

June 1, 2021

City of Bellingham

Bellingham Planning Commission

RE: City View Development Proposal

I am opposed to the City View Dormitory Housing project proposal to be located in the Puget Neighborhood being considered by the City of Bellingham Planning Department. I believe this proposal comes now as a result of a failure to mitigate the situation with appropriate zoning clarifications five years ago when we had a very similar 'rooming house/dorm' dwelling project, known as University Ridge, proposed. The current City View project is even more objectionable than University Ridge by virtue of it's out of bounds size and height. Our neighborhood has been, with a few reasonable exceptions, an established single family home residential community for more than 50 years. These are decidedly middle income houses occupied by middle income earners. It is a family centric neighborhood. It is a neighborhood where we know our neighbors, their children and if they are elderly, what their special needs are. We help each other. I said this in my communications to the City over five years ago and I repeat it now: Puget Neighborhood is the quintessential example of the middle class American home owner dream. Veterans, teachers, attorneys, GP workers, nurses, police and fire staff, Western staff, contractors and small business owners are some of the types of achievers and taxpayers who saved and saved for their down payments. They are the backbone of the economy locally and nationally. They aren't speculators or 'house flippers'. And, they are most definitely not opportunists driven by profit only intentions. They are the 40+ hours a week working families who strive to make a home and community the best place they can. They and I did not do all this for a lifetime only to find a massive pricey dormitory/transitory housing project sprouting up and towering over our homes after having been approved as appropriate by the Planning Department. The mantra and determination to infill Bellingham must not cause ruinous harm to the existing character of our neighborhoods.

I watch nearly all the City Council Meetings, County Council Meetings and some Planning Commission Meetings on BTV. I am, as are my neighbors, grateful for the efforts of those who serve our community. We appreciate the need for genuinely affordable housing. Historically, affordable housing has always been a societal challenge. I am a big fan of the efforts for infill in Vancouver BC with a strategic eye for well planned urban living for families. It has been a success except for the pesky issue of affordability. I do favor more buildings going up in height especially for low income/mixed income (preferably) housing where the location is decidedly urban and appropriate to the needs of the population.

I am also supportive of former Governor Christine Gregoire's Challenge Seattle group. Their focus is toward the rarely mentioned at Council Meetings affordable middle income home building. While I realize that Planning's mission is DENSITY, I favor the efforts by Kulshan Land Trust to build single family starter homes at the most affordable price possible. The land where City View is proposed to be built on would be ideal for such housing. Two story duplexes or row style multi houses would also be

appropriate for the neighborhood and would not be objected to by area residents. And equally as important, would not cause negative environmental impacts.

Realistically there is not a current shortage of buildable land for a project like City View even closer to the University. There is land perfectly suited on Lincoln Street. There will be properties on Samish for such projects. In my opinion Samish construction should all be many more floors in height than is currently being constructed. There is land west of I-5 and I understand that Western is endeavoring to build more student housing. Additionally, one more consideration that should be made by the City is the impending influx of ADU/DADA's in and around this area and throughout Bellingham. I hope to find it in my budget at some point to convert this house to accommodate a separate living quarters in my lower level with a two bedroom rental unit. One of my neighbors recently remodeled and added a new ADU for rental purposes. Several more in my area are in process. This is the future for many homeowners and will have significant positive impacts on reducing housing shortages for persons who would like to reside in a residential neighborhood away from dense apartment living at an affordable price.

Former Mayor Linville lamented that the Puget Neighborhood "was zoned multi-family/single family many many decades ago". However it was never intended that the Puget neighborhood would become a student dormitory style housing location. Three bedroom/bathroom units, each bedroom with their own lease contract is no different than dorm/rooming house models.

There is a long list of valid and serious concerns including but not limited to: extremely steep slope, wetlands, fire response (severely limited effective access for emergency and fire vehicles), excessive traffic in very narrow streets, offensive and disturbing all night long lighting, lack of adequate parking and cars parking and blocking area private properties, noise, invasion of privacy due to the height and position of the structures, flooding and instability from the construction on such a steep slope, not to mention that it would be a hideous out of place eyesore.

I am not anti student or anti renter. I've been both as have my children. Several houses surrounding mine are currently occupied by renters. I welcome them as my neighbors no differently from a property owner. My strong opposition to City View is based on the structure and nature of the housing type. In no way will this complex do anything to assist the City of Bellingham toward low income/density housing. It is geared to be a highly profitable private pricy dorm-style temporary residence/massive structure amongst humble single family beloved homes. This is a purely profit driven plan by a developer with no regard for the long list of harmful impacts to the environment and residents. Approval of such a proposal would be a travesty and a betrayal to the Puget Neighborhood community. It is my understanding that the City of Bellingham has a mandate to preserve the character of the diverse neighborhoods named and established by the City Council.

We are the people who have strived to be good and contributing community members. For decades we have voted to approve school, park, EMT, and projects levies for the 'greater good of our Bellingham' even though dollars are limited. There must be a best intentions compact with and from the City. The "rights" of a developer does not include the potential devastation of the surrounding area of a development. Please don't lose sight of basic values of respecting the residents. We are not asking for

anything costly or unreasonable from our City. I urge the Planning Department to make every possible careful and reasonable consideration to protect and preserve the upper Puget area and ask that you not approve the City View application.

Very truly,

Susan Bayer
825 Queen Street
Bellingham, WA 98229



Public Comment

Name

Courtenay McFadden

Full name or organization

Your name is required for identification as a part of the public record.

Choose Topic

CityView Project

Topics available for online public comment are listed above. If no topics are listed, there may be opportunities for public comment on various topics through email, letters, and public comment periods during meetings.

More information on this topic can be found at <https://www.cob.org/cityview>

Comment or Testimony

I have major concerns for this development beyond the traffic congestion. I live in the neighborhood below the planned site for this and feel so lucky to live in a neighborhood with new young families. I have lived here for the last 11 years and I've watched the neighborhood blossom from being filled with college rentals to becoming first time homes for young families like myself. This apartment project is aimed for student housing and you cannot deny that. I was in college once (at western) and I know what it looks like, feels like, and how college kids act. I do not want our quite quaint neighborhood to become filled with loud college kids who drive fast, party and have no regard for the young families and kids around the neighborhood. I also have lived in all sorts of neighborhoods throughout Bellingham and have seen with an area heavy in student housing/student rentals petty crime rates have increased. In those high rental neighborhoods I have had 3 houses broken into and my car broken in multiple times. I feel safe in our neighborhood and don't need an increase in petty crime bc of the student rentals.

