

March 13, 2009

SKAGIT COUNTY  
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Mount Vernon U.G.A. Open Space Concept Plan

We are the Guidingers, John and Charlene. We live at 17248 Dike Rd. My son and his wife Richard and Vicky Guidinger live at 17226 Dike Rd. Parcel Number P23230 and P23231.

Because we are not connected to the internet, we were not notified of this meeting and will not be able to attend. We give our proxy to Josh Axthelm of 17166 Dike Rd. We accept the views and commentaries of the letter presented by him.

The public access/open space is unacceptable to us. We are saddened that officials in the county would take away our property rights. You did not notify us of the proposals by mail. We do not want public access, Greenbelt, trees planted, path or walkways; or additional taxes assessed to our property.

We have gates for dike district access only, but no gate or fence between the front and back of our property so the dike district can maintain the dike for flood protection. We would be accessible to theft, vandalism, and unwanted people walking through and around our home from the dike, "out of view", if public access is allowed.

If Green Belt were allowed, we would loose control over the usage of our property. Seasonal flooding occurs twice a year or more through the back of the property behind the dike. We cannot shoulder the responsibility or liability of public access.

John and Charlene Guidinger  
Richard and Vicky Guidinger  
17248 and 17226 Dike Rd.  
Mount Vernon, WA 98273  
360-424-8431

Neighbors,

I have recently become aware of a proposal/comprehensive plan changes that affect the land that we farm and use. The latest proposal by the Skagit County as well as the Comprehensive Plan for the city of Mount Vernon, designates the dike as a "Public Pathway" and the property between the dike and the river and the dike as "Open Space"

As you may be aware, the use of the dike by the public has been increasing over the last few years. Along dike road, the dike through our properties is owned by the land owner, with an easement for maintenance, not for public access. We are taxed on the property and it is ours. However, there seems to be a trend/misconception by the general public that the dike is public owned therefore should also be accessible to the public.

Personally, I have some of the few remaining gates on top of the dike. In the last few years a number of people, whom I do not know, have opened or climbed over my gates. I have horses and cows that use the dike to get to either side. If the animals were to escape, or if the individual going through my property were to be injured, I would in turn become liable.

As a point of land value, If you separate our property on both sides of the dike, the land on the road side becomes of little more value than a city lot, only the public would then have a great view into your backyard.

Please view the proposal on [Skagitcounty.net](http://Skagitcounty.net)...Planning and Development Services...Planning Projects of Current Interest: Open Space. Additionally please refer to the comprehensive plan for the city of Mount Vernon. I have attached a few pages from these documents.

Unfortunately, even though the proposal affects our land, we did not receive notification from the city or county that the dike and pathways through our land would be incorporated into the city comprehensive plan and Urban Growth Area changes.

There is a public hearing on the 17<sup>th</sup> of March and comments due to the county on the 13<sup>th</sup> of March Please see a copy from the webpage attached.

Josh Axthelm  
17166 Dike Road  
333-3395