

February 13, 2012

CITY OF MONROE
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COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Monroe Planning Commission
David Demarest
Bill Kristiansen
Paul Loots, Chair
Wayne Rodland
Jeff Sherwood

RE: East Monroe Economic Development Group Proposal for Comprehensive Plan Amendment

Dear Monroe Planning Commissioners:

This letter is intended to supplement our earlier letter dated December 22, 2011, stating our opposition to the proposal by the East Monroe Economic Development Group to effect a comprehensive plan amendment which would change the zoning of the subject property from Limited Open Space to General Commercial. As our earlier submittal has evidenced, the subject property presents extensive development challenges that raise serious questions regarding any efforts to rezone the property from Limited Open Space to General Commercial. These developmental and environmental challenges include the following:

- 40%+ grades along the adjoining properties to the north of the subject property which have a history of slides and erosion;
- Subject property includes a stream and numerous wetlands, including sensitive habitat for native salmon;
- Subject property serves as a wildlife corridor;
- Property frequently floods and is in a flood hazard area;
- Commercial development of the property will result in significant noise, light and other aesthetic issues affecting adjoining property owners; and
- Any commercial development of the property would present significant issues with the Washington Department of Transportation and present serious risks relating to ingress and egress to Highway 2.


The Monroe Planning Commission is well aware of these issues and has consistently rejected any attempt to rezone the subject property from Limited Open Space to General Commercial for obvious good reasons.

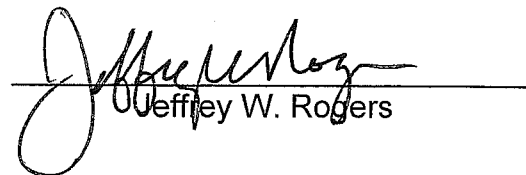
We are concerned that the City of Monroe is giving short shrift to these environmental and developmental challenges as it has determined to proceed with an Environmental Impact Statement ("EIS") on a phased review basis. To date, we have received little or no information as to the progress of this phased review and many of our questions have gone unanswered. We believe the City of Monroe has an obligation to an open and transparent process so its citizens can effectively participate in voicing concerns regarding proposed zoning changes. While some have stated that the deck is stacked against us as the proposed zoning change is a pet project of the Mayor and certain City Council Members, we believe our voices of concern will ultimately prevail. Frankly, no action should be taken unless and until a complete EIS is prepared addressing all the environmental issues.

While the Planning Commission has no jurisdiction to determine whether a phased EIS is appropriate in this instance, we believe the Planning Commission can continue to raise legitimate issues with any attempt to rezone the property from Limited Open Space to General Commercial given the many environmental issues that should be carefully considered before any final decision is rendered with respect to a proposed Comprehensive Plan amendment. Any zoning change that results in commercial development of the property presents significant risk to many constituents, including adjoining land owners, travelers on Highway 2, the overall environment, as well as to the City of Monroe, if any of these risks ripens into an actual liability which could further drain the City's financial resources.

Please give careful and thoughtful consideration to the many issues and challenges facing any attempt to rezone the subject property from Limited Open Space to General Commercial.

Respectfully submitted,


Lowell Anderson


Jeffrey W. Rogers