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1/14/19



BLAZING TRAILS FOR 20 YEARS
1992-2012

January 14, 2019

Honorable Hearing Examiner Sharon Rice
Office of the Hearing Examiner
PO BOX 97010,
M/S: 3NFN
Redmond, WA 98073

Honorable Hearing Examiner Rice,

At the January 7, 2019 Hearing Examiner Public Hearing regarding the Emerald Heights Conditional Use Permit (CUP) and Site Entitlement Plan, a number of Abbey Road residents quoted comments that I had allegedly made in the past about the 2000 appeal of the City's Determination of Non Significance (DNS) for the Redmond High School rebuild and the 2011 rezone application for Emerald Heights. These comments were portrayed as related to the current issues at hand and as a further justification for neighboring resident opposition to the projects.

I am submitting this letter for the record to clarify and further explain my comments and their intent.

I did not testify against the Redmond high school rebuild or attend any meetings on the issue. I did not write any letters myself about the issue, however, I did add my signature to a letter along with my wife at the time. The letter I signed stated *"We believe that there is an impact to the environment, specifically to the Abbey Road neighborhood"* from the proposed Redmond High School rebuild and that *"The negative impact to our neighborhood's privacy, light and traffic will be significantly reduced with a more strategically located building site."*

In their testimony, Abbey Road homeowners seemed to imply that my concerns about the Redmond High School rebuild DNS should apply equally to the Conditional Use Permit (CUP) and Site Entitlement Plan applications for the proposed Emerald Heights Independent and Assisted Living buildings. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Redmond High School is an institutional facility, just like any other school, hospital, or correctional facility. Institution facilities are not necessarily compatible with residential neighborhoods. Emerald Heights is proposing residential units for seniors, not an institutional facility, and what they're proposing is entirely compatible with the surrounding neighborhood. The notion that somehow I'm a hypocrite because I don't share the same concerns about an institutional facility (Redmond High School) as I do about a compatible residential development in Emerald Heights is wholly without substance because they are two very different types of developments.

Abbey Road residents also quoted from testimony that I gave during the 2011 re-zone application for Emerald Heights at the meeting on January 7th. Among other things I was quoted as testifying *"The screening is so effective that it is possible to drive by Emerald Heights and not know it is there."*

My oral testimony in favor of the re-zone was meant to communicate my belief that Emerald Heights had opportunity to grow and serve more seniors and also that Emerald Heights was a good neighbor.



My comments were meant to describe the current nature of the Emerald Heights community in 2011. I did not make forward looking statements or any statements about where buildings would be located or the preservation of specific areas because, while Emerald Heights could support more senior members of the greater community, Emerald Heights did not have specific plans in 2011 for exactly how that growth would occur.

The 2011 rezone plan Emerald Heights submitted as part of its rezone application was a conceptual plan, not a building plan. As anyone who has ever been involved in a development project can attest, once a conceptual plan begins to take shape as a building plan for which permits are requested, plans can and do often change based on engineering, codes and regulations.

That's what has happened here. After extensive research and due diligence on a number of scenarios, the Emerald Heights team found that the proposed locations for the Independent and Assisted living buildings are the most feasible locations on campus to build these residential units.

Emerald Heights has done an exceptional job of balancing the needs for more senior residential housing and improved healthcare with maintaining the "green" character of the campus and the neighborhood. In every way – from significant landscaping to more residential building designs – Emerald Heights has gone above and beyond what is required by Redmond City codes and regulations.

The community spoke and Emerald Heights listened. The refinement of both landscaping and building plans has resulted in two residential projects that are totally compatible with the surrounding neighborhoods.

Sincerely,



Al Chambard
Chief Financial Officer
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