

July 14, 2014

Redmond Planning Commission
P.O. Box 97010
Redmond, WA 98073-9710

Attn. Jeff Churchill & Kim Dietz

Re. **SE Redmond Neighborhood Plan Update (Marymoor Subarea)**
Comments submitted for Planning Commission Pubic Hearing July 16, 2014

Dear Chair Chandokar & Commission Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. My comments are in response to the above referenced opened issues by Commission Members (6/23/14) – A1. Housing Near Light Rail Station, A2 Delay in Effectiveness MDD Zoning, and A4. Uses Allowed In MDD.

A1. Housing Near Light Rail Station, A4 Uses Allowed in MDD

The Southeast Redmond Plan Update (July 9, 2014) has not adopted any Residential/Mixed Use policies near the light rail station location and the MDD2 zone use standards only emphasizes MP Development standards?

The Planning Commission discussions on 3/19/14 agreed “there should be opportunities for mixed-use residential development close to the future light rail station and requested policy language to reflect that”. Further, the Commission asked “for specific policies creating new housing opportunities near Marymoor Park and the light rail station to offset the loss of housing capacity proposed in the Northeast Subarea.” On 6/25/14, Commissioners Miller and Biethan emphasized “preserving housing options” close to the light rail station. Based on the current draft of the Technical Committee report to the Planning Commission, it is unclear why the Comprehensive Plan is not being amended as requested by the Planning Commission?

It appears there is general census in the plan update process that locating 700+ residential units in the Marymoor MDD1 zone will be within walking distance of the light rail station and residential uses located near the light rail station are not warranted? This premise was referenced from a paper by the Public Policy Institute of California “that people are willing to walk a greater distance to rail transit stations than people employed within the MP zone. This premise needs to be reevaluated.

The distance between the proposed Marymoor light rail station to the center of the MDD1 residential zone is 2,600 feet (1/2mile). The study referenced by staff is “Making the Most of Transit – Density, Employment Growth and Ridership around New Stations, February 2011”

This paper states “transit ridership falls sharply as distances from transit stations increase” ...and “greater densities are encouraged around new transit stations.”

This report further states that “one quarter (1/4) mile is the limit that most people will walk for most trips to a light rail station.(p14) ” While the majority of the 700+ future residents living in the Marymoor subarea will elect not to use light rail transit, it is suggested the Planning Commission consider a Mixed Use Residential/Commercial zone in the MDD2 zone.

Mixed Use Commercial/Residential Uses – If it is the City’s vision to create “opportunities for people to live, work and shop near transit” a Commercial/Residential Mixed Use zone abutting NE 70th Street and the Rail Station is a critical land use component for the Rail Station to be an extension of the community it serves.

With the use of Performance Zoning this Mixed Use Zone should support urban scale densities (250 residential units) with commercial on the ground level and residential above. Commercial uses and outdoor plazas should not front NE 70th arterial to avoid impeding traffic flow to and from the Rail Station from Redmond Way.

The vision of the Rail Station serving the community and the community serving the Rail Station necessitates the economic synergy of urban densities in close proximity to the Rail Station. Commercial services in close proximity to the Rail Station cannot economically survive by only serving peak hour transit users. Many recall in previous decades that urban centers became “dead zones” at night because they lacked the vitality of urban densities living in close proximity to transportation and commercial services.

A2. Delay in effective MDD zoning

The Planning Commission concurred with Staff’s recommendation to leave the Kent zoning (H6.) “as-is” and the subject property could be rezoned at some point in the Future (3/12/14). In the month of June 2014, both the Chee property (2.35 acres) and the Kent Property (.76 acres) were included in the MDD1 Performance Zone with an effective zoning date of 1/1/18.

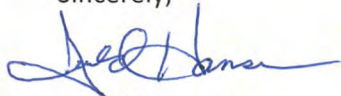
It is respectfully requested that the Planning Commission and Staff recommend that the MDD1 zoning on the above referenced properties be effective subject to City Council approval in fall of 2014 and not be subject to the three year effective date of 1/1/18.

Both of these undeveloped properties (3.11 acres) are located on East Lake Sammamish Parkway to the south of NE 65th Street and it is my understanding these subject properties are not part of the infrastructure planning process that would warrant a delay in the effective date of the MDD zoning. At the present time, Hansen Investments, LLC, is preparing a Residential Master Plan Development Application for the Chee property and negotiations are pending to include the Kent property in the Master Plan Development Application.

Prior to June 2014, our Residential Master Plan Application was predicated on the current BP zoning and while we are in support of the MDD Residential Performance Zoning, a three year delay will create significant economic hardships for all parties involved.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment. Your time, efforts and consideration are very much appreciated.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jerald Hansen". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Jerald Hansen
President