

## Jackson Ewing

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**From:** Leah Ouellette <springwoodcg@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, March 16, 2026 1:38 PM  
**To:** Jackson Ewing  
**Subject:** Written statement for public hearing for springwood parcel

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

City of Olympia,

I would like to address the environmental checklist first. After reading the checklist in regards to the native (and non) wildlife found on the site I would like to include a full and accurate list:

Animals found on site:

Long tailed weasels, great horned owls and barred owls (babies often) Douglas and eastern gray squirrels, hummingbirds (Anna's and Rufus) osprey, bald eagles, dozens of song birds, white tailed deer (juvenile to adult, males too), coyotes, raccoon, pacific tree frogs and a brown ground frog (I'm not sure of name) salamanders, newts.

I have lived at 1735 springwood ave ne, next to the projected project site for almost 7 years and have observed all of these wild animals here on my property as well as on project site.

The wild acreage on project site is used by all of these creatures.

The site is also home to invasive plant species not mentioned in report:

Tansy, buttercup (my entire yard is buttercup), reed canary grass, English Ivy, Himalayan blackberry, laurel, holly.

These plants are easily observed on the project site.

This project will not only deeply impact the wildlife that use the acreage for their habitat, it will deeply impact every person within a wide radius. Cars already speed on bethel and miller ave, we are very close to a school zone so more cars equals more traffic and auto incidents. There are no traffic revisions to deal w the already busy streets of Bethel and Miller (speed bumps etc) and I saw no mention of these revisions in the context of increased cars and traffic for the safety of existing community members.

The water runoff is also very concerning. There is season flooding every year in the Rhody park across from project site, my property as well sees the flooding as does the entire road side of project site.

Adding more houses, roads and sidewalks will only make the existing properties wetter and create more drainage challenges for already taxed sewers in the neighborhood.

There is little desire from anyone in the neighborhood and beyond for the proposed project (at this scale of 37 houses). The North Star development has its own concerns of flooding increases and a connecting road increasing traffic and decreasing safety. I believe it is incredibly important to consider the impact this project will have on our community, its culture and its values. I have not spoken to a single person who feels this large scale project would benefit this NE neighborhood in any way.

The scale of this project would ruin the community connection and culture and goes against what the community wants. Why do we let big construction companies come in to ruin our communities here in Olympia? Housing is important, we need some houses, we do not need nor want 37 packed mega homes on our quiet peaceful street.

Leah Ouellette

**Jackson Ewing**

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**From:** Allie Hardy <wilkersonallie@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 18, 2026 12:11 AM  
**To:** Jackson Ewing  
**Subject:** Springwood Garden Plat

You don't often get email from wilkersonallie@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Hello,

I want to include a comment regarding the Springwood Garden Plat - project # 25-0980. The proposed development of 37 homes will greatly negatively impact the neighborhood, and more importantly, the wildlife and ecosystem of this little pocket of nature within the NE neighborhood. This is an absurd number of homes, which I assume will not be affordable (as nothing is anymore). This increase of traffic will dramatically alter the landscape of our neighborhood, creating congestion, and displacing wildlife. There are owls, deer, possums, etc. that reside within the rhododendron garden and surrounding forests. Please reconsider the scale of this project. My child attended outdoor preschool at the end of Springwood Avenue for two years. It is a blissful and serene setting that encouraged exploration and imagination. I would walk my child to and from preschool each day. It would be a shame to eliminate yet another natural space that won't easily regenerate.

Best,  
Allie Hardy



## Jackson Ewing

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**From:** Jessica Morrison <jessica.m.morrison13@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 18, 2026 9:43 AM  
**To:** Jackson Ewing  
**Subject:** Public Comment-Springwood Garden Plat. PROJECT: 25-0980

You don't often get email from jessica.m.morrison13@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Jackson Ewing,

This email is a public comment related to Project 25-0980 Springwood Garden Plat with a hearing scheduled for April 13th on behalf of those living on the street. I appreciate your time in reading the below comments!

My son has had the wonderful opportunity to attend a small outdoor preschool on Springwood Ave where he has gotten to enjoy deer, birds, trees, and wild spaces. I am also a renter who has been priced out of homeownership and understand the desperate need for more houses.

While I support land being used to make AFFORDABLE housing, my concern is that 37 houses and a through street will harm and diminish the natural surroundings. That 37 houses is far too many to allow for natural space to still be wild and included. And finally, that these 37 houses will be built and still remain unaffordable. Hurting nature, those living on the street (animals and preschool kids included) without truly supporting those in need of houses.

I would fully support developing with fewer houses per the space or for Olympia to change their zoning laws to include multiple dwellings (AUD) more regularly while leaving natural land in tact.

Thanks again for reading!

**Jessica Morrison (She/Her)**

\*I'm [#MadeByDyslexia](#) expect big thinking & small typos!

*"Answering your souls calling is not a single revelation; rather it is a lifelong dance"*

*-Rebecca Campbell*

## Jackson Ewing

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**From:** Debbie Arnold <meinoly1959@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, June 16, 2025 5:39 PM  
**To:** Jackson Ewing  
**Subject:** Help

Mr. Ewing,

I am writing today out of great concern for kids and animal safety on Marion St NE and Miller. A dog was hit recently and another child was nearly hit today due to speeding down Marion St NE . These cars are driving at least 40 mph in a residential neighborhood.

The dog was hit on Miller and both of these streets are treated as fwys by neighbors.

I don't want to see another child hit on Marion St NE would you please advise me as to what we can do to have the city address both of these safety issues on both of these streets? also would you please attach this letter to the file on the Springwood development as well.

Respectfully,

Debra Arnold

To: Jackson Ewing, Lead Planner for the Proposed Springwood Gardens Development  
Olympia Planning and Development Department, [jewing@ci.olympia.wa.us](mailto:jewing@ci.olympia.wa.us)

From: Joe Mantione  
Board Member of the Devon Place Homeowners Association  
[mantionejj@gmail.com](mailto:mantionejj@gmail.com) (303) 881-1808

Re: Comments on the Proposed Springwood Gardens Development

Date: April 7, 2025

Thank for the opportunity to comment. There are a lot of different perspectives and opinions on the proposed Springwood Gardens Development.

I am submitting comments reflecting a concern that a few residents in the Devon Place subdivision have raised.

The concern is the potential impacts from higher groundwater and surface water flows that could occur from the proposed Springwood Garden development.

Our Devon Place subdivision is southwest and downhill from the Springwood Area and the proposed development site. Our subdivision includes 50 houses developed 30+ years ago. We have observed that we have high ground water that appears to be increasing over time. We base this observation on: 1) some residents have had to put in french drains in the recent past, in order to prevent damage to their homes from groundwater flows; and 2) we have a drainage system that transports runoff to our large stormwater infiltration basin / retention pond; the level of the pond remains considerably higher for longer periods than in the past. We attribute these changes to regularly higher groundwater levels during the rainy months.

Our subdivision also backs up to Mission Creek, and our drainage overflow system pipes water directly to Mission Creek, which flows to Puget Sound. So we are concerned that more impervious area from new development and pavement could cause higher surface water flooding and pollution, which could reduce the water quality of runoff to Mission Creek (may also apply to groundwater). Habitat for salmon runs could potentially be negatively affected by toxins in contaminated water flows into Mission Creek and Ellis Creek.

We believe that the relatively high density of homes and close proximity of the new homes in the proposed Springwood Gardens development, without top notch stormwater mitigation measures, could greatly exacerbate negative surface and groundwater impacts on properties downstream, including Devon Place. Possibly clustering and/ or reducing the density of development along with aggressively implementing stormwater and flood control mitigation measures could go a long way to reduce possible impacts.

We have also observed that there is a lot of areas in the larger Springwood area (south and east of the proposed development) that often have wet soils/ standing water and cause some flooding on Springwood Avenue. There is also a lot of wetlands in the larger area. So we recommend the development's stormwater analysis and recommended mitigation measures be based on the larger environmental context of the Springwood Area. We also recommend that a professional expert opinion on the water-related findings and recommendations provided by the developer's consultant be reviewed through a third party to ensure their neutrality and overall thoroughness.

I reserve the right to offer further comments at a later time.

Thanks again for this review and comment opportunity.

Joe Mantione  
Board Member of the Devon Place Homeowners Association  
Retired Senior Community / Environmental Planner with the City of Boulder, Colorado for 25 years

## Proposed Springwood Gardens Development Comments (Revised 4/7/25)

Submitted by Joe Mantione, 1240 Devon Loop NE, [mantionejj@gmail.com](mailto:mantionejj@gmail.com) (303) 881-1808

Retired Community/ Environmental Planner, 25 Years with the City of Boulder, Colorado

### **A Vision and An Opportunity to Provide New Housing Implementing Innovative, Sustainable Development Concepts and Preserve the Semi-Rural Character of the Greater Springwood Area**

- Springwood Gardens could provide something special for Olympia: a new infill development and preservation prototype for several other semi-rural areas at the fringe of the City of Olympia and its Urban Growth Area. There are many examples of sustainable/ open space design development from around the country to learn from, as well as many good resources to guide this type of semi-rural/ urban development (See *Rural by Design* by Randell Arendt).
- The outcome of the planning process for Springwood Gardens could and should create a compatible mix and diversity of existing and new housing units with the goals of:
  1. Provide a highly livable community with its own unique semi-rural character, including a housing affordability component and diversity in housing type and affordability; and
  2. Protect and restore environmentally sensitive areas, ensuring that the carrying capacity of the land is not exceeded. It could be a win-win for the City of Olympia to expand its housing supply, for the developer to offer a quality housing product, and to provide a place to live that both existing and new residents enjoy.
- My vision for the larger Springwood area is to accept a reasonable amount of new housing growth, but only to the extent that it meets these two overall goals. If it is necessary to reduce the current proposal for housing density and number of dwelling units in order to meet these goals, I believe the development density and dwelling units of the proposed development should be reduced. I also believe creating sensitive new development and meeting these goals is very possible and likely if the various stakeholders sincerely work together.
- An alternative to the current development proposal is to approve a mixed-use development with fewer homes and include alternative community land uses such as a neighborhood park, community gardens, or another public use.

### **Recommended Planning Process for the Springwood Development Site and the Larger Springwood Area**

- The planning process for the Springwood development site and larger Springwood area could and should spend the time and effort to bring stakeholders together to collaborate for the common good. I believe it is possible to preserve the semi-rural character of the Springwood Gardens site and the larger Springwood Area, and to use ecological- and climate-friendly site/ utility/ street designs to create new highly livable housing and sustainable development and reduce impervious space that contributes to water runoff.
- ***However, it is essential to slow down the approval process to order support an inclusive, creative planning process that will provide this win-win outcome.***
- I believe the Planning and Development Department should defer a decision on the Springwood Gardens development to allow community character and development design charrettes with the developer, residents of the larger Springwood area, city staff, and other interested parties. These charrettes could be a stand alone effort or part of a sub-area plan for the larger Springwood area.

- It is much better planning to implement a charette design process that develops scenarios and proposals for the larger Springwood area, and well as to foster plan buy-in, rather than incrementally plan for Springwood Gardens and continue in the future piecemeal planning for other small areas of the larger Springwood area. Many of the issues apply to much of the larger Springwood area, similar environmental and other constraints and opportunities for both preservation and development, and housing affordability concerns that are shared by subareas or in the to entire area. If these concerns are not planned in a larger context, but instead are planned in piecemeal fashion, optimal solutions may be precluded or not feasible.
- A landscape architect with experience in charettes should be hired to lead the charette design process. A series of aerials photos and other maps and digital and physical overlays should be developed to provide the context for analysis of planning constraints and opportunities and the development of plan alternatives. Analysis of soils, slopes, wetlands and other water features, drainage flows, legal restrictions, vegetative cover, site assets/ amenities, network of footpaths, more.
- Duplicating in Springwood Gardens the cookie-cutter suburban style, density and development character of the subdivisions to the south and north of Springwood Gardens with no provision for affordable housing would be a mistake and a wasted opportunity. Putting in extra effort to create and try a new semi-rural / urban development planning model could demonstrate how new development could provide many more benefits than traditional suburban infill development to new and existing residents, surrounding neighborhoods, and the community at large.
- If conventional suburban infill development is approved for the Springwood development, then a development pattern precedent may create a domino effect enticing other property owners of vacant land to do the same. That result would completely undermine the current semi-urban character of the larger Springwood area.
- The key to creating new more sustainable development options is to create smaller pockets of clustered development with swatches of open space between them, protect and restore environmental resources, and avoid and mitigate negative impacts of new development.

### **Transportation and Traffic**

The number of auto trips, and how they are managed, has a direct impact on quality of life (safety, air quality, and noise pollution) and the degree of naturalness in the Springwood Gardens area and the larger Springwood area.

- Instead of extending the street grid from Miller Street to Springwood Avenue in two places, implement just one street extension (on Central), and on Marion provide a pedestrian / biking through-path (the reverse is also possible). This dual solution will provide street continuity but also a safe path for school children to walk or bike to Roosevelt Elementary School and Reeves Middle School.
- Implement traffic speed mitigation measures to slow traffic down on Springwood Avenue, possibly speed bumps.
- Install crosswalks where needed for safety.
- Provide sidewalks and curb and gutter on Springwood Avenue, and extend it to Bethel Avenue. (Idea is borrowed from others.)
- Provide a marked crosswalk at the intersection of Springwood Avenue and Bethel Avenue, in order to accommodate school children and bus riders who need to cross Bethel. (Idea is borrowed from others.)

## **Park Issues**

- Enlarge Tract D as a neighborhood park to include an open area and playground (adjacent to Springwood Parcel across the road), including the marked trees to be saved. Providing a neighborhood park here helps satisfy a city goal of locating parks within walking distance so that everyone has the opportunity to walk to an open space and wooded area. (Idea is borrowed from others.)
- Protect the Springwood Parcel Natural Area by increasing monitoring and enforcement of protective regulations and implement measures to mitigate negative impacts from increased visitation by people and dogs.

## **Key Design Components for a Sustainable/ Open Space Development Design and Finding Preservations/ Development Solutions to the Problems and Opportunities for Springwood Gardens and the Larger Springwood Area**

### **Subdivision Design and Layout Strategies**

These strategies will better protect environmental resources, add to the livability of new residences and compatibility with existing residences, and preserve the overall semi-rural character.

- Identify, protect and restore the most important environmental resources and constraints.
- Work within the fabric of environmental constraints, strategically locate smaller compact clusters of residences, create permanent pockets of open space separating them, and maximally avoid and mitigate negative impacts of new development. Buffer surrounding development if possible with the location and landscaping and trees.
- Identify work with the dwelling unit density and number of units that will optimize the quality of life on the Springwood Gardens site and in the larger Springwood area, given constraints and opportunities.

### **Housing Issues**

These strategies are linked to environmental sustainability, resident livability, community character, and housing affordability.

- Require that the new housing stock be diverse in housing type and affordability, including both single family and multifamily homes and a variety of home prices, and house size and lot size.
- A good way to increase housing density or keep it within a target, without proportionate negative impacts, and increase overall internal open space is to include some townhomes in the new development. Townhomes, can also add to affordability and a diverse residential population, and help protect environmental resources.
- Require some percentage of units to be permanently affordable, through covenants and the restrictions on the income of buyers.

## **Implement A Collaborative Planning Process and Achieve Significantly More Sustainable and Compatible Development Based on Win-Win Solutions**

These mechanisms would work better if they were applied to the larger Springwood Area.

- Create a zoning overlay district over the underlying zoning that reduces the allowed dwelling unit density and the number of new units if built under current zoning (currently 4-8 dus/ dwelling units pers acre) with a conventional subdivision layout (start below the minimum 4 dus per acre).
- At the same time, allow the density and number of units to be increased to and above that minimum threshold by allowing more density/more units if low environmental impact and compatible with overall semi-rural character. The more sustainable and compatible the new housing development is, the more the developer can be rewarded with density,

### **Planning Context**

- The proposed Springwood Gardens site was annexed to the City of Olympia (and almost all properties east to Friendly Grove—most of it annexed in 1886).
- The site and larger Springwood area is primarily former agricultural use (with wet meadows for blueberry farms). The existing land use pattern is dispersed very low density development with substantial open land. Directly to the south of the proposed Springwood Gardens site are suburban-style neighborhoods with similar density as to what is proposed in Springwood Gardens.
- The Springwood Gardens site (and a large area around it) is designated as an Urban Growth Area (UGA), and it has long been zoned and planned for Low-Density Residential Development with 4-8 dwelling units per acre. The Comprehensive Plan provides direction to, over time, densify those areas that are below planned densities, so the default target for a designated Low-Density Residential area is at least 4 dwelling units per acre, with an exception for lower densities where there are significant environmental constraints (as is the case for the Springwood area).
- Olympia has a process for more detailed sub-area planning, involving residents and community stakeholders, as well as a process for revision of the Comprehensive Plan. In these processes, land use and densities possibly could be decided differently than designated in the Comprehensive Plan and the Zoning Ordinance.
- The landowner and developer for Springwood Gardens have some vested rights to develop as proposed if development satisfies current City codes.
- Given the existing City annexation and the approved suburban-style zoning (4-8 dwelling units per acre) for the Springwood Gardens site and the larger Springwood area, it will likely prove very difficult to stop the proposed by-right development with standard suburban-style subdivision layout and density.
- Consequently, I believe that it is necessary to focus on getting the development plans revised to better foster compatibility with the existing neighborhood, preservation of environmental resources, and reduction of ground or surface water and transportation adverse impacts.
- Maybe a more desirable alternative could be considered for a less intensive mixed-use development with some housing and a community gardens, a neighborhood park site, or another alternative land use.

## **Appendix**

### **Brainstorm of Proposed Development Issues for Springwood Gardens and Possible Solutions**

#### **Environmental Issues**

- Would groundwater levels rise causing damage or mitigation costs (e.g., new French drains) to existing development, especially downhill from the development, and in particular, existing homes along Springwood Avenue and environs and the Devon Place subdivision?
- Would groundwater or surface water quality be degraded (more impervious area and sources of pollution), with more degradation of water flowing into Puget Sound?
- Will existing wetlands on this parcel proposed for development and in the larger Springwood Avenue area be degraded or lost because of by Springwood Gardens and future development in the area?
- If that happened, would the wetland water holding / detoxifying function decline, potentially causing surface water flooding and pollution and rising groundwater damage?
- Would the proposed development significantly reduce or degrade natural habitat and connectivity for wildlife movement?
- Would negative wildlife habitat impacts from additional development in the larger Springwood area drive wildlife out of the area or create more conflicts between wildlife and people/ pets?

