

August 15, 2012

To: Snohomish County Executive Aaron Reardon
Snohomish County Council
Snohomish County Public Works/Tina Hokanson
Snohomish County Parks & Recreation/Tom Teigen/James Yap
Woodinville City Council

Re: Proposed Wellington Hills County Park

To all concerned;

We have lived in Woodinville for the past 18 ½ years. We chose this beautiful area with a large lot precisely because of the abundant natural surroundings and quiet environment. Having survived the “Brightwater” noise and commotion of these past years we are saddened to see yet another project being planned that will directly impact us in so many ways with very little consideration given to what the neighborhood truly wants and can actually handle. (Sure there have been minor concessions given to make us feel better but not enough to satisfy our needs). It is so very obvious to the majority of us here that this is not the correct place for a ‘sports’ park, that it feels very much like another project being planned “for us” rather than “with us”. We raised children here and they were involved in soccer for many years so we see the value in that. However we as homeowners also see the value in quiet neighborhood parks and having soccer fields/sports fields located away from neighborhoods as much as possible for the safety and sanity of the people living in those neighborhoods.

This entire process has been so rushed and hastily planned that the neighbors who are going to be directly impacted have had little chance to digest and respond to the amount of changes being proposed. This kind of project should involve the neighbors and the county working directly together on a 50/50 basis, not just a few select people on a committee supposedly representing the greater neighborhood. There is so much at stake here that it would be such a waste of time, money and resources to make decisions so quickly and not please the greater majority of people not to mention preserving the environment most affected. One would have to ask, ‘who is this mitigation project really benefitting?’

We are all for a quality, peaceful, neighborhood park here but definitely not a sports park of the magnitude that is being suggested by the parks department. The landscape and natural layout of this property are so unique and beautiful it would be a shame to scrape it flat and mold it to other uses. Why is it so necessary to ‘bend’ this outstanding natural habitat to accommodate people rather than using what is naturally here and having people ‘bend’ to its natural design in the form of a completely unique habitat and park for everyone to enjoy?

Beautiful landscapes and natural formations are becoming more and more rare and unusual as the land is manipulated and transformed to cater to the current popular sports and that seems like such a shame. According to Tom Teigen the only real stipulation for the proposed park use is that it be for 'active use' and that can be defined in the context of a neighborhood park in a multitude of quieter, less invasive ways other than a lot of outdoor soccer fields, an indoor sports facility, a mountain biking complex and parking for 750 cars. Active use could be defined as retaining the current golf course as well.

If 'safety is the overriding factor in the park design' as stated in the design criteria provided by Snohomish County via Tom Teigen and Bruce Dees, then how in the world can this location even be considered for a park this large and complex? Traffic issues have been at the forefront of discussion since this park became known to us and it makes no logical sense whatsoever to bring that many cars into this area. Regardless of the 'traffic calming' devices that may be installed the simple fact remains that there will be too many cars for the road and the neighborhood to safely handle. Not only will it be more difficult for the neighbors to access their own streets but the issue of emergency response is of real concern as well. We understand that there will be great care taken and many studies done to resolve traffic concerns but to date we have not seen any evidence of either current studies taking place or information resulting from previous studies (except for the reports regarding the massive changes that have occurred on 240th St. since the opening of Costco at the bottom of the hill). We have seen firsthand the major impact of traffic on our roads and the blatant disregard for the posted speed limits, running lights at Costco and the greatly increased usage of 240th St.

Common sense needs to be applied to this project. Let's not try to squeeze a large sports complex into a small neighborhood where it just doesn't fit. There have been other options suggested to the county that could handle a sports complex much, more easily and effectively allowing the opportunity to create a distinctly unique park to be located here at Wellington. The majority of neighbors here are not supportive of the proposed park as it now stands and also feel that they are not being properly heard. Sometimes sacrifices need to be made to preserve valuable natural habitats rather than just to make money as this proposal suggests. There needs to be a more agreeable way to mediate this issue and allow for more compromises to benefit the directly affected neighbors and fill the county's needs as well. We firmly believe this is possible if we are given the time and opportunity to do so. Thank you for your support in this matter.

Sincerely,

Anon