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RECEIVED

By Jeremiah Cromie at 10:46 am, May 10, 2023

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Jeremiah Cromi

Staff Planner
Kittitas County WA

Re: VA-23-00003 Sparks Park Variance

I am writing to inform the city of our very strong opposition to the proposed zoning variance set out in application VA-23-00003. When we retired, we chose the Easton area for our forever home in 2013. The rural environment, the small quaint community, and the vast outdoor recreational opportunities is what drove us to this beautiful area. Approval of this project would destroy everything that is Easton and the upper county.

The Applicants Proposal:

"Angadjot Sandhu, authorized agent, submitted a Variance application on February 2, 2023 pursuant to Kittitas County Code (KCC) 17.84 on 16.51 acres of land zoned LAMIRD Type 3 General Commercial in a LAMIRD Land Use currently owned by Sparks Park LLC. The variance request is for a truck stop, restaurant, and vehicle repair shop to go above the current limitations of site area, impervious surface and retail square footage on the property. All these uses are permitted outright in General Commercial zoning in a Type 3 LAMIRD."

A Truck Stop: The request for a truck stop is one word "dispatched" away from being considered a "Freighting and trucking yard or terminal" which is an industrial use and is not authorized in the LAMIRD Type 3.

Definition: 17.08.261C "Freighting and trucking yard or terminal"

"Freighting and trucking yard or terminal" means an area in which trucks, tractor and/or trailer units, and semi trailers are parked for seventy two (72) hours or less, and dispatched. (Ord. 2013-001, 2013)

Retail Sales: General retail sales is implied to accompany the truck stop since it was included in the Zoning Variance Application Narrative from the applicant. The applicant should not be allowed to exceed the allowed use. **Note 48:** Permitted when conducted wholly within an enclosed building (excluding off-street parking and loading areas), provided the use does not exceed four thousand (4,000) square feet.

Definition: 17.08.469A "Retail sales"

"Retail sales" means selling goods or services to the general public for personal or household consumption and rendering services incidental to the sale of such goods. This definition excludes agriculture sales.

A Vehicle Repair Shop: Is not authorized unless; **Note 11:** Permitted when conducted wholly within an enclosed building (excluding off-street parking and loading areas)." This does not authorize the use of gas/fuel service stations since they cannot be fully enclosed. A canopy over the pumps doesn't constitute a wholly enclosed building.

Definition: 17.08.560A "Vehicle/equipment service and repair."

"Vehicle/equipment service and repair" means maintenance of motorized vehicles and equipment including exchange of parts, installation of lubricants, tires, batteries, and similar vehicle accessories, minor customizing and detail operations, and body shops. This definition includes gas and service stations. (Ord. 2013-001, 2013)

Impervious Surfaces: The applicants plan is to surface all but 26% of the land. How can that possibly maintain a rural character? I have seen grocery stores with more rural character than this proposal.

Note: *All allowed uses within Type 3 LAMIRDs, other than manufacturing, outdoor recreation, and natural resource processing will be limited to 30,000 square feet in area, and that impervious surfaces on lots greater than one acre in size are limited to one third (1/3) of the lot.*

There are approved uses of the LAMIRD Type 3 the county has adopted. Once again, the applicant is essentially trying to **rezone** the property through an unjustified variance application of these uses for their own benefit, not ours. It is an excessive ask that can't be undone. The applicant states in their proposal: "**All these uses are permitted outright in General Commercial zoning in a Type 3 LAMIRD.**" Have they read the allowable use table???

Additionally, after reviewing the SEPA checklist submitted by the applicant, it appears to be 90% incomplete. The questions were vaguely answered just enough to pass through the county.

Example: 8. Land and Shoreline Use.

Q: What is the current use of the site and adjacent properties? Will the proposal affect the current land uses on nearby or adjacent properties. If so, describe.

A: The site is currently vacant and undeveloped. The neighboring uses are vacant/undeveloped land to the north, residential to the east, and Interstate 90 is located to the southwest.

The applicant did not provide a complete or accurate answer to this question. The 121.58 acres to the north is WSU Trust land managed by DNR. The 22 acres to the East is recreational property with camping, RV, and lodge accommodations that were established in 1975 and have continued to provide such services since 1975. The property was purchased from the long-time owners and is currently undergoing an extensive remodel, renovation, and upgrade project to better serve their customers, some of whom have been utilizing the facility for many years. The property directly south is the entrance road to the Silver Ridge Ranch Lodge.

The Rural Character, viewable by air traffic and users of the Easton State Airport, will be completely destroyed. The applicant has made it clear they expect the proposed facility to attract traffic that may have used other current businesses on Sparks Road. That would certainly have a devastating effect on those businesses and the special rural quality of the Easton community as it has been designated by the GMA, the County's Comprehensive Plan, and the Land Use and Zoning regulations.

We both served in the US Air Force for a combined 50+ years, serving in wars, campaigns and overall defense of our nation. We provided that defense through discipline and enforcement of the rules, guidelines, and standards. As representatives and enforcers of the county codes and ordinances, we, the citizens of Kittitas County, expect the same discipline from you. This applicant is attempting to **rezone** the property to suit their desires and appears to not care about the LAMIRD Type 3 allowed uses, Comprehensive Plan or Growth Management Act. Your job is enforcement of those codes. Enforce them!!!

Respectfully,