RECEIVED
By Virgil Amick at
11:46 am, November 11, 2026

To: The City of Cle Elum

From: Mark and Katie Peffer

Date: November 9, 2026

Re: Wildwood Ranch development

Staff,

I am writing to you to convey our concerns over the Wildwood Ranch development as is currently planned. We have lived at 60 Kingston Ct, off Wits End Dr for 4 yrs and have owned a home in the Cle Elum area since 2006. I am a retired professional firefighter and my wife is a retired school teacher.

We are not against development. We knew there were plans to develop this property when we bought. At that time, it was slated for 44 homes. We feel this planned neighborhood of 92 homes is overcrowded, does not reflect the neighborhood it is being built in and frankly, is unsafe. You will receive input and testimony on the technical and legal side of the concerns from Friends of Deer Meadow. I will not reiterate them here but state my unequivocal support for their positions.

Aside from needing to update the traffic study, where are these people going to park? I have responded to emergencies in these "zero lot line" neighborhoods. After the first few went in our jurisdiction, the fire marshal had to mandate ordinance changes so there was more room for resident parking and all dead ends had to accommodate our fire engine's turn radius to complete zero point turns in order to turn around. These were hard lessons learned. When we could not drive to the scene and had to overhaul hose 200' just to get water to front doors, we realized the developer projections on clear drive accessibility were horribly deficient. Do not repeat my city's mistakes. Please provide enough street space to allow on street parking without blocking emergency access. Has the fire dept done a review of these plans for access?

The developer's application for this project is burying deer creek. Where are any buffers in the site plan? How is this going to be addressed? With the sensitive area running through this project, how can this density of impervious surface allow for the storm water collection and not adversely affect both above and below ground critical areas. The City of Cle Elum has a long history of protecting open and sensitive areas. Can we be assured the same care is being displayed here?

My other safety concern is wildland fire. As we saw this year in Spokane and honestly every year, dense suburban housing built up against the wildland interface is very difficult to defend. I spent 15 years as an engine boss on a Type 6 engine. We were structure

protection specialists responding to fires from Washington to California. When, not if, we get a fire east in the valley with an east wind that pushes fire into town, Cle Elum simply does not have the recourses in house or through mutual aid to stop it. This is not a criticism of the Cle Elum fire department. In Spokane this year, they were able to have 23 engines on the scene of the Spokane Complex fire in 20 minutes and had no chance to stop it from burning over 600 homes. Less urban density is easier to defend and make Firewise.

In closing I would respectfully ask for more information sharing and transparency regarding City actions and decisions on this project. We need to trust the City is making the best choices up front from all options. And we need to use current and complete information to move forward. Trust is key. We only want our voices heard and respected, and no special allowances made. Develop the property. But please administer the City codes and ordinances openly and fairly to provide livable and workable solutions for all involved.

Sincerely,

Mark Peffer
Katie Peffer

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