

## In the Dog Days of Summer, City Council Has a Long One

Published: Woodinville Weekly August 14, 2012

Written by Don Mann

While the city councils of Bothell and Kenmore have taken the entire month of August off, the Woodinville City Council — all seven of them — rolled up their collective sleeves to once again take on the issue of proposed Ordinance No. 532, which amends residential density regulations.

But before they did, an unfamiliar figure emerged at the podium during public comment with some interesting and uplifting news. His name is Mark Shark, manager of Bellevue-based Taylor Development, and he'd come to introduce himself, hand out business cards and let the city know his company was in the very early stages of acquiring the 20-acre tourist district property formerly known as Woodinville Wine Village. The city would be hearing more from Mr. Shark in the near future, he implied.

Then, after an executive session to discuss potential litigation regarding proposed land use regulations, it was back to Ordinance No. 532 and the public hearing was reopened with a hope that first reading could be passed on the seventh council go-round on the item, beginning in February.

City Manager Richard Leahy began with an overview of where the ordinance, after a series of tweaks, currently stood: Regulations repealed include residential density incentives (which allow "bonus" units), transfer of residential density credits (which allows transfer units between sites) and flexible lot standards (which allow "bonus" units).

Regulations changed include rounding "down" versus rounding "up" to calculate the number of units allowed, changing density calculation to "gross area" versus "net area," and changing calculations regarding "on-site" transfers for critical areas, or areas where it's physically impossible to build — whether it be because of water, environmental protection or unusual topography.

New regulations include minimum lot sizes for single-family projects, establishing regulations for lot size averaging, and establishing regulations for existing lots that don't meet new requirements.

It was quite confusing to most, he admitted, and required more than a little math to understand.

Four citizens spoke during public testimony — all familiar figures to the council — and they spoke in lockstep: With so much at stake, don't rush to pass first reading. Preserve the integrity of the R-1 zones. Don't allow developers to come in and overbuild to meet Growth Management Act's mandate of providing 2,200 more housing units by the year 2031.

Following that, under the direction of Mayor Bernie Talmas, the council reviewed the proposed ordinance's regulations line-by-line and it became clear it needed more tweaking, particularly concerning changing density calculation from "net" square footage to "gross."

Talmas asked Leahy for clarification for the regulation as written: “When you subdivide, it’s not just critical areas ... there are other public right-of-way issues, too. Correct?”

Leahy said it was. “To give you an example, let’s just use one acre because it’s easy: If you have to set aside 25 percent for a roadway, 10 percent for a park, 10 percent for a surface water retention pond, say all those percentages come to 50 percent. They’re excluded from your density calculations, so now you’re dealing with one half-acre, and that’s what your unit count is based on.”

Councilmember Paulette Bauman wanted further clarification. “So if you’ve got a true acre and then you have road improvements or any setbacks there’s a potential of not being able to build at all?

Said Leahy: “Absolutely.”

He reminded the council that about one-third of the existing R-1 parcels in Woodinville are less than one acre — which meant more tweaking was in order, and the public hearing was unanimously continued to September 18.

It was then on to approval of Resolution No. 423, generated by council request and written by staff, expressing concerns about the development of the Wellington Hills Golf Course into a major Snohomish County sports complex featuring nine lighted soccer fields and paved parking to accommodate over 700 vehicles — about the size of nearby Costco’s parking lot.

The resolution contains nine bullet-points and reads like this:

Items of Concern: The following items need to be properly mitigated as part of the Wellington Hills Park Project:

1. Proper detention, filtering and control of stormwater runoff and erosion needs to be provided particularly in the “Golf Course Basin” that drains north from Woodinville into Snohomish County and then back into Woodinville, and for any other runoff that ultimately discharges to Little Bear Creek or leaves the site;
2. Adequate mitigation of traffic impacts associated with the construction and operation of the facility need to be provided, including but not limited to pedestrian and bicycle safety improvements on 156th Avenue in Woodinville;
3. Adequate and safe pedestrian and bicycle connections need to be provided to existing transportation systems and the future “Rails and Trails” Corridor that runs from Woodinville to Snohomish;
4. The southern property buffers, along the Woodinville city boundary, should be expanded to a minimum of 200 feet and require that all mature trees be retained and that additional native species trees, particularly evergreens, be planted;
5. Adequate sewage disposal and wastewater systems need to be identified and provided, which do not rely upon extending sanitary sewer to the site;
6. Adequate provisions need to be taken to eliminate field lighting glare and noise from impacting the immediately adjoining residential neighborhoods in Woodinville;

7. The conceptual site plan should be reversed so that the active use athletic fields and accompanying night lighting and parking, are placed on the northern part of the property; and the passive trails and natural area are placed on the southern portion of the property adjacent to the Woodinville city boundary;

8. Operation of the Wellington Hills County Park sports fields should not create an unfair and detrimental impact on the usage of City of Woodinville Sports Fields, which the City recently constructed at great cost to meet the sports field needs of the community;

9. To facilitate a thorough review and participation in that review by the City and City residents, an environmental impact statement should be prepared that assesses alternatives, impacts and mitigation for the proposed development, including but not limited to those noted above, as well as consistency with adopted city and county plans.

After Councilmember Susan Boundy-Sanders voiced her opposition to it, reminding her colleagues that the Brightwater mitigation funds which will pay for it were meant to be mitigation for the entire community, the resolution was passed 5-2 with Boundy-Sanders and Councilmember Les Rubstello opposed.

First reading of Ordinance No. 527: Amending the traffic impact fees  
In lieu of the late hour and another executive session pending, the first reading of

Ordinance No. 527 was moved to the August 14 meeting.