

RE: Peck-Jenson PL11-0240

My name is Phil Holboy. I live with my wife and daughter on a 7.8 acre parcel on the south side of Bay View Road, just across the road from the Peck-Jensen parcels. We've lived on Bay View Road for over a quarter century. Our home is one of several original homestead farms that have established and maintain the rural character in Skagit County that so many people enjoy and wish to preserve. I am here tonight because I'm concerned that, if approved, the Peck-Jensen proposal will degrade the rural and historical character of the Bay View Road community.

The two parcels in question are surrounded by rural farms. Most of these small farms have been in operation for well over one hundred years. The Peck-Jensen parcels also have a long history of rural agriculture and they currently support cows and produce grass hay.

Contrast these pastoral farms and fields with the new development in the Rural Intermediate zone to the north of the Peck-Jensen parcels. None of the 2.5 acre parcels in this area support any livestock. These parcels all consist of large houses and shops, each with over 6,000 sq. ft. of combined space. None of these homes "preserve the character of existing natural neighborhoods and communities." Instead, they've eroded the character of the Bay View Road community.

In their current form, the Peck-Jensen parcels play an important role in an effective transition from low density to high density, from the south side of Bay View Road to Bridgeview Way. Maintaining the logical outer boundary at Starvation Ridge Lane avoids a precarious boundary on Bay View Road that would encourage low-density sprawl.

The Planning Department determined that the Peck-Jensen parcels are "part of an existing natural residential neighborhood and community." The question is *which community*? The Peck-Jensen parcels are similar to the other parcels along Bay View Road that support livestock and maintain the rural and historical character of the community. They do not resemble any of the 2.5 acre parcels within the Rural Intermediate zone and therefore should not receive that designation.

Since 1997 there has been no change to the parcels in question. At that time the Pecks were allowed to subdivide their 10+ acre parcel into two 5 acre parcels even though the designation remained Rural Reserve. Today the Pecks and Jensens each have a 5 acre parcel along Bay View Road. I am not aware of any circumstances beyond the control of the landowners that would prevent the Pecks from building a new home on their parcel or prevent the Jensens from occupying or replacing the existing dwelling on their parcel. In fact, the Pecks stated in their 1996 letter to the county, "if we had known this would happen we would have at least divided

our land into two 5 acre lots so that we could build our planned home on our hill.” The Jensens acquired their 5.89 acre parcel knowing that it was designated Rural Reserve and could only support one dwelling. Even if the Planning Commission denies this proposal we will see at least one, and possibly two new homes on what was a 10 acre farm.

The current boundary has prevented low-density sprawl along Bay View Road. If the southern boundary is moved then the county and area property owners can expect further expansion of the Rural Intermediate zone and a decay of the rural and historical character of this community.

Denying this proposal will still allow the Pecks to build and the Jensens to occupy or replace the existing home on their parcel. On the other hand, if this proposal is approved the character of the Bay View Road community will be negatively impacted and irreversibly altered.

I respectfully request that the Skagit County Planning Commission deny the Peck-Jensen proposal to amend the county Zoning Map.

Thank you,

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