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To: Kelly Tayara, Senior Planner
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From: Charles Schmid
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Date: April 23, 2021 (revised and updated version)

Subject: Comments on SEPA Permit for Messenger House

WE ARE LOOKING FORWARD to a well-designed facility. First of all, I would like to state that my wife and I are excited about the renovation of the Messenger House. We have lived nearby since February 1970. Over five decades we have seen a wide range of patients and administrations.

We received the proposed SEPA document and have many questions, several of which could not be answered due the quarantine and lack of access to the City of Bainbridge Planning Department; this resulted in us not receiving the proposed SEPA document on April 8 - and therefore we requested that the closing be extended one week later (on April 20) for easier reading since we were only able to access it on mobile devices.

FILLING IN THE BLANKS. I was somewhat confused by the various references to Phase 1 and Phase 2 for the project. Where is the Phase 1 description? Did Phase 2 go through the proposal period for the project?

There also were head counts around 56 and 90. I think these numbers just require some proofreading. As I recall, phasing follows close-set rules since it has wide applications. I have a number of notebooks covering past plans which might help clarify this.

I also see that the applicants stated they will not expand on the present design of the project - this must be explicitly stated - and not just an add-on lacking due process. Does the property line extend to all the present property? Are any boundary changes being proposed as part of Phase 2? Any changes should be made clear and justified in my opinion. If none are, designating this as open space will make a wonderful park-like space area along Manitou Park Blvd. and the owners should be congratulated for leaving it natural. This could be accomplished by

compressing buildings into more floors and 35-foot buildings. Passers-by now are always impressed with the magnificent historic trees and bushes on the property.

TRAFFIC. The proposed SEPA says a traffic analysis was done; however due to lack of access (and time) my wife and I not have a chance to review it. We hope plans were included to take into account the failing steep banks which could hinder an escape route along Murden Cove Rd. We, along with neighbors, appreciated the Messenger House staff who started using the road though the woods years ago rather than driving by residential homes and pedestrians - the number of which has grown over the years. That back access road has made our streets much quieter and safer.

PROPOSED MITIGATION AND SHORELINE. A geotech report by Aspec reviewed some steepness in the slopes. One steep area connects the end of Mountain View Road with the other end of Manitou Park Blvd as it goes down the very steep slope to Rolling Bay Walk. Does the proponent own this property? If so, this would make a wonderful trail since it goes through a forest. Even though this area is steep and hidden, its also wonderful. It is not clear if Shoreline is part of the proposal or how it will be handled. In the draft Shoreline Plan I seem to recall that the terminus described above was a narrow strip of land commencing with the waters of Puget Sound. Some evidence of this are old steps along the right side of the road (when walking down it). It divides the routes into three paths 1) The Ocean Drive easement, 2) Manitou Pk. Blvd, and 3) Mountain View Drive (north)

Has the sewer system been improved - which I believe is a pump system?

ENVIRONMENTAL REPORTS. Two important reports on sources of pollution are light glare and late night noise. We brought these up during previous remodels of the Messenger House since noise and glare are often due to staff coming and going along with bright parking lot lamps. Noise is not easily diminished by vegetation. Possible quieting could be achieved by heavy walls / fences buffering the parking lot, and double paned glass in neighbors' houses. Other noise sources include noise generators, heat pumps and the dumping waste into large bins and cans, which most architects are aware of

MISCELLANEOUS. The City has included a good section on vegetation and plantings.

CONCLUSION. I hope my "citizen's view" of the draft SEPA provides some benefit for the reader. I found it interesting with good sections (e.g. plantings) and sections missing important elements (such as property descriptions) and some half-good & bad (shorelines) There are some great possible opportunities, such as a trail on the north end of the undeveloped section of the property, and also the potential for a small community meeting room to replace the theater which was torn down, counter to preservationists' plans (see the February 18, 2015 article in the Kitsap Sun titled "Bainbridge's Moran School Has Rich History, but Does It Have a Future?")

Thank you for considering my comments and I hope this revised letter can be considered as part of the official record.

- Charles Schmid

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