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March 2, 2023

Kelly Bacon
Kittitas County Community Development Services
411 N Ruby St., Suite 2
Ellensburg, WA 98926

RECEIVED
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Kittitas County CDS

Subject: Project File Number CU-23-00001 3 BR Custom Cuts

Dear Ms. Bacon,

I am writing to voice my concern over the proposed commercial slaughterhouse, located in the residential area off Wilson Creek Road. This business will have a tremendous impact on our neighborhood, as well as the greater Ellensburg community. The impact on the environment will be overwhelming. There are numerous studies and research available, that indicates slaughter and processing facilities pose unique problems, inherent to their business. Placing it in a residential community, so close to the city of Ellensburg, is irresponsible and abhorrent.

Why is it irresponsible and abhorrent? Let me start with the scope of the business. The application states that this will be a small, "niche," operation. However, it appears that the investment to facilitate such a business is costly. How would the owners service a significant financial investment, with just harvesting a few heads every week? It's also being praised as providing good paying jobs and having a positive economic impact on the county. Wouldn't this be considered a commercial operation then? And why wouldn't they have future expansion plans? Was that ever discussed? Is this site zoned for a major commercial business? When they expand the facility, do they have enough land to hold and feed the live animals before harvesting? Will this turn into a feedlot? What else could be included? Has a thorough, responsible planning process been done?

What about the responsibility to the multi-generational families that have lived and continue to live in this area? Studies show that home values decrease significantly within a mile radius of slaughterhouses. Many are relying on this for their retirement and a peaceful way of life.

And the list for abhorrence is extensive, beginning with the environment and neighborhood. How is a slaughterhouse ever good for the environment or neighborhoods? The stench from waiting animals, as it sounds like multiple species will be harvested, will be horrible and far reaching. With our wind and weather patterns, you know the smell will impact the entire valley. And how will they manage the different species? I only see one holding pen on the permit. From the stench, you go to noise of animals being hauled in, to the traffic issues that will be caused, to the sounds of all the machinery necessary to run this operation. The flies, rodents, and coyotes being attracted to this type of operation will overrun the area.

How will our water supply be protected from the onslaught necessary to support this business? And not just the supply, but protection from the wastewater going into our yards and creeks that ultimately feed the Yakima River? I have lived here for 15 years and every year that parcel has flooded. How will these sensitive lands and salmon bearing creeks survive?

In addition to my previous comments, here are a few of my specific questions and concerns:

1. How will the traffic be managed from Wilson Creek to this location?
 - a. How will trucks be able to enter and exit the property from Wilson Creek, without a turn lane and shoulders?
2. How will the safety of pedestrians and bike traffic be assured on Wilson Creek?
3. How will children, waiting for the school bus, be protected from large trucks and debris flowing from these trucks?
4. How will the proposed septic system handle the huge waste that will be generated from the slaughtering of the animals?
5. How will the current well system handle the water supply necessary to service a slaughterhouse?
6. How will the historical flooding of the property be managed?
7. How will animal waste products be kept from getting into Lyle and Wilson Creeks?
8. How will the air pollution from the animals waiting to be killed be managed?
9. How will the influx of flies and rodents be managed?
10. How will the noise from cattle haulers be managed?
11. How will the noise from HVAC systems on the buildings be managed in this residential community?
12. How will the designated sensitive areas be handled?
13. Will other livestock, besides cattle be processed?
 - a. If so, how will that affect the proposed septic system design? Do you have to have separate systems for separate animals?
14. What is the maximum number of slaughters that will be performed in week?
15. Are there plans for expansion?
 - a. If so, what is the maximum number of livestock expected on the property, at full expansion?

I sincerely hope you do a full investigation of this proposal and conclude, that it would be better placed, elsewhere. Please put yourself into the shoes of the families that would have to live next to this facility. And ask, would you want it next to you and your family?

Thank you for your time and efforts.

Sincerely,


Deborah Whitman