

October 21, 2010

City of Monroe Planning Commission
806 West Main Street
Monroe, WA 98272-2198

RE: East Monroe Development Group Application for Comprehensive Map Amendment

Dear Planning Commissioners:

As residents of 127 East Rivmont Drive, Monroe, WA 98272, we are writing to express our opposition to the Citizen-Initiated Comprehensive Plan Amendment Application ("Application") that will be considered at the upcoming October 25, 2010 Planning Commission Public Hearing. Having reviewed the Application, we are stunned that the East Monroe Development Group ("Applicant") states that, "No neighbors would be adversely affected by the change in land-use designation." Such a statement shows an appalling lack of appreciation for the many landowners whose property directly abuts the property that is the subject of the Application. Those contiguous property owners face a number of significant risks associated with the proposed Comprehensive Plan Amendment. Clearly, such an amendment opens the door to commercial development of this site which would have a profound impact on our ability to use and enjoy our properties caused by a dramatic increase in noise and light pollution resulting from any commercial development. In addition to the visual impacts, approval of the Comprehensive Plan Amendment would result in a significant decrease in the value of our properties.

Although we are not familiar with comprehensive plan amendment applications, we are troubled by the sketchy information provided by the Applicant in connection with the Application. It appears to gloss over many of the risks that are presented both from the contiguous property owners' standpoint, as well as the general community. Approval of the proposed Application raises a number of issues from a critical areas perspective. The property has a number of critical area risks, including the presence of a stream and wetlands; steep slopes on the hillside to the immediate north of the property which present significant landslide and slope degradation risks to those of us owning such property; frequent flooding; and a fish and wildlife habitat. Given these significant critical area risks, before any final recommendation or decision is made by either the Planning Commission or the City Council, the Applicant should be required to provide an environmental impact statement addressing those key risks.

Another factor which merits serious consideration is that approval of the Application would result in a large residential area being directly contiguous to commercial zoned

property. In our view, this is a relative rarity in the City of Monroe. We believe the fact that there is no buffer between our respective properties warrants heavy weighting in the Planning Commission's decision-making process.

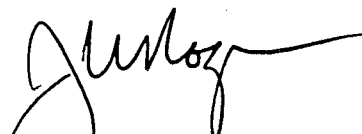
While the Applicant states that this will be of benefit to the City of Monroe from an economic development standpoint, there are currently over 60 acres of commercially developable property in the City of Monroe that await commercial development. In our judgment, the existing commercially zoned property should be given a priority for development since some of it is owned by the City, the carrying costs of which are being borne by taxpayers. Additionally, much of the subject property will not be able to be developed given the environmental sensitivity and critical areas identified above. The setbacks required by the stream and Highway 2 consume significant portions of the property.

Another issue weighing against the change in the Comprehensive Plan is that much of the property is within an urban conservancy area which, under the Shoreline Master Program, should not be subject to commercial development.

A risk that merits careful study and consideration are the traffic safety issues associated with ingress and egress from this property to Highway 2. Once again, before this Application is given serious consideration, the WSDOT should be contacted with respect to traffic-related issues associated with a potential Comprehensive Plan Amendment allowing commercial development. As with many of these issues, before the Planning Commission renders any decision and recommendation to the City Council, a number of governmental agencies should be consulted with respect to the proposed Comprehensive Plan Amendment change, and certainly an environmental impact statement should be prepared so that governmental agencies considering this Application can make an informed decision, taking into account significant environmental impacts and appropriate mitigation measures.

While we plan to provide verbal testimony at the upcoming October 25th Public Hearing, we respectfully submit these written comments for your consideration.

Very truly yours,



Jeffrey Rogers



Janet Rogers