

Letter, Snohomish County Council Member Brian Sullivan, November 23, 2012

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Chairman Brian Sullivan
Snohomish County Council
3000 Rockefeller Avenue
Everett, WA 98201

Dear Council Member Sullivan,

Thank you for taking the time to meet with our group Neighbors to Save Wellington Park (NSWP) on November 19th. We appreciate your listening to our concerns about the proposed Master Plan for Wellington Park and hearing your own views and vision for Snohomish County.

We were very interested in the fact that you wanted to see Brightwater mitigation money used positively for our communities and that your views on the flaws in the community involvement program seemed to coincide with our own. It was very encouraging to note that on November 19, Snohomish County Council voted to defer action on the Parks Department budget, possibly for some of the same reasons we discussed at our meeting:

- Lack of a Needs Assessment for a Regional Sports Facility. This casts doubt on some of the uses proposed for Wellington and raises questions about the scope and intent of the Brightwater Mitigation agreement itself. This issue might be resolved in renewed communications between King and Snohomish Counties. As suggested, we are hoping you might use your office and connections to facilitate such a discussion.
- The absence of a Site Selection process denies the public an explanation on whether or not high volume recreational uses at Wellington Hills would meet community needs as well as land use standards. There may be too many topological, environmental, constricted road conditions and miscellaneous safety issues to warrant Wellington's use for some of the uses proposed in the draft Master Plan? It's hard to see how a Regional Sports Facility would comply with the current R-5 zoning of the site and the fact that it lies outside an Urban Growth Boundary.

In short, NSWP believes that the Master Plan as proposed would result in major environmental damage to the site and to adjacent communities, warranting the preparation of a full environmental impact statement (EIS), including a completed traffic study as you had suggested.

- No business plan or cost/benefit analysis preceded the development of the Draft Plan. How can the County be assured that 700+ parking spaces, lighted, artificial-turf ball fields and a mountain bike facility would not incur additional costs, not only on site, but on any infrastructure development made necessary by such a complex?

NSWP has also asked the Parks Department why a viable 83 year old golf course, which successfully served all age groups, was eliminated without a similar benefit/cost analysis. To date, no answer to this question has been forthcoming from any source. And finally,

- What steps might **be** taken at this late date to assure all of the active, involved, and interested “publics” that the agencies of government have listened to and given every due consideration to the issues raised for a project of such proposed magnitude?

In addition to the preparation of a full EIS, which NSWP supports, we truly appreciate your willingness to give us ample time on Council’s agenda to further discuss these and other issues for the record.

We hope you can convince your colleagues on the Council that these steps are necessary to restore public faith in a process leading to a Wellington Community Park that has been jeopardized by short cuts, pre-conceived assumptions, and lack of transparency.

We look forward to working with you and all of the Snohomish County Council members and agencies to help create parks designed and wanted for the needs of the community in which they are going to be placed. We feel that working together we can create Natural, Community Desired parks that will be enjoyed by the entire community they serve for years to come.

Thank you again for meeting with us. Please let us know if there is anything we can do to assist you and your colleagues.

Respectfully,

NSWP