#### **Community Character Issues**

- Would this individual development seriously degrade the existing semi-rural character and quality of life of the Springwood Avenue area?
- Does the 5.2 units per acre seriously degrade the “rural” feel of the neighborhood?
- Would this development lead to a landslide conversion of land to urban density in the Springwood Avenue area (a domino effect), resulting in the loss of the overall semi-rural character?
- Would the City of Olympia require some mix of housing types to increase overall affordability of the development, and / or require a portion of the units be dedicated to permanent affordability?

#### **Traffic Issues**

- Would very quiet / low volume traffic on Springwood Ave be substantially increased by this proposed development with new street connections and by the likely additional development in the Springwood neighborhood area?
- How crucial is extending the road grid from Miller Street to Springwood Avenue with two street extensions on Central and Marion streets?

#### **Impacts to the City of Olympia Springwood Parcel Natural Area**

- Will the increased visitation from people and dogs in the Springwood Parcel Natural Area (across the street from the proposed development) cause damage to its natural vegetation, water flow, and habitat?

- If even more urban development follows the Springwood development, will the natural area be seriously degraded?

### **Possible Solutions / Development Changes to Increase Benefits or Reduce Impacts**

- Require some units to be permanently affordable (overall benefit to the City)
- Require some townhouses in the mix without increasing the overall housing density (increase affordability, reduce environmental impacts, increase internal open space)
- Reduce the overall density and number of housing units (increase neighborhood compatibility and fewer negative impacts)
- Consider a mixed-use development with fewer homes and alternative community land uses (reduce intensity of development and associated impacts)
- Cluster housing units and provide open spaces between them (reduce environmental impacts and increase housing livability)
- Implement traffic mitigation measures to slow and channel additional traffic (reduce impact on neighborhood)
- Pick either Marion and Central street extensions from Miller Street, implement just one and provide the other with a pedestrian through-path (reduce traffic impacts and increase walk ability)
- Require state-of-the-art surface and groundwater mitigation measures—not just a one big stormwater retention pond, e.g., multiple stormwater catchment basins, porous paving products for driveways and streets, strategic landscaping patches that act like“sponges”, rain gardens (reduce flooding and improve water quality), more
- Expand / enhance existing wetlands and construct new wetlands (reduce flooding, increase water quality, and enhance habitat quality)
- Preserve all important environmental features, i.e., trees, shrubs, wetlands and water features, and habitat patches and corridors on site (preserve and protect environmental resources and increase livability)
- Increase park maintenance and enforcement of regulations in the Springwood Parcel Natural Area, and implement measures to mitigate increased visitation by people and dogs (protect the Natural Area from negative impacts)

## Jackson Ewing

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**From:** ron@rondalton.com  
**Sent:** Friday, April 11, 2025 7:52 PM  
**To:** Jackson Ewing  
**Subject:** Re: Springwood Gardens Proposed Development 25-0980

Mr Ewing

This email was sent on the 7th and I hadn't received a confirmation from your office. Please confirm your recipe

Thank You

Ron Dalton

On Apr 7, 2025, at 4:55 PM, ron@rondalton.com wrote:

Added Public Comment on:

### **Springwood Gardens Proposed Development 25-0980**

In reviewing the preliminary 20250203 Springwood Garden P-Plat.pdf it becomes apparent that the road widths on this proposition are not in keeping with the adjacent development (Northpointe) and should be reviewed.

A. The planned continuation of the roads on **Marion** and **Central** become notably narrower as it enters the proposed subdivision. These streets should be at least as wide and the current streets that feed into them. The carved out parking area on **Marion** should not be added to the street width.

B. **Road A** that goes between **Marion** and **Central** is proposed at a 20' width from curb to curb. The current parallel streets of **Quasar Way** and **Bright Star Way** are both 32' wide to accommodate neighborhood parking and room for emergency vehicles. Building 19 homes on this narrow street would be problematic and a safety concern. **Road A** should conform with area standards and be 32' wide.

C. **Springwood Ave** needs to be widened to accommodate this projected traffic impact. The preliminary drawing show the road at 20' wide however the actually paved road is 16' not 20' as shown. The plan shows 14 houses built on Springwood and adding 4' for a total of 20' as the main arterial into this development. This road is not in keeping with the current city development in the area (Review Northpointe plat). 39 homes added to a 16' road seems better suited for county than city.

D. Due to the current climate and expected rainfall in the area the street at the adjacent property-Northpointe were developed to control the water run off. Quasar and Bright star were designed to have higher elevation on one side of the road allow rainwater run off to flow on mainly one side of the street. With the heavy rain in the area it would be wise to review current development standard for new construction in this area,

As a home owner in this area I am concerned about the quality of any future development. As a land developer I understand their priority in maximizing profit for the development and selling houses that benefit from being located within the city limits of Olympia. This public

comment is being submitted to the City of Olympia with recommended standards to review with the developer before this project moves forward.

Thank you for your time

Ron Dalton

1613 Quasar Way NE

Olympia, Wa 98506

ron@rondalton.com

206-476-6528

April 3, 2025

To: Jackson Ewing, Associate Planner, City of Olympia  
Re: Project: Springwood Gardens plat  
Record Number 25-0980  
Project location: 1609 Springwood Ave NE

We, the undersigned object to the following design features of the Development as shown on Preliminary Plat- Site Plan C1.0.

1. The C Frontage Section on C4.0, showing road pavement edge improvements, curb, landscape area, and sidewalk, all stop abruptly at the western end of the development line.
  - A. Pedestrians of all ages, school students enroute to their bus, anyone walking to the bus stop on Bethel, will be then forced off the sidewalk and out into the substandard existing narrow portion of Springwood Ave traffic enroute to Bethel and back when returning.
  - B. The City of Olympia, as part of this Preliminary Review, must require the developer to acquire the land necessary for the continuation of the road lane, edge improvements, catch basins, curb, and safe sidewalk, design to the corner of Springwood Ave NE and Bethel, and then complete this extension as part of the Development.
  - C. In addition to the above, speed deterrents such as speed bumps need to be required as a provision of the Development approval for additional safety of all concerned.
  - D. In addition to the above, roadside water drainage must be adequate to provide for drainage on the north side of Springwood.
  - E. Note that the existing Springwood Ave NE paved width will not safely accommodate utility vehicles, emergency vehicles, various delivery vehicles, and common automobiles passage at the same time.

We, and our neighbors, await your response, and implementation of the action necessary for the above Development upgrades.

David J Mackey  
Sandra L Herndon  
Residents and owners  
1416 Springwood Ave. NE  
Olympia WA 98506

**Date: April 6, 2025**

**TO: City Planning**

**Subject: Springwood Gardens Proposed Development 25-0980**

**FROM: Springwood area community members**

### **Executive Summary of Concerns**

#### **1.Environmental and Water Needs**

- a. Require state-of-the-art surface and groundwater mitigation measures, e.g., multiple stormwater catchment basins, permeable paving for all driveways, new streets/extensions
- b. Expand/enhance existing wetlands and construct new wetlands (reduce flooding, increase water quality, enhance habitat quality)
- c. Preserve all important environmental features (trees, shrubs, wetlands, habitat patches/corridors)

#### **2.Traffic Needs**

- a. Pedestrian path for Central Extension (rather than a new street to Springwood)
- b. 1407 sidewalk/curb extension out to Bethel
- c. Speedbumps on Springwood, Marion, and nearby on Bethel
- d. Marked crosswalk from Springwood Parcel over to Central St. Extension (with flashing lights), and 3-4 parking spaces next to Tract D (see 3a below)
- e. Marked crosswalk at intersection of Springwood and Bethel to accommodate school children and bus riders
- d. Placement of IT bus shelter at same intersection on Bethel

#### **3. Springwood Parcel/Park Needs**








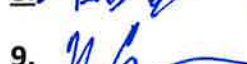







- a. Tract D enlarged to include open area/playground (adjacent to Springwood Parcel across the road), including the marked trees to be saved
- b. Helps satisfy a city goal of a park (with open space and wooded area) in walking distance for everyone.
- b. Increased park maintenance and implement measures to mitigate increased visitation by people and dogs to protect from negative impacts



RE: 25-0980

## 4. Types of Housing Desired

- a. Some units to be permanently affordable (benefit to the city)
- b. Some townhouses (increase affordability, increase internal open space, reduce environmental impact)
- c. Mixed-use development to include fewer homes and alternative community land uses
- d. Cluster housing units with open spaces between (increase livability and reduce environmental impact)
- e. Eco-friendly, quality housing

Signature	Name	Address	Email address
1. 	Debra ARNOLD	2013 Marion St NE Oly wa 98506	meindly1959@gmail.com
2. 	LUKAS MALONE	2019 Marion St NE Olympia WA 98505	LukasMalone@gmail.com
3. 	Marcia Horvath	1915 Marion St NE Olympia WA 98506	homerengosher@gmail.com
4. 	Shanna Paxton	1916 Marion St NE	shannapaxton5@gmail.com
5. 	DEREK SATER	2012 MARION ST NE	soncysgirl@yahoo.com
6. 	Tracy Clement	2008 Marion St. NE	soncysgirl@yahoo.com
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8. 	Aaron Varad	2007 Marion St NE	aaronvarad@gmail.com
9. 	Nick Chermak	2002 Marion St NE	NDCmark@hotmail.com
10. 	Terri Wilson	1205 Devon Loop NE	willy547@comcast.net
11. 	Kenneth W. Kennedy	1651 Bright Star Way NE	comcast.net
12. 	M. Guscott	2031 Marion St. NE	guscotmj@plu.edu
13. 	Rita K. Alborn	1501 Miller NE	
14. 	Heather Pens	1610 Bright Star Way NE	hptrillum@gmail.com
15. 	J. J. O'Connell	1618 East Side St NE	

#### 4. Types of Housing Desired

- Some units to be permanently affordable (benefit to the city)
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- Mixed-use development to include fewer homes and alternative community land uses
- Cluster housing units with open spaces between (increase livability and reduce environmental impact)
- Eco-friendly, quality housing

Signature	Name	Address	Email
<u>1.</u> Fleming Behrend	FLEMMING BEHREND	2331 Bethel St.	flemmingbehrend@gmail.com
<u>2.</u> Silvia Beltrando	SILVIA BELTRANDO	2331 Bethel St	reudocsil@gmail.com
<u>3.</u> Melissa MacLennan	Melissa MacLennan	1311 Devon Dr NE Olympia	mmacLennan@live.com
<u>4.</u> Andrew Wilson	Andrew Wilson	1201 Devon Loop NE Olympia	WILL5541@msn.com
<u>5.</u> Sarah Brooks	Sarah Brooks	1257 Devon Loop NE Olympia	olympiagir137@gmail.com
<u>6.</u> Connie Delisio	Connie Delisio	1248 Devon Loop NE	cadell1550@gmail.com
<u>7.</u> Tish Ellis	Tish Ellis	1245 DEVON LOOP NE	TishBoHon73@gmail.com
<u>8.</u> Joe Mantione	Joe Mantione	1240 Devon Loop NE	mantionej@gmail.com
<u>9.</u> Russell Lehman	Russell Lehman	1215 Devon LP NE	rlehman@comcast.net
<u>10.</u> Katherine Lehou	KATHERINE LEHMAN	1218 Devon Loop	KLM@LUE@westmar.com
<u>11.</u> Michelle Sever	Michelle Sever	1241 Devon LP NE 11	MichelleSever
<u>12.</u> Jeremy Sever	severdaddy7@		1024@gmail
<u>13.</u> M. HOGG	M. HOGG	1235 DEVON LP NE DLY 98506	triviastuff16@gmail.com
<u>14.</u> Tamara Miketa	TAMARA MIKETA	1224 Devon LP NE	tami.miketa@comcast.net
<u>15.</u> Whitney Toppel	Whitney Toppel	1222 Devon LP NE	wetoppel@gmail.com

RUEHMAN





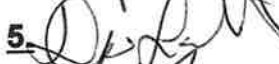







#### 4. Types of Housing Desired

- a. Some units to be permanently affordable (benefit to the city)
- b. Some townhouses (increase affordability, increase internal open space, reduce environmental impact)
- c. Mixed-use development to include fewer homes and alternative community land uses
- d. Cluster housing units with open spaces between (increase livability and reduce environmental impact)
- e. Eco-friendly, quality housing

Signature	Name	Address	Email
1. <u>Leslie Morris</u>	Leslie Morris	2417 Bethel St NE	lesliemorris919@gmail.com
2. <u>Jason Morris</u>	Jason Morris	2417 Bethel St NE	allsixxesandsevens@gmail.com
3. <u>Kathryn Kasimor</u>	Kathryn Kasimor	2509 Bethel St NE	estella2509@gmail.com
4. <u>Lance Poe</u>	Lance Poe	2503 Bethel St NE	lancepoe464@gmail.com
5. <u>Alex Tomita</u>	Alex Tomita	1310 Devon Dr NE	thetomitas@gmail.com
6. <u>AARON PARADEE</u>	AARON PARADEE	1306 Devon Dr NE	PARADEE75@gmail.com
7. <u>Ben Yokoyama</u>	Ben Yokoyama	1202 Devon Loop NE	
8. <u>Anne Kohlberg</u>	Anne Kohlberg	1204 Devon Ln NE	apkohlberg@hotmail.com
9. <u>Linda Stretz</u>	Linda Stretz	1206 Devon Ln NE	Lstretz@hotmail.com
10. <u>Alan Jackson</u>	Alan Jackson	1208 Devon Ln NE	alchemist4now@gmail.com
11. <u>Kathleen Snyder</u>	Kathleen Snyder	1220 Devon Ln NE	ksnyder75@gmail.com
12. <u>Rob Bengel</u>	Rob Bengel	2217 Three Sisters Ct.	robertdenjef@gmail.com
13. <u>Lance D. Crow</u>	Lance D. Crow	2214 Three Sisters Ct NE	petecrow1951@hotmail.com
14. <u>DARYL GRAZIA</u>	DARYL GRAZIA	1216 Devon Loop NE	dgrazia123@hotmail.com
15. <u>Shirley Johnson</u>	Shirley Johnson	2144 Bethel St NE	essjay.grove@gmail.com
16. <u>Jandra Parker</u>	Jandra Parker	2632 81st Ave NE	
17. <u>Nicholas Parker</u>	Nicholas Parker	2632 81st Ave NE	nparker30comcast.net

#### 4. Types of Housing Desired

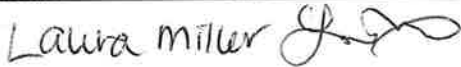

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<u>Signature</u> <u>address</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Email</u>
1. 	Rachel Brooks	1916 Prospect Ave Oly	rachelbrooks@gmail.com
2. 	Andrew Dechaine	1916 Prospect Ave Oly	adechaine90@gmail.com
3. 	Daniel Spencer	504 Central St NE Olympia	rdsealno@rol.com
4. 	Stephanie Picias	1357 Thurston Avenue NE Oly	sjpicias@gmail.com
5. 	David Lambert	3733 Shrout Rd NE Oly	mamafedclaw@gmail.com
6. 	CURTIS D. TANNER	1817 Rose St NE OLYWA	curtis.d.tanner@gmail.com
7. 	T.J. Johnson	928 Wilson St NE, Olympia	urbancorridor@comcast.net
8. 	Miranda Plumb	504 Central St NE Olympia	fishingsayehotmail
9. 	Wendy Tanner	1817 Rose St NE Oly	curtisandwendy@msn.com
10. 	Quinn Johnson	928 Wilson St. NE Oly	quinnajohnson1997@gmail.com
11. 	Patricia A. Kilmer	1715 Bigelow Ave NE Oly	pattkilmer811@gmail.com
12. 	Daniel Fisch	2505 17th Ave NW Oly	dfischhh@gmail.com
13.			
14.			
15.			

RE: 25-0980

4. Types of Housing Desired

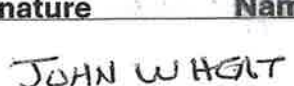
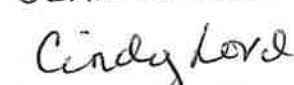
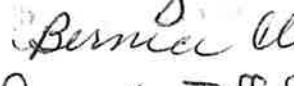

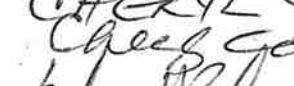





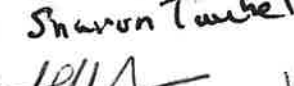



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<u>Signature</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Email address</u>
<u>1.</u> 	Laura Miller	1603 Bright Star Way NE	miller.laura@gmail.com
<u>2.</u> 	TAC Miller	1603 Bright Star Way NE	miller.tac@gmail.com
<u>3.</u>			
<u>4.</u>			
<u>5.</u>			
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RE: 25-0980

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Signature	Name	Address	Email address
1. 	JOHN WHEAT	1609 BRIGHT STAR Way N.E.	
2. 	Cindy Lord	"	Lucinda.lord@gmail.com
3. 	Bernice Clem	166 Bright Star Way N.E.	
4. 	Jeff Shannon	2109 Central St NE	jeffshannon@gmail.com
5. 	CHERYL CONNER	1627 Bright Star Way NE	cherylconner106@gmail.com
6. 	Cheryl Conner		cherylconner106@gmail.com
7. 	Judy Woodson	2115 Central St NE	jani.perez@comcast.net
8. 	Chris-Jon Lindsay	2133 Central St NE	
9. 	Lindsey Davis	2139 Central St NE	Lindsay@comcast.net
10. 	Audrey Leamons	2145 Central St NE	draudr@comcast.net
11. 	RON DALTON	1613 QUASAR Way NE	Ronald.Ronald@comcast.net
12. 	Sharon Tumbel	1610 Bright Star Way NE	Sharon.Tumbel@comcast.net
13. 	Alicia Witzel	1646 Bright Star Way NE	al.witzel@gmail.com
14. 	Kyaad	1645 Bright Star Way NE	Kyaad1@hotmail.com

RE: 25-0980

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<u>Signature</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Email address</u>
1. <i>Jessica Duke</i>	Jessica Duke	1622 Bright Star Way NE	oly, WK 988506
2. <i>Kristina Beeson</i>	Kristina Beeson	1639 Bright Star Way NE	
3. <i>Nathaniel Beeson</i>	Nathaniel Beeson		
4. <i>Daniel Park</i>	Daniel Park	1610 Bright Star Way NE	
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March 17, 2025

TO: Jackson Ewing, Associate Planner, City of Olympia

RE: Right-of-way in front of 1407 Springwood Ave NE

I am writing to offer right-of-way in front of my property at 1407 Springwood Ave NE, from my east property boundary to Bethel St. in return for dialogue and adequate compensation. This mutually-agreed-upon outcome should include sidewalk, crosswalks, drainage, and curbing.