This apartment complex will change the beautiful dynamic of the neighborhood - the young families with kids playing on the streets, families walking and enjoying the outside, to a traffic heavy, fast driving highway. We don't need that. As mentioned, this neighborhood has changed over the years from rentals to young families with children. Let's keep it that way please.

Files

Documents or images related to your comments.

Email

courtenay.mcfadden@gmail.com

Your email address will only be used to send you a copy of this comment and any official notifications related to this topic.

Date

6/3/2021



Public Comment

Name

Morgan Bartlett

Full name or organization

Your name is required for identification as a part of the public record.

Choose Topic

CityView Project

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Comment or Testimony

Please see attached aerial as a reference for this evening's Planning Commission Meeting.

Files

15) CityView Aerial.pdf

Documents or images related to your comments.

Email

morgan@madronabayllc.com

Your email address will only be used to send you a copy of this comment and any official notifications related to this topic.

Date

6/3/2021



Puget Street

Trail to S. 46th St.

Marionberry Court

Nevada Street

Consolidation Avenue



Public Comment

Name

RJ Halloran

Full name or organization

Your name is required for identification as a part of the public record.

Choose Topic

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Comment or Testimony

This project attempts to solve a dire problem that our city is currently facing. Bellingham is in the midst of a housing and homelessness crisis, and anyone seeking to provide shelter for people without should be applauded. However, the proposal as it stands lacks efficacy, for multiple reasons.

First, the concept of private dormitories has been a proven failure. Lark (formerly NXNW) and Elevate (formerly Gather) are examples of the lack of demand for this type of housing. Students at Western Washington University don't want to live in overpriced housing projects; they want affordable apartments, 2-5 bedroom houses, and 2-4 unit converted homes. Every person who has searched Craigslist and Facebook for a bedroom in Bellingham for the last 3 years knows they can always find a sublet at Lark or Elevate, as the current tenants find the properties don't have the value to match their high price. It's impossible to imagine that a similar complex, with a view of the city and Bellingham Bay, would be able to keep costs low enough to create affordable student housing.

The scale of the project is also problematic. We absolutely need to increase the density of housing, but the proposed 4-story building with 400 tenants needs to be downsized significantly, if not abandoned altogether. A project this size would affect the neighborhood in a variety of ways, including increases in traffic, hydrological, and environmental impacts. A less tangible concern of mine is the change in status quo that happens when 400 college sophomores drop in an established community. A healthy balance of college students, young professionals, families, and retirees have found a way to thrive together and build community in the Puget neighborhood. As a recent college graduate (WWU '17) I am highly aware of the need for an increase in the housing supply for college students. I also recognize that I am a much different neighbor now than I was back in 2015, when I witnessed several people my age drunkenly climbing through backyards and vandalizing property. I live within earshot of a family that has a trampoline in their yard, and it always brings me great joy to hear the kids (and sometimes parents) bounce around, making memories that will last a lifetime. I can easily see a scenario where exclamations of glee turn to screams of horror as an inebriated CityView resident decides that a trampoline at 10pm is a shared amenity for all living in the neighborhood. Other less-than-ideal scenarios I can envision are students driving to campus in a hurry to make their 8am class (because the project is not adjacent to public transit) and as they speed down Consolidation Avenue, they hit the dog I frequently see walking off-leash, or perhaps that dog's human guardian. Though they may sound extreme, these extrapolations must be considered; because while of course events such as these can and will happen as the city grows, their likelihood increases with this brand of development.

This project has come this far in the planning stages because the developers are hoping for a liberal application of city building standards. Let us take the opportunity to consider the full impact of the project, err on the side of caution, and protect the financial and cultural investment of the current homeowners and residents. I urge the planning commission to restrict the scale of this project to the absolute smallest possible size, and I plead with the developers to reconsider the location of this project or find a more suitable way to develop the land. There is a way to still create housing, create jobs and profit from this land, and mitigate impacts to the community to a tolerable level.

Files

Documents or images related to your comments.

Email

roberthalloranservice@gmail.com

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Date

6/3/2021



Public Comment

Name

Thomas Dohman

Full name or organization

Your name is required for identification as a part of the public record.

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Comment or Testimony

I am a resident of Samish Neighborhood and have a keen interest in how the CityView project - if approved - will impact both the Puget & Samish neighborhoods.
I have followed many of the twists & turns of the proposed CityView Project Development since the original public meeting held by the developer to begin to inform interested & concerned neighbors. Given the numerous deficiencies related to this housing development - which in nearly all respects lean toward negative impacts due primarily to the size & location of this structure - I am hopeful that this project will not be approved for this particular site.

Files

Documents or images related to your comments.

Email

tokadohma@gmail.com

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Date

6/3/2021

Aven, Heather M.

From: Christopher Jensen <chrisoramy@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, June 3, 2021 10:02 PM
To: Grp.PL.Planning And Development Commission
Subject: Cityview

I have been watching you discuss the proposed Cityview College Dormitory. It's very depressing because it is obvious that, with the exception of Scott Jones, none of you cares about the average citizen. You are more concerned with your ideological agendas. You didn't hear a word any of us said. Oh, except Mr. Bartlett. You heard *him* just fine.

Anyway, it was clear that the meeting was for show only. Again, with the exception of Mr. Jones. He seems to care about people.

Thanks,
Christopher Jensen



Public Comment

Name

Dick Conoboy

Full name or organization

Your name is required for identification as a part of the public record.

Choose Topic

CityView Project

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Comment or Testimony

Notably, the developer is asking for the "option" of doing construction in 2 phases, essentially buildings A and B (the two smaller buildings) and the foundation of building C (with 60 units), followed at some indeterminate time by building C in its entirety. What this tells me is that financing might be a problem and that building C may very possibly remain as a bare foundation to collect dirt, debris and graffiti for years to come. Worse yet financing may fail while the development of the first phase is ongoing and the neighborhood will be left with a gaping hole in the stand of trees, bull-dozed land and the sight of construction detritus for years.

Files

Documents or images related to your comments.

Email

riton@comcast.net

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Date

6/4/2021



Public Comment

Name

Cathleen Cunniff

Full name or organization

Your name is required for identification as a part of the public record.

