

Jane Rasely

From: haiyan zhao <haiyan88@yahoo.com>
Sent: Sunday, October 14, 2018 8:00 PM
To: PCD
Subject: Galbreath RUE/PLN50996 RUE&Galbreath Variance/PLN50996 VAR

October 14 2018

Dear Bainbridge Island Planning & Community Development Department:

I recently received a letter from your Department regarding a proposal for a single-family residence with lot coverage of 1020 square feet encumbered by a stream buffer. I am deeply troubled by the above proposal. I would like to let you know my concerns first, and if needed, I may elevate my concerns to other federal and state agencies.

The letter states that this proposal is "exempt from review under the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) pursuant to WAC 197-11-800". WAC 197-11-800 clearly states that "Documentation that the requirements for environmental analysis, protection and mitigation for impacts to elements of the environment (listed in WAC [197-11-444](#)) have been adequately addressed for the development exempted." So, where is documentation of environmental analysis? Even if the project is technically exempt, it seems prudent to perform some independent analysis in light of the intent on preserving the stream environment when the buffer zones were created in the first place. Per WAC [197-11-444](#), environment elements include fish or wildlife migration routes. The stream runs adjacent the property and nearly completely within the established buffer zones. Flora and Fauna follow the stream and buffering is required to maintain that habitat. I observe that the stream is frequented by wildlife and supports a bit of bio-diversity to our otherwise fairly sterile island. I hereby ask, what is the point of having stream buffers if a variance can destroy it? Other properties have to respect the buffer requirements and the neighborhood is established in terms of setbacks, market value, and other regulations so why would this property qualify for exemption to place a home, driveway, and septic within the stream buffer?

RUE and variance exemptions should be in line with neighborhood characteristics and not impact market value of other homes. This is a 1020 square feet construction on a 0.15 acre lot in an area zoned for 2.5 acre lots many with natural vegetation buffer zones and reasonable setbacks. Per the variance cited in the application, the house and driveway will have lot coverage nearly double the allowable amount. On a relative scale, that is a huge variance. The area is a well water recharge area, but where does the waste water go? How will the waste water impact the stream and/or fresh water recharge? Again, every single house around this particular property is zoned at 2.5 acres, so why is this one exempt from the zoning requirement? Why is it a reasonable variance to have a 5 foot setback when our larger lots are required to have larger setbacks? This one request alone may likely affect adjacent property values that were established based on the enforcement of, not variances from, the current land use criteria. The sum total of the requested variances are greatly at odds with established neighborhood characteristics and the intent of the land use regulations.

How will this new "minor" construction impact the characteristics of the neighborhood and what precedent your Department would like to establish?

All in all, there are just a lot of unanswered questions. I understand that the City would like to have a high-density downtown Winslow while keeping the rural area rural. This new development certainly does not fit into the City's general development plan.

I appreciate your attention to the matter. Thank you.

Concerned citizen/Long-time Islander

Haiyan Zhao