This agreement would then provide the entire length of Springwood Ave NE with sidewalk on the south side from the east end of the 1409 parcel all the way to Bethel St. and avoid a pedestrian bottleneck at the entrance of Springwood Ave NE.

Greg Hansen, 1407 Springwood Ave NE



3-17-2025

I can be reached at 360-789-4178 and [Gregandjulie@comcast.net](mailto:Gregandjulie@comcast.net) (and at 4761 East Catalina, Mesa, AZ 85206 from March 19 til April 19).

RECEIVED  
MAR 24 2025

COMMUNITY PLANNING  
AND DEVELOPMENT DEPT.

City of Olympia:

Honorable Mayor Dontae Payne

Honorable Mayor Pro-tem/ Community Livability and Public Safety Comm.ChairYen Huynh

Honorable City Councilmember / Land Use and Environment Comm. Chair Dani Madrone

Honorable City Councilmember Clark Gilman

Honorable City Councilmember Kelly Green

Honorable City Councilmember Robert Vanderpool

Honorable City Councilmember Jim Cooper

City ManagerJay Burney

Hearing Examiner Mark C. Scheibmeir, esq.

Lead Planner Jackson Ewing

*Email & hand delivered*

Re: SpringwoodGarden Development

[City of Olympia Community Planning & Development](#)

31 March 2025

Dear City Officials,

I am writing to you today regarding the proposed Springwood Meadow Development located at 1609 Springwood Ave NE Olympia, WA. 98506. I have numerous concerns regarding this proposal and hope the City of Olympia employees, elected officials, vendors / contractors, etc. will consider.

I am a long time resident of Olympia and other parts of Olympia, Tumwater and Thurston County. And have see the growth that this beautiful area had become. However. . . .

Here are several concerns:

**Wetlands, water pooling, water runoff**

When we moved into our current home (within the Northpointe HOA), we experienced quite a bit of water runoff and ground sinking. This water was so bad that the City of Olympia had to obtain an easement on some properties and installed a drainage system. All this work was completed by City employees and thus was completed at the city taxpayer expense. This development was approved by the City (Hearing Examiner, etc.) and the developer was permitted to build the homes, make their profit, and leave (this development went through the approval process just as the Springwood Garden is doing currently). Even though a project may be 'within minimum' requirements due to current codes and regulations does not mean that it should be allowed to move forward without looking at the specific area. I am surprised that a professional company can survey an area and claim that there is little to no concern for major wetland areas as there is free standing / pooled water currently on the proposed development as well as areas adjacent to this development. I would please

ask the city employees, elected officials, etc. just take an actual walk on this property and surrounding areas. **It is well within the City's authority to require** additional surface areas / lots for the excess water runoff that will occur – let's make this the out of town developer's responsibility now and not on the taxpayer's shoulders later. Therefore, please consider this notice from our HOA to the City and request that this is handled correctly now to avoid possible future litigation. There are already currently water pooling issues with some of our Quasar Way neighbors (backyards, sump pumps, etc.) and do not want to see this problem exacerbated by the proposed developers lack of green space between the developments, etc.

Northpointe Homeowners Association would love to host and walk anyone through the areas of concern (our backyards, etc.).

### **Traffic (vehicle and pedestrian)**

The traffic study is showing an increase of 300 + daily trips through this area (please think of where you currently live and try to imagine 300 extra vehicles driving by). We would ask that neither of the proposed street extensions (Marion and Central) be granted. The Miller Ave. allows **pedestrian access only** and the Jabbok Way allows **emergency vehicles only**. We only ask for this same consideration permitted to developments which are within a 2 mile radius of this proposed development.

Also, there are at least 6 other neighboring developments that do not permit through access. Nonetheless, we recognize the importance of our emergency personnel in protecting life and property and ask that the Marion extension allow for emergency vehicle and pedestrian access only and the Central extension allow pedestrian access only. **It is well within the City's authority to require** the developer to widen their proposed roadways within their proposed development to allow better emergency personnel access and not put this burden on taxpayers living outside this proposed development. With wider streets, there would be no need for vehicular through traffic.

I have heard that the City is not requiring a sidewalk from the proposed development to the main arterial street (Bethel). If true, I find this hard to believe that the City would not require the developer to complete a sidewalk from their development to Bethel (the City has an easement currently). This will allow the increased pedestrian traffic from their proposed development, to include the safety of the school age children, etc. safer access. **It is well within the City's authority to require** this request of increased pedestrian safety.

The smaller width of the proposed streets are purely for increased numbers of lot developments (i.e. increased profit) and does nothing to increase livability or safety. The City should require all of the proposed roadway widths to be increased to allow for better firetruck, school bus, etc. access. **It is well within the City's authority to require** this improvement as to not put the burden on surrounding neighborhoods of increased and

unsafe vehicular traffic (**i.e. if the developers widen their streets then there would be no need to have the Marion and Central street extensions open for vehicle traffic**).

Unfortunately, the City has a history of approving / allowing a proposed development to move forward since it meets “current guidelines and regulations” without any consideration of additional measures listed above. The City has the authority to require additional items above and beyond the minimum regulations when it is warranted. We believe these additional requests are warranted and ask the City to require them. We feel that without these additional requirements the aftermath of this proposed development puts an extreme onus on the City’s budget and ultimately all taxpayer’s within our city as the City will be responsible for any issues which arise after this developer has made their money and left. I invite each of you to personally look into our very own development within Northpointe HOA.

My personal experience is when the City had City employees working in some of the backyards approximately 3 years after the developer had left the area. An easement had to be granted and thus the City placed a responsibility and financial burden on ALL of our taxpayers for installation and ongoing maintenance of this drain / manhole. Even though the City recognized and corrected their error **after** allowing our development to move forward (since it met the ‘minimum requirements’), taxpayers lost in the end by spending precious City resources then and STILL ONGOING resources due to the required upkeep and maintenance.

We hope that any or all of you take us up on our offer and look forward to seeing you (boots on the ground) soon. Please do not just sit back and take the submitted reports at face value. Come and see for yourselves the wildlife that flourish on this site (which is specifically listed as not there), come and see for yourself the free standing and pooled water that is currently there and only stands to increase (which again is not listed in the submitted reports), etc. The above concerns are real and must be mitigated by the ones proposing the development NOW and not put on the shoulders of taxpayers LATER through litigation, etc.

Respectfully submitted,

Ronald D. Walters  
3251 Central Street NE  
Olympia, WA 98506  
360-402-9018

Cc: Northpointe Homeowners Association  
John L. Adams, President  
1604 Bright Star Way NE  
Olympia, WA. 98506  
253-209-9949 cellular

Regarding File Number 25-0980

Dear Mr. Ewing,

I am voicing my objection to the proposed Springwood Gardens development.

A project of this size will drastically increase traffic dangers and pollution, negatively impact wildlife and local ecosystems, increase noise pollution, and will only exacerbate the affordable housing crisis we are experiencing. We also know there are other options that would not have these negative impacts on our community and wildlife. We have organized our letter to cover 7 topics to convince you to rethink this development:

- 1. This Housing Development Ignores Olympia's Promise to Work Towards Mitigating Climate Crisis**
- 2. Proposal Elements Out of Alignment or Compliance with City of Olympia Municipal Code**
- 3. Impact on Salmon Habitat & Setchfield Lake Ecosystem**
- 4. Impact of Traffic**
- 5. Increased Housing does NOT Increase Affordability**
- 6. Pacific Lifestyle Homes & Garrette Custom Homes Are Not Good Homes**
- 7. Reasonable Alternatives**

#### 1. This Housing Development Ignores Olympia's Promise to Work Towards Mitigating Climate Crisis

US population is projected to flatten out and then decline in the next couple of decades. Read [here](#) (Article: U.S. Population Projected to Begin Declining in Second Half of Century) for more information. Regional population growth projections are based on the misconception about the vitality of the tech sector, which is due for a correction, presently [shedding thousands of jobs and paying lower salaries to new hires](#). This coincides with a massive increase in severe heatwaves and torrential precipitation as a result of climate breakdown. Rather than replacing urban forest with asphalt and a plan that's detrimental to the community, we need to be enhancing green space—our only buffer to severe heatwaves and weather events. This should coincide with the establishment of more community gardens, expansion of our trail system, and the creation of truly affordable and socialized housing in the downtown core by renovating existing vacant or single-story commercial real estate into multi-story apartments with courtyard gardens. [Seattle's Urban Heat Island Index \(UHI\) is 8.2 degrees hotter on average](#) than surrounding green space, while national public health monitor Heat.gov notes that [UHI temperature spikes of 15 to 20 degrees have been observed](#). Urban heat islands are caused by a loss of tree cover, but also the overuse of asphalt, and by heat sources like cars and air conditioning units. A higher UHI increases strain on the power

grid, acting as a threat multiplier by increasing the likelihood of power outages during severe weather events.

Additionally, according to the [Thurston Climate Action Plan](#), Olympia has made a 12 point commitment to mitigating climate crisis and related issues in Olympia. This development project is in direct conflict with eight of those twelve points:

1. Create vibrant centers, corridors, and neighborhoods while accommodating growth.
  - a. The development project will consist of cheaply built homes that maximize housing square footage on each minimally sized lot--not a vibrant center or corridor. This “growth” is not green by any means.
2. Preserve environmentally sensitive lands, farmlands, forest lands, prairies, and rural lands, and develop compact urban areas.
  - a. The development project sits on historic farmland and forestland which will be destroyed, not preserved, in this new development project.
3. Protect and improve water quality, including groundwater, rivers, streams, lakes and Puget Sound.
  - a. This development project is in marshy land (a non-irrigated blueberry bog sits in the middle of the proposed site), consists of riparian forest habitat, is directly adjacent to a wetland that feeds into a salmon-bearing stream no more than 300 meters away. Toxic runoff and groundwater from both the toxic materials being used to create these homes in addition to the addition of 50-70 more cars and ~339 more road trips per day will drastically harm, rather than improve, water quality.
4. Plan and act toward zero waste in the region.
  - a. The development project will result in plenty of waste, both during construction as they bulldoze an existing single family home, and two other dwellings that currently sit on the property, and as 39 new single family units contribute to increased waste.
5. Ensure that residents have the resources to meet their daily needs.
  - a. Residents of Olympia need clean air, clean water, green spaces, and climate mitigation plans. We do not need more poorly made, unaffordable homes that are not green.
6. Support a local food system to increase community resilience, health and economic prosperity.
  - a. As this site is historic farmland, it poses an opportunity to be a site that includes a community farm or garden space (see Reasonable Alternatives section for more).
7. Provide opportunities for everyone in the Thurston Region to learn about and practice sustainability.
  - a. If the City of Olympia invested in a green development project instead, we could work together to find opportunities for our neighbors both near and far to practice sustainable work in the form of farming or gardening, habitat restoration, etc.
8. Make strategic investments to advance sustainability regionally.

- a. A greener or more affordable development project in this space could pose inspiration for regional residents near and far.

We urge the city to reconsider this development project in lieu of greener alternatives that would better benefit the city and our neighbors alike!

## 2. Proposal Elements Out of Alignment or Compliance with City of Olympia Municipal Code

### A. [Olympia Comprehensive Master Plan](#) - Land Use and Urban Design

The following is a list of Comprehensive Plan codes that we see as out of alignment with this development proposal. The Olympia Comprehensive Plan was adopted by Ordinance 6945 on December 16, 2014, and is current through Ordinance 7301, passed November 23, 2021.

PL5.5 Provide incentives and assistance for preserving, restoring, redeveloping and using historic buildings, districts, neighborhoods, streets, structures, objects and sites.

PL5.6 Support public or non-profit acquisition of the most important historic resources to ensure their preservation.

PL6.2 The design review process should recognize differences in the city with the objective of maintaining or improving the character and livability of each area or neighborhood

PL7.1 Provide urban green spaces in which to spend time. Include such elements as trees, garden spaces, variety of vegetation, water features, “green” walls and roofs, and seating.

PL7.2 Provide urban green spaces that are in people’s immediate vicinity and can be enjoyed or viewed from a variety of perspectives.

PL7.3 Establish a maximum distance to urban green space for everyone in the community.

PL7.4 Increase the area of urban green space and tree canopy within each neighborhood proportionate to increased population in that neighborhood.

PL7.5 Establish urban green space between transportation corridors and adjacent areas.

PL14.2 Concentrate housing into three high-density Neighborhoods: Downtown Olympia, Pacific/Martin/Lilly Triangle; and the area surrounding Capital Mall.

PL14.3 Preserve and enhance the character of existing Low-density Neighborhoods. Disallow medium or high-density development in existing Low-density Neighborhood areas except for Neighborhood Centers.

PL16.13 Encourage adapting non-residential buildings for housing.

PL20.1 Require development in neighborhoods to be of a type, scale, orientation, and design that maintains or improves the character, aesthetic quality, and livability of the neighborhood.

PL22.1 Use trees to foster a sense of neighborhood identity.

PL22.2 Identify, protect and maintain trees with historic significance or other value to the community or specific neighborhoods.

PL22.3 Encourage the use of appropriate fruit and nut trees to increase local food self-sufficiency.

PL25.3 Collaborate with community partners to ensure that everyone within Olympia is within biking or walking distance of a place to grow food.

PL25.8 Work with community organizations to develop strategies, measure, and set goals for increasing local food production.

PL25.9 Work with local governments throughout the region to help protect existing agricultural lands and develop and promote a vibrant local food economy.

PN2.1 Acquire and preserve land by a set of priorities that considers environmental benefits, such as stormwater management, wildlife habitat, or access to recreation opportunities.

PN6.4 Use regulations and other means to prevent a net loss in the function and value of existing wetlands, while striving to increase and restore wetlands over the long-term.

### 3. Impact on Salmon Habitat & Setchfield Lake Ecosystem

Mission Creek is a salmon-bearing stream that flows into Budd Inlet. Running just southwest of the development site, **it is connected via wetlands within the project bounds**. In the mid-2010s with support from the state Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO), the South Puget Sound Salmon Enhancement Group completed a [\\$200k project](#) that restored tidal and fish access to the creek. Coho salmon and chum salmon have been documented to use the lower reaches of Mission Creek, and their passage upstream is only partially blocked by a culvert under Bethel Street. As such, full restoration faces lower hurdles compared to other more heavily impacted streams. Surveys by WDFW predict that this single barrier correction could potentially restore chum, coho, steelhead, and sea-run cutthroat to the upstream. Runoff from the housing development will likely enter into this stream system, impacting salmon habitat. The sediment associated with extensive construction and deforestation on the development

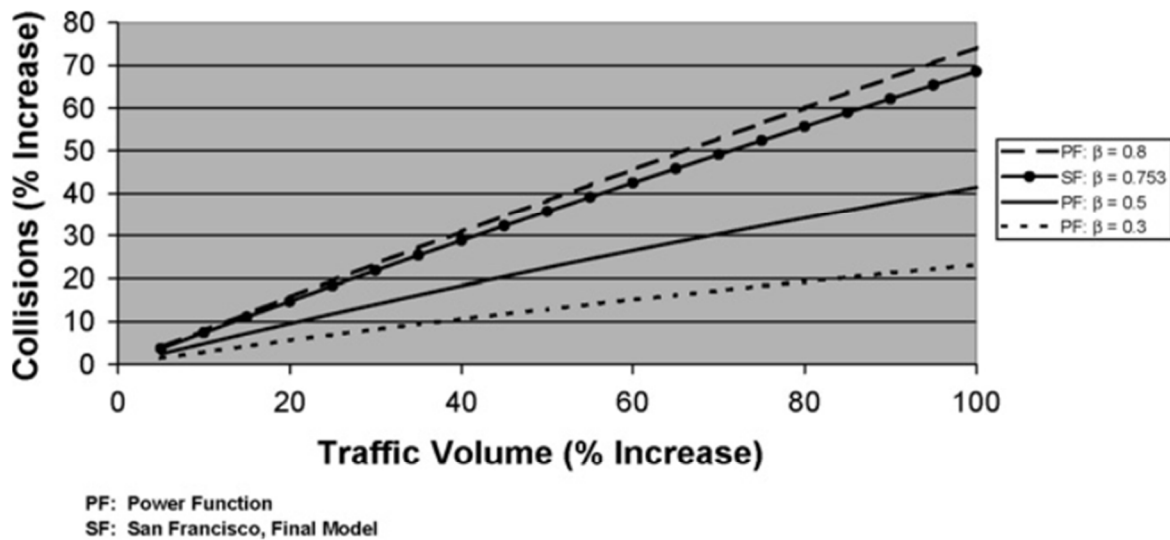
site would be especially harmful to spawning. The proposed development does not adequately address the negative impacts to this system in terms of water quality, stream hydrology, and canopy cover, especially as extreme winter rain events and summer droughts increasingly alter stream flows and increase water temperatures.

