

Lauren Davidson

From: Perry Huston
Sent: Monday, April 04, 2016 8:01 AM
To: Angela Hubbard; Lauren Davidson
Subject: FW: Comments on Draft Zoning Plan

From: Don Johnson [<mailto:dwjnrc@live.com>]
Sent: Sunday, April 03, 2016 10:03 AM
To: Perry Huston
Cc: albert_roberts@hotmail.com
Subject: Comments on Draft Zoning Plan

Re: Draft Zoning and Zoning Code Maps, Okanogan County Code Title 17A —issued Oct. 16, 2015

Please consider the following concerns regarding whether the Okanogan County Comprehensive Plan complies with state law.

Dr. D.W. Johnson
Libby Creek Watershed Association
43 Sonora
La Paz, BCS, Mexico

The draft zoning will threaten water quality by the impact of septic system discharge since the county's most productive aquifers are "water table" or "unconfined" aquifers that are highly susceptible to contamination.

Provisions allowing dense concentrations of multifamily and mobile home parks in the rural zones undermine the purpose of zoning and the orderly management of growth.

The current Methow Water Rule (WAC 173-548) stipulates that water reserves in the Methow Valley be allocated solely for single-family homes and agricultural stock watering. Water may not be allocated for other uses, such as multifamily homes or manufacturing plants.

The new accessory housing provisions to not consider state health department regulations (WAC 246-272A) which stipulate that septic systems are not allowed on properties of less than one acre when water is supplied by a private water source. Under the Methow rule (WAC 173-548) water may not be used for public water supplies (outside existing areas served by public water systems—primarily the towns of Twisp and Winthrop). The state health department regulations and the Methow Rule prevent building accessory housing units on pre-existing legal lots on less than one acre in the Methow valley. This should cover most of the county. Yet the code states that accessory housing units are allowed on legal pre-existing lots that won't meet health department standards.

The county should designate agricultural zoning for all currently designated agricultural lands. The only zone category in the county's existing code is the Agricultural District (AD). The stated purpose of the classification is to "protect land and water resources for production of food, feed, fiber and to protect agricultural uses and facilities....and establish use requirements so that the utilization of lands...will not occur in such a way as to decrease their importance and economic value as agriculture". In the proposed code, that zone is renamed Agriculture (AG) and the purpose statement has been changed to read "to provide development options, within agricultural areas". Cluster land division is allowed at base densities of 1 development per 20 acres.

New provisions allowing for "limited divisions" in R5 and R20 zones and permitting the creation of nonconforming lots should be removed.

Recommendations:

1. Provisions allowing development of multifamily housing and mobile home parks at densities of five units per acre in rural zones (including R1, R5, and R20) should be removed.
2. Accessory housing units should not be allowed on legal pre-existing lots less than one acre in area.
3. Most one acre zoning should be reexamined in light of available water resources, water quality, and demand for public services. (If it takes two acres to accommodate a septic system, why not zone for two acres instead of one?)
4. The Zone Code and Subdivision Ordinance should require new construction and subdivisions to adhere to standards for building materials, access, and water availability that have proven effective in mitigating the risk of wildfire.
5. Include in 17A.310.08: The Hearing Examiner or board of adjustment shall consider that the project is compatible with surrounding development and any impacts on surrounding properties and community services will be mitigated by development conditions imposed.
6. Begin developing ordinances for regulation of grading, drainage, and signage.