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February 16, 2021

Whatcom County Council (WCC)  
311 Grand Avenue, Suite 105  
Bellingham, WA. 98225

**RE: South Caitac Comp Plan request**

Honorable Councilmembers,

I(we) are the owners of the properties located at 5041 & 5041A Guide Meridian Rd. I am of the understanding that this Council is holding a hearing on February 23 to discuss proposed Comprehensive Plan and Rezoning issues to consider this year. I wish to express in the strongest possible terms support for the proposal to bring the South Caitac and Meridian properties into the UGA.

To be clear, Council members, such a result is way overdue. The properties were recommended for inclusion in the prior planning cycle (2015) by both County and City planning Boards, but were removed at the last minute by the Councils themselves during the approval process. A drive down Meridian north of Kelly Rd. so handily illustrates the rundown conditions of the properties in this small area as a result. Although these properties have preexisting structures, utilities, fire protection service, policing, etc., they have nonetheless been unreasonably included in the UGA Reserve rather than being included in the UGA itself. This is a ponderous (and I might add, non-statutory and legally questionable) designation that in effect prevents the reasonable exercise of ownership rights.

The properties cannot be marketed as residential due to the worry by potential buyers of its impending inclusion into the UGA and perhaps commercial zoning, but also is of no interest as commercial property due to its limbo status as UGA reserve with no clear timeline for change. I daresay that this designation is in essence an illegal taking. It has resulted in the current near-slum condition of many of the properties. In the meantime, however, Council did somehow see fit to permit a BMX racetrack operation in this same "residential neighborhood", along side the many other small businesses that operate in the affected area. The conflicts, contradictions, and misuse of the planning process for these Guide Meridian frontage properties are clear and stark. It is time to for Council to rectify the situation in the course of regular business, lest it be so compelled otherwise.

I am familiar with the S. Caitac application and wholly support the proposal. We encourage the Council to take an active and assertive role in rectifying what has become unreasonable and extended restrictions upon the ownership of the affected properties.

I thank you for your attention in this matter.

Sincerely,

*Don Burkhart*

Don Burkhart  
Atty in Fact for JoAnn Roe, owner 5041 Guide Meridian  
Trustee of the ECB Trust, owner 5041A Guide Meridian

