

## **Letters to the Editor, Woodinville Weekly, April 29, 2013**

On April 19, Neighbors to Save Wellington Park filed a complaint in Superior Court challenging the proposed development of the Wellington Hills Park and citing the Land Use Protection Act (LUPA). The City of Woodinville filed a similar appeal in Superior Court.

In a recent Herald article about the appeals, the parks director claims that “the public has been actively involved in the process throughout” and says that the Parks Department “will continue to work with the neighbors on shaping plans.” Don’t believe him. The public has been ignored and shut out of the planning process for Wellington Hills Park from the beginning, even though the Brightwater agreement, that provided funds to build a new park, required input from the community.

Decisions about the new park design were made well before the first public meeting; the only parties who had real input in the design process were special interest groups.

Once the design was presented to the public in May 2012, numerous objections have been voiced by community members, but no substantive changes to the design were made to reflect their concerns.

We have asked the Parks Department at every opportunity to scale back the design: fewer fields, no lights for night games, and concentrate on the type of amenities people will use and enjoy.

The current park site doesn’t provide enough amenities to keep people enjoying the open space in the ways that our favorite parks do. If the Parks Department had bothered to actually change their design to fit the site and our community, we wouldn’t have to wage such a battle. It’s unfortunate that our message to please build us a community park has gotten lost.

We had to file an appeal to be heard, and to stop a design that violates Washington land use law. The Parks Department needs to scrap its master plan for a commercial sports complex and start working with us to design a park that fits its surroundings

T.S.