The second salmon-bearing stream that could potentially be impacted is Ellis Creek, due to the project's proximity to the creek and Setchfield Lake. **At least \$1.3 million has been spent on restoring salmon in this waterway.** The creek maintains salmonid-bearing scour width parameters until it connects to Setchfield Lake, its headwaters. In 2006 with RCO support, the City of Olympia looked to replace two downstream culverts that prevented migration of chum salmon, coho salmon, cutthroat trout, rainbow trout and steelhead. Removal would restore access to 1.5 miles of largely intact habitat. According to the Recreation and Conservation Office's project description: "Rural zoning densities as well as stream and wetland buffers designated under Thurston County's Critical Areas Ordinance will protect the stream habitat outside of [Squaxin] park." **The Ellis Creek watershed is "one of the only nearly intact basins in Budd Inlet."** As barriers to full restoration are minimal, this makes the creek a priority for restoration according to SRFB funding metrics. The proposed development is set back from the lake itself, however it would destroy several acres of riparian woodland integral to the lake ecosystem. Further, **if developments such as Springwood Gardens continue to be approved, they will encircle Setchfield lake, drastically degrading ecosystem's capacity to support salmon** and a myriad other native species. Therefore it is of critical importance that the proposed plan not be implemented. Any development must be aligned with ongoing salmon recovery efforts in the area.

Additionally, as a wetland specialist noted, for years, the developers have been swallowing up land for housing, and the only land left for developers to use is land that was never a good investment to begin with. All the good land for new development is gone. The only land left is land that builders do not like to build on due to so many environmental issues. The proposed development area is one of them. The water level of Setchfield lake is only 5-8 feet lower than the land surrounding it. This is known as a Kettle Lake because all the rain water runoff eventually seeps back into the lake due to the surrounding layers of land and its composition. The surrounding land is therefore riparian habitat integral to the lake system itself. Moreover, it is wet, with open pools of standing water on the ground for a significant amount of the year.

#### 4.0 Impact of Increased Traffic

Traffic studies have determined that a linear relationship exists between increased traffic and frequency of vehicle-pedestrian accidents. See for example this chart and quotations from Wier et al. Published in *Accident Analysis & Prevention*, February 2009.



**Fig. 1.** Vehicle-pedestrian injury collision increases associated with traffic volume increases: power function and San Francisco final model predictions.

“A scatter plot of traffic volume by vehicle-pedestrian injury collisions shows a positive linear association. [...] Consistent with previous national and international findings, our study provides additional evidence that traffic volume is a primary environmental cause of vehicle-pedestrian injury collisions at the area level.”

#### 5. Increased Housing does NOT Increase Affordability

We recognize that these homes will also do nothing to amend the housing crisis we are in. They are clearly not affordable nor quality homes that will serve to increase neighbor's property tax such that some are forced to move.

Regardless, the increase of housing (even affordable housing) in Olympia does not address the housing crisis. Olympia's specific housing crisis is fueled by several factors, including:

- Real estate speculation (in March 2023, investors accounted for 27% of all single-family home purchases [in the US] [1])
- Airbnb's (2.25 million homes in the US are Airbnbs--this doesn't count Vrbo, Guesty, Vacasa, or any other AirBnB alternatives [2])
- Non-residential use of homes (Nearly 1/3 of the 62 homes in the south Capital neighborhood are owned or used by lobbyists, corporations, or unions--meaning they are not used as houses but as overnight accommodations or meeting spaces for businesses [3]).

While the idea that increased supply will meet demand and increase affordability can be applied to a variety of different products in our economy, housing is not one of them. This is for a couple reasons.

1. Land is subject to what is called a “natural monopoly” because there is only a finite amount of land in any given area. More housing can be built but there is no way to increase the supply of land to meet demand. Without price controls, land will actually skyrocket in value as density increases.
2. Housing is treated as an investment. Speculators and wealthy investors buy up housing and hold it until they can get a better price for it later. They treat homes like stocks. This means any lull in market rate will be met with investors simply squatting on their investments until the market rate increases again. And if market rates do actually drop, which only happens during a crisis, investors will attempt to seize all the available housing for the same reason that people buy stock when a highly profitable firm suffers a temporary drop in its price. They will then rent out their investment property as a landlord or sell the investment property when they can make a lot of money off that home.

All this to say: there is no market solution to housing affordability, because [decommodification is the only proven strategy for creating truly affordable housing](#). The creation of more market-rate homes will simply drive up the cost of living of the area—it will NOT make homes more affordable for working families. Additionally, the increase of property taxes that coincide with increased expensive development means that working-class families and long-term residents are more likely to be pushed out of their own homes as they aren't able to keep on top of increased monthly bills. We need only look at other urban regions that grew quickly and increased housing extensively (like Portland and Seattle) to see this trend that more homes in urban regions with growing populations increase the price of those homes, increasing the cost of living, while also decreasing the quality of life for those living there (due to lack of green spaces, increased traffic, increased noise, environmental pollution, etc).

So, instead of increased housing development, I see a plethora of easier solutions to the housing affordability problem. In Olympia's downtown core, we could emulate and expand upon efforts like [House Our Neighbors](#) and [Seattle Social Housing](#), two initiatives which are balancing climate-smart design with truly affordable, decommodified housing. Other ideas include: below-market rent control, eliminating the use of homes not as homes, creating a time limit (10 months?) on a home being allowed to be vacant before it is converted into affordable, below-market housing (for sale or for rent), a standard basic income, decreasing prices (rent or sale) on buildings that have been vacant for years and converting them into lower-profit commercial business & affordable below-market housing (this piece is actually in Olympia's current Comprehensive Plan!), outlawing anyone from owning a home who does not live in the region (city, county, state, or even country--anything would be better than what we have now) where the home is, making landlordism a non-profit venture with a focus on housing people rather than prioritizing rent increases to match market rates...

A combination of these and similar ideas seems to me to be the best way to work towards a root cause of housing unaffordability, which is essentially that wage increases haven't been anywhere close to matching housing price increases in many decades. And that wealthy people treat housing like stocks and buy it all up.

## 6. Pacific Lifestyle Homes & Garrette Custom Homes Are Not Good Homes

*“This builder is going to rip you off and your documents that you sign will hamstring what you can do legally. I would find a different builder no matter the price point you're looking to build in.”*

Garrette Custom Homes has a reputation that speaks for itself. Their [Yelp Page](#) shows a 2.5 star rating, with horror stories from reviewers. Of the staff, one reviewer writes:

“Our sales guy (Tom) was fired after lying to several clients. **Our contract was laced with problems and we had hundreds of emails discussing scopes of work or product selection that were all lies.** Our site manager was fired after not showing up to our red line meeting. Our interim site manager (Brian) only worked with us long enough to get the dirt work and foundation done. **During this time, they ran \$70k over budget on dirt work and didn't tell us until a future scheduled meeting.** This far exceeded our reserve fund and could not be included in the loan. Our next site manager lasted about 3 weeks before he quit in the middle of framing (Paul). Our next site manager (David) was new to the company and showed zero leadership skills when with the sub-contractors. Under David's supervision work was shoddy and the site was unsanitary. We had laborers pooping in the wetland, urinating under the house leaving puddles of piss on the vapor barrier, we had 3" trim on one side of a window and 2" on the other. The warranty person (Melina) who was horrible to work with and eventually fired after she tried to break into our house with the painters while we were on vacation so they could do touch up work. We had this on video and had to call top level management at Garrett to get resolution. The new warranty person (Holly) spent the next 12 months ghosting us and playing dumb on every problem.”

Of the workmanship, this reviewer writes:

“Buyer beware. Bought a brand new Garrette home last February. Beautiful home, great floorplan, but many, many, many issues with finishing work. Mostly small detail work, though **there was a large drainage and run off issue that has cost us personally over \$40,000 to date to fix.** It appears that there was no follow up on any of the work that contractors did. **Almost every issue is still unresolved from our 60 day walk through and now approaching one year in the house.** I understand that covid slowed things down, but Customer Service is non-existent. Simple communication is all together missing. I'd be very careful before making a purchase.”

The other reviews echo the same frustrations:

“This was our first home-building experience and it was very disappointing to say the least. The construction and project team were terrible, if they were around long enough to see updates through. **There were lots of turnover with the folks we worked with, which is very telling about the lack of management support.** Buyers in our property were promised the surrounding fence would be fixed by the site manager but when he left the company, Garrett said they wouldn't fix it. They also installed the wrong cabinet in my laundry room (doesn't line up with the wall) and they refuse to fix it. This was escalated to the manager supporting our property, Brian, but he clearly had no intention on trying to address our concerns and brushed us off. **Because we had such a terrible experience, I won't be recommending the services of Garrett or Pacific Lifestyle homes to family or friends.**”

Meanwhile, Pacific Lifestyle Homes also has a reputation that speaks for itself. Their [Yelp Page](#) shows a 2.6 star rating, with horror stories from reviewers. One reviewer writes:

“Lack of finishing detail. **Lived in this new construction home for less than one year and compared to other national builders buying from PLH is not worth the extra money.** During walkthrough they will say if you can't see the defect from a certain distance it isn't going to be worked on. I'll include photos but you can definitely tell they just rush builds out. This includes dry paint on carpet, mice dropping issue during inspection in the crawl space they responded that they didn't see any when they went down. Now as a more seasoned home owner mice do hide in the daytime and have caught over 50 in the crawl space. Very poor paint in the garage with dried paint drip. Another image includes the center of our fireplace with the wood being cut very unevenly.”

Another writes,

“I have been dealing with a poorly constructed home built in late 2022 by Garrette Custom Homes and purchased from Pacific Lifestyle Homes in the Ridgefield WA area. **A repeatedly leaking roof and mold issues have been going on since the house was built creating extended problems of getting the warranty repair work done in a timely manner.** 2 1/2 months in each occurrence with two different rental tenants being unable to use areas of the house is unacceptable. If you are planning to purchase a new or existing home, first look at the reviews and complaints about Pacific Lifestyle Homes, at the B.B.B. website before committing your self; make sure to completely read the 2-10 warranty offering as well.”

It goes on:

“**I would not build with this company.** We walked through our home during the process and had to keep pointing out mistakes where they left off outlets, windows to shower and smurf tub for TV, ect. so nice to catch a few things wrong during building. Then when we arrived to get our keys. There was paint all in the carpet walls bowed from sheetrock not being hung correctly and rooms and ceilings painted incorrect and insulation under the house hanging from the floor where it fell off.ECT. When we pointed these things out they said they would fix it by giving us a check. which we

wanted things fixed in the home so it was nice, not money. When the manager went to get ok from their company we got nothing and the video on camera system was erased of the painter dripping all over. (...) The floor plan is great, I just wish it would have been built by a company that had quality houses as important, not their pocket book. Please do your homework before making this mistake.”

In conclusion, we want housing to be provided here that is well-built, quality craftsmanship, and that will last for decades to come. The residents of Olympia deserve that. There is plenty of evidence that Pacific Lifestyle Homes & Garrette Custom Homes do not have that reputation, and trust, of the communities where they have worked before. Like named before, we need accessible, affordable housing - not housing that has a reputation of being hastily and inefficiently built, that costs residents even more money to fix (on top of being pricey and inaccessible homes).

## 7. Reasonable Alternatives

For all the reasons listed above, we hope you can now recognize how this particular development project will negatively impact the City of Olympia in a vast variety of ways. We propose the following alternative development projects for your team to consider.

### Smaller, Green Housing Development!

A smaller development project cultivated with environmental priorities would be a great boon to the neighborhood and habitat that the current project threatens. We can look at [Woodard Housing Co-op](#) for inspiration: buildings made with green materials and outfitted with solar power, where 18 residential units are integrated with green space, community gardens, and forest. We know this kind of project is possible in Olympia, because Woodard already exists.



Green development should be the priority of the City of Olympia so that it remains in alignment with its Climate Action Plan. A smaller development project would be cheaper in both the short and long term (remember Garrette Custom Homes reputation for building poorly made homes that will need ongoing maintenance and upkeep!). Additionally, as inflation increases, as tariffs impact building materials, and with the threat of a looming recession, we should be looking to smaller, more affordable development projects. With the ongoing threat of climate crisis and drastic weather events, we should prioritize environmental standards within all of those development projects as well.

#### A Park and Restoration Project for Wildlife Including Salmon!

Another alternative could be a new park or an extension of the beloved Springwood Parcel across the street from this planned development project. The origin story of this parcel is actually quite similar to this development plan. An owner of a broad acreage of land sold it to the city, and it was converted into a gorgeous park teeming with a diverse array of species and life. We suggest that instead of a collection of poorly made homes packed in like sardines, that the City consider extending the Springwood Parcel, allowing the marshy meadow and nearby wetlands and (generally essential ecosystem that this development project intends to impeded upon) to help protect vital salmon, owls, frogs, and other wildlife habitat. Afterall, this was owner's intended use of the space! Additionally, the parcel upon which this development project is intended to be built feeds water into both Mission Creek and Ellis Creek, home for local salmon to

spawn. A new park in combination with a salmon restoration project that works to alter the existing culvert barriers would see salmon spawning further up both the creeks and even returning to Setchfield lake—something that hasn't happened hundreds of years.

### Community Garden or Farm!

There are no eastside community gardens, and we know that the City of Olympia has recently completed an Urban Farm Park feasibility study, which pointed to the need for a site that could provide mixed functions of farmer training (including youth farmers), food production, land and garden access, educational values, community gathering, etc. They emphasized interrelated food security and ecological and community benefits, especially for marginalized groups. Although the city doesn't have the resources to move this forward at this time, we believe the space designated for Springwood Gardens could actually become a garden!

The neighbors expressing their refusal of this development project are made up of a wide array of environmentalists, working families, architects, artists, musicians, writers, construction workers, architects, and activists. We are creative thinkers, and we would be more than happy to work with the City of Olympia to find a solution that benefits us all.

For these and many other reasons, we do not want this development project to take place. You can expect my presence at the Public Hearing to bring up these and more points.

Sincerely,

Dr Silvia Behrend  
360-259-2971

**Jackson Ewing**

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**From:** debcupp@aol.com  
**Sent:** Wednesday, April 9, 2025 11:37 AM  
**To:** Jackson Ewing  
**Subject:** Springwood Gardens

Dear Jackson,

I am writing to you in regards to our concerns over the proposed plat of Springwood Gardens. I see from the original plat that you sent out, that even though the road is having 10feet added along Springwood, it appears to be green space and sidewalk and not roadway. As this road is already extremely narrow, we are concerned about cars parking in the street and blocking access. We are hoping that it will be signed that parking on the street will not be allowed. We live directly across the street from the proposed subdivision. We are not opposed to the development, but concerned over impact of street access, and traffic. Several of the driveways along this road are blind to traffic, which is a strong concern. Are there going to be speed bumps? A 20 foot road leaves little room for 2 cars to pass well, or a large truck and a car.

Thank you for your attention in this.

Best regards,  
Gary & Deborah Waldherr  
1622 Springwood Avenue NE  
Olympia, WA 98506  
360-561-1947

## **Proposed Springwood Gardens Development Comments (Revised 4/7/25)**

**Submitted by Joe Mantione, 1240 Devon Loop NE, [mantionejj@gmail.com](mailto:mantionejj@gmail.com) (303) 881-1808**

**Retired Community/ Environmental Planner, 25 Years with the City of Boulder, Colorado**

### **A Vision and An Opportunity to Provide New Housing Implementing Innovative, Sustainable Development Concepts and Preserve the Semi-Rural Character of the Greater Springwood Area**

- Springwood Gardens could provide something special for Olympia: a new infill development and preservation prototype for several other semi-rural areas at the fringe of the City of Olympia and its Urban Growth Area. There are many examples of sustainable/ open space design development from around the country to learn from, as well as many good resources to guide this type of semi-rural/ urban development (See *Rural by Design* by Randell Arendt).
- The outcome of the planning process for Springwood Gardens could and should create a compatible mix and diversity of existing and new housing units with the goals of:
  1. Provide a highly livable community with its own unique semi-rural character, including a housing affordability component and diversity in housing type and affordability; and
  2. Protect and restore environmentally sensitive areas, ensuring that the carrying capacity of the land is not exceeded. It could be a win-win for the City of Olympia to expand its housing supply, for the developer to offer a quality housing product, and to provide a place to live that both existing and new residents enjoy.
- My vision for the larger Springwood area is to accept a reasonable amount of new housing growth, but only to the extent that it meets these two overall goals. If it is necessary to reduce the current proposal for housing density and number of dwelling units in order to meet these goals, I believe the development density and dwelling units of the proposed development should be reduced. I also believe creating sensitive new development and meeting these goals is very possible and likely if the various stakeholders sincerely work together.
- An alternative to the current development proposal is to approve a mixed-use development with fewer homes and include alternative community land uses such as a neighborhood park, community gardens, or another public use.

### **Recommended Planning Process for the Springwood Development Site and the Larger Springwood Area**

- The planning process for the Springwood development site and larger Springwood area could and should spend the time and effort to bring stakeholders together to collaborate for the common good. I believe it is possible to preserve the semi-rural character of the Springwood Gardens site and the larger Springwood Area, and to use ecological- and climate-friendly site/ utility/ street designs to create new highly livable housing and sustainable development and reduce impervious space that contributes to water runoff.
- ***However, it is essential to slow down the approval process to order support an inclusive, creative planning process that will provide this win-win outcome.***
- I believe the Planning and Development Department should defer a decision on the Springwood Gardens development to allow community character and development design charrettes with the developer, residents of the larger Springwood area, city staff, and other interested parties. These charrettes could be a stand alone effort or part of a sub-area plan for the larger Springwood area.

- It is much better planning to implement a charette design process that develops scenarios and proposals for the larger Springwood area, and well as to foster plan buy-in, rather than incrementally plan for Springwood Gardens and continue in the future piecemeal planning for other small areas of the larger Springwood area. Many of the issues apply to much of the larger Springwood area, similar environmental and other constraints and opportunities for both preservation and development, and housing affordability concerns that are shared by subareas or in the to entire area. If these concerns are not planned in a larger context, but instead are planned in piecemeal fashion, optimal solutions may be precluded or not feasible.
- A landscape architect with experience in charettes should be hired to lead the charette design process. A series of aerials photos and other maps and digital and physical overlays should be developed to provide the context for analysis of planning constraints and opportunities and the development of plan alternatives. Analysis of soils, slopes, wetlands and other water features, drainage flows, legal restrictions, vegetative cover, site assets/ amenities, network of footpaths, more.
- Duplicating in Springwood Gardens the cookie-cutter suburban style, density and development character of the subdivisions to the south and north of Springwood Gardens with no provision for affordable housing would be a mistake and a wasted opportunity. Putting in extra effort to create and try a new semi-rural / urban development planning model could demonstrate how new development could provide many more benefits than traditional suburban infill development to new and existing residents, surrounding neighborhoods, and the community at large.
- If conventional suburban infill development is approved for the Springwood development, then a development pattern precedent may create a domino effect enticing other property owners of vacant land to do the same. That result would completely undermine the current semi-urban character of the larger Springwood area.
- The key to creating new more sustainable development options is to create smaller pockets of clustered development with swatches of open space between them, protect and restore environmental resources, and avoid and mitigate negative impacts of new development.

