

REPORT and DECISION of the SNOHOMISH COUNTY HEARING EXAMINER PRO TEM

DATE OF DECISION: March 15, 2007

PLAT/PROJECT NAME: **BLUFFS NORTH**

APPLICANT/
LANDOWNER: Bluffs North LLC

FILE NO.: 05 117272

TYPE OF REQUEST: 12-lot **RURAL CLUSTER SUBDIVISION** on 40.19 acres

DECISION (SUMMARY): **APPROVED** subject to conditions

BASIC INFORMATION

GENERAL LOCATION: The property is located northwest of Lake Roesiger Road, 1500 feet west of the intersection of North Roesiger road and North Carpenter Road

ACREAGE: 40.19 acres

DENSITY: 0.31 du/ac (gross)
0.32 du/ac (net)

NUMBER OF LOTS: 12

AVERAGE LOT SIZE: 44,268 square feet

MINIMUM LOT SIZE: 41,359 square feet

ZONING: R-5

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN DESIGNATION:

General Policy Plan Designation: Rural Residential-5 (1 du/5 acres)
Subarea Plan: Granite Falls
Subarea Plan Designation: Rural (1 du/5 acres)

UTILITIES:

Water: Snohomish County PUD No. 1
Sewage: Individual septic

SCHOOL DISTRICT: Granite Falls

FIRE DISTRICT: No. 16

SELECTED AGENCY RECOMMENDATIONS:

Department of:

Planning and Development Services: Approve subject to conditions

Public Works: Approve subject to conditions

INTRODUCTION

The applicant filed a Master Application on March 28, 2005. (Exhibit 1)

The Department of Planning and Development Services (PDS) gave proper public notice of the open record hearing as required by the county code. (Exhibits 20, 21 and 23)

A SEPA determination of non-significance was made on January 31, 2007. (Exhibit 22) No appeal was filed.

The Examiner held an open record hearing on February 28, 2007, the 127th day of the 120-day decision making period. Witnesses were sworn, testimony was presented, and exhibits were entered at the hearing.

PUBLIC HEARING

The public hearing commenced on February 28, 2007 at 11:00 a.m.

1. The Examiner indicated that he had read the PDS staff report and, reviewed the file and therefore had a general idea of the particular request involved.

The hearing concluded at 11:15 a.m.

NOTE: Audio tapes of this hearing are available in the Office of the Hearing Examiner.

FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND DECISION

FINDINGS:

1. Based on all of the evidence of record, the following Findings of Fact are entered:
2. The master list of Exhibits and Witnesses which is a part of this file and which exhibits were considered by the Examiner, is hereby made a part of this file, as if set forth in full herein.
3. The PDS staff report has correctly analyzed the nature of the application, the issues of concern, the application's consistency with adopted codes and policies and land use regulations, and the State Environmental Protection Act (SEPA) evaluation with its recommendation and conditions. This report is hereby adopted by the Examiner as if set forth in full herein unless otherwise stated below.

4. No issues of concern were raised at the public hearing. No one from the public attended.
5. Any Finding of Fact in this Report and Decision, which should be deemed a Conclusion, is hereby adopted as such.

CONCLUSIONS of LAW:

1. The Examiner having fully reviewed the PDS staff report, hereby adopts said staff report as properly setting forth the issues, the land use requests, consistency with the existing regulations, policies, principles, conditions and their effect upon the request. It is therefore hereby adopted by the Examiner as a conclusion as if set forth in full herein, in order to avoid needless repetition.
2. The Department of Public Works recommends that the request be approved as to traffic use subject to certain conditions.
3. The request is consistent with the GMACP; GMA-based County codes; and the type and character of land use permitted on the site and the permitted density with the applicable design and development standards.
4. Any Conclusion in this Report and Decision, which should be deemed a Finding of Fact, is hereby adopted as such.

DECISION:

Based on the findings of fact and conclusions of law entered above, the decision of the Hearing Examiner Pro Tem on the application is as follows:

The request for approval of a 12 lot **RURAL CLUSTER SUBDIVISION** is hereby **APPROVED**, subject to compliance by the applicant with the following Conditions:

CONDITIONS

- A. The preliminary plat received by PDS on September 20, 2006 (Exhibit 15) shall be the approved plat configuration. Changes to the approved plat are governed by SCC 30.41A.330.
- B. Prior to initiation of any further site work; and/or prior to issuance of any development/construction permits by the county:
 - i. All site development work shall comply with the requirements of the plans and permits approved pursuant to Condition A, above.
 - ii. The platlor shall mark with temporary markers in the field the boundary of all Native Growth Protection Areas (NGPA) required by Chapter 30.62 SCC, or the limits of the proposed site disturbance outside of the NGPA, using methods and materials acceptable to the county.
 - iii. A final mitigation plan based on the *Critical Areas Study and Buffer Mitigation Plan* prepared by Skagit Wetlands & Critical Areas dated July 21, 2006 (Exhibit 14) shall be submitted for review and approval during the construction review phase of this project.

