

November 22, 2011

Commissioner Ken Dahlsted
Commissioner Sharon Dillon
Commissioner Ron Wesen
Skagit County Board of County Commissioners

SENT VIA FAX

Dear Commissioners;

This input is being provided in response to the comments provided by Friends of Skagit County, Evergreen Islands, the Skagit Citizens Alliance for Rural Preservation (SCARP), and the Skagit County Agricultural Advisory Board in opposition to my petition (PL11-0239) for a Comprehensive Plan Amendment.

The Friends of Skagit County state that there needs to be an analysis of these lands showing that their conversion will not damage the farming community and Skagit County's agricultural economy. This property has never been part of the farming or agricultural economy as shown in Skagit County's aerial photographs dating back to 1937 and therefore the converting of this property cannot have any effect on the farming community nor Skagit County's agricultural economy. My property is in fact a legally platted tract in the Skagit Beach residential plat and is legally restricted by the covenants of this plat to single family residential use only. Furthermore the soils on this property have been certified to not be "Prime Farm Land" by a Certified Professional Agronomist. Also, this parcel is a Certified Residential Lot, and is taxed by Skagit County as a residential lot, and for many years I have invested considerable time and money into preparing this property for residential use.

Mr. Tom Glade of Evergreen Islands asserts that this lot meets many of the criteria of agricultural land but in fact Mr. Ravnik has detailed that Ag-NRL land is that which is primarily devoted to commercial agricultural production. This property is not currently devoted and for many decades has NOT been devoted to commercial agricultural production. Evergreen Islands further asserts that "the applicant can construct a residence on the property by complying with the Department's interpretation by demonstrating three years farm income." To this I would respond that it has been shown that this property is unsuitable to support farming due to the poor soils, the irregular shape and size of the property and the lack of adequate access for farm equipment.

Please refer to the submissions of Mr. John Ravnik of Ravnik & Associates for a detailed discussion and evidence supporting this petition.

Finally the opposition to this petition asserts that this application is precedent setting. My attorney, John Blanchard addressed this issue in detail at the recent Commission docket hearing. This is not precedent setting legally or otherwise. This lot is totally unique and is officially a part of a residential community. The requested Map Amendment corrects the historical error in

which all the other lots within the Plat of Skagit Beach were converted to RRv, Rural Reserve, but for unknown reasons this lot was not. No other lot in Skagit County would be in any way comparable to this lot. Consequently, this lot could not be used as a precedent as no other petitioner would be able to match the unique qualities of this lot.

Again I refer you to the detailed discussion of these issues as submitted by Mr. John Blanchard and also Mr. John Ravnik. Their notes are part of the comments in the file on this matter.

Notwithstanding the comments made by others against my application, I have every legal right to protect the residential development and use of my property as assigned by historical platting, its residential tax rate and personal monetary investment. I am not trying to convert this parcel from agricultural use but rather to correct a historical error.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I look forward to your favorable consideration.

Sincerely,

James F. Ritchie