### **Transportation and Traffic**

The number of auto trips, and how they are managed, has a direct impact on quality of life (safety, air quality, and noise pollution) and the degree of naturalness in the Springwood Gardens area and the larger Springwood area.

- Instead of extending the street grid from Miller Street to Springwood Avenue in two places, implement just one street extension (on Central), and on Marion provide a pedestrian / biking through-path (the reverse is also possible). This dual solution will provide street continuity but also a safe path for school children to walk or bike to Roosevelt Elementary School and Reeves Middle School.
- Implement traffic speed mitigation measures to slow traffic down on Springwood Avenue, possibly speed bumps.
- Install crosswalks where needed for safety.
- Provide sidewalks and curb and gutter on Springwood Avenue, and extend it to Bethel Avenue. (Idea is borrowed from others.)
- Provide a marked crosswalk at the intersection of Springwood Avenue and Bethel Avenue, in order to accommodate school children and bus riders who need to cross Bethel. (Idea is borrowed from others.)

## **Park Issues**

- Enlarge Tract D as a neighborhood park to include an open area and playground (adjacent to Springwood Parcel across the road), including the marked trees to be saved. Providing a neighborhood park here helps satisfy a city goal of locating parks within walking distance so that everyone has the opportunity to walk to an open space and wooded area. (Idea is borrowed from others.)
- Protect the Springwood Parcel Natural Area by increasing monitoring and enforcement of protective regulations and implement measures to mitigate negative impacts from increased visitation by people and dogs.

## **Key Design Components for a Sustainable/ Open Space Development Design and Finding Preservations/ Development Solutions to the Problems and Opportunities for Springwood Gardens and the Larger Springwood Area**

### **Subdivision Design and Layout Strategies**

These strategies will better protect environmental resources, add to the livability of new residences and compatibility with existing residences, and preserve the overall semi-rural character.

- Identify, protect and restore the most important environmental resources and constraints.
- Work within the fabric of environmental constraints, strategically locate smaller compact clusters of residences, create permanent pockets of open space separating them, and maximally avoid and mitigate negative impacts of new development. Buffer surrounding development if possible with the location and landscaping and trees.
- Identify work with the dwelling unit density and number of units that will optimize the quality of life on the Springwood Gardens site and in the larger Springwood area, given constraints and opportunities.

### **Housing Issues**

These strategies are linked to environmental sustainability, resident livability, community character, and housing affordability.

- Require that the new housing stock be diverse in housing type and affordability, including both single family and multifamily homes and a variety of home prices, and house size and lot size.
- A good way to increase housing density or keep it within a target, without proportionate negative impacts, and increase overall internal open space is to include some townhomes in the new development. Townhomes, can also add to affordability and a diverse residential population, and help protect environmental resources.
- Require some percentage of units to be permanently affordable, through covenants and the restrictions on the income of buyers.

## **Implement A Collaborative Planning Process and Achieve Significantly More Sustainable and Compatible Development Based on Win-Win Solutions**

These mechanisms would work better if they were applied to the larger Springwood Area.

- Create a zoning overlay district over the underlying zoning that reduces the allowed dwelling unit density and the number of new units if built under current zoning (currently 4-8 dus/ dwelling units pers acre) with a conventional subdivision layout (start below the minimum 4 dus per acre).
- At the same time, allow the density and number of units to be increased to and above that minimum threshold by allowing more density/more units if low environmental impact and compatible with overall semi-rural character. The more sustainable and compatible the new housing development is, the more the developer can be rewarded with density,

### **Planning Context**

- The proposed Springwood Gardens site was annexed to the City of Olympia (and almost all properties east to Friendly Grove—most of it annexed in 1886).
- The site and larger Springwood area is primarily former agricultural use (with wet meadows for blueberry farms). The existing land use pattern is dispersed very low density development with substantial open land. Directly to the south of the proposed Springwood Gardens site are suburban-style neighborhoods with similar density as to what is proposed in Springwood Gardens.
- The Springwood Gardens site (and a large area around it) is designated as an Urban Growth Area (UGA), and it has long been zoned and planned for Low-Density Residential Development with 4-8 dwelling units per acre. The Comprehensive Plan provides direction to, over time, densify those areas that are below planned densities, so the default target for a designated Low-Density Residential area is at least 4 dwelling units per acre, with an exception for lower densities where there are significant environmental constraints (as is the case for the Springwood area).
- Olympia has a process for more detailed sub-area planning, involving residents and community stakeholders, as well as a process for revision of the Comprehensive Plan. In these processes, land use and densities possibly could be decided differently than designated in the Comprehensive Plan and the Zoning Ordinance.
- The landowner and developer for Springwood Gardens have some vested rights to develop as proposed if development satisfies current City codes.
- Given the existing City annexation and the approved suburban-style zoning (4-8 dwelling units per acre) for the Springwood Gardens site and the larger Springwood area, it will likely prove very difficult to stop the proposed by-right development with standard suburban-style subdivision layout and density.
- Consequently, I believe that it is necessary to focus on getting the development plans revised to better foster compatibility with the existing neighborhood, preservation of environmental resources, and reduction of ground or surface water and transportation adverse impacts.
- Maybe a more desirable alternative could be considered for a less intensive mixed-use development with some housing and a community gardens, a neighborhood park site, or another alternative land use.

## **Appendix**

### **Brainstorm of Proposed Development Issues for Springwood Gardens and Possible Solutions**

#### **Environmental Issues**

- Would groundwater levels rise causing damage or mitigation costs (e.g., new French drains) to existing development, especially downhill from the development, and in particular, existing homes along Springwood Avenue and environs and the Devon Place subdivision?
- Would groundwater or surface water quality be degraded (more impervious area and sources of pollution), with more degradation of water flowing into Puget Sound?
- Will existing wetlands on this parcel proposed for development and in the larger Springwood Avenue area be degraded or lost because of by Springwood Gardens and future development in the area?
- If that happened, would the wetland water holding / detoxifying function decline, potentially causing surface water flooding and pollution and rising groundwater damage?
- Would the proposed development significantly reduce or degrade natural habitat and connectivity for wildlife movement?
- Would negative wildlife habitat impacts from additional development in the larger Springwood area drive wildlife out of the area or create more conflicts between wildlife and people/ pets?

#### **Community Character Issues**

- Would this individual development seriously degrade the existing semi-rural character and quality of life of the Springwood Avenue area?
- Does the 5.2 units per acre seriously degrade the “rural” feel of the neighborhood?
- Would this development lead to a landslide conversion of land to urban density in the Springwood Avenue area (a domino effect), resulting in the loss of the overall semi-rural character?
- Would the City of Olympia require some mix of housing types to increase overall affordability of the development, and / or require a portion of the units be dedicated to permanent affordability?

#### **Traffic Issues**

- Would very quiet / low volume traffic on Springwood Ave be substantially increased by this proposed development with new street connections and by the likely additional development in the Springwood neighborhood area?
- How crucial is extending the road grid from Miller Street to Springwood Avenue with two street extensions on Central and Marion streets?

#### **Impacts to the City of Olympia Springwood Parcel Natural Area**

- Will the increased visitation from people and dogs in the Springwood Parcel Natural Area (across the street from the proposed development) cause damage to its natural vegetation, water flow, and habitat?

- If even more urban development follows the Springwood development, will the natural area be seriously degraded?

### **Possible Solutions / Development Changes to Increase Benefits or Reduce Impacts**

- Require some units to be permanently affordable (overall benefit to the City)
- Require some townhouses in the mix without increasing the overall housing density (increase affordability, reduce environmental impacts, increase internal open space)
- Reduce the overall density and number of housing units (increase neighborhood compatibility and fewer negative impacts)
- Consider a mixed-use development with fewer homes and alternative community land uses (reduce intensity of development and associated impacts)
- Cluster housing units and provide open spaces between them (reduce environmental impacts and increase housing livability)
- Implement traffic mitigation measures to slow and channel additional traffic (reduce impact on neighborhood)
- Pick either Marion and Central street extensions from Miller Street, implement just one and provide the other with a pedestrian through-path (reduce traffic impacts and increase walk ability)
- Require state-of-the-art surface and groundwater mitigation measures—not just a one big stormwater retention pond, e.g., multiple stormwater catchment basins, porous paving products for driveways and streets, strategic landscaping patches that act like“sponges”, rain gardens (reduce flooding and improve water quality), more
- Expand / enhance existing wetlands and construct new wetlands (reduce flooding, increase water quality, and enhance habitat quality)
- Preserve all important environmental features, i.e., trees, shrubs, wetlands and water features, and habitat patches and corridors on site (preserve and protect environmental resources and increase livability)
- Increase park maintenance and enforcement of regulations in the Springwood Parcel Natural Area, and implement measures to mitigate increased visitation by people and dogs (protect the Natural Area from negative impacts)

## Jackson Ewing

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**From:** psullivan <psullivan@fastmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 7, 2025 5:02 PM  
**To:** Jackson Ewing  
**Subject:** Springwood Garden Development comments.

From: Margaret Sullivan  
1613 Northpointe Way NE  
Olympia. 98506

To: Jackson Ewing

I am writing in response to the proposed Springwood Gardens development plans in northeast Olympia at 1609 Springwood Ave NE, File Number: 25-0980

I live on Quasar Way NE in the neighboring Northpointe HOA that the new development will abut at our south edge. This neighborhood is quiet and family-friendly with a goodly number of children who are visible and active in the neighborhood. This neighborhood has a reasonable traffic flow which is protective of residents and children who line here. The neighborhood also has water runoff issues and is in a very wet natural area which includes the Springwood plat of the proposed development

I am concerned about a number of things in the developer's proposal. From the developer's materials it looks as though both Central and Marion Streets will change from stubs to through streets going to Springwood Street. Traffic is projected to increase by 300+ trips per day, greatly increasing traffic and related safety issues. It appears that the width of streets has been minimized, which will cause traffic and parking issues. Springwood street is very narrow and currently doesn't not support 2-way traffic well. Having a faster passage across Marion through Northpointe and the Springwood plat seems like creating a fast highway through a slow neighborhood to a street that cannot handle much traffic. The plan seems people and pedestrian un-friendly, and guarantees creating safety hazards to human activities. I am also concerned about hydrology and water drainage and the wetlands that are dominant in this area. I don't think they are being addressed by the developer's proposal.

Thanks for listening and for your time.  
Margaret Sullivan

April 7, 2025

VIA EMAIL

Jackson Ewing  
 City of Olympia Community Planning & Development  
 601 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue E.  
 Olympia, WA 98501  
 Email: [jewing@ci.olympia.wa.us](mailto:jewing@ci.olympia.wa.us)

RE: **Springwood Gardens Development (Record No.: 25-0980)**

Dear Jackson Ewing:

I am writing to express my concerns regarding the proposed Springwood Gardens development located at 1609 Springwood Avenue NE Olympia, WA 98506. As a resident of the Northpointe neighborhood, I encourage you to meaningfully consider the following matters as you assess the proposed development of Springwood Gardens.

**Traffic safety** – My understanding is the City of Olympia is requiring the developer AHBL to connect the Springwood developments via street access Central St. and Marion St. This should be reconsidered. First, adding 300+ daily trips through the Northpointe neighborhood would increase congestion and decrease safety. I have two boys (8yrs and 6yrs) who regularly play in the street with their neighborhood friends. There are also a number of senior citizen and retired neighbors who “walk the loop” daily for exercise. Creating a vehicle thoroughfare through the heart of our neighborhood benefits no one. We live in an era where society regularly admonishes children and teens for being too “plugged in” and “not playing outside enough.” Here, the kids really do have a safe and controlled environment to be outside. These types of spaces and neighborhood characteristics should be preserved where possible. The City of Olympia has an opportunity to do that here.

**Mailbox access** – Our entire neighborhood must physically walk across Marion Street to get to their mailboxes. Creating a thru way on Marion Street would escalate the chances that someone gets hit by a car while trying to send/receive a letter.

**Connectivity** – One of the things the City of Olympia kept mentioning during the “non-public” meeting via Zoom was the idea of connectivity. I agree. Northpointe and Springwood neighborhoods should be connected. However, I disagree that these neighborhoods need to be connected by car access through Central and Marion Street.

- **Pedestrian Access:** The City should consider requiring the AHBL to connect both neighborhoods with foot/bicycle paths. This would accomplish a few things simultaneously. First, it would allow free flow of foot/bicycle traffic between the neighborhoods. Third, it would avoid either neighborhood from being used as a thru-way or thoroughfare, thereby increasing pedestrian safety for each. Third, this approach would not be an outlier or inconsistent with surrounding developments. There are already foot/bicycle paths that connect Bethel St-to-Tullis St. There is also a bicycle/foot path that connects Miller Ave. NE to Quince St. These two examples have

become community gardens, that enhance connectivity, while also serving as natural traffic calming measures. It is not out-of-the ordinary and is a reasonable compromise.

- **Access for Emergency Vehicles only**—Here, this could be a further compromise where Marion and Central Street have a removable barrier of some sort that is only lifted for emergency vehicle access. Again, this would allow foot/bicycle traffic between the neighborhoods while not encouraging excessive vehicle usage through either. There are also neighborhoods in the immediate vicinity that have no outlet. For example, the neighborhood starting at Sable Lane & Miller only has one way in and one way out. Connectivity for private, commercial, or emergency vehicles has not been previously mandatory when nearby developments were built. For Springwood Gardens, closed access to all traffic on Marion and Central—with exception of emergency vehicle access—is a reasonable compromise.

**Traffic calming measures**—If for whatever reason, the City of Olympia chooses to ignore the suggestions and concerns of community members who live there should be serious permanent installation of traffic calming measures on both Marion and Central Street. This may include speed bumps, or *permanent* barriers such as those used on Lebanon Street in Lacey, WA<sup>1</sup>.

- **School and City Bus stop** – It should also be noted that the Olympia High School and local elementary school bus stops both begin at the junction of Marion and Miller. Here, students cross on foot every morning to wait for a bus to take them to school. It is already dangerous considering the dimly lit intersection and no curb on the east side of Miller for students to wait safely on. Creating a thoroughfare down Marion St. will make this a more dangerous bus stop for children. If there are going to be an estimated 300+ more daily car trips, consider putting in a roundabout or some other realistic traffic calming device at the intersection of Miller and Marion.

At the end of the day I am just a concerned parent. My two kids and their elementary aged friends deserve a safe neighborhood to play in. Yes, this includes the streets of Marion, Quasar, Bright Star, and Central. I bought my home and moved here in 2022 because Northpointe represented a safe place where I could raise my kids. My neighbors deserve a safe place to walk and get their exercise in. As the City of Olympia, you have a lot of authority to take into consideration neighborhood concerns and require the developer meet and mitigate against foreseeable risks.

During the non-public meeting I heard the phrase “investment backed expectation” thrown around multiple times. The allusion was that AHBL had an “investment backed expectation” to build what they wanted, where they wanted, how they wanted, because they paid money to get this proposal before the city. I disagree. An investment is simply that, an investment. Investments also inherently come with risk. Here, my hope is the City of Olympia seriously takes into consideration the “community-based expectations” that I—and my neighbors—have laid out regarding the proposed Springwood Gardens development.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter. I look forward to your response. I also look forward to being included on future discussions on how to ensure that development in our city is both responsible and sustainable.

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<sup>1</sup> “Is there too much traffic and speeding on Lacey’s Lebanon Street? City study to find out.” June 2, 2021 at <https://www.theolympian.com/news/local/article251832278.html>

Sincerely,

Virak Anthony Thach  
2121 Central St. NE  
Olympia, WA 98506  
[virak20@hotmail.com](mailto:virak20@hotmail.com)

**Jackson Ewing**

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**From:** Tristan W <tristannweiss@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 7, 2025 4:55 PM  
**To:** Jackson Ewing  
**Subject:** Concerned Neighbor Regarding File Number 25-0980

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Dear Mr. Ewing,

As a concerned neighbor with young children, I am writing to express my strong objection to the proposed Springwood Gardens development. I frequently walk along the streets adjacent to and near the project site, and I have serious concerns about the potential impact on our community, particularly regarding traffic safety and environmental issues.

The traffic along Bethel Street is already a significant concern, with vehicles often speeding and creating hazardous conditions for pedestrians, especially children. The addition of a large development like Springwood Gardens will only exacerbate these dangers, increasing the risk of accidents and making our streets less safe for families. Furthermore, the flooding issues we experience in the area lead to dangerous splashing from passing cars, which poses an additional risk to those walking along the sidewalks.

In addition to traffic concerns, I believe this project will have far-reaching negative effects on our local wildlife and ecosystems, increase noise pollution, and fail to address the affordable housing crisis we are facing.

There are alternative options that could better serve our community without compromising our safety and environment.

To support my concerns, I have organized my thoughts around eight key topics that I hope will encourage you to reconsider this development:

1. This Housing Development Ignores Olympia's Promise to Work Towards Mitigating Climate Crisis
2. Proposal Elements Out of Alignment or Compliance with City of Olympia Municipal Code
3. Impact on Salmon Habitat & Setchfield Lake Ecosystem
4. Impact of Traffic
5. Increased Housing does NOT Increase Affordability
6. Pacific Lifestyle Homes & Garrette Custom Homes Are Not Good Homes
7. Areas of Concern in Proposed Plan and More Research Needed
8. Reasonable Alternatives

I urge you to take these concerns seriously and consider the long-term implications of this development on our community, especially for families with young children.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

Tristan Weiss

## Jackson Ewing

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**From:** Pete Hamar <phamar@protonmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 7, 2025 12:57 PM  
**To:** Jackson Ewing  
**Cc:** CityCouncil  
**Subject:** Opposition to File No. 25-0980 Springwood Gardens  
**Attachments:** NO\_to\_Springwood \_Gardens.pdf; NO\_to\_Springwood \_Gardens.docx

Dear Jackson Ewing, City of Olympia Design Review Board, and Olympia City Council,

My name is Pete Hamar and I am writing to voice my opposition to the Springwood Gardens Plat development plan. I live in close proximity to the site and received a notice about it in the mail. Look, I grew up in an east coast city full of this kind of development. It's the kind of area where you literally cannot tell one town from another. Let's be frank, these places look like shit, and the only reason they exist is that our neoliberal (de)regulatory apparatuses allow developers to make a fortune at the expense of our communities (human and nonhuman). We're seeing the bulldozing of the ecological and social foundations which comprise the unique character of a given place, and the replacement of those living systems with a sterile cookie-cutter hellscape and a sea of asphalt, the kind of American dystopia that leaves our foreign friends scratching their heads and wondering what is wrong with this country.