Choose Topic

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Comment or Testimony

As a current homeowner on Nevada Street, I attended the city planning meeting last night, June 3rd, on ZOOM. I did not speak during the ZOOM meeting but have sent in other written comments in 2020 about City View. I am writing today because I continue to be vehemently opposed to this project. It is just plain wrong for our neighborhood. The changes that the developers made and highlighted in their presentation last night do not come close to alleviating the concerns of neighbors on Nevada Street who will be living in the shadow of this huge development. The sheer size of these buildings is the issue. They will LOOM over the single family homes on Nevada Street. Adding a little more open space, trees and vegetation will not give our neighbors the privacy and residential enjoyment they deserve to have. Besides losing the visual privacy, they will face the noise, the light pollution, the slamming car doors, the parties, the loud voices and music at all hours which will travel easily into their backyards and windows. At the heart of the matter is the right of current Bellingham residents, who have paid taxes and supported this community for years and years, to enjoy their own homes and neighborhood. I understand the need for the planning committee members to be impartial and logical in their analysis in last night's meeting, but it upset me very much that there was a lack of empathy for what these homeowners and residents are facing. Someone on the planning committee said something about "well, this kind of development needs to be built somewhere." As if that is the most important fact. Currently there are hundreds of new apartment units coming available in Bellingham. Do we need this development to be built? Is there a demand not being met by all the other projects currently coming to fruition? Maybe when City View was first proposed there appeared to be a need. Now that so many units have been built and are being built, I think it's a fair question to ask if these units are needed. There was also a committee member's comment about how everyone says "not in my backyard." Well, in this case the buildings in question are huge monstrosities that don't belong next to 2 story single family homes. I do not think that the neighbors on Nevada Street are closed to all development. They just want development that fits this neighborhood that is decades old and is well established with single family homes. There was talk last night that the city made a mistake allowing only the single family homes to be built, that they should have included more multifamily homes in the areas, so that this situation didn't happen. But the problem is, it has happened. This is a long established neighborhood with single family homes, and it has character, scale and integrity. Are the neighbors now going to have to pay the price because the city of Bellingham didn't go about the development of the neighborhood in a smarter way including the multifamily housing sooner? It seems incredibly wrong to make the neighbors on Nevada Street have to pay such a high price- their home values, their privacy, their enjoyment of their home and property, and at the most extreme level, potentially even their safety and the safety of their families. While the city must consider the rights of the developer to build this project and make the money they are striving to make, they need to give weight and concern also for the human beings who are currently living in this neighborhood. I assure you that if this project is built, that many of our neighbors will leave. They will be driven out by the city's desire to put a developers priorities over the people who have already been calling this area home, who have contributed taxes and support to make our neighborhood and city a community. Those future residents, those future profits, will take precedence over common sense that says City View is too large, too out of character for this neighborhood. I would like to mention that the core issue here is the density allowed for the property. The density numbers used by the city of Bellingham are phantom numbers without solid backing or verification. I heard in last night's meeting that the city is "looking into" how the density numbers were originally decided upon, what the history is behind the numbers. My question is, why is it taking the city of Bellingham so long to get to the bottom of the density numbers? The neighborhood association raised this question months and months ago. The question is simple- How did the city come up with the density and what process did they use? Who was involved and how was the public notified

Files

Documents or images related to your comments.

Email

cmcunniff@yahoo.com

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Date

6/4/2021



Public Comment

Name

David and Madeleine Baines

Full name or organization

Your name is required for identification as a part of the public record.

Choose Topic

CityView Project

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Comment or Testimony

To the Planning Commission, further to a previous letter expressing concerns re drainage and construction on the hillside above Nevada Street and Marionberry Court, we believe it is time for an end to this and all future similar projects. This has been hanging over our heads like the sword of Damocles, and has become like a festering disease. Access for emergency vehicles is minimal at best and in an emergency situation, chaos could ensue.

When we bought our home in 2003 on Marionberry Court, the realtor told us that the adjacent land is designated wetland and cannot be built on. Maybe that's as much as he knew then.

Regarding your expressed concerns last night for affordable housing in Bellingham, please don't lose sight that it is good paying jobs which are the fuel of an area's economy. Bring back the lost jobs, back off the green frenzy and you will see the desired turn around.

One other fact that must be straightened out is from the original zoning which resulted in the multi family portion being built on safer ground further downhill, leaving the upland for single family residences.

sincerely, Madeleine and David Baines, 4417 Marionberry Court. Bellingham 98229

Files

Documents or images related to your comments.

Email

davidbaines1212@gmail.com

Your email address will only be used to send you a copy of this comment and any official notifications related to this topic.

Date

6/4/2021



Public Comment

Name

Erik Bernhoft

Full name or organization

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Choose Topic

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Comment or Testimony

I would like to express my support of the opinions of the Puget Neighborhood Working Group in opposition to the proposed Cityview Project.

Cityview is:

1) Inappropriately placed, towering over the homes of Nevada St. only ~100ft away at times. This proposal is disrespectfully and disproportionately close to the homes of Nevada St and Marionberry Ct with the parking lots of these apartments laying just over 50ft from the foundations of the adjacent homes!!!

2) Out of character of the Upper Puget Neighborhood. (1-2 story homes and small/medium multifamily complexes stepped immediately to a 5 story mega-tower perched on the hillside)

3) A disproportionately dense dormitory style 2 apartment, suited for college campus, surrounded by a sea of small family homes.

4) Would overly strain fragile neighborhood roadways (despite what the developer's strategically biased traffic study may claim) and further tax the already troubled intersections of the narrow Lincoln St and Nevada St with Lakeway Dr. Traffic lights at both intersections would be absolutely necessary as well as considerable widening and improvement of both streets

No reasonable person can look at the plans & scope of the Cityview project and honestly believe that this is an appropriate scaled development for this neighborhood. I implore you not to saddle the upper Puget Neighborhood with this disproportionate, battleship sized dormitory complex.

-Erik Bernhoft

Files

Documents or images related to your comments.

Email

ebernhofthotmail.com

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Date

6/4/2021



Public Comment

Name

Tim Erfle

Full name or organization

Your name is required for identification as a part of the public record.

Choose Topic

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Comment or Testimony

I have lived in the Samish Neighborhood for over 10 years off of Consolidation Ave on South 42nd. Consolidation Ave cannot safely accommodate the additional traffic as would be generated by a huge apartment complex. My daughter has to walk on Consolidation to get to her bus stop, and I do not feel that it would be safe for her to do this with the additional traffic.

The scale of this project does not match that of the neighborhood. There will be parking issues in an already crowded area, the privacy will be affected by the height and close proximity of the proposed buildings. We have occasional prowls in our vehicle and stolen property, this apartment complex would not help with that issue.

A development of this size, in this area, provides no positive aspects or benefits the neighborhood in any way.

Please reconsider this development.

Files

Documents or images related to your comments.

Email

tim.erfle@gmail.com

Your email address will only be used to send you a copy of this comment and any official notifications related to this topic.

