



CITY OF WESTFIR
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W. H. A.
Correspondence to
the Board
UAW U8 BESO

March 7, 2005

Lane County Board of Commissioners
125 East 8th Avenue
Eugene, OR 97401

RE: Historic Forest Service Houses

Dear Board of Commissioners:

The City of Westfir is interested in acquiring two historic houses that are owned by the U.S. Forest Service. The two houses are located on about one acre of land immediately adjacent to the northwestern corner of Westfir.

The City has supplied the domestic water for these houses as long as anyone can remember. Winfrey Road, a major residential access road traversing the Hemlock neighborhood, accesses the houses. In addition, these houses, one in particular, have been a part of the Westfir community since its inception in the late 1920's.

The Middle Fork District of the Willamette National Forest has declared these houses, which were used as employee housing by the Forest Service, as surplus property. The City has entered into an informal discussion with the Middle Fork District with the hope that these houses may be transferred to the City in some way. The City of Westfir hopes to procure these structures for administrative use.

Westfir is especially interested in acquiring these houses for two reasons. Both the houses have historic value. The U.S. Forest Service has recently determined that both are eligible for inclusion on the National List of Historic Structures. The houses have even more importance to Westfir. One of the houses was built in 1927, just a few years after Westfir was founded. It served as the local District Ranger's residence; the Forest Service has played a central role in Westfir's formation and development. The Civilian Conservation Corps built the other in 1936. Secondly, these houses could provide several other community services the current City Hall location cannot. One such service is housing the rather substantial library, which has accumulated through citizen donations. Another potential benefit these houses could provide is that of a community center. Westfir does not now provide such a facility and in a recent survey (1997), nearly half of Westfir's citizens indicated they would like to have a community center to be used for

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public gatherings, summer youth activities, and potentially as an interpretive center detailing the community's history. The site these houses occupy is also pleasingly landscaped and would provide a needed City Park location.

There is more information about these houses, including the work that needs to be done to make the houses ADA accessible, and photos in the Westfir Community Facilities Master Plan. If you would like a copy of the WCFMP, please contact me and I will send one to you.

These houses have been a part of the Westfir community since its inception and are historically important to the community. The City of Westfir would appreciate any assistance you can offer in helping the City acquire these houses. The acquisition of these houses for community use would provide for their restoration and for the preservation of their historic value.

Please feel free to contact me at 782-3733 if you have any questions regarding this issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Diana V. Tonkin".

Diana V. Tonkin, Mayor
City of Westfir