It seems to me that approval of this plan would entail totally disregarding Comprehensive Plan PL20.1 (Require development in neighborhoods to be of a type, scale, orientation, and design that maintains or improves the character, aesthetic quality, and livability of the neighborhood) and PN2.1 (Acquire and preserve land by a set of priorities that considers environmental benefits, such as stormwater management, wildlife habitat, or access to recreation opportunities). On top of that, if Springwood is permitted, my fear is that this will also be the first domino, so to speak, in the destruction of the riparian woodland and wetland corridors which presently shield Ellis creek, Setchfield lake, and Mission creek. As someone who majored in the biogeochemistry of climate change, it brings me to despair to see that even a supposedly progressive city like Olympia is behaving exactly like climate denialists when it comes to housing infrastructure.

I was a renter for 20 years, including 13 years in Olympia. In that time, I have seen rents and home prices skyrocket. I have also spent time living in Seattle and Portland, seeing thousands of houses get built, all while prices continue to shoot skyward. I have seen so many friends move away from Olympia, working class people and Evergreen grads, because of Olympia's out of control rent nightmare. What would benefit working Olympians is rent control and permanently affordable social housing. What would benefit the generations to come after us is the bolstering of green infrastructure like community gardens, bike paths, urban forest canopy, and other emergency action to mitigate the localized effects of climate change. The absolute last thing anyone needs is a bunch of crappy market rate subdivisions. Projects like Springwood Gardens are fuel on the dual fires of climate and affordable housing.

In addition to this preamble, the rest of my comment is attached in both DOCx and PDF formats.

## Regarding File Number 25-0980

Dear Mr. Ewing,

I am voicing my objection to the proposed Springwood Gardens development.

A project of this size will drastically increase traffic dangers and pollution, negatively impact wildlife and local ecosystems, increase noise pollution, and will only exacerbate the affordable housing crisis we are experiencing. We also know there are other options that would not have these negative impacts on our community and wildlife. We have organized our letter to cover 8 topics to convince you to rethink this development:

- 1. This Housing Development Ignores Olympia's Promise to Work Towards Mitigating Climate Crisis**
- 2. Proposal Elements Out of Alignment or Compliance with City of Olympia Municipal Code**
- 3. Impact on Salmon Habitat & Setchfield Lake Ecosystem**
- 4. Impact of Traffic**
- 5. Increased Housing does NOT Increase Affordability**
- 6. Pacific Lifestyle Homes & Garrette Custom Homes Are Not Good Homes**
- 7. Areas of Concern in Proposed Plan and More Research Needed**
- 8. Reasonable Alternatives**

# 1. This Housing Development Ignores Olympia's Promise to Work Towards Mitigating Climate Crisis

US population is projected to flatten out and then decline in the next couple of decades. Read [here](#) (Article: U.S. Population Projected to Begin Declining in Second Half of Century) for more information. Regional population growth projections are based on the misconception about the vitality of the tech sector, which is due for a correction, presently [shedding thousands of jobs and paying lower salaries to new hires](#). This coincides with a massive increase in severe heatwaves and torrential precipitation as a result of climate breakdown. Rather than replacing urban forest with asphalt and a plan that's detrimental to the community, we need to be enhancing green space—our only buffer to severe heatwaves and weather events. This should coincide with the establishment of more community gardens, expansion of our trail system, and the creation of truly affordable and socialized housing in the downtown core by renovating existing vacant or single-story commercial real estate into multi-story apartments with courtyard gardens. [Seattle's Urban Heat Island Index \(UHI\) is 8.2 degrees hotter on average](#) than surrounding green space, while national public health monitor Heat.gov notes that [UHI temperature spikes of 15 to 20 degrees have been observed](#). Urban heat islands are caused by a loss of tree cover, but also the overuse of asphalt, and by heat sources like cars and air conditioning units. A higher UHI increases strain on the power grid, acting as a threat multiplier by increasing the likelihood of power outages during severe weather events.

Additionally, according to the [Thurston Climate Action Plan](#), Olympia has made a 12 point commitment to mitigating climate crisis and related issues in Olympia. This development project is in direct conflict with eight of those twelve points:

1. Create vibrant centers, corridors, and neighborhoods while accommodating growth.
  - a. The development project will consist of cheaply built homes that maximize housing square footage on each minimally sized lot--not a vibrant center or corridor. This "growth" is not green by any means.
2. Preserve environmentally sensitive lands, farmlands, forest lands, prairies, and rural lands, and develop compact urban areas.
  - a. The development project sits on historic farmland and forestland which will be destroyed, not preserved, in this new development project.
3. Protect and improve water quality, including groundwater, rivers, streams, lakes and Puget Sound.
  - a. This development project is in marshy land (a non-irrigated blueberry bog sits in the middle of the proposed site), consists of riparian forest habitat, is directly adjacent to a wetland that feeds into a salmon-bearing stream no more than 300 meters away. Toxic runoff and groundwater from both the toxic materials being used to create these homes in addition to the addition of 50-70 more cars and ~339 more road trips per day will drastically harm, rather than improve, water quality.
4. Plan and act toward zero waste in the region.
  - a. The development project will result in plenty of waste, both during construction as they bulldoze an existing single family home, and two other dwellings that

currently sit on the property, and as 39 new single family units contribute to increased waste.

5. Ensure that residents have the resources to meet their daily needs.
  - a. Residents of Olympia need clean air, clean water, green spaces, and climate mitigation plans. We do not need more poorly made, unaffordable homes that are not green.
6. Support a local food system to increase community resilience, health and economic prosperity.
  - a. As this site is historic farmland, it poses an opportunity to be a site that includes a community farm or garden space (see Reasonable Alternatives section for more).
7. Provide opportunities for everyone in the Thurston Region to learn about and practice sustainability.
  - a. If the City of Olympia invested in a green development project instead, we could work together to find opportunities for our neighbors both near and far to practice sustainable work in the form of farming or gardening, habitat restoration, etc.
8. Make strategic investments to advance sustainability regionally.
  - a. A greener or more affordable development project in this space could pose inspiration for regional residents near and far.

We urge the city to reconsider this development project in lieu of greener alternatives that would better benefit the city and our neighbors alike!

## 2. Proposal Elements Out of Alignment or Compliance with City of Olympia Municipal Code

### A. [Olympia Comprehensive Master Plan](#) - Land Use and Urban Design

The following is a list of Comprehensive Plan codes that we see as out of alignment with this development proposal as this will be **high-density, high-cost, low-grade development requiring the destruction of 7.06 acres of greenspace and felling of 160+ trees that has high likelihood of Indigenous cultural artifact presence, with an inadequate water filtration plan that will pollute and otherwise negatively impact adjacent wetland and waterways for salmon and other wildlife, depleting the character and livability of a low-density neighborhood.** The Olympia Comprehensive Plan was adopted by Ordinance 6945 on December 16, 2014, and is current through Ordinance 7301, passed November 23, 2021.

PL5.5 Provide incentives and assistance for preserving, restoring, redeveloping and using historic buildings, districts, neighborhoods, streets, structures, objects and sites.

PL5.6 Support public or non-profit acquisition of the most important historic resources to ensure their preservation.

PL6.2 The design review process should recognize differences in the city with the objective of maintaining or improving the character and livability of each area or neighborhood

PL7.1 Provide urban green spaces in which to spend time. Include such elements as trees, garden spaces, variety of vegetation, water features, “green” walls and roofs, and seating.

PL7.2 Provide urban green spaces that are in people’s immediate vicinity and can be enjoyed or viewed from a variety of perspectives.

PL7.3 Establish a maximum distance to urban green space for everyone in the community.

PL7.4 Increase the area of urban green space and tree canopy within each neighborhood proportionate to increased population in that neighborhood.

PL7.5 Establish urban green space between transportation corridors and adjacent areas.

PL14.2 Concentrate housing into three high-density Neighborhoods: Downtown Olympia, Pacific/Martin/Lilly Triangle; and the area surrounding Capital Mall.

PL14.3 Preserve and enhance the character of existing Low-density Neighborhoods. Disallow medium or high-density development in existing Low-density Neighborhood areas except for Neighborhood Centers.

PL16.13 Encourage adapting non-residential buildings for housing.

PL20.1 Require development in neighborhoods to be of a type, scale, orientation, and design that maintains or improves the character, aesthetic quality, and livability of the neighborhood.

PL22.1 Use trees to foster a sense of neighborhood identity.

PL22.2 Identify, protect and maintain trees with historic significance or other value to the community or specific neighborhoods.

PL22.3 Encourage the use of appropriate fruit and nut trees to increase local food self-sufficiency.

PL25.3 Collaborate with community partners to ensure that everyone within Olympia is within biking or walking distance of a place to grow food.

PL25.8 Work with community organizations to develop strategies, measure, and set goals for increasing local food production.

PL25.9 Work with local governments throughout the region to help protect existing agricultural lands and develop and promote a vibrant local food economy.

PN2.1 Acquire and preserve land by a set of priorities that considers environmental benefits, such as stormwater management, wildlife habitat, or access to recreation opportunities.

PN6.4 Use regulations and other means to prevent a net loss in the function and value of existing wetlands, while striving to increase and restore wetlands over the long-term.

**B. City of Olympia R4-8 Building Code Violations (see particularly table 4.04)**

*Four of the lots are smaller than 45' and should be eliminated or consolidated*

- Lots 5, 7, 8, and 39 do not meet the required minimum lot width of 45'

*Two of the lots do not meet the required minimum lot size of 4,000 square feet and should be eliminated*

- Lots 7 and 8 do not meet the required minimum lot size of 4,000 sq ft

*Proposed square footage on most lots seem too big/impossible with minimum set-backs, current building and lot dimensions, and 2-story maximums*

- Assuming minimum front and back yard set-backs of 20', side set-backs of 5', and maximum 2 stories that can be built above grade (see table 4.04), the square footage of many homes that are stated (e.g., lots 10-23, page 4 of "Springwood Garden P-Plat-1") are not accomplishable even when maximizing building footprints right up to the edge of those minimums
- For example, lot 10's building footprint could at its full maximum be 40'x50', which makes for 2,000 square feet per floor, so how can developers claim over double that square footage at 4,475 with a two-story maximum house (unless they're building a basement below the driveway)?
- The developers should demonstrate how they plan to manage such big square footage given code, or revise their square footage proposals (and housing price/cost estimates) to code

*Maximization of 45% impervious surfaces via impermeable roofing and permeable driveways puts lots at future risk for being remodeled out of code, needs to be accounted for in development HOA*

- Many of the lots are designed where the footprint of the home is right at the 45% of the lot maximum allowed by city code, with "permeable driveways" installed as a way to allow cars onto lots without making the impervious

- This means that any future remodeling of the driveways to asphalt or other impervious surfaces (or yards with concrete, patios, etc.) would immediately put many of the lots out of compliance with city code
- The best way to account for this is to make the houses be smaller proportions of the lots and the driveways asphalt like many people would prefer
- The second best way to account for this is to write protections against remodeling with any impervious surfaces past the 45% of the lot amount into the development HOA agreements

*Discrepancies in reporting of impervious surfaces in Arborist Plan and SEPA Environmental Plan*

- A. In the Arborist Plan's tree density calculations the developers claim 1.35 acres as "ROW" (right of way, to my understanding, or roads and sidewalks) exempt from tree density calculations, which at 19% of the 7.06 acres is on is remarkably higher than the estimate of 12% they provide in the SEPA environmental checklist page 4.
- B. Can you help to clarify the differences between the 0.85 acres estimated in the SEPA environmental checklist (p.4) and the 1.35 acres claimed in the Arborist plan?

**C. Concerns / Discrepancies from Environmental Assessment Report**

Below are screenshots of discrepancies regarding priority habitat and priority species pulled from the [Environmental Critical Assessment Report](#).

Basically, Page 2 says there ARE NO priority species habitats in or adjacent to site.

Page 8 says there ARE priority species observed onsite that may utilize the project site.

Page 14 says there ARE TWO priority habitats.

Pages 15-16 CHECKS THREE separate priority habitats.

Continue northerly on Bethel Street NE to Springwood Avenue NE. Turn east onto Springwood Avenue NE and continue to the project site located at 1609 Springwood

On page 8:  
 Avenue NE.  
 Several species identified by the State of Washington as "Priority Species" were observed onsite or potentially may utilize the project site. Priority species require protective measures for their survival due to their population status, sensitivity to habitat alteration, and/or recreational, commercial, or tribal importance.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

### NATIONAL WETLAND INVENTORY

The *National Wetland Inventory (NWI) Mapping* completed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service was reviewed as a part of this assessment (Figure 2). This mapping resource did not identify any wetlands or drainage corridors within or immediately adjacent to the project site. This mapping resource identified offsite wetlands well offsite to the east of the project site associated with Setchfield Lake and surface water drainages offsite to the north and south of the project site.

### STATE OF WASHINGTON PRIORITY HABITATS AND SPECIES

The State of Washington *Priority Habitats and Species (PHS) Mapping* was reviewed as a part of this assessment (Figure 3). This mapping resource did not identify any priority habitats within or immediately adjacent to the project site. This mapping resource identified Setchfield Lake well offsite to the east and Mission Creek well offsite to the south of the project site. This mapping resource identified the potential presence of Yuma myotis (*Myotis yumanensis*), little brown bat (*Myotis lucifugus*), and big brown bat (*Eptesicus fuscus*) within the same township as the project site.

### STATE OF WASHINGTON DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

The State of Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) *SalmonScape Mapping* was reviewed as a part of this assessment (Figure 4). This mapping resource did not identify any wetlands or stream corridors within or immediately adjacent to the project site. This mapping resource identified wetland areas offsite to the east of the project site and Mission Creek offsite to the south.

### STATE OF WASHINGTON DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

The State of Washington Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) *Water Type Mapping* was reviewed as a part of this assessment (Figure 5). This mapping resource did not identify any stream corridors or wetlands within or immediately adjacent to the project site. This mapping resource identified wetland areas offsite to the east of the

The majority of observed wildlife species are commonly present within urban areas. Species observed onsite, species that would be expected to utilize the habitats provided by the project site, and species that may potentially utilize the habitats provided by the project site include red tailed hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*), merlin (*Falco columbarius*), mourning dove (*Zenaida macroura*), American crow (*Corvus brachyrhynchus*), Northern flicker (*Colaptes auratus*), violet green swallow (*Tachycineta thalassina*), tree swallow (*Tachycineta bicolor*), American robin (*Turdus migratorius*), song sparrow (*Melospiza melodia*), black capped chickadee (*Parus atricapillus*), dark-eyed junco (*Junco hyemalis*), bats (*Myotis* spp.), purple finch (*Carpodacus purpureus*), house finch (*Carpodacus mexicanus*), white crowned sparrow (*Zonotrichia leucophrys*), brown creeper (*Certhia americana*), bushtit (*Psaltriparus minimus*), evening grosbeak (*Coccothraustes vespertina*), rufous sided towhee (*Pipilo erythrophthalmus*), starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*), rock dove (*Columbia livia*), Steller jay (*Cyanocitta stelleri*), Anna's hummingbird (*Calypte anna*), rufous hummingbird (*Selasphorus rufus*), black tailed deer (*Odocoileus hemionus*), coyote (*Canis latrans*), raccoon (*Procyon lotor*), striped skunk (*Mephitis mephitis*), opossum (*Didelphis virginianus*), Western screech owl (*Otus kennicotti*), deer mouse (*Peromyscus maniculatus*), shrew (*Sorex* spp.), mole (*Scapanus* spp.), bats (*Myotis* spp.), eastern gray squirrel (*Sciurus carolinensis*), Douglas squirrel (*Tamiasciurus douglasi*), eastern cottontail (*Sylvilagus floridanus*), Norway rat (*Rattus norvegicus*), black rat (*Rattus rattus*), and vole (*Microtus* spp.).

The project site was not identified to provide spawning or juvenile rearing habitats for amphibians and was not observed, and has not been documented, to provide direct habitats for fish species.

**MOVEMENT CORRIDORS:** The project site was generally located within a well urbanize residential area. The project site appeared well used by the daily movements of small to medium sized wildlife species and was within the seasonal migratory pathways for a variety of passerine birds. The project site was also identified to be well used by domestic pets. In addition, the entire project site has been modified and managed for residential uses for several decades. As a result of this manipulation, no portion of the project site exhibited characteristics typically associated with a "prairie ecosystem."

We know there is spawning or juvenile rearing habitat for amphibians and the wetland (& runoff) would feed into Mission Creek, which contains salmon habitat. Creating basins to infiltrate water per the SEPA review still results in polluted water seeping into the ground, streams, pond, and watershed.

### **State Priority Species**

Several species identified by the State of Washington as "Priority Species" were observed onsite or potentially may utilize the project site. Priority species require protective measures for their survival due to their population status, sensitivity to habitat alteration, and/or recreational, commercial, or tribal importance.

