

## **Public Comment, Snohomish County Planning Commission, October 8, 2014**

I open with these words from Ansel Adams, the nature photographer and environmental advocate:

*"It is horrifying that we have to fight our own government to save the environment."*

But that's exactly what we, Neighbors to Save Wellington Park, are doing – we're fighting to save a community asset from destruction.

Harking back to the beginning of this effort ... King County gave Snohomish County funds intended to mitigate for the effects of the nearby Brightwater sewage treatment plant; the funds were not intended to create a countywide, regional tournament level facility.

Furthermore, the size and scope of the proposed plan for the sports complex at Wellington Hills Park are inconsistent with its surroundings and the rural designation of the area.

Wellington Hills is a rurally zoned area and rural areas should not be easy targets for urbanization. Developments in rural areas should be limited to activities that continue to promote rural character.

But the current proposal for multiple lighted fields and hundreds of parking stalls is clearly urban ... as are the noise and traffic that will be produced by sports events.

Fundamentally we believe: Neighborhoods should have a voice in what happens to their community and the community's needs should have precedence over those of special interest groups.

We are not opposed to sports or sports fields - that has never been our issue. What we object to is the inappropriate development of Wellington Hills Park as well as the persistent disregard for our community's thoughts, needs and vision for a community park.

In many ways, the proposed "tournament level sports complex" is no different than when a big box store elbows its way into a quiet rural town ... and radically disrupts and negatively impacts the quality of life and the daily life of established neighborhoods.

I encourage you as members of the Snohomish County Planning Commission to represent the interests of our community ... and all communities in rural areas ...

by insisting that the guidelines for development of parks be respectful of citizens, their input and be harmonious with the surrounding communities.

W.S.