- iv. Fire hydrants are required because some lots are less than an acre in size. Location of the fire hydrants will be determined during construction review of the plat.

C. The following additional restrictions and/or items shall be indicated on the face of the final plat:

- i. “The lots within this subdivision will be subject to school impact mitigation fees for the Granite Falls School District No. 332 to be determined by the certified amount within the Base Fee Schedule in effect at the time of building permit application, and to be collected prior to building permit issuance, in accordance with the provisions of SCC 30.66C.010. Credit shall be given for 3 existing parcels. Lots 1 through 3 shall receive credit.”

- ii. Chapter 30.66B SCC requires the new lot mitigation payments in the amounts shown below for each single-family residential building permit:

\$3,521.76 per lot for mitigation of impacts on county roads paid to the county,

The developer of this subdivision has elected to defer these payment obligations to a time preceding building permit issuance. Notice of these mitigation payment obligations shall be contained in any deeds involving this subdivision or the lots therein. Once building permit has been issued all mitigation payments shall be deemed paid.

- iii. All Critical Areas shall be designated Native Growth Protection Areas (NGPA) (unless other agreements have been made) with the following language on the face of the plat;

"All NATIVE GROWTH PROTECTION AREAS shall be left permanently undisturbed in a substantially natural state. No clearing, grading, filling, building construction or placement, or road construction of any kind shall occur, except removal of hazardous trees. The activities as set forth in SCC 32.10.110(29)(a), (c), and (d) are allowed when approved by the County.”

- iv. The developer shall pay the County \$0.00 per new dwelling unit as mitigation for parks and recreation impacts in accordance with Chapter 30.66A SCC; provided, however, the developer may elect to postpone payment of the mitigation requirement until issuance of a building permit for that lot. The election to postpone payment shall be noted by a covenant placed on the face of the recorded plat and included in the deed for each affected lot within the subdivision.

- v. A minimum buffer of 100 feet shall separate timber harvest activities from both the plat boundaries and residential lot lines within the plat.

- vi. Notice for forestry uses within required or optional open space: Lots within a rural cluster subdivision, and adjacent to or within 1,300 feet of forestry uses located in a designated open space tract may be subject to inconvenience or discomforts arising from forestry activities, including but not limited to noise, odors, fumes, dust, smoke, the operation of machinery of any kind, timber harvest, brush control, hours of operation, and other forestry activities.

- vii. Access for the timber harvest shall be reviewed by Snohomish County PDS for potential impacts to areas designated as NGPA/E within tracts 996 and 997, as well as impacts to the Sight Obscuring Buffer as shown on the approved plat plan (exhibit 15). Mitigation may be required.

- viii. Lots 1-8 shall maintain the Vegetated Visual Screening Buffer on each of the lots. Where existing vegetation fails to meet the designated function of the Vegetated Visual Screening Buffer, supplemental plantings of native vegetation shall be required. At a minimum,

supplemental plantings shall be made to an ultimate density of trees at 10 feet on center and shrubs at 3 feet on center. A minimum of 75% of the trees shall be conifers.

- ix. The Bluffs North Homeowners Association shall be responsible to maintain the Vegetated Visual Screening Buffer within tracts 999, 997, and 996. Where existing vegetation fails to meet the designated function of the Vegetated Visual Screening Buffer, supplemental plantings of native vegetation shall be required. At a minimum, supplemental plantings shall be made to an ultimate density of trees at 10 feet on center and shrubs at 3 feet on center. A minimum of 75% of the trees shall be conifers.

D. Prior to recording of the final plat:

- i. Adequate public road access shall be provided.
- ii. Native Growth Protection Area boundaries (NGPA) shall have been permanently marked on the site prior to final inspection by the county, with both NGPA signs and adjacent markers which can be magnetically located (e.g.: rebar, pipe, 20 penny nails, etc.). The platlor may use other permanent methods and materials provided they are first approved by the county. Where an NGPA boundary crosses another boundary (e.g.: lot, tract, plat, road, etc.), a rebar marker with surveyors' cap and license number must be placed at the line crossing.

NGPA signs shall have been placed no greater than 100 feet apart around the perimeter of the NGPA. Minimum placement shall include one Type 1 sign per wetland, and at least one Type 1 sign shall be placed in any lot that borders the NGPA, unless otherwise approved by the county biologist. The design and proposed locations for the NGPA signs shall be submitted to the Land Use Division for review and approval prior to installation.

- iii. The final wetland mitigation plan shall be completely implemented.
- iv. Where existing vegetation fails to meet the designated function of the Vegetated Visual Screening Buffer, supplemental plantings of native vegetation shall be required. At a minimum, supplemental plantings shall be made to an ultimate density of trees at 10 feet on center and shrubs at 3 feet on center. A minimum of 75% of the trees shall be conifers.

E. In conformity with applicable standards and timing requirements:

- i. The preliminary landscape plan (Exhibit 13) shall be implemented. All required detention facility landscaping shall be installed in accordance with the approved landscape plan.