Wetland name or number   A  

H 1.5. Special habitat features: Check the habitat features that are present in the wetland. The number of checks is the number of points. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Large, downed, woody debris within the wetland (> 4 in. diameter and 6 ft long). <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Standing snags (dbh > 4 in.) within the wetland <input type="checkbox"/> Undercut banks are present for at least 6.6 ft (2 m) <b>and/or</b> overhanging plants extend at least 3.3 ft (1 m) over open water or a stream (or ditch) in, or contiguous with the wetland, for at least 33 ft (10 m) <input type="checkbox"/> Stable steep banks of fine material that might be used by beaver or muskrat for denning (> 30 degree slope) OR signs of recent beaver activity are present (cut shrubs or trees that have not yet weathered where wood is exposed) <input type="checkbox"/> At least ¼ ac of thin-stemmed persistent plants or woody branches are present in areas that are permanently or seasonally inundated (structures for egg-laying by amphibians) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Invasive plants cover less than 25% of the wetland area in every stratum of plants (see H 1.1 above for the list of strata and H 1.5 in the manual for the list of aggressive plant species)	3
Total for H 1	4

**Rating of Site Potential** If score is:   15-18   = H   7-14   = M    0-6   = L *Record the rating on the first page*

<b>H 2.0. Does the landscape have the potential to support the habitat functions of the site?</b>	
H 2.1. Accessible habitat (include only habitat polygons accessible from the wetland). <i>Calculate:</i> % relatively undisturbed habitat $\frac{3.6 + [( \% \text{ moderate and low intensity land uses} ) / 2]}{1} \times 10 = 8.7$ % Total accessible habitat is: > 1/3 (33.3%) of 1 km Polygon points = 3 20-33% of 1 km Polygon points = 2 10-19% of 1 km Polygon points = 1 < 10% of 1 km Polygon points = 0	0
H 2.2. Total habitat in 1 km Polygon around the wetland. <i>Calculate:</i> % relatively undisturbed habitat $\frac{6 + [( \% \text{ moderate and low intensity land uses} ) / 2]}{2} \times 24 = 30$ % Total habitat > 50% of Polygon points = 3 Total habitat 10-50% and in 1-3 patches points = 2 Total habitat 10-50% and > 3 patches points = 1 Total habitat < 10% of 1 km Polygon points = 0	2
H 2.3. Land use intensity in 1 km Polygon: > 50% of 1 km Polygon is high intensity land use points = (- 2) ≤ 50% of 1 km Polygon is high intensity points = 0	(-2)
Total for H 2	0

**Rating of Landscape Potential** If score is:   4-6   = H   1-3   = M    < 1   = L *Record the rating on the first page*

<b>H 3.0. Is the habitat provided by the site valuable to society?</b>	
H 3.1. Does the site provide habitat for species valued in laws, regulations, or policies? <i>Choose only the highest score that applies to the wetland being rated.</i> Site meets ANY of the following criteria: points = 2 — It has 3 or more Priority Habitats within 100 m (see next page) — It provides habitat for Threatened or Endangered species (any plant or animal on the state or federal lists) — It is mapped as a location for an individual WDFW Priority Species — It is a Wetland of High Conservation Value as determined by the Department of Natural Resources data — It has been categorized as an important habitat site in a local or regional comprehensive plan, in a Shoreline Master Plan, or in a watershed plan Site has 1 or 2 Priority Habitats (listed on next page) within 100 m points = 1 Site does not meet any of the criteria above points = 0	2

**Rating of Value** If score is:    2   = H   1   = M   0   = L *Record the rating on the first page*

Wetland name or number   A  

### WDFW Priority Habitats

See complete descriptions of Priority Habitats listed by WDFW, and the counties in which they can be found, in: Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife. 2008 (current year, as revised). [Priority Habitat and Species List](#).<sup>133</sup> This list was updated for consistency with guidance from WDFW.

This question is independent of the land use between the wetland unit and the Priority Habitat. All vegetated wetlands are by definition a Priority Habitat but are not included in this list because they are addressed by this rating system.

Attempting to determine if site has this priority habitat as well

Count how many of the following Priority Habitats are within 330 ft (100 m) of the wetland unit:

- **Aspen Stands:** Pure or mixed stands of aspen greater than 1 ac (0.4 ha).
- **Biodiversity Areas and Corridors:** Areas of habitat that are relatively important to various species of native fish and wildlife. This habitat automatically counts if mapped on the PHS online map within 100m of the wetland. If not mapped, a determination can be made in the field.
- **Caves:** A naturally occurring cavity, recess, void, or system of interconnected passages under the earth in soils, rock, ice, or other geological formations and is large enough to contain a human.
- **Cliffs:** Greater than 25 ft (7.6 m) high and occurring below 5000 ft elevation.
- **Fresh Deepwater:** Lands permanently flooded with freshwater, including environments where surface water is permanent and often deep, so that water, rather than air, is the principal medium within which the dominant organisms live. Substrate does not support emergent vegetation. Do not select if Instream habitat is also present, or if the entire Deepwater feature is included in the wetland unit being rated (such as a pond with a vegetated fringe).
- **Herbaceous Balds:** Variable size patches of grass and forbs on shallow soils over bedrock.
- ✗ **Instream:** The combination of physical, biological, and chemical processes and conditions that interact to provide functional life history requirements for instream fish and wildlife resources. Do not select if Fresh Deepwater habitat is also present.
- **Nearshore:** Relatively undisturbed nearshore habitats. These include Coastal Nearshore, Open Coast Nearshore, and Puget Sound Nearshore.
- **Old-growth/Mature forests:** **Old-growth west of Cascade crest** – Stands of at least 2 tree species, forming a multi-layered canopy with occasional small openings; with at least 8 trees/ac (20 trees/ha) > 32 in. (81 cm) diameter at breast height (dbh) or > 200 years of age. **Mature forests** – Stands with average diameters exceeding 21 in. (53 cm) dbh; crown cover may be less than 100%; decay, decadence, numbers of snags, and quantity of large downed material is generally less than that found in old-growth; 80-200 years old west of the Cascade crest.

On Page two, it says: The State of Washington Priority Habitats and Species (PHS) Mapping was reviewed as a part of this assessment (Figure 3). This mapping resource did not identify any priority habitats within or immediately adjacent to the project site. This mapping resource identified Setchfield Lake well offsite to the east and Mission Creek well offsite to the south of the project site. This mapping resource identified the potential presence of Yuma myotis (*Myotis yumanensis*), little brown bat (*Myotis lucifugus*), and big brown bat (*Eptesicus fuscus*) within the same township as the project site. This page shows 3 priority habitats

<sup>133</sup> <http://wdfw.wa.gov/publications/00165/wdfw00165.pdf>  
Wetland Rating System for Western WA: 2014 Update  
Rating Form – Version 2, July 2023

15

Wetland name or number   A  

- **Oregon White Oak:** Woodland stands of pure oak or oak/conifer associations where canopy coverage of the oak component is important. For single oaks or oak stands <0.4 ha in urban areas, [WDFW's Management Recommendations for Oregon White Oak](#)<sup>134</sup> provides more detail for determining if they are Priority Habitats
- ✗ **Riparian:** The area adjacent to freshwater aquatic systems with flowing or standing water that contains elements of both aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems which mutually influence each other.
- ✗ **Snags and Logs:** Trees are considered snags if they are dead or dying and exhibit sufficient decay characteristics to enable cavity excavation/use by wildlife. Priority snags have a diameter at breast height of > 20 in. (51 cm) in western Washington and are > 6.5 ft (2 m) in height. Priority logs are > 12 in. (30 cm) in diameter at the largest end, and > 20 ft (6 m) long.
- **Talus:** Homogenous areas of rock rubble ranging in average size 0.5 - 6.5 ft (0.15 - 2.0 m), composed of basalt, andesite, and/or sedimentary rock, including riprap slides and mine tailings. May be associated with cliffs.
- **Westside Prairies:** Herbaceous, non-forested plant communities that can either take the form of a dry prairie or a wet prairie.

Despite this, the [SEPA Environmental Checklist](#) says there is no priority habitat:

- water plants: water lily, eelgrass, milfoil, other  
 other types of vegetation

Refer to the Level V Soil and Vegetation Plan prepared by Sound Urban Forestry dated January 30, 2025 for a full list of existing vegetation.

**(3) What kind and amount of vegetation will be removed or altered?**

Vegetation within the project area will be removed. Vegetation within Tract B (Wetland Buffer) and Tract D (Soil & Vegetation Protection Area) will remain undisturbed.

**b. List threatened and endangered species known to be on or near the site.**

According to the Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife's "*Priority Habitats and Species (PHS on the Web)*," no threatened or endangered plant species are known to be on or near the site.

**c. Proposed landscaping, use of native plants, or other measures to preserve or enhance vegetation on the site, if any.**

Landscaping will be in accordance with the city of Olympia Municipal Code. Tracts B and D will retain trees and vegetation in their natural state.

**d. List all noxious weeds and invasive species known to be on or near the site.**

No noxious weeds or invasive species are known to be on or near the site.

**This appears to be in contradiction to page 8, 15, and 16 of the Environmental Critical Areas Assessment**

**5. Animals**

**a. List any birds and other animals that have been observed on or near the site or are known to be on or near the site.**

Songbirds and small mammals (including squirrels and rodents typical of an urban area). See Environmentally Critical Areas Assessment dated October 23, 2024 for a full list of birds and animals observed onsite.

**Examples include:**

- **Birds: hawk, heron, eagle, songbirds, other:**
- **Mammals: deer, bear, elk, beaver, other:**
- **Fish: bass, salmon, trout, herring, shellfish, other:**

**b. List any threatened and endangered species known to be on or near the site.**

Per the Environmentally Critical Areas Assessment dated October 23, 2024, no threatened or endangered species are known to be on or near the site.

Additionally, note that they only mention plant species, not animal species, when they say there are no threatened or endangered plant species.



### 3. Impact on Salmon Habitat & Setchfield Lake Ecosystem

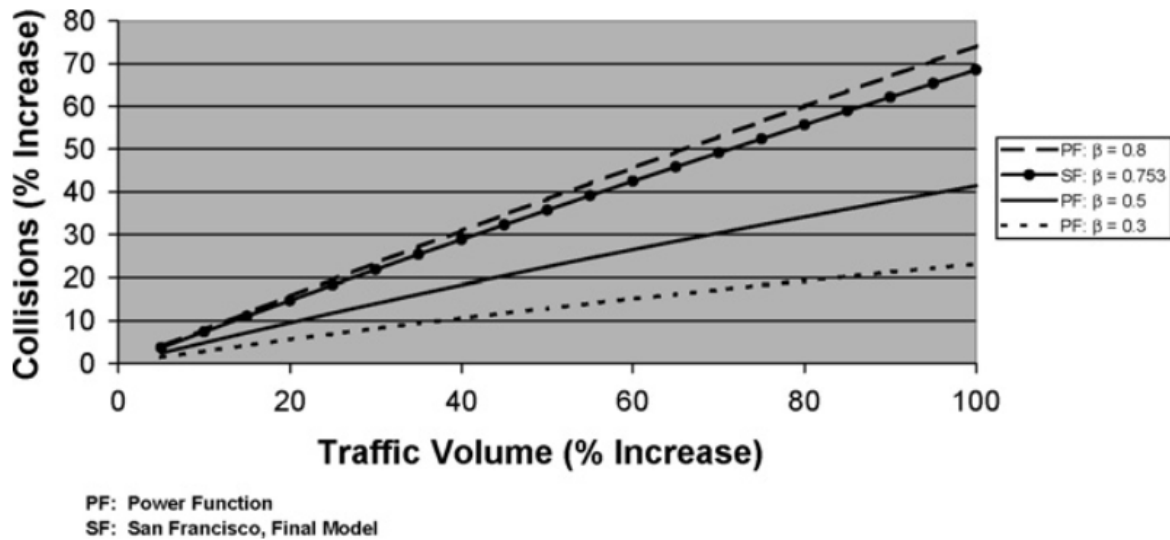
Mission Creek is a salmon-bearing stream that flows into Budd Inlet. Running just southwest of the development site, **it is connected via wetlands within the project bounds**. In the mid-2010s with support from the state Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO), the South Puget Sound Salmon Enhancement Group completed a \$200k [project](#) that restored tidal and fish access to the creek. Coho salmon and chum salmon have been documented to use the lower reaches of Mission Creek, and their passage upstream is only partially blocked by a culvert under Bethel Street. As such, full restoration faces lower hurdles compared to other more heavily impacted streams. Surveys by WDFW predict that this single barrier correction could potentially restore chum, coho, steelhead, and sea-run cutthroat to the upstream. Runoff from the housing development will likely enter into this stream system, impacting salmon habitat. The sediment associated with extensive construction and deforestation on the development site would be especially harmful to spawning. The proposed development does not adequately address the negative impacts to this system in terms of water quality, stream hydrology, and canopy cover, especially as extreme winter rain events and summer droughts increasingly alter stream flows and increase water temperatures.

The second salmon-bearing stream that could potentially be impacted is Ellis Creek, due to the project's proximity to the creek and Setchfield Lake. **At least \$1.3 million has been spent on restoring salmon in this waterway**. The creek maintains salmonid-bearing scour width parameters until it connects to Setchfield Lake, its headwaters. In 2006 with RCO support, the City of Olympia looked to [replace](#) two downstream culverts that prevented migration of chum salmon, coho salmon, cutthroat trout, rainbow trout and steelhead. Removal would restore access to 1.5 miles of largely intact habitat. According to the Recreation and Conservation Office's project description: "Rural zoning densities as well as stream and wetland buffers designated under Thurston County's Critical Areas Ordinance will protect the stream habitat outside of [Squaxin] park." **The Ellis Creek watershed is "one of the only nearly intact basins in Budd Inlet."** As barriers to full restoration are minimal, this makes the creek a priority for restoration according to SRFB funding metrics. The proposed development is set back from the lake itself, however it would destroy several acres of riparian woodland integral to the lake ecosystem. Further, **if developments such as Springwood Gardens continue to be approved, they will encircle Setchfield lake, drastically degrading ecosystem's capacity to support salmon** and a myriad other native species. Therefore it is of critical importance that the proposed plan not be implemented. Any development must be aligned with ongoing salmon recovery efforts in the area.

Additionally, as a wetland specialist noted, for years, the developers have been swallowing up land for housing, and the only land left for developers to use is land that was never a good investment to begin with. All the good land for new development is gone. The only land left is land that builders do not like to build on due to so many environmental issues. The proposed development area is one of them. The water level of Setchfield lake is only 5-8 feet lower than the land surrounding it. This is known as a Kettle Lake because all the rain water runoff eventually seeps back into the lake due to the surrounding layers of land and its composition. The surrounding land is therefore riparian habitat integral to the lake system itself. Moreover, it is wet, with open pools of standing water on the ground for a significant amount of the year.

## 4. Impact of Increased Traffic

Traffic studies have determined that a linear relationship exists between increased traffic and frequency of vehicle-pedestrian accidents. See for example this chart and quotations from Wier et al. Published in *Accident Analysis & Prevention*, February 2009.



**Fig. 1.** Vehicle-pedestrian injury collision increases associated with traffic volume increases: power function and San Francisco final model predictions.

“A scatter plot of traffic volume by vehicle-pedestrian injury collisions shows a positive linear association. [...] Consistent with previous national and international findings, our study provides additional evidence that traffic volume is a primary environmental cause of vehicle-pedestrian injury collisions at the area level.”

## 5. Increased Housing does NOT Increase Affordability

We recognize that these homes will also do nothing to amend the housing crisis we are in. They are clearly not affordable nor quality homes that will serve to increase neighbor's property tax such that some are forced to move.

Regardless, the increase of housing (even affordable housing) in Olympia does not address the housing crisis. Olympia's specific housing crisis is fueled by several factors, including:

- Real estate speculation (in March 2023, investors accounted for 27% of all single-family home purchases [in the US] [1])
- Airbnb's (2.25 million homes in the US are Airbnbs--this doesn't count Vrbo, Guesty, Vacasa, or any other AirBnB alternatives [2])
- Non-residential use of homes (Nearly 1/3 of the 62 homes in the south Capital neighborhood are owned or used by lobbyists, corporations, or unions--meaning they are not used as houses but as overnight accommodations or meeting spaces for businesses [3]).

While the idea that increased supply will meet demand and increase affordability can be applied to a variety of different products in our economy, housing is not one of them. This is for a couple reasons.

- 1) Land is subject to what is called a "natural monopoly" because there is only a finite amount of land in any given area. More housing can be built but there is no way to increase the supply of land to meet demand. Without price controls, land will actually skyrocket in value as density increases.
- 2) Housing is treated as an investment. Speculators and wealthy investors buy up housing and hold it until they can get a better price for it later. They treat homes like stocks. This means any lull in market rate will be met with investors simply squatting on their investments until the market rate increases again. And if market rates do actually drop, which only happens during a crisis, investors will attempt to seize all the available housing for the same reason that people buy stock when a highly profitable firm suffers a temporary drop in its price. They will then rent out their investment property as a landlord or sell the investment property when they can make a lot of money off that home.

All this to say: there is no market solution to housing affordability, because [decommodification is the only proven strategy for creating truly affordable housing](#). The creation of more market-rate homes will simply drive up the cost of living of the area—it will NOT make homes more affordable for working families. Additionally, the increase of property taxes that coincide with increased expensive development means that working-class families and long-term residents are more likely to be pushed out of their own homes as they aren't able to keep on top of increased monthly bills. We need only look at other urban regions that grew quickly and increased housing extensively (like Portland and Seattle) to see this trend that more homes in urban regions with growing populations increase the price of those homes, increasing the cost of living, while also decreasing the quality of life for those living there (due to lack of green spaces, increased traffic, increased noise, environmental pollution, etc).

So, instead of increased housing development, I see a plethora of easier solutions to the housing affordability problem. In Olympia's downtown core, we could emulate and expand upon efforts like [House Our Neighbors](#) and [Seattle Social Housing](#), two initiatives which are balancing climate-smart design with truly affordable, decommodified housing. Other ideas include: below-market rent control, eliminating the use of homes not as homes, creating a time limit (10 months?) on a home being allowed to be vacant before it is converted into affordable, below-market housing (for sale or for rent), a standard basic income, decreasing prices (rent or sale) on buildings that have been vacant for years and converting them into lower-profit commercial business & affordable below-market housing (this piece is actually in Olympia's current Comprehensive Plan!), outlawing anyone from owning a home who does not live in the region (city, county, state, or even country--anything would be better than what we have now) where the home is, making landlordism a non-profit venture with a focus on housing people rather than prioritizing rent increases to match market rates...

A combination of these and similar ideas seems to me to be the best way to work towards a root cause of housing unaffordability, which is essentially that wage increases haven't been anywhere close to matching housing price increases in many decades. And that wealthy people treat housing like stocks and buy it all up.

