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Public Comment

Regarding the scope of the EIS for Agency File Number POL2020-00331 Growth Management Hearing Board Compliance Effort, my comments are as follows:

As it appears this will reopen the comp plan in many areas, including land use and housing, I would like to address both of those areas. It does appear that the goal of City Council in dealing with this lawsuit plan to change the growth pattern so the amount of residential housing is reduced to conform with their new V/C concurrency standard.

I have read Paul Stickney's comments (Enrich and Sustain) and agree with him that if they do decide to significantly decrease development from what is currently allowed in our Comprehensive plan and zoning, we will have less diversity of types of housing and, this will be done without sufficient information and informed public input. I'm afraid all we are looking at is housing and transportation needs for a select group of residents..... couples who are highly paid professionals, 25-55 years of age with children.

But we need to look at the bigger picture. What about the rest of the life cycle and life circumstances? What about the 8,500 seniors I hear we have in Sammamish? As they age and need to downsize or start requiring assistance for their activities of daily living? What about those who become divorced or widowed and can't afford the large home? What about the individual who suffers a severe disability and needs a smaller wheelchair accessible residence? How about our professionals who don't make a high salary such as teachers and social workers? Having a greater diversity of housing in the Town Center could help alleviate these housing needs. If we had a group of alternatives for seniors these wouldn't add to the transportation issues as this demographic may no longer be driving or will not be commuting to work during rush hour. And while we look at the greater community needs we need to ask ourselves, do we continue to need more 4,000 sf home? I believe like Enrich and Sustain does, that we have a housing imbalance. The information described as "The Chew", [the gap between what housing is needed and what is currently provided] and "SF Buildout" [single family buildout capacity] needs to be obtained first, before you make changes to housing and land-use policies and numbers in the Comprehensive Plan.

I would rather we find other ways to handle development. Many say the concern is that putting growth in the Town Center is one thing and might be good but that won't stop development outside the Town Center. I would like to see a different approach considered that recognizes we need to decrease the amount of additional large single-family homes in Sammamish, and modestly increase the amount of different and smaller housing types we allow.

What can we do with Transfer of Development Rights? Why can't we use some of the land that is considered buildable but in terrible locations such as steep slopes and landslide hazard areas and put that in the Town Center? Could we down zone or use regulations to lessen more big houses in much of the City outside the Town Center?

My concern is if this EIS process is used to basically stop further development of the Town Center and having development continue as it has outside the Town Center area, we will not be helping our storm water issues as regional storm water can only be done with a larger development like the Town Center. Plus with TDR's we might be able to also help by not developing on steep slopes. We also could save more tree canopy with development concentrated in one area and developing a system of trails [Green Spine] to connect to parks and community amenities. This also helps in preserving wildlife corridors.

As community character is also addressed in the Comprehensive Plan, I would like to see the Town Center have a Northwest look with using cedar and other materials that speak to this region. I have found the new apartments and townhouses going up tend to have a hard, industrial look. When we are talking about a large planned development at the city core, it should be attractive. Perhaps this could be addressed through development regulations and a design review commission.

I realize this is on a tight time line but feel if by making the new concurrency standard work because we have decreased the diversity of types of homes available, we have only looked at the needs of a select part of the community over a very brief period of time without sufficient information and public input and it would be better to leave the concurrency standard the way it was before, until this missing information is obtained. It certainly is the right time to review, but in an appropriate way considering the consequences of multiple options that are sufficiently informed, before making changes to our Comprehensive Plan.

I support the Enrich & Sustain "Petition for Actions" posted on the civic web as public comment for the 7.14.20 City Council meeting and recommend the City include this growth approach one of the alternatives considered to manage growth in balanced, sustainable and holistic ways.