

CLERK OF THE COUNCIL
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WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL

January 17, 2023

Sen. Sharon Shewmake
213 John A. Cherberg Building
PO Box 40442
Olympia, WA 98504
Email: sharon.shewmake@leg.wa.gov

Growth Management Hearings Board
P.O. Box 40903
Olympia, WA 98504
Email: eluh@eluh.wa.gov

Dear Senator Shewmake and the Growth Management Hearings Board (GMHB),

The Ridge at Semiahmoo is a proposed 25-lot residential development located on a 11.3-acre property (parcel 405115318480) on Semiahmoo Drive in northern Whatcom County. The Whatcom County Hearing Examiner issued preliminary approval of the long subdivision on January 18, 2017, and the applicant had five years (under state subdivision law and county code) to complete construction of improvements and gain final approval of the long subdivision ([WCC 21.05.039\(1\)](#)). Due to unforeseen health and pandemic-related circumstances, the owners were unable to proceed with the development, and the project approval expired in January 2022. The applicant approached the county for authorization to extend project approvals beyond the expiration date, but the county's legal staff concluded that restrictions in the Growth Management Act (GMA) prevented the County from issuing any additional extensions.

The Whatcom County Council would like to express our support for the Ridge at Semiahmoo development, as it would provide greatly needed housing opportunities in our county. Further, the Council supports the exploration of potential changes to GMA regulations that could address extending project expiration dates for extenuating circumstances. Thank you for your consideration and willingness to explore options for this development project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Barry Buchanan".

Barry Buchanan, Chair
Whatcom County Council

CC: Gordon Montgomery (gcmontgomery@comcast.net)