatory behavior from other employees against interviewed staff by creating the potential for a hostile work environment.”

Janssens and the city attorney’s office declined to comment for this story.

Judson Randall, president of Open Oregon, says Janssens and the city attorney’s office have put their own interests above the law.

“There’s no reference to ‘morale’ in the public records law,” Randall says. “Once the city provided those records to the media, they should be available to any member of the public.”

Cruser, who’s been with the fire bureau for nearly 26 years, says as an inspector he’s at the “bottom of the food chain” in the Fire Marshal’s Office. He’s not in a position to retaliate, and says he took a risk by questioning Jones’ behavior.

“The fire bureau has become about damage control and burying damage under a good story instead of addressing the problem,” Cruser says. “I don’t want to sound like Pollyanna, but it feels like we’ve forgotten who we work for—the public.”

## **The Portland Mercury**

### **Zoning Change Approved for Giant Propane Tank in N. Portland**

*By Shelby R. King  
April 7, 2015*

Portland Planning and Sustainability commissioners voted tonight, 6-4, to approve a zoning change necessary for a Canadian company to build a propane storage and export facility in North Portland.

Protestors packed the house and 97 people waited, mostly patiently, to testify mostly against a \$500 million giant propane tank that Commissioner Chris Smith said would be “soot on (Portland’s) brand.”

“There’s no way to do this and say we still believe in our Climate Action Plan,” Smith said.

When the commission voted, protestors—who had been remarkably courteous during the six-hour hearing—immediately erupted into chants of “shame!” and “murder!”

But an affirmative vote is just a vote to hand the issue off to Portland City Council, which, several commissioners pointed out, consists of elected officials who maybe should weigh in on the controversial topic. In the end, city council has the final say on the project, regardless of today’s vote.

The commission’s next move is to submit their recommendations—which will include six of nine proposed amendments—to city council. The commissioners could also choose to submit one or more letters to the council to explain the split vote.

## **GoLocal PDX**

### **Portland’s Urban Growth Boundary Could Force the City to Go Taller**

*By Melanie Sevcenko  
April 8, 2015*

Residents might call them sore thumbs on the skyline, while developers see them as pillars of currency. Either way, the question of taller buildings cannot be avoided when trying to solve Portland’s increasing density.

Today, the majority of high rises are located in Portland’s west quadrant, ranging from 15 stories upwards to 42.

With Portland’s push towards high density, matched with an exceeding housing shortage, the central city could make room for more high rises at the hands of opportunistic investors.

Last summer, the Portland Bureau of Planning and Sustainability (BPS) initiated the West Quadrant Plan, which seeks to guide future investment and development to the area.

The Lloyd District, across the river to the east, is also exploding with development, according to the BPS. "There's a lot of interest from the development community being able to build taller buildings," said Mark Raggett, senior planner at BPS. "The central city of Portland is the only place in the state where you can build to 200 or 300 feet."

By BPS definition, a high rise in the central city of Portland is a building over 15 stories.

Five high rises are currently under construction, which includes four residential buildings and the Park Avenue West Tower, designated for commercial office space, ground floor retail and apartments. When completed, the skyscraper will be the fourth tallest building in the Rose City at 504 feet.

Raggett said Portland's interest in taller buildings in the downtown area helps maintain the city's urban growth boundary. It also reduces pressure on suburban areas and natural habitats outside the boundary.

And unlike lower, squat buildings that cover more area, tall buildings allow room for plazas and small public spaces, according to the BPS.

### **Sky's the Limit**

In the late 1980s, Portland made strides to preserve and protect its public views of Mt. Hood from the shadows of high rises.

Adding to that, the City's intentions were to build on a smaller scale, from the center outward, to maintain the attractiveness of sights along the Willamette River.

By the late 1990s, downtown residential living had become an emerging market, led first by the development of the Pearl District.

But as more people moved downtown, it seems they didn't expect as many newer, larger buildings to pop up around them.

"We're hearing a lot of concerns about the character of new developments and what that means to the skyline of the central city, also to the streetscape, and impacts on social isolation," said Raggett. "Those concerns are largely coming from a population of downtown residents."

Before the 1988 City Central Plan, Portland's limit on height hit 460 feet. These days, in the Pearl and Lloyd districts, that number is unlimited.

Vanessa Sturgeon, president and CEO of TMT Development Company, the force behind Park Avenue West Tower, believes that Portland's skyline is perfectly suited for high-rise development.

And in fact, the urban growth boundary has only motivated her company to be more creative in its development, she said.

"We have to be more conscious about density because we don't have the 'easy out' that sprawl provides," said Sturgeon. "Our urban growth boundary is one reason so many institutional investors have been attracted to Portland, it makes downtown a safe bet for investment. The more stakeholders the better."

For Gerard Mildner, associate professor of Real Estate Finance at Portland State University, his concern lies with the additional costs of higher density.

He said the City has targeted some of Portland's cheapest areas, like Gateway and 82nd Street, for high-rise living. If that were to happen, rents would continue to increase drastically across the city.

"I don't have a problem with high density," said Mildner. "But to make the assumption that high rises are going to be the bulk of our housing for the next 20 years I think is insane."

### **Vertical Sprawl**

Michael MeHaffy is an urban development consultant and a resident of Portland's west side.

What troubles him is vertical sprawl, which he says can damage walkable, human-scale urban communities. Also, the aesthetic impact of a building is greatly magnified by its towering height.

"Tall buildings are, in affect, a type of vertical gated community," said Mehaffy, who also dismisses the argument that high rises are an efficient and "more green" way to develop.

And while high rises might have their purpose, they're definitely not a silver bullet answer to combat sprawl, believes Mehaffy. On the contrary, he said low and mid-rise buildings get better results regarding urban density and "compactness."

"This wave of capital that's surging into our city can be managed with tools that don't allow a new generation of very damaging buildings to be built in our core," he said.

Tall buildings also have negative social impacts on city residents, argues architect Suzanne Crowhurst Lennard, founder of the International Making Cities Livable Conferences.

"High rise buildings create inequality and un-livability," said Lennard. "They increase land prices so rapidly that the poor and middle classes are quickly displaced."

"If Portland planners and elected officials continue to push high-rises through," continued Lennard, "our city will quickly lose its unique livability and become as unaffordable as Vancouver, B.C., New York, and Hong Kong."

### **Should The Boundary Be Broken?**

Portland should not have to choose between outward or upward, according to Suzanne Crowhurst Lennard.

She said documentation shows, "enough available land, for example in parking lots, to accommodate all necessary growth without breaking the urban growth boundary or building high rises."

Gerard Mildner is a little more eager to question the boundary, by looking toward additional suburban development, like urban reserves in Washington County, which would not necessarily embrace sprawl.

"We know we're going to be expanding the urban growth boundary sometime over the next 20 years," said Mildner.

"Frankly, I think we should be doing it today, because it will take those urban reserves 10 years to plan for that growth, and it'll take some of the heat off the current housing market."