Date

6/5/2021



Public Comment

Name

George F. Sanders

Full name or organization

Your name is required for identification as a part of the public record.

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Comment or Testimony

Planning Commission 03Jun21--Loss of Parking Consolidation Ave.pdf

New graphic showing affected households with front doors facing unmarked alley.

Files

Planning Commission 03Jun21--Loss of Parking Consolidation Ave.pdf

Documents or images related to your comments.

Email

gsanders@openaccess.org

Your email address will only be used to send you a copy of this comment and any official notifications related to this topic.

Date

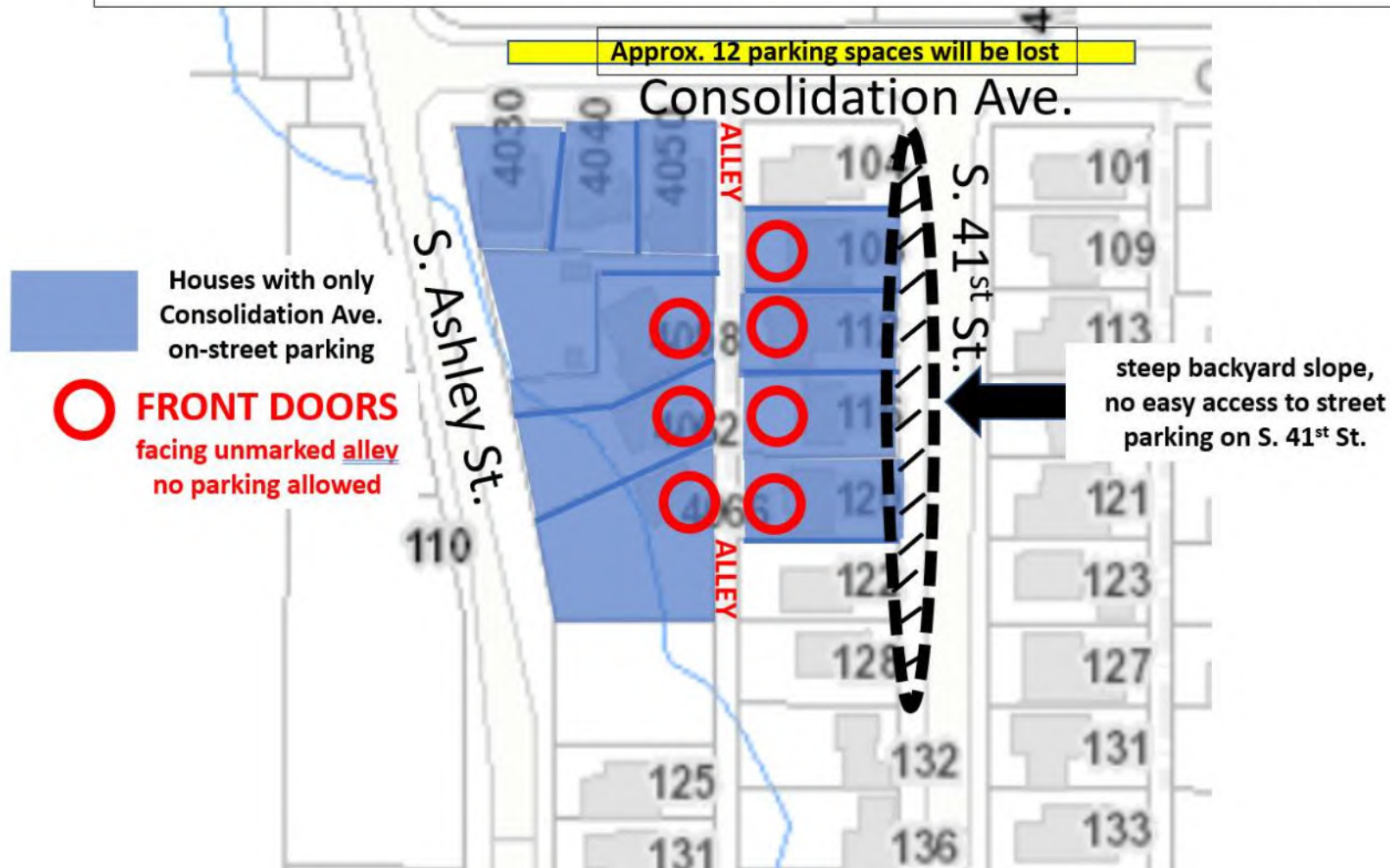
6/5/2021

Comments before Planning Commission, June 3, 2021 (excerpts)

"My name is George F. Sanders. I am a Licensed Engineering Geologist. I have lived at 4062 Consolidation Ave for 20 years.

My house is located in a narrow alley without street parking. The only overflow street parking available to my guests are the approximately dozen parking places currently existing along the steepest portion of Consolidation Ave. and it is simply too steep and too narrow for big tandem trucks (or WTA busses) to transit safely. The City of Bellingham's construction of traffic-calming devices on Nevada Street now leaves only a single choke point on Consolidation Ave. for thousands of tandem haul truck trips if this project is approved. This is a very dangerous situation, and It's guaranteed that the first thing to go will be the neighborhood's parking spaces on Consolidation Ave."

steep hill, too narrow for trucks to safely pass





Public Comment

Name

Stanley J. Hodson

Full name or organization

Your name is required for identification as a part of the public record.

Choose Topic

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Comment or Testimony

CityView Dormitory Project

June 1, 2021

To Whom It May Concern:

We own the home and live at 120 South 46th Street, Bellingham, WA 98229, next door to Lon and Susan Swan.

We moved here in 2020, attracted by the relatively quiet residential nature of the neighborhood. If we had wanted to live next to hundreds of college students (or unrelated individuals living three to a unit), then there were places nearer the WWU campus we could have chosen.

We oppose the CityView Dormitory Project for the same reasons (unsuitability of neighborhood location, intractable auto and parking issues, and incompatibility of scale) stated in Lon and Susan's May 31, 2021 email submitted to cityview@cob.org

Sincerely,

Stan and Victoria Hodson
120 South 46th Street
Bellingham, WA 98229
(805) 701-0757
stanhodson1118@aol.com
victoria.hodson@sbcglobal.net

Files

Documents or images related to your comments.

Email

stanhodson1118@aol.com

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Date

6/5/2021



Public Comment

Name

Beth Kealy

Full name or organization

Your name is required for identification as a part of the public record.

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Comment or Testimony

The size and scope of the CityView Dormitory Style apartments proposed does not fit with the character off the Puget Neighborhood. The increased noise, traffic, and people getting in and out of that space would significantly impact the neighborhood negatively. I firmly apprise the project. As a resident of this neighborhood for 13 years and the Bellingham area for 30 years, I believe the location is not a good fit for this large a project.

