

January 9, 2020 (final sent 1/9/20)

To: DCD Director, City Manager, Hearing Examiner, City of Bainbridge Island, WA

From: Kjell Stoknes

RE: Inappropriate influence on a major proposed land use application

Please put this in the public record for the Winslow Hotel SPR/CUP

**CITY MANAGER AND PCD DIRECTOR INTERVIEW ON
BAINBRIDGE ISLAND
BROADCASTING (BCB) 7/20/2019 REGARDING THE PROPOSED
WINSLOW HOTEL SPR/CUP**

The city manager made a number of comments in her interview on Bainbridge Island Broadcasting (BCB) on 7/20/2019 related to the proposed Winslow Hotel. Her comments appeared to reflect positively on the proposed development, (PLN50880 SPR/CUP). The BCB interview with the city manager is discoverable by anyone looking it up on the Internet. <https://www.bestofbcb.org/cc-095-city-addresses-affordable-housing-trees-and-the-hotel-project/> The interim PCD director (now permanent PCD Director), who works at the pleasure of the city manager, was also present at the BCB interview. She did not make any comments about what the city manager said.

Some of the comments made by the city manager in this interview include:

- The hotel sector has excess demand.
- An important part of the project is economic development.
- When you think about a hotel, you think about tourism, but you also think about jobs.

- The Winslow core is where our most intensive uses are intended to happen.
- We have a lot of households on this island that are looking for a place to work without having to commute.
- Opportunity to add jobs is not to be overlooked either.
- In the vicinity of this hotel we have several hotels that function well in their context. It is not completely unknown what it will be like to have a hotel in downtown Winslow.
- It is something that I think can be successful there if the conditions are found to be as we want them to be.
- It is similar in height to other buildings in the vicinity

The only noted comments by the interim DCD Director during the BCB interview were that the number of hotel employees is not available and that the possibility of adding affordable housing to the project will be discussed at the next planning commission meeting.

As the head of the city, the city manager has responsibility for all of the various city departments. Making positive leaning statements on a land use permit application for a major site plan review (SPR) and a conditional use permit (CUP) that is in the approval process puts undue pressure on her staff. Her comments may influence the objectivity of the recommendation made by the PCD Director in her staff report to the Hearing Examiner. This is a particularly sensitive issue since the Planning Director's position is usually the most controversial in the city because they deal with regulating private property. The city manager also appoints the Hearing Examiner for a two-year term with confirmation required by the city council (BIMC 2.14.030.B). Objectivity is essential.