

Lauren Davidson

From: Isabelle Spohn <isabelle.spohn@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 28, 2016 11:26 AM
To: Lauren Davidson; Perry Huston; albert_roberts@hotmail.com
Subject: Proposed Zone Code Comments 3/2/16

Comments on Proposed Zoning Ordinance before the Planning Commission, 3/28/16

Dear Commissioners:

Thank you for this opportunity for input. I have been involved in this planning process (Comprehensive Plan/ Zoning, and related ordinances) since 2007.

I have carefully read the document submitted by the Methow Valley Citizens Council in response to this current Draft before the Planning Commission and wish to voice my support for all aspects of the MVCC input.

I want to point out that years of work have gone into this carefully considered document from MVCC - not only by the current writers, but also by many other citizens (MVCC members and others) who took part in county-wide meetings in neighborhoods across the county during the early years of planning (Approximately 2007-2010 and ongoing) and those who have participated in subsequent hearings over the years.

Since the recent Comprehensive Plan failed to address many issues of concern, it is now up to the Zoning Ordinance to address them.

I myself actually live in the "Upper" Methow (north of Gold Creek) but also have property that was considered to be in the "Methow Review District" when I bought it. It is now south of those boundaries, due to a change in the boundaries of School District 350, and is thus without many of the "protections" that governed the property when I bought it.

I find that the striking contrast between "protections" for School District 350 and the areas south of SD 350 in the Methow Valley are inappropriate. People in the "Lower" Methow have consistently shown their appreciation for a rural way of life without the "hubbub" of tourism and other business found in other areas of the county. They are all along the same river, share the migratory fish in the river, share much of the same wildlife as the upper Methow, and appreciate the same beauty. They enjoy open spaces the same as folks in the "Upper Methow." Some areas of the Lower Methow are even more sensitive, environmentally speaking, than some areas of the "Upper" Methow when it comes to availability of water in particular.

The differences in protections are especially noticeable in 1) the higher development densities allowed south of School District 350 despite the unavailability of a sustainable source of groundwater in that area (See the Aspect Study commissioned by the Methow Watershed Council 2) the likelihood of septic contamination of wells with such densities in such soils, the propensity of much of those drier areas to large wildfires, and the 3) lack of roads appropriate for adequate ingress and egress during these wildfires. 4) In addition, the lack of any requirement for Conditional Use permits in the case of overnight accommodations in the Lower Methow is very disturbing - someone needs to be accountable for activities of renters in these situations (such as dogs chasing deer, noise, etc.) 5) the unintentional decrease in available year-round housing that would likely occur with the lack of any regulation since the recent wildfires have made this an issue especially in the "Lower" Methow Valley.

In relation to groundwater supply, see "State assesses concerns about groundwater," p. A3, Methow Valley News, 3/23/16 for new information regarding decreasing groundwater in Eastern Washington although stream and river flows have rebounded.

Thank you for your work on behalf of the citizens of the county,

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