Files

Documents or images related to your comments.

Email

bkealy4@q.com

Your email address will only be used to send you a copy of this comment and any official notifications related to this topic.

Date

6/6/2021

Aven, Heather M.

From: Debbie Easton <ddeaston55@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, June 7, 2021 8:05 AM
To: Grp.PL.Planning And Development Commission; planningdepartment@cob.org
Cc: MY - mayorsoffice@cob.org; CC - Shared Department
Subject: Proposed Development, CityView, Between Nevada and Puget Streets (Hawley Tract)

Dear Bellingham City Officials,

After attending the Bellingham Planning Commission's meeting concerning to the CityView project on Thursday, June 3rd, I felt the need to express my grave concerns about the proposal again.

Environmental and lifestyle goals for Bellingham have been established by the community and city officials. The CityView proposal is counter to those goals. Numerous multifamily projects are under construction around the city that do embrace those goals. Single-family housing construction in Bellingham is limited and that is where we have a need. Please reject the CityView proposal and encourage development of single-family houses on that site.

Martin Bartlett, the applicant/developer, spoke stressing this is the right housing for families, single adults and college students. I believe rent cost, lack of services nearby and high density will keep families from choosing CityView. It will remain a dormitory style apartment complex too expensive for students. Martin's proposal should have identified the project as LU25, Off-Campus Housing, and targeted in a more appropriate location.

I would like to respond to comments made by Planning Commission members on June 3rd in defense of multifamily housing at this site:

"Today many single-family houses in the area are rentals for college students." As a resident familiar with my neighbors, I can say I know of no college students currently renting those houses. Single adults and families who are tired of the apartment style living are renting homes in Puget to gain space, yards and a garage. There is a shortage of single-family housing in Bellingham pushing purchase prices out of reach for many forcing residents into single-family rentals. We need to develop more single-family homes. The CityView site would be great for that development.

"The area is zoned multifamily. The single-family houses on Nevada were just built first. Now those residents don't want their lives affected by CityView." The feedback provided by the public has made it clear that the area should never have been zoned multifamily. Neighbor Don Diebert explained that Puget requested zoning information in 2019. A new zoning code for Puget is needed.

Drainage, Wetlands and Geo-Hazards

Jed Ballow suggested the engineers Martin Bartlett has hired to review these categories should be trusted to determine if the project meets the City of Bellingham's requirements. My question is, are current city requirements adequate to guarantee no damage or loss to the neighborhood will occur from land-slides, earthquakes, falling trees or drainage during or post-development? Who will replace my house if a landslide destroys it as a result of approving this construction in the wrong location? I would like the Planning Department and Director to enforce extreme safety requirements, not minimum.

I have serious concerns about ground stability from this development. Each winter water runs off the hill and across Nevada between Consolidation and Byron streets. If the temperature drops, it freezes into a sheet of ice. This condition will only be exacerbated by disturbing the environment.

Steve Sundin showed an Erosion Hazard and Landslide map and said there is "no threat" around the CityView buildings. But the map clearly showed red and gray hazardous areas just above the houses on Nevada Street

and along Puget Street above the buildings. This map needs further scrutiny! Any ground slide or flooding at those locations will have a disastrous effect on structures in the path!

Steve Sundin also said no new storm drains were needed for the project; current storm drains are expected to handle all the run off. How is that possible with runoff water already crossing the road?

Traffic, Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety

The CityView location has no convenient bus access. Scott Jones suggested the counsel look at compliance with Bellingham's goals for transit. The nearest WTA site is 4/10 of a mile downhill from the development. How does a family with children bring groceries uphill that distance from the bus? It is not reasonable for a college student to carry groceries and books that distance either. The transit support for this site is insufficient.

In 2018 Bellingham installed "calming features" on Nevada Street. These features have created more danger to pedestrians, bicyclists and cars by narrowing the street. Chris Como from Transit said these "calming features" have made Nevada Street safer and able to handle this new influx of traffic. It is clear he does not drive that street! These concrete islands located a few feet from the sidewalk have reduced parking and provide a narrow passage requiring one car to stop allowing the other car to pass. This often results in the most aggressive driver pushing through first. Speed bumps would have slowed traffic and been much safer without damaging the aesthetics of the neighborhood!

Chris stated "The developer will pay fees to the city for transportation issues outside Nevada." That is great for those areas but Nevada will be a nightmare. Early darkness and bad weather in winter already create a challenge for drivers to see pedestrians and bicyclists on Nevada Street. Adding 700 new people to that mix on such a limited road is a disaster waiting to happen. The traffic study conducted for this project was done during off peak times and is not adequate.

Ali Taysi said sidewalks were added to Nevada in 2018. This is not completely true. The area of Nevada Street North to Lakeway only has a complete sidewalk on the East side. Pedestrians and bicycles are in the street on the West side from Thimbleberry Place to Lakeway where no sidewalks exist. When Ali was asked about sidewalks on Puget Street, he said there are none and it would be too expensive to retrieve easements and it would make Puget Street residents unhappy.

The proposed street leading to CityView is slated to have parking on one side, a 15% grade and be 12 feet wide. Concerns exist about emergency services access through this congested street. Every minute counts when someone is waiting for aid.

Safety for all has to be our first priority in Bellingham neighborhoods. I plead with the Planning Director and Planning Department to stop the development of CityView at this location. It puts people and homes at risk with no gain other than profit for the developer. CityView would work at a different location with available services and less environmental destruction.

Sincerely,

Debbie Easton
4206 Thimbleberry Place
Bellingham, WA 98229

Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10

Aven, Heather M.

From: alan schwartz <alschwartzart@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, June 7, 2021 1:56 PM
To: Grp.PL.Planning And Development Commission
Subject: CityView Comments
Attachments: 5UpBv25ZQp6O62LQh7zTwA.MOV

Thank you for allowing us the extra time to submit more comments. After watching some of the meeting and hearing other comments there are a few more areas I'd like to address.

First and foremost I live at 4410 Consolidation so the proposed project is directly out my front door.

One thing I'd like to address is 45th Street. Has anyone discussed this adjacent undeveloped street? Its the forest on the other side of the road. Basically South of what would be the extension of Consolidation and between 44th and 46th. This a beautiful forest with a path that connects to Samish Crest Trail network and park land. But the reality is its several lots owned by other developers. In fact one was recently up for sale. Its basically an undeveloped 45th street on the city parcel map (see attached) My question is how can you guarantee this wouldn't this get developed once Consolidation is extended?

