

Lauren Davidson

From: Tom & Gina McCoy <tmc@methownet.com>
Sent: Monday, March 28, 2016 7:24 AM
To: Lauren Davidson; Perry Huston; albert_roberts@hotmail.com; mvcc@mvcitizens.org
Subject: Proposed Zone Code Comments
Attachments: Gina McCoy draft Zoning Code comments.pdf

Please accept the attached comments on the draft zoning code.

Thank you,
Gina McCoy, P.E.



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March 25, 2016

To: Perry Huston, Director of Planning

CC: Okanogan County Regional Planning Commission Chair Albert Roberts and Commissioners Phil Dart, Dave Schulz, Marlene Rawley, Tamara Porter, Mark Miller

Okanogan County Office of Planning and Development
123 Fifth Avenue North, Suite 13
Okanogan, WA 98840

Re: Draft Zoning and Zoning Code Maps, Okanogan County Code Title 17A – issued October 16, 2015

Dear Director Huston and Planning Commission,

Please accept the following comments on the draft Zoning Code and Zoning Map. I share many of the concerns over the draft zoning code expressed in the Methow Valley Citizens Council (MVCC) comments, including those addressing density, water resources, wildfire and Conditional Use Permits.

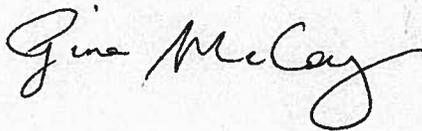
As a long-time professional hydrologist and environmental engineer I am particularly dismayed by the failure of the draft Zoning Code to incorporate information on limited water availability in planning for future development. As previously noted by myself and many others, water availability is clearly not adequate to support the development that would be allowed under the draft Zoning Code.

This approach to zoning is reminiscent of the rampant development allowed by Kittitas County in the upper Yakima subbasin: when it was shown that groundwater withdrawal was negatively affecting senior water rights, the Department of Ecology imposed a moratorium on exempt wells. Many landowners were left with undevelopable land. Eventually, their only recourse was to try to find existing water rights to purchase. Considering that the large majority of senior water rights are devoted to seasonal irrigated agriculture, it is exceedingly difficult and costly to acquire existing rights for the year-round use needed for domestic water supply. This may be feasible for the wealthy, but it is not for the ordinary owner of a small lot.

To knowingly allow for sub-division of land in excess of the development that can be supported by available water is unconscionable. It will create 'winners' who either develop or sell their land before the water runs out and 'suckers' who are left holding undevelopable parcels. The land use patterns created by such an approach will be poorly laid out and difficult and expensive to provide services for.

The residents of Okanogan County deserve a Zoning Code that will ensure well-conceived future development. Accordingly, the draft Zoning Code must be revised to be consistent with available water supply and the other issues identified by MVCC.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments. Sincerely,



Gina McCoy, P.E.