

Comments to GMPC May 25, 2016 On The King County Comprehensive Plan Relative to the Duthie Hill Notch

Intro.

A number of my neighbors and I agree whole heartedly with the Executive Recommended Comprehensive Plan wherein it recommends against a change to Urban Growth Boundary to include the Duthie Hill Notch in the UGA. Pages 7 and 8 of the report to this council summarize the situation quite well.

The Duthie Hill Notch fails to meet any of the three criteria of Planning Policy DP-16. There is no documented shortfall of developable land to meet forecast housing needs within the City of Sammamish, there is no 4 to 1 exchange offered, and the area is not a King County Park being transferred. Further, we maintain that the 4 acre pond and wetland are an environmentally sensitive area. Thus the conditions of the Notch fail to meet the requirement of DP-17 that an area be free from environmental constraints.

In 2 or 3 minutes I cannot outline how the Notch grew from its origin in 1894 nor present all the points against annexation or refute the arguments of those who favor it. You will/have heard from the City of Sammamish in which they offer their reasons for wanting to annex the Notch. And, if I were on City staff I could understand why they make those arguments. And, I will acknowledge that there are a majority of property owners in favor of annexation. But I would ask that you examine in more depth some of their arguments:

Maintenance of Duthie Hill Road. The mixed jurisdiction on Duthie Hill Road is cited as a major roadblock to road/traffic improvement. However, the City is embarking on improvements to Sahalee Way, which connects to SR 202 via a county owned portion of the road. I have read that the County is cooperating with the City in upgrading their portion of the road to make this project possible. Why cannot this cooperative attitude be applied to the small stretch of Duthie Hill Road that fronts the Notch?

Continuity of the UGA. Yes the border is irregular, but as is pointed out in a number of documents, it is only one of 25 such Notches in the county. Further the report notes that taking action on the Notch in this regard would set the precedent for a number of future proposals

Coincidentally, just an eighth of a mile down Duthie Hill Road is another Notch. Only this time a development in the City of Sammamish crosses Duthie Hill Road and intrudes upon county rural land. So notches aren't an anomaly and work both ways.

On the opposing side, I would note that King County has issued a grant alert for a \$150,00 design phase of a project to expand and restore salmon spawning and rearing habitat along Patterson Creek, behind Aldarra and Montaigne developments. It so happens that the pond in the Duthie Hill Notch feeds that creek. The pond has demonstrably been affected by development in the past and will be so drastically if urban development is allowed. And that is the stated intent of those who favor annexation and rezoning.

So who benefits? The city which gains the fees and property taxes associated with the existing and new homes. Those who favor annexation but generally want to sell out to a developer. In fact, one of the lots is owned by a development LLC, another by a realtor developer, and two by individuals with that stated intent.

Who suffers? Those of us who bought our properties as long as 30+ years ago and wish to stay in our homes. We will see a changed character to our neighborhood, new and heavy traffic through it, , and conversion of our streets from private gravel roads to paved public ones. As development occurs, our property assessments will be

increased, and with that our taxes, which have already increased 25% in the last 4 years.

A lot of thought, time and ingenuity has been applied by the City in proposing new ways and changes to policy that would allow annexation of the Notch. I would suggest that that same ingenuity be applied to finding ways to protect our rights as well as achieve City objectives.

Who speaks for us? Who acts in our behalf to protect our properties? We count on you to do that.

I quote again the Seattle Times from January 3, 2016.

"So, there's not a shortage of space to build homes. Changes are sought because developers would prefer to build in more lucrative areas, where they're now limited by land-use rules.

As long as the region has capacity for all growth in sight, elected officials should stand firm and uphold the Growth Management Act. Its principles are needed now more than ever."