

July 18, 2017

Dan Carlson  
Community Development Services  
411 North Ruby Street, Suite 2  
Ellensburg, Washington 98926

Dear Sir:

Regarding Marion Meadows PUD (PD-17-00001) , Associated Conditional Use Permit (CU-17-00001) Development Agreement (DV-17-00001) and Long Plat (LP- 17-00001).

I am the owner with my wife of property at 3251 East Sparks Road. I share a property line with multiple neighbors on Pit Way and Country Lane. I have owned this property since 2012 and have very much enjoyed the rural nature of this property. That being said, I do share a common property line with multiple neighbors in what is known as Easton Village. Although this development is improving, it continues to be plagued with issues including the following: Drug use and sales, Domestic Disturbances, Abandoned vehicles, Trash accumulating on the property including the storage of used tires, multiple households on single family lots, squatters continuing to reside on property sold in a tax auction, trailers and tents with people living in them, non drivable RV parked at the back of a residence with people living in it, partially dismantled vehicles, abandoned vehicles, and recreational equipment, failing septic systems. One residence even has a trailer parked in front of it with a snow shed secured to its roof. Because the small lot size and lack of enforceable covenants, adjacent neighbors have been forced to build high fences to shield the blight.

The above issues are just some of the problems that may be well documented in county files as well as with the Sheriff's office as they respond to calls for assistance in Easton Village. This is what happens when you have small lots in areas that are otherwise rural. Across from my property to the east, are nice homes on large lots 1-5 acres in size. I am not aware of any of these homes creating issues like the ones described in the prior paragraph.

My understanding of the Marion Meadows proposal is that it is very much like the Easton Village model with some minor differences. We have seen the issues associated with developments with small lot sizes and unenforceable covenants. We can be dumb once but to be dumb twice by allowing similar lot sizes in an adjacent neighborhood , does not seem like something in the best interest of the citizens in Upper Kittitas County.

My understanding of the development plan is that due to the proximity of the emergency air strip, homes are not permitted directly under the flight path. The development plan includes construction of a self storage in the area that is precluded from residential use as well as RV repair facility and campground. Having a self storage facility at the front of a planned development would be an eyesore, and have a negative impact on the others living in the community as well as on property values for those adjacent.

A significant portion of the self storage would be for the storage of RV and other recreational equipment. 2016-2017 was a pretty typical winter for Easton. My neighbor across the street had a Ford truck parked in the open. With over 6 feet of snow accumulating on the roof of the truck , it was severely damaged. Unless the self storage facility is constructed with high pitched roofs to cover their RV's customers would only need one winter before they realized the extreme conditions their investments are being subjected too. High pitched roofs would be unsightly and may create issues for aircraft, hence the very reason that this area is restricted from residences. I understand the owners intent to maximize the use of the property, but the self storage facility proposed at the entrance does nothing to enhance the project and may actually set the project up for failure.

The proposal also includes a campground ostensibly for use by those who store their RV's in the self storage area. I have previously expressed my lay opinion on storage of RV's in Easton's Winters as a very bad idea. It is my opinion that the campground it is also a bad idea. We already have three campgrounds within a mile of the proposed campground (Lake Easton State Park, Lake Easton Resort, and Silver Ridge Ranch). There is also another campground that you should be aware of to see what happens to an area when a campground fails. Please look at the abandoned campground directly to the north east of Turtle Town. At one time this was an ongoing wonderful facility that is now abandoned and with few exceptions, has become a shanty town. Please take a look at this before you move forward on this project. I don't know the full extent of the issues that created its demise but I can recognize blight when I see it. Why would an additional campground further distance from the freeway have a greater chance of success than the Turtle Town.

As I mentioned in Paragraph (2), the Easton Village model is the exact opposite of what is needed in this area. The area is rural, and is currently properly zoned. Creating Easton Village II using a different name of Marion Meadows is a big mistake and will adversely impact nearby property owners.

I also want to describe what happened this past winter with multiple snows and freezing conditions. When I came to my residence on two occasions, there were semi trucks blocking East Sparks. The freeway was closed at exit 70, the trucks pulled off the road only to find that the shell station lot was filled, and covered in ice. They could not turn around so they went further east on East Sparks passing over Silver Creek. When they encountered the slight hill just past Silver Creek they lost traction and spun out. The tractor and trailer totally blocked East Sparks. Unfortunately this is not an isolated instance, as it happened twice this year that I have personal knowledge of. Marion Meadows would have been isolated as East Sparks is the only way to access this property. Had there been a fire or other emergency, emergency personnel would not have been able to reach the area.

An additional impact would be on Kittitas County Public Works. They do an outstanding job pushing East Sparks but often it is not cleared immediately as other roads with higher traffic volumes are given priority. Unless East Sparks is raised in priority and or additional personnel and equipment are used, people in the proposed development will be stranded. At the present time most of the owners of larger lots have their own snow equipment and share in the burden of keeping their roads to East Sparks open. I don't know if the roads in the Marion Meadows will be deeded to the County or will remain in private ownership. One development with similar small lot plans charges nearly \$1000 per year per lot for snow clearing of the private roads in the development. This past year those roads became one lane roads as the snow piled up and the roadways narrowed as there was no place to push the snow. Also the home owners in that development are required to store their own snow on their lots. This is another reason to insure that lot sizes are adequate for both reserve septic fields and for storage of snow as they will likely need both at some point.

An additional impact will be on traffic. Currently East Sparks is the only public Road for access to Easton Village, and the proposed Marion Meadows. I am not sure how many daily trips are taken on that road now but doing a bit of math, 90 residences with one trip away from and one trip back to the residence daily for 365 days would result in  $90 \times 2 \times 365$  which = 65,700 additional trips per year on East Sparks. Annually East Sparks requires shoulder work and repair patches with its current traffic load. With this additional burden, those costs would escalate accordingly.

I am not against allowing the owners to develop their property. But I am against the proposed development plan for all the reasons stated above and many more that could be stated. This is a rural area. The lot sizes need to be large enough to encourage year round residences and families to consider Easton as their homes. The rural nature of the community need to be preserved, and not create Eastern Village II with the attendant problems that continue from that experiment. I am opposed to another campground as we have seen that result and continue to see its impact. . Lets not do that again. Self Storage lots have their place but not as a gate way to a community.

I would like to be kept informed on these proposals as they move through the review process. Please let me know how I might access that information. Please feel free to contact me directly by email or phone should you want additional details.

Sincerely,

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