And that being the case, in direct response to some of the planning commission thinking the project is better than single family development because it 'preserves 50%' more green space, I say in no way is that accurate. In fact, I'd say that statement and thought process lacks serious foresight. If 45th Street were to also be developed then the entire 'green corridor' would be shut off. Period. And regarding single home development, I'm sure the city could also manage sensible planning and permitting in this sensitive area if need be.

On the topic of green space. Since the trail into the forest literally starts in my driveway, I have keen insight as to how valued this forest is to both the community and the animals and wildlife. I can say for a fact multiple people a day recreate here. They jog, walk, hike, bike, birdwatch, dog walk, and use this green space all day, every day. Its essentially the community park because there is none. Regarding animals, its a forest, so deer, raccoon, squirrel, rabbit, songbirds, owls, eagles, etc.. all live there too. I see these most everyday as well. In fact just before I sat down to write this a deer walked up Consolidation street and into the forest where it belongs. (see attached) And this happens most every day.

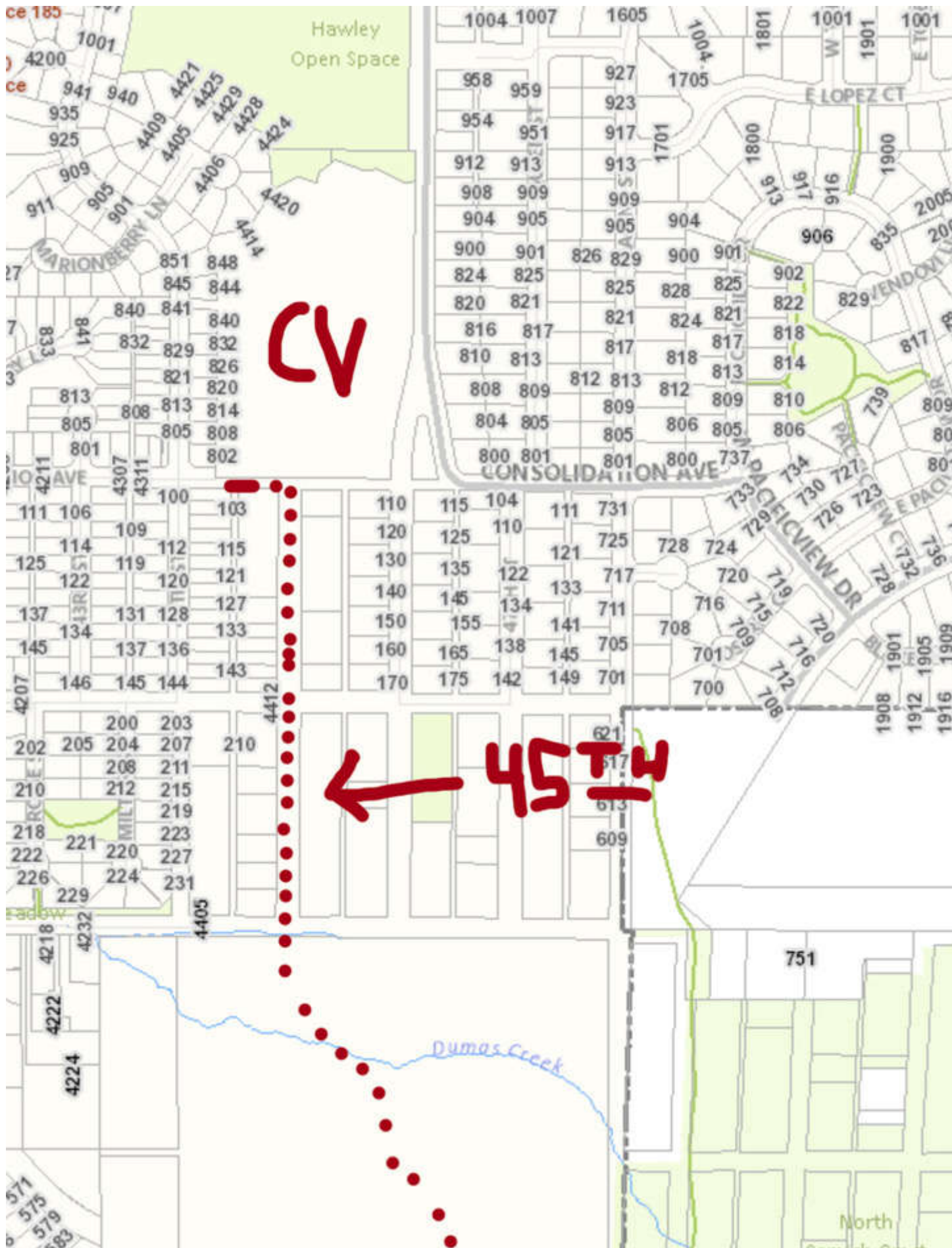
All in all, to me, living here and visualizing all the problematic issues of unsafe traffic, noise, pollution, parking, water runoff, deforestation, related development, building on slopes, wildlife habitat destruction, etc...it sure seems like there's no way this should happen and there really are such better uses for this land.

Personally I think the best solution is for the city to purchase this forest and build an official trail that connects to Samish crest trail network. Its already there, people already use it, and most of all it's why people live in B'ham, because they like to walk down the street and hit a trail. We need more of this not less.

Lastly, I'd also like to address my own situation. My driveway is very steep and in the line of fire. If this development were to happen I would have to be backing in and out of Consolidation right at the entrance to the development which seems like a dangerous and awkward thing to have to do. I know I am only one, but safe access to my home whether during construction or after needs to also be addressed. I will most certainly be severely impacted.

Thanks again for listening to our comments. I really hope the city uses the best foresight to address ALL issues.

Alan Schwartz





Public Comment

Name

Greg Halleen

Full name or organization

Your name is required for identification as a part of the public record.

Choose Topic

CityView Project

Topics available for online public comment are listed above. If no topics are listed, there may be opportunities for public comment on various topics through email, letters, and public comment periods during meetings.

More information on this topic can be found at <https://www.cob.org/cityview>

Comment or Testimony

I am writing in response to your discussion of the CityView project which took place Thursday evening, June 3rd.

During your discussion, you referred many times to the difficulty of a situation like CityView where single family zoning and multi family zoning are next to each other. I believe Commissioner Ballew said developers should not be penalized just because there is single family zoning next to a multi family zone. Another comment was made saying there will always be a few people who aren't happy with any development going into their neighborhood. Finally, Commissioner Plaskett asked if people who moved into the single family homes knew or should have known that they were moving into a neighborhood that was zoned multi family behind them.

