

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

For over two years, I've been expressing concerns with the Parks Department's plans for Wellington Hills. As you are hearing tonight, there are actually a few hundred of us in the Wellington area that know the enjoyment of our rural homes is threatened by the proposed plan. Our objections are many—traffic, noise, light pollution, loss of green space, trees and habitat, erosion, and more. Yet all these problems are symptomatic of a single issue within the Comp Plan, and it's this:

The classification of Wellington Hills as a Community Park is without basis and misleading.

Within the Comp Plan, Community Parks are depicted as:

- Of mixed use, offering
 - Both passive and active activities, AND
 - Recreational opportunities for both youth and adults
- Located *within* urban areas and/or UGAs
- Accessed by foot or public transportation, as well as by car
- *Designed based on community input* (as opposed to stakeholder groups)

Let's contrast that with the proposal for Wellington Hills Park:

- *The community had no meaningful input* to park design.
- Rather, *the design was based on input from stakeholder groups* and emphasizes the hosting of youth sports and *regional* sports tournaments. It features:
 - 7 fields, including 4 full-size, stadium-lit, artificial turf fields
 - Parking lots to accommodate over 700 cars
 - A 50,000 square foot indoor recreation center AND a 60,000 foot indoor mountain bike facility, both to be funded by public-private partnerships
 - A footprint of approximately 24 acres...roughly the size of Safeco Field
- The park is located *OUTSIDE* the UGA, in an unincorporated area that is zoned as rural.

- There is neither safe pedestrian access nor access by public transportation.

The Level of Service Analysis provided by the Parks Department goes so far as to identify Wellington Hills as a *Special Use facility* fulfilling the need for a “regional, tournament-level athletic field site in partnership with other public and private entities.”

The planned park would actually move commercial-type use into an area, which, by its very designation as R-5 in SCC Title 30, is intended to maintain rural character.

It is impossible to discuss how to mitigate the impacts of this park, because the proposed plan is wholly inappropriate—and not in the spirit of why a park was initially proposed—for the Wellington area.

In summary, the classification of Wellington Hills Park as a Community Park is misleading and incorrect. It destroys an existing park and allows unnecessary commercial endeavors in the form of public-private partnerships, to move into the rurally zoned areas of our county.

This plan needs to go back to the drawing board.

J.L.