



August 10, 2015

Eric Shields
Planning Director
City of Kirkland
123 Fifth Avenue
Kirkland, WA 98033

RE: Potential PUD Opportunity on Simonds Road

Dear Mr. Shields:

A land owner, Jim Jordan, recently approached the Finn Hill Neighborhood Alliance (FHNA) to gather input on his proposed 13-lot Short Plat bordering 97th Avenue NE and Simonds Road along the northern border of Kirkland. The property is currently a wooded undeveloped parcel, but is bisected by a small tributary stream that flows under 100th Avenue NE to the east and eventually into Juanita Creek. To the west of the property is a privately held open space tract, bordered by over 20 acres of City owned open space that follows the stream to where it begins near 88th Avenue NE. FHNA has shown interest in this area of the neighborhood for some time due to the forested ravine and potential opportunities for the creation of an off-street trail system to improve the connectivity of the area.

At the request of City Planning Department staff, Mr. Jordan asked FHNA for their input on two site plans he has prepared. The first site plan would not require any modifications to zoning and would create a 13-lot subdivision based on the current RSA 4 zoning designation. Under this plan, ten lots would access off of 97th Avenue NE and three lots would obtain access off of Simonds Road.

The second site plan option would create a Planned Unit Development (PUD). It would contain the same number of lots as the first option and provide primary access off of 97th Avenue NE. The PUD option would allow for smaller lot sizes and would provide about two acres of open space that fronts Simonds Road. It would be his intention to deed the open space to the City for public use.

The FHNA Board does not intend to weigh in on the merits of specific development proposals and it has not spoken to residents living near 97th Avenue NE about their views regarding either of Mr. Jordan's development proposals. However, we are interested in evaluating alternative development options that provide significant public benefits that enhance our neighborhood. We have reviewed the zoning code Section 125.35 that summarizes the criteria for approving a PUD for additional guidance on this matter.

For this specific project, the potential impacts of smaller lots could be potentially addressed through the following types of public benefits:

- Preserving a minimum of two acres of forested open space for potential recreational opportunities
- Enhancing the stream corridor through the property by removing potential invasive species
- Creating a soft-surface trail that connects Simonds Road to 97th Avenue NE
- Providing funding to the City Parks Department to plan eventual extension of the soft-surface trail to the west through the City owned open space connecting to 88th Avenue NE

The items above would be worthy of considering as the City evaluates the site proposal options and solicits input from the public and surrounding neighbors.

We are also interested in how this could be an example of how to approach development of other parcels of land in the neighborhood in order to achieve some of our stated goals as a community such as improving connectivity and/or preserving our forested open spaces. Perhaps other parcels of land in the neighborhood deserve some additional evaluation during our neighborhood planning process to assist the City in evaluating PUD proposals in the future.

Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions regarding our thoughts on this matter.

Respectfully,
On Behalf of the Finn Hill Neighborhood Alliance Board of Directors



Scott Morris
President

cc: City Council
Kurt Triplett, City Manager