These comments seem to miss the crux of the issue here. Commissioner Jones put it correctly when he stated that this is the wrong development for this piece of property. He said it doesn't line up with the Planning Commission's overall vision of multi family neighborhood planning. It is not really that close to services and transportation. It tries to fit a huge complex into a piece of property with many issues-- drainage, wildlife, stability, etc. It degrades the quality of life for the surrounding neighbors who have been there for decades.

That is the correct view. The neighbors aren't necessarily against multi family housing. They have just asked that it be in scale with the rest of the neighborhood. There aren't "just a few neighbors who are against any development". Over 200 neighbors have responded to this particular proposal--not all multi family proposals. This particular proposal is so out of scale to the neighborhood. 65 foot high buildings don't belong here. 3 buildings, each the size of city hall or bigger, don't belong here. A project that is really set up for students/dormitory (as you all have mentioned) doesn't belong here. This is not affordable housing. The developer has not been honest with the neighbors since he proposed this project.

Finally, neighbors who moved here knowing there was a multi family zoning behind them also knew that there was a comprehensive plan for the Puget neighborhood. The plan was clear about neighborhood transition for any multi family housing and that ultimately, the multi family housing would fit with the scale of the surrounding neighborhood. They were counting on you, the Planning Commission to make sure any development agreed to was in line with the comprehensive plan and the surrounding neighborhood that was allowed to be built there.

This project as proposed should not be allowed to move forward. That does mean another multi family project couldn't go in there, but CityView as proposed should not.

Thank you.

Files

Documents or images related to your comments.

Email

ghalleen19@gmail.com

Your email address will only be used to send you a copy of this comment and any official notifications related to this topic.

Date

6/7/2021



Public Comment

Name

Naomi Bormuth

Full name or organization

Your name is required for identification as a part of the public record.

Choose Topic

CityView Project

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Comment or Testimony

I have lived at 825 Nevada for 12 years as of this August. It is a wonderful, family-centered neighborhood, filled with kids of varying ages, from babies to middle schoolers, and even high schoolers. There are also many amazing retired couples and individuals whom my husband, 3 young kids (ages 8, 6, and 5) have gotten to know over the years and treasured. It truly takes a village to raise children, and I am deeply thankful for the community of support and encouragement my family and I have received because we've lived here. My children feel comfortable going up the sidewalk to the stop sign at Nevada and Consolidation, as well as going down Nevada to the first cul-de-sac headed north, whether riding bikes, scooters, or simply running. Our oldest son is allowed to go into the woods on his own knows to stay on the hiking trails. He loves being in nature and having the chance to explore and adventure! The idea of putting in a huge apartment building is completely out of character with the neighborhood. It doesn't make any sense to put an apartment where the majority of residents own their own homes and are families or retired people. We have a close-knit community, and putting in an apartment building will start to tear that down. Over the years, Nevada Street has gotten a little busier with traffic, and the traffic safety measures put into place (the yellow dividers that narrow Nevada) and the new round-a-bout do absolutely nothing to slow traffic coming from Consolidation, heading down Nevada. Cars speed dangerously fast down this road and can be a menace. Installing oversized speed bumps would be a welcome change! With a new apartment building, traffic will be even worse, I will have to curtail the freedom my kids currently enjoy on the sidewalk of riding their scooters and bikes, as well as their freedom to explore in the woods, since much of it would be destroyed. This will be a very sad day for me and my entire family, not to mention the neighborhood, if this goes through. I can only imagine the traffic congestion, the probability of more speeding vehicles, and adding people to our neighborhood who aren't necessarily here to live long-term, like the majority of the current residents. I strongly urge you to plan this apartment building elsewhere, where it can be more in character with its surrounding neighbors. Bellingham is an amazing community to be part of, but we also need to fight to keep certain neighborhoods the way they are, they way they were originally intended to be. Thank you for your thoughtful consideration.

Sincerely,

Naomi Bormuth

Files

Documents or images related to your comments.

Email

naomijkooi@yahoo.com

Your email address will only be used to send you a copy of this comment and any official notifications related to this topic.

Date

6/7/2021



Public Comment

Name

Donald Diebert on behalf of the Puget
Neighborhood Working Group

Full name or organization

*Your name is required for identification as a part of
the public record.*

Choose Topic

CityView Project

*Topics available for online public comment are listed above. If no topics are listed, there may be
opportunities for public comment on various topics through email, letters, and public comment periods
during meetings.*

More information on this topic can be found at <https://www.cob.org/cityview>

Comment or Testimony

The issues of Scale of the CityView Proposal and Privacy are directly a result of a Unit Density that greatly exceeds the zoning for Area 17 of the Puget Neighborhood. The Puget Neighborhood Working Group previously (through John Buri, Esq.) submitted a research and analysis document detailing the recorded history of the Hawley Replat, including City Council Agendas and Resolutions. This analysis shows that at no time was assignment of an Unit Density to Tract F discussed, motioned, or recorded as an official action. The attached file is a single page summary of the Unit Density issue including relevant citations and references. As requested previously, we are asking for:

1. An explanation of how the 176 count, Unit Density was calculated and the back-up materials which support the calculation and official filing.
2. An explanation of how the 176 count, Unit Density is "Vested", under the timeframe provided for in BMC 21.10.260.

No further action should be taken granting approval of the project until the Unit Density issue is resolved through a required but never completed public process.

Thank you for your review and response.

Puget Neighborhood Working Group

Files

Planning Department - Density Public Comment
6.7.2021.docx

Documents or images related to your comments.

Email

dondiebert@outlook.com

Your email address will only be used to send you a copy of this comment and any official notifications related to this topic.

Date

6/7/2021

Scale of the CityView Proposal – Unit Density is the Issue

For years, the Puget Neighborhood has asked *why the Unit Density for the Hawley Replat – Tract F*, is 176 units, greatly exceeding the published Zoning for Area 17. Seeking an answer, in 2019 the Puget Neighborhood Work Group researched the official records and engaged Mr. Phillip Buri, Esq., for analysis and presentation of the findings. On February 6th, 2020, Mr. Buri submitted to the City Planning and Community Development Department a comprehensive review of the multi-year Hawley Replat process. *Note: this report is available on the City website at [Buri Filing](#) and [Buri Filing - Exhibits](#)*

Unit Density – Never was Defined for Tract F

Mr. Buri states, “This is the story of how a caption on an unrecorded, unapproved lot layout drawing became *a phantom density allowance*,” which, “reappears sporadically in plat maps that never received public review, let alone approval. Because CityView relies on an *inaccurate and inappropriately large density allowance*, the Puget Neighborhood opposes its development in the current form.” *[Emphasis added]*

City Council Agenda Bills and Resolutions – Unit Density Never Assigned to Tract F

From 1994 through 2002, a series of City Council Agenda Bills and Resolutions were recorded. Key to these official actions is that a Unit Density was never explicitly assigned for Tract F.

