



April 12, 2010

The Honorable Dave Gossett, Chair  
Snohomish County Council  
3000 Rockefeller, M/S 609  
Everett, WA 98201

Dear Chair Gossett and Council Members,

The Town of Woodway, the City of Shoreline and the non-profit community group Save Richmond Beach are unified in our concerns about the potential development of the Paramount property at Point Wells. In particular, we are concerned that the County's Urban Center Comprehensive Plan designation adopted last August, and the current draft urban center zone district regulations intended to implement the comprehensive plan, fail to recognize the unique characteristics of Point Wells.

Our concerns include, but are not limited to:

1. Traffic volume: establishing a clear and enforceable limitation on the total number of vehicle trips generated by future development at Point Wells;
2. Impact mitigation: identifying and guaranteeing the implementation of specific mitigation measures to address various anticipated impacts (transportation, park & open space, service delivery, etc.);
3. View corridors: outlining measures that will be taken to preserve existing view corridors; and
4. Scale and bulk: ensuring that the overall design will enhance and not detract from the character of the surrounding communities

**Recognition of Point Wells as a Distinctive Urban Center:**

We support a regulatory approach that acknowledges the unique qualities of Point Wells. This important point was validated at the Urban Land Institute presentation on April 5, 2010 to the County Council. Vlad Oustimovich, an industry expert and Seattle TAP panelist agreed that Point Wells is different from the other five candidate "urban centers," and advised that it merits a separate review process.

In contrast to the other five centers that are surrounded with a mix of urban intensive lands, Point Wells is surrounded by Puget Sound and long-established, stable, low density residential neighborhoods, served by low volume local access streets. Also, in sharp contrast to the other “urban center” sites, Point Wells is not served by transit, such as the Swift BRT along SR-99 or the Sound Transit light rail that will serve the site at I-5/164<sup>th</sup> St. SW. While the Sounder commuter train does traverse Point Wells, there is no stop and no plans for a stop in the adopted plans of Sound Transit, Community Transit, Metro or any other agency.

### **Recommended Amendments to the Urban Center Zone District**

We suggest that the County adopt a descriptive district title (such as “Waterfront Urban Center” or “Waterfront Overlay”) to the final urban center zone district, and that the text of said district or overlay zone include the following code provisions:

1. Design parameters for site layout and orientation, building height, building mass, parking, pedestrian and vehicular circulation, access to transit, landscaping and signage will be defined by Snohomish County’s adoption of design guidelines/standards jointly recommended by the adjacent local governments and the applicant.
2. A requirement that a design review committee is created to review the design elements of the submitted site development plan with a recommendation to the planning agency (Snohomish County PDS staff) and forwarded to the Hearing Examiner.
3. The requirement that a development agreement per RCW 36.70B.170 will be the official entitlement that will be reviewed and approved by the Snohomish County Hearing Examiner to authorize development of the site. (Note: The zone text need only establish that the development agreement is the entitlement mechanism that will be used to approve the final development plan. As with all development agreements, specific terms of the agreement are defined during the review process of an application that has been officially submitted to the approval authority.)
4. The requirement that for any development proposal exceeding sixty-five feet and/or one and one-half the minimum allowable density provided in GPP LU.3.A.4, the parties to the development agreement per RCW 36.70B.170 shall include Snohomish County and any city or town whose municipal boundaries are within one mile of the proposed development.

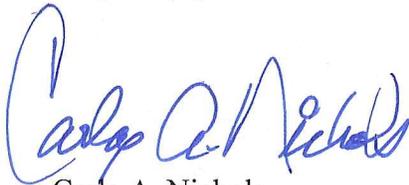
With regard to this last recommendation, we respect the County’s role as the permitting authority for unincorporated areas. However, we believe that the above amendments effectively implement Snohomish County General Policy Plan (GPP) goals and policies,

which recognize the importance of intergovernmental cooperation in planning for urban centers.

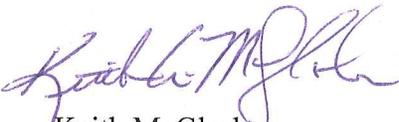
It cannot be disputed that the residents of the two incorporated communities that surround Point Wells would be most directly affected by the scale and configuration of development there. We do not think that it is unreasonable to ask that the County require the developer to work collaboratively with our communities. In the event that an agreement with Woodway and Shoreline could not be reached, the property owner would still have a reasonable opportunity to develop the property significantly in excess of the minimum density set forth in GPP LU.3A.4.

We look forward to the Council's consideration of this important issue.

Respectfully Submitted,



Carla A. Nichols  
Mayor, Town of Woodway



Keith McGlashan  
Mayor, City of Shoreline



Caycee Holt  
Save Richmond Beach

cc: Woodway Town Council  
City of Shoreline City Council  
Snohomish County Council  
Snohomish County Executive  
Gary Huff, representing Paramount NW, Inc.