F. All development activity shall conform to the requirements of Chapter 30.63A SCC.

Nothing in this permit/approval excuses the applicant, owner, lessee, agent, successor or assigns from compliance with any other federal, state or local statutes, ordinances or regulations applicable to this project.

Preliminary plats which are approved by the county are valid for five (5) years from the date of approval and must be recorded within that time period unless an extension has been properly requested and granted pursuant to SCC 30.41A.300.

Decision issued this 15th day of March, 2007.

EXPLANATION OF RECONSIDERATION AND APPEAL PROCEDURES

The decision of the Hearing Examiner is final and conclusive with right of appeal to the County Council. However, reconsideration by the Examiner may also be sought by one or more parties of record. The following paragraphs summarize the reconsideration and appeal processes. For more information about reconsideration and appeal procedures, please see Chapter 30.72 SCC and the respective Examiner and Council Rules of Procedure.

Reconsideration

Any party of record may request reconsideration by the Examiner. A petition for reconsideration must be filed in writing with the Office of the Hearing Examiner, 2nd Floor, County Administration-East Building, 3000 Rockefeller Avenue, Everett, Washington, (Mailing Address: M/S #405, 3000 Rockefeller Avenue, Everett WA 98201) on or before **March 26, 2007**. There is no fee for filing a petition for reconsideration. **“The petitioner for reconsideration shall mail or otherwise provide a copy of the petition for reconsideration to all parties of record on the date of filing.” [SCC 30.72.065]**

A petition for reconsideration does not have to be in a special form but must: contain the name, mailing address and daytime telephone number of the petitioner, together with the signature of the petitioner or of the petitioner’s attorney, if any; identify the specific findings, conclusions, actions and/or conditions for which reconsideration is requested; state the relief requested; and, where applicable, identify the specific nature of any newly discovered evidence and/or changes proposed by the applicant.

The grounds for seeking reconsideration are limited to the following:

- (a) The Hearing Examiner exceeded the Hearing Examiner’s jurisdiction;
- (b) The Hearing Examiner failed to follow the applicable procedure in reaching the Hearing Examiner’s decision;
- (c) The Hearing Examiner committed an error of law;
- (d) The Hearing Examiner’s findings, conclusions and/or conditions are not supported by the record;
- (e) New evidence which could not reasonably have been produced and which is material to the decision is discovered; or
- (f) The applicant proposed changes to the application in response to deficiencies identified in the decision.

Petitions for reconsideration will be processed and considered by the Hearing Examiner pursuant to the provisions of SCC 30.72.065. Please include the County file number in any correspondence regarding this case.

Appeal

An appeal to the County Council may be filed by any aggrieved party of record. Where the reconsideration process of SCC 30.72.065 has been invoked, no appeal may be filed until the reconsideration petition has been disposed of by the hearing examiner. An aggrieved party need not file a petition for reconsideration but may file an appeal directly to the County Council. If a petition for reconsideration is filed, issues subsequently raised by that party on appeal to the County Council shall be limited to those issues raised in the petition for

reconsideration. Appeals shall be addressed to the Snohomish County Council but shall be filed in writing with the Department of Planning and Development Services, 2nd Floor, County Administration-East Building, 3000 Rockefeller Avenue, Everett, Washington (Mailing address: M/S #604, 3000 Rockefeller Avenue, Everett, WA 98201) on or before **March 29, 2007** and shall be accompanied by a filing fee in the amount of five hundred dollars (\$500.00); PROVIDED, that the filing fee shall not be charged to a department of the County or to other than the first appellant; and PROVIDED FURTHER, that the filing fee shall be refunded in any case where an appeal is dismissed without hearing because of untimely filing, lack of standing, lack of jurisdiction or other procedural defect. [SCC 30.72.070]

An appeal must contain the following items in order to be complete: a detailed statement of the grounds for appeal; a detailed statement of the facts upon which the appeal is based, including citations to specific Hearing Examiner findings, conclusions, exhibits or oral testimony; written arguments in support of the appeal; the name, mailing address and daytime telephone number of each appellant, together with the signature of at least one of the appellants or of the attorney for the appellant(s), if any; the name, mailing address, daytime telephone number and signature of the appellant's agent or representative, if any; and the required filing fee.

The grounds for filing an appeal shall be limited to the following:

- (a) The decision exceeded the Hearing Examiner's jurisdiction;
- (b) The Hearing Examiner failed to follow the applicable procedure in reaching his decision;
- (c) The Hearing Examiner committed an error of law; or
- (d) The Hearing Examiner's findings, conclusions and/or conditions are not supported by substantial evidence in the record. [SCC 30.72.080]

Appeals will be processed and considered by the County Council pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 30.72 SCC. Please include the County file number in any correspondence regarding the case.

Staff Distribution:

Department of Planning and Development Services: Ed Caine

The following statement is provided pursuant to RCW 36.70B.130: "Affected property owners may request a change in valuation for property tax purposes notwithstanding any program of revaluation." A copy of this Decision is being provided to the Snohomish County Assessor as required by RCW 36.70B.130.
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