- 1) City Council Resolution (No. 19-94, April 25, 1994), states in the General Notes (Exhibit C, page 4), that the Hawley’s Replat included Phase 1, consisting of 123 units; and Phase 2 (where Tract F is located). *No Unit Density was assigned to Tract F.*
- 2) City Council Resolution (No. 2002-24, July 15, 2002), states it is, “A resolution granting Final Plat approval for the preliminary plat of Division 2, consisting of 48 single family lots, 1 duplex lot, 1 triplex lot, 1 fourplex lot, a 50-unit multifamily tract and *a reserve tract [Emphasis added]* located in Area 17 of the Puget Neighborhood” (Exhibit E, page 1, paragraph 1). *No Unit Density was assigned to Tract F.*
- 3) City Council Resolution No. 2002-24, continues by reference the requirements of Preliminary Plat Resolution 19-94, (Exhibit E, page 7, Future Phases), *that additional public review is required before development.*
- 4) The Cedar Ridge Division 2 Plat (Whatcom County No. 2020703650, July 23, 2002), was filed as an “*Unofficial Document*,” with the Whatcom County Auditor (Exhibit F). The declarants for this Plat filing were Peoples Bank, Irving H. Hawley Jr. and Joan Hawley (property owners). A Plat Map attached to this filing shows Tract F, with a notation of 11.15 Acres, Future Units – 176 units (Exhibit F, page 5). *This is not an official City Resolution, rather a private Plat filing.* This is unusual as private parties are not permitted to declare a Unit Density that exceeds Area Zoning.

Summary – Puget Neighborhood Request

Mr. Buri’s states, “The city has yet to conduct the *required public process* to determine the appropriate Unit Density for Tract F. *Until this is completed, any review of the CityView proposal is premature,*” and, “The Puget Neighborhood Working Group respectfully suggests it is time to start over.” *[Emphasis added]*

The following is a standing request:

1. An explanation of how the 176 count, Unit Density was calculated and the back-up materials which support the calculation and official filing.
2. An explanation of how the 176 count, Unit Density is “Vested”, under the timeframe provided for in BMC 21.10.260.

No further action should be taken granting approval of the project until the Unit Density issue is resolved through a required but never completed public process.



Public Comment

Name

George F. Sanders

Full name or organization

Your name is required for identification as a part of the public record.

Choose Topic

CityView Project

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Comment or Testimony

EXISTING HYDROLOGIC DATA IS INSUFFICIENT FOR THIS PROJECT

The Puget Neighborhood Working Group RFI Response previously commented on deficiencies in the geotechnical knowledge of this proposed development in sections 1) Critical Areas and 3) Stormwater Site Plan.

It should be re-emphasized that GeoEngineers state that their 2013 report "is based on the conditions that existed at the time the study was performed. The findings and the conclusions of this report may be affected by the passage of time".

During the June 3, 2021 meeting, Steve Sundin, when asked to comment on behalf of the Planning Department, inferred that the GeoEngineers report was complete and acceptable. Mr. Sundin failed to disclose that the GeoEngineers report is based on data from 2013, almost nine years out-of-date. He also failed to respond to public comments documenting (in writing and pictures) existing groundwater incursions and surface drainage issues that will be exacerbated by construction of the emergency driveway. None of these existing problems were addressed in the report.

Test pits are dug to determine bearing capacity of soils and other geotechnical properties but are not specifically designed to acquire hydrologic data. Rather, the only hydrologic observations made in the test pits are basically the presence or absence of moisture or standing water. The current hydrologic conditions cannot be deduced from a handful of 9-year old test pits scattered across this site.

Files

Documents or images related to your comments.

Email

gsanders@openaccess.org

Your email address will only be used to send you a copy of this comment and any official notifications related to this topic.

Date

6/7/2021



Public Comment

Name

Maggie Carrigan

Full name or organization

Your name is required for identification as a part of the public record.

Choose Topic

CityView Project

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Comment or Testimony

When I drive around town now, I see where new apartments seem to have appropriated our streets for their parking spaces. I am assuming this will happen to the neighborhood around CityView. Who is paying for our streets, new paving, and markings, etc? I'm fairly sure CityView will be built, but it isn't right and the people who let it happen should leave town.

Files

Documents or images related to your comments.

Email

Nenac100@gmail.com

Your email address will only be used to send you a copy of this comment and any official notifications related to this topic.

Date

6/9/2021



Public Comment

Name

Alex McLean

Full name or organization

Your name is required for identification as a part of the public record.

Choose Topic

CityView Project

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Comment or Testimony

I have submitted a lengthy list of concerns and grievances regarding this proposal in previous public comments.

I will sum up my opposition with City View in a briefer manner now:

This proposal fails all the litmus tests for smart density and good urban planning.

Whatever went sideways here, whatever malfunction happened that will suddenly plop five-story towers in the middle of a neighborhood, it needs to be reconsidered.

Thanks for your time,

Alex McLean,
Happy Valley

Files

Documents or images related to your comments.

Email

Felixian@comcast.com

Your email address will only be used to send you a copy of this comment and any official notifications related to this topic.

Date

6/10/2021



Public Comment

Name

Geoff Beaumont

Full name or organization

Your name is required for identification as a part of the public record.

Choose Topic

CityView Project

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Comment or Testimony

Good Afternoon and thanks for reading this comment. I speak against the Cityview project on the basis of how it will change my neighborhood. I have lived on 41st st since 1996 and have seen the area grow and change over the years.

Initially many home were bought as rental properties and filled with students and cars, so any cars. It was so difficult too park in front of my house. The last few years with additional student housing units built on WTA bus lines on Lincoln and Consolidation have allowed these homes to by bought and occupied by families and other permanent residents. Old furniture, late night parties and the extra cars parked everywhere have disappeared. We now have a beautiful neighborhood once again. This project will bring to many cars, racing down Consolidation to park at Lincoln Creek. Build these residences on the bus lines, Lincoln St. South of Fred Meyers is empty and perfect for this type of project.

Build homes or Condos on this land, please do not wreck our neighborhood.

Files

Documents or images related to your comments.

Email

monicaandgeeff@comcast.net

Your email address will only be used to send you a copy of this comment and any official notifications related to this topic.

Date

6/10/2021

