

Larry D. Swartz  
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July 17, 2024

Jamey Ayling  
Planning Manager  
Kittitas County Community Development Services  
411 N. Ruby Street, Ste 2  
Ellensburg, WA 98926

**Project Name:** Ranch on Swauk Creek Meadows Development Agreement

**Subject:** Written Comments as Requested for Notice of Application (DV-24-00001)

Dear Jamey,

I have reviewed the documents regarding the Ranch at Swauk Creek Notice of Application (DV-24-00001) project and wish to provide feedback and raise several concerns as a homeowner at 681 Fir Tree Drive, Cle Elum.

1. **Traffic Analysis (Exhibit A, Paragraph I):** The documents mention that a traffic analysis will be conducted prior to Phase II. However, I am concerned that the proposed timeline may not allow adequate coordination with all relevant agencies, particularly regarding the intersection of highways 97 and 970. Given the existing congestion and safety issues at this intersection, it is imperative that a thorough traffic analysis is completed before any construction begins. This will allow sufficient time for appropriate measures to be proposed and implemented to mitigate potential impacts on residents and travelers.
2. **Wetland and Wildlife Study (Exhibit A, Paragraph V.F):** It is indicated that a study on wetlands and wildlife will be required and completed. I request clarification on whether this study has been conducted and if the results are available for review. Given the presence of Swauk Creek and its potential habitat for ESA-listed species like salmon and bull trout, as well as significant wildlife such as owls, deer, elk, bear, cougar, and badgers in the area, it is crucial that environmental assessments are thoroughly reviewed before construction proceeds.
3. **Water System Requirements (Exhibit A, Paragraph VII.C, D, E):** The documents suggest the need for a Group A water system with fire hydrants, which is essential for a project of this scale (over 240 homes). This is particularly critical considering the fire hazards posed by the surrounding forested areas. I have noted a discrepancy in the understanding of water system requirements, as indicated in the letter dated January 19, 2024, from Chad Bala. Clarification is needed on which specific codes permit reliance solely on residential fire sprinklers without ensuring system-wide storage and fire hydrants. It is important to emphasize that while fire sprinklers protect individual homes, they do not provide the necessary water supply for firefighters to combat larger fires effectively. The absence of adequate fire hydrants will impact insurance premiums for the

future homeowners and other homeowners in the area, which have already escalated due to increased wildfire risks.

Addressing these concerns proactively before construction commencement will demonstrate a commitment to community well-being and responsible development practices.

I kindly request timely notification of the public hearing and would appreciate the opportunity to discuss these matters further.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Larry D. Swartz". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Larry D. Swartz