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Skagit County Planning Commissioners:

First of all I would like to thank you for taking the time and effort to be on the planning commission. I live on the Dike Road and like most of the residents I would not have known that this was in anyway affecting my property. I would like to make a few observations and add a few suggestions.

If the property owner had been asked by letter or phone their opinion of public access to their privately owned land on the Dike Road you could have known our opinion before wasting any of the tax payers' money. The answer would have been NO!!!!!!! Therefore no more money needed to be spent on this. Instead, special interest group were allowed to input their want and needs for biking and hiking trails through private property and then attempt to pass the plans through without the owner's knowledge or comments. Easily done if no one knows, so don't tell anyone this may directly affect. This then can be passed without opposition. Once in Open Space public access it is difficult to change. Even if this current board states that the land will not have public access the next group may not. When annexed into the City they could and or would condemn the property thus able to take the property. This piece of the Open Space plan affects very few land owners directly. It would seem to me that they should have been informed directly. Not by a simple news paper clip (which not everyone gets) and the County Web Page (which if I would guess less than 5% of the population ever visit).

It seems to me that as a group you do not know how our land is now zoned or what we are allowed to do with it. In concept the current zoning serves as a green belt and open space. I have three tax parcels and cannot sell them separately. As zoned I must sell 40 acres or as close to that as possible. On my 11+ acres I am allowed one house. From the Dike to the river I am not allowed any residential houses or buildings, the only building that are allowed are existing when I bought it, which were none. The inside dike acreage is used for light private recreation only. I am able to maintain it as such. Therefore if left in the county and not allowed in any Cities UGA and left Zoned as is it would serve as a green belt and open space as it always has been. Without a building variance not more than one house is allowed on the 6+ acres outside the dike. This to me is a very simple solution.

Only by changing it to be in any Cities' UGA is the entire area in need of any open space language. I am very generous with my land and have had weddings, retirement parties, cancer benefits, funerals, and many more such functions for my extended family and friends. For the most part most or all of the hikers and bikers that use the dike either are our neighbors, family, friends, or people that have had the manners to ask our blessing to use it as such. If put into open space these pleasures are at risk.

What upsets me more than anything if by plan or not, the simple consideration of informing me directly that my land usage and or zoning were to be changed was not done.

Thank You Ron Eastman

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