

To: Whom it may concern

April 14, 2022

From: Kevin Curd  
721 Hyak Dr. E.  
Snoqualmie Pass, Wa. 98068

Regarding: Reasonable Use Exception RU-22-00002 East Peak

I am writing in regards to the proposal from East Peak development to reduce the recommended wetland and stream setbacks. They also are proposing a change in their original design, which would see the condominium building move from the South end of the area to the North.

In regards to the reduced wetland buffer, I find it odd that none of the documentation seems to specify the final reduced buffer. The original buffer for a type 3 wetland is indicated at 150 feet plus 15 foot setback. In looking at the Proposed Site Plan the distance is not called out, but it appears that the type 3 wetland buffer has been reduced from 150 feet to 25 feet with a ten foot building setback. This seems to be an extreme reduction in the buffer zone. A total reduction of approximately 125 feet. The primary reason for the reduction does not appear to have any environmental rational. The only reason given in asking for the reasonable use exception is that East Peak development would like to maximize their financial return on this project. Nowhere in the wetland evaluation does it mention that this is a newly created wetland, so it must be assumed that this wetland was present when East Peak originally purchased this land and it would seem that they should have conducted due diligence prior to purchasing this particular plat. It does not seem that Kittitas County should be required to waive environmental standards solely that East Peak can maximize its profit. With regards to the current real estate market it would seem probable that, even if the buildable plat is reduced by 40 to 50 percent, the project should maintain a healthy profit.

It would seem that if concessions are made by Kittitas County to reduce the buffer that it should be the County who determines the buffer reduction and that the County should not just rubber stamp plans based on the developer's best interest.

In reading the Wetland Buffer enhancement plan, I noted that it stated that the wetlands would be cleaned of gravel. My concern is that the wetland would continue to see snow removal thrown onto the enhanced buffer. In fact with reduced area for snow removal due to the new buildings, the wetland area would more than likely become the primary snow holding area for the parking lot resulting in a further degradation of the wetland area.

Since I live in lower Hyak, one of my chief concerns has always been any changes that affect water run-off. Currently E Hyak drive at its low point usually floods annually causing the homeowners to sandbag or dyke their driveways. This is typically a winter event where we see periods of heavy rain. With drainage ditches full of snow the water jumps from the ditches to the roadway. The county has already commented that the approved 2018 plans may be inadequate for stormwater drainage. It would seem that maximizing the wetland area would be beneficial to water runoff.

In regards to flipping the design layout, with the condominium at the North end, it appears that this may have a negative effect for the existing residential homes on Chamonix Pl. Nowhere in the plans does it indicate the height of the proposed condo, but I would imagine that having a 40 to 60 foot tall building will have a detrimental effect on existing housing located due west and north of the condo.

It is important to note that Snoqualmie Pass is a biologically diverse zone. We have seen considerable effort by Washington state to increase wildlife connectivity and enhance wildlife corridors. With Hyak bordering on a major wildlife corridor it would seem that decisions about reducing wetland buffers would be looked at with a more critical eye than perhaps a development situated in an urban environment.

Sincerely,  
Kevin Curd