## 6. Pacific Lifestyle Homes & Garrette Custom Homes Are Not Good Homes

*“This builder is going to rip you off and your documents that you sign will hamstring what you can do legally. I would find a different builder no matter the price point you’re looking to build in.”*

Garrette Custom Homes has a reputation that speaks for itself. Their [Yelp Page](#) shows a 1.7 star rating, with horror stories from reviewers. Of the staff, one reviewer writes:

“Our sales guy (Tom) was fired after lying to several clients. **Our contract was laced with problems and we had hundreds of emails discussing scopes of work or product selection that were all lies.** Our site manager was fired after not showing up to our red line meeting. Our interim site manager (Brian) only worked with us long enough to get the dirt work and foundation done. **During this time, they ran \$70k over budget on dirt work and didn't tell us until a future scheduled meeting.** This far exceeded our reserve fund and could not be included in the loan. Our next site manager lasted about 3 weeks before he quit in the middle of framing (Paul). Our next site manager (David) was new to the company and showed zero leadership skills when with the sub-contractors. Under David's supervision work was shoddy and the site was unsanitary. We had laborers pooping in the wetland, urinating under the house leaving puddles of piss on the vapor barrier, we had 3" trim on one side of a window and 2" on the other. The warranty person (Melina) who was horrible to work with and eventually fired after she tried to break into our house with the painters while we were on vacation so they could do touch up work. We had this on video and had to call top level management at Garrett to get resolution. The new warranty person (Holly) spent the next 12 months ghosting us and playing dumb on every problem.”

Of the workmanship, this reviewer writes:

“Buyer beware. Bought a brand new Garrette home last February. Beautiful home, great floorplan, but many, many, many issues with finishing work. Mostly small detail work, though **there was a large drainage and run off issue that has cost us personally over \$40,000 to date to fix.** It appears that there was no follow up on any of the work that contractors did. **Almost every issue is still unresolved from our 60 day walk through and now approaching one year in the house.** I understand that covid slowed things down, but Customer Service is non-existent. Simple communication is all together missing. I'd be very careful before making a purchase.”

The other reviews echo the same frustrations:

“This was our first home-building experience and it was very disappointing to say the least. The construction and project team were terrible, if they were around long enough to see updates through. **There were lots of turnover with the folks we worked with, which is very telling about the lack of management support.** Buyers in our property were promised the surrounding fence would be fixed by the site manager but when he left the company, Garrett said they wouldn't fix it. They also installed the wrong cabinet in my laundry room (doesn't line up with the wall) and they refuse to fix it. This was escalated to the manager supporting our property, Brian, but he clearly had no intention on trying to address our concerns and brushed us off. **Because we had such a terrible experience, I won't be recommending the services of Garrett or Pacific Lifestyle homes to family or friends.**”

Meanwhile, Pacific Lifestyle Homes also has a reputation that speaks for itself. Their [Yelp Page](#) shows a 2.6 star rating, with horror stories from reviewers. One reviewer writes:

“Lack of finishing detail. **Lived in this new construction home for less than one year and compared to other national builders buying from PLH is not worth the extra money.** During walkthrough they will say if you can't see the defect from a certain distance it isn't going to be worked on. I'll include photos but you can definitely tell they just rush builds out. This includes dry paint on carpet, mice dropping issue during inspection in the crawl space they responded that they didn't see any when they went down. Now as a more seasoned home owner mice do hide in the daytime and have caught over 50 in the crawl space. Very poor paint in the garage with dried paint drip. Another image includes the center of our fireplace with the wood being cut very unevenly.”

Another writes,

“I have been dealing with a poorly constructed home built in late 2022 by Garrette Custom Homes and purchased from Pacific Lifestyle Homes in the Ridgefield WA area. **A repeatedly leaking roof and mold issues have been going on since the house was built creating extended problems of getting the warranty repair work done in a timely manner.** 2 1/2 months in each occurrence with two different rental tenants being unable to use areas of the house is unacceptable. If you are planning to purchase a new or existing home, first look at the reviews and complaints about Pacific Lifestyle Homes, at the B.B.B. website before committing your self; make sure to completely read the 2-10 warranty offering as well.”

It goes on:

“**I would not build with this company.** We walked through our home during the process and had to keep pointing out mistakes where they left off outlets, windows to shower and smurf tub for TV, ect. so nice to catch a few things wrong during building. Then when we arrived to get our keys. There was paint all in the carpet walls bowed from sheetrock not being hung correctly and rooms and ceilings painted incorrect and insulation under the house hanging from the floor where it fell off.ECT. When we pointed these things out they said they would fix it by giving us a check. which we wanted things fixed in the home so it was nice, not money. When the manager went to get ok from their company we got nothing and the video on camera system was erased of the painter dripping all over. (...) The floor plan is great, I just wish it would have been built by a company that had quality houses as important, not their pocket book. Please do your homework before making this mistake.”

In conclusion, we want housing to be provided here that is well-built, quality craftsmanship, and that will last for decades to come. The residents of Olympia deserve that. There is plenty of evidence that Pacific Lifestyle Homes & Garrette Custom Homes do not have that reputation, and trust, of the communities where they have worked before. Like named before, we need accessible, affordable housing - not housing that has a reputation of being hastily and inefficiently built, that costs residents even more money to fix (on top of being pricey and inaccessible homes).

## 7. Areas of Concern in Proposed Plan and More Research Needed

### Stormwater Management

We are concerned about the stormwater management strategy for the proposed project. These include the documented limitations for infiltration in onsite soils which currently doesn't support the optimistic prediction that the onsite pond will indeed "infiltrate approximately 97% of all runoff from the Site." Several community members have spoken about the proposed plan's failure to document the seasonal presence of standing water in the eastern side of the site, and to address water mitigation here. Finally the stormwater infrastructure design doesn't consider the changing precipitation patterns, specifically the increasing intensity of precipitation. This is stated by the city of Olympia in the [City of Olympia's Climate Change Response](#), where the city responds to the question "How is climate change impacting Olympia?" with this: "New and growing impacts include rising temperatures, extreme heat, heavy precipitation, flooding, sea level rise and wildfires." If we know that we are experiencing heavy precipitation, we need building sites to plan for, be responsive to, and mitigate the effects of climate change.

### The Use of Infiltration Strategy Needs Further Study

#### *Detention/Infiltration Pond*

Because this land is on and adjacent to a wetland, and has seasonal standing water on the property, we are concerned with the plan for how water movement will be mitigated. We noticed that the onsite stormwater is proposed to be collected by catch basins and conveyed via underground pipes to a combined detention/infiltration pond in the southwest part of the site, after which it will be discharged to the wetland buffer onsite (Drainage Design Report, p. 3). **However, the use of infiltration as a main stormwater management strategy appears inconsistent with the conclusions and recommendations from the Preliminary Stormwater Soils Report (Geotechnical Report) which state that infiltration of stormwater runoff from the proposed residential plat is only feasible using relatively shallow Best Management Practices (BMPs) in portions of the site (without indicating which portions).** This is confusing, and we need more information about this. Which part or portion of the site? Additionally, the applicant states that based on their subsurface explorations, it is their opinion that infiltration trenches and basins are **not** feasible for this project due to the limited depth to impermeable glacial till and/or recessional silt deposits (p. 7). Yet the strategy proposed for the project is stated as a detention/infiltration basin, indicating that infiltration is part of the strategy, with the assumption that the onsite pond will infiltrate approximately 97% of all runoff from the Site (Drainage Plan p. 10). This is confusing, and appears to contradict itself. We need more information from the applicant and a proposal with backed research.

Also, we noticed that in the Preliminary Plat in the Drainage Design Report, the location of the Combined Detention and Infiltration Pond is in Tract C in the southwestern portion of the site. The Geotechnical Report, Appendix A - Subsurface Explorations, indicates that for Test Pit 5 (TP-5) which is located in the vicinity of the detention/infiltration pond (Figure 2, Site and

Exploration Plan in the Geotechnical Report), mottling was observed from 2 feet to 10 feet indicating “slow percolation of surface water or seasonal high groundwater” (p. 6). **The assumption that the onsite pond will infiltrate approximately 97% of all runoff from the Site appears overly optimistic and is not supported by the existing documentation.** Here, additional study and research is needed to make sure that the design of the stormwater management strategy does what it is intended to do - at this time, it lacks research to support the claims made. At a minimum, more research needs to be done to determine whether 5 feet or more of vertical separation exists between the bottom of the proposed stormwater detention/infiltration basin/pond facility and seasonal high groundwater or impermeable soils, as required per 2022 COO DDECM, Volume V, Section V-5.6, BMPs T7.10 and T7.20, and a groundwater mounding analysis if a separation of 3 feet may be considered. (Geotechnical Report p. 6). There are contradiction in that the Geotechnical Report seems to differentiate, without explanation, “infiltration BMPs” from “Low Impact Development (LID) BMPs” that use infiltration (which it identifies as pervious pavement and biofiltration), and states the latter could be considered and potentially are feasible. **This is confusing and requires explanation or correction.**

### **Permeable pavement**

We also feel that additional study is needed to demonstrate that the proposed “permeable pavement” will accomplish the infiltration of stormwater goals that are stated. The current plan rests on analysis of grading that may change during construction: in Geotechnical Report, Appendix A - Subsurface Explorations (starting on page 105/178 in the Storm drainage report) indicates that for TP-6, potential water drainage issues occurred at 1.5 feet (“mottling was observed consistent with perched groundwater within the recessional silt and weathered glacial till at depths ranging between 1.5 and 4.5 feet below the ground surface in all the test pits”, p. 6), while the observed mottling for TP-4 was 2.0 feet and for TP-7 was 2.5 feet. On page 97/178 the report states that “the use of permeable pavement is infeasible if saturated conditions would be created within 1 foot of the bottom elevation of the lowest layer and the seasonal high groundwater table or an underlying impermeable/low permeable layer.” (referencing 2022 COO DDECM, Volume V, Section V-5.6, BMP T5.15). **A grading plan is not included. If any grading of the site would occur in development, a reevaluation of the acceptability of permeable pavement is needed. The grading plan showing the final grade should be evaluated against the criterion identified above to conclude if and where permeable pavement as a “best management practice” might be acceptable. With the existing information in the documentation, there is doubt that the infiltration attributed to permeable pavement would be achieved.**

“Infiltration” is also being relied on for the run-on from adjacent land to the east onto the project site, which the storm drainage report on page 7 identifies as 3.29 acres draining into the eastern edge of the project site. The report states that this runoff will be intercepted by a gravel trench located in the back yards of the eastern lots, which will capture and infiltrate runoff to the maximum extent feasible before sending the runoff to the proposed conveyance system. However, the Geotechnical Report states on page 97 that “Based on our subsurface explorations, it is our opinion that infiltration trenches and basins are not feasible for this project

due to the limited depth to impermeable glacial till and/or recessional silt deposits.” This is a concerning discrepancy to encounter in the report. Estimates of how much of the site’s run-on will be able to be infiltrated into these trenches should be researched further. In addition, all estimated volumes of stormwater must consider the changing precipitation patterns now occurring under climate change, which we have more information about below.

### **Project could increase risk of downstream property flooding**

**The 100-year floodplain of Mission Creek is located just downstream of the property’s stormwater discharge point, indicating that should the drainage and stormwater plan not operate as suggested, downstream properties could experience an increased risk of flooding, particularly those structures adjacent to or within the existing 100-year floodplain.** This 100-year floodplain that the project documentation uses is based on mapping by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). These are widely known to be out of date and not an accurate representation of flood risk; [see this article](#), for example. This is because the maps don’t take into account intense rainfall events being experienced under climate change, which [the city states](#) is an impact of climate change that we see here in Olympia.

**In the Drainage Design Report (p. 9), the applicant indicates that they used the Western Washington Hydrology Model to plan for the stormwater management system, which uses long-term precipitation data but does not directly incorporate climate change projections for precipitation.** Instead, it focuses on historical data from 1948 to 2009 to estimate total rainfall and peak events, not planning for or incorporating climate change. Climate change is projected to lead to changes in precipitation patterns, including more intense heavy rain events and shifts in the balance between snow and rain in western Washington, as stated by the City of Olympia. [Stormwater management system designs should consider potential future increases in peak flows](#). We want to ensure that the applicant is effectively designing for future climate conditions, and is sufficiently protecting the homes and land that are downstream from the project site. We want to ensure that the applicant is incorporating the expected changes in rainfall intensity, frequency, and duration, and that the applicant is calculating stormwater runoff and designing stormwater infrastructure capacities with this in mind. We do not have evidence yet that the applicant has done their due diligence and research to incorporate this data into the design of this project. We request to see the updated plans at a future community meeting and be notified of the change in plans. The applicant needs to be accountable to both the city of Olympia, as well as the local residents.

### **Wildlife**

#### **Important Habitat and Species**

We are concerned about the safety of the wildlife, and request more information. The Environmentally Critical Areas Assessment identifies “important habitat and species” as defined by the City of Olympia to include areas that “serve a critical role in sustaining needed habitats and species for the functional integrity of the ecosystem”, and these include movement corridors (p. 5). This Assessment also states that “the project site appeared well used by the daily

movements of small to medium sized wildlife species” (p. 8). It is not clear to us if the daily use of the project site is used or functions as a movement corridor as this was not evaluated. Due to the location of the parcel, it appears likely that some wildlife could utilize the site since Setchfield Lake and its watershed are located to the east, and the project parcel could be used to provide a corridor to the wetland area to the Mission Creek corridor through forested lands to the west to Budd Inlet. **This should be evaluated in the assessment for important habitat/movement corridors.**

#### State Threatened and Endangered Species

We noticed that the Environmentally Critical Areas Assessment does not identify the State threatened and endangered species, but only indicates that “the project site did not appear to provide, and has not been documented to provide, direct critical habitats for State Threatened species” (p. 9). **It is not clear how this determination was made. The report should be amended to identify the State listed species, the kinds of habitat utilized by them, and the methodology used to determine whether the project site provides such conditions. This requires further explanation and research.**

## 8. Reasonable Alternatives

For all the reasons listed above, we hope you can now recognize how this particular development project will negatively impact the City of Olympia in a vast variety of ways. We propose the following alternative development projects for your team to consider.

### Smaller, Green Housing Development!

A smaller development project cultivated with environmental priorities would be a great boon to the neighborhood and habitat that the current project threatens. We can look at [Woodard Housing Co-op](#) for inspiration: buildings made with green materials and outfitted with solar power, where 18 residential units are integrated with green space, community gardens, and forest. We know this kind of project is possible in Olympia, because Woodard already exists.



Green development should be the priority of the City of Olympia so that it remains in alignment with its Climate Action Plan. A smaller development project would be cheaper in both the short and long term (remember Garrette Custom Homes reputation for building poorly made homes that will need ongoing maintenance and upkeep!). Additionally, as inflation increases, as tariffs impact building materials, and with the threat of a looming recession, we should be looking to smaller, more affordable development projects. With the ongoing threat of climate crisis and drastic weather events, we should prioritize environmental standards within all of those development projects as well.

### A Park and Restoration Project for Wildlife Including Salmon!

Another alternative could be a new park or an extension of the beloved Springwood Parcel

across the street from this planned development project. The origin story of this parcel is actually quite similar to this development plan. An owner of a broad acreage of land sold it to the city, and it was converted into a gorgeous park teeming with a diverse array of species and life. We suggest that instead of a collection of poorly made homes packed in like sardines, that the City consider extending the Springwood Parcel, allowing the marshy meadow and nearby wetlands and (generally essential ecosystem that this development project intends to impeded upon) to help protect vital salmon, owls, frogs, and other wildlife habitat. Afterall, this was owner's intended use of the space! Additionally, the parcel upon which this development project is intended to be built feeds water into both Mission Creek and Ellis Creek, home for local salmon to spawn. A new park in combination with a salmon restoration project that works to alter the existing culvert barriers would see salmon spawning further up both the creeks and even returning to Setchfield lake—something that hasn't happened hundreds of years.

### Community Garden or Farm!

There are no eastside community gardens, and we know that the City of Olympia has recently completed an Urban Farm Park feasibility study, which pointed to the need for a site that could provide mixed functions of farmer training (including youth farmers), food production, land and garden access, educational values, community gathering, etc. They emphasized interrelated food security and ecological and community benefits, especially for marginalized groups. Although the city doesn't have the resources to move this forward at this time, we believe the space designated for Springwood Gardens could actually become a garden!

The neighbors expressing their refusal of this development project are made up of a wide array of environmentalists, working families, architects, artists, musicians, writers, construction workers, architects, and activists. We are creative thinkers, and we would be more than happy to work with the City of Olympia to find a solution that benefits us all.

For these and many other reasons, we do not want this development project to take place. You can expect my presence at the Public Hearing to bring up these and more points.

Sincerely,

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# Use This Phone Script to Call Lead Planner Jackson Ewing

Call 360-570-3776

Regarding File Number 25-0980

Mr. Ewing,

I am expressing deep concern at the prospect of the Springwood Gardens "plat" which we received a letter about in the mail yesterday.

A project of this size will drastically increase traffic dangers and pollution, negatively impact wildlife and local ecosystems, decrease property value, increase noise pollution, and will do nothing to help the housing crisis we are experiencing but will rather contribute to an increased cost of living in the area.

A project of this size will drastically increase traffic dangers and pollution, negatively impact wildlife and local ecosystems, increase property tax (driving some neighbors out of their homes!), increase noise pollution, and will do nothing to help the housing crisis we are experiencing but will rather contribute to an increased cost of living in the area.

With the building of three new roads to accommodate 39 new units, we can expect traffic, car pollution, runoff, and car-related accidents to drastically increase.

This neighborhood is prized for its green spaces and park-like setting, and these roads and units will destroy both meadow and forest—critical habitat for our wildlife and to mitigate extreme climate-related weather events like flooding or heat.

The proximity of this project to Setchfield Lake which feeds into the salmon-bearing Ellis Creek, suggests we can expect negative impacts from car pollution to drastically decrease water quality, which could affect salmon downstream.

Additionally, we recognize that these homes will also do nothing to amend the housing crisis we are in. Olympia's specific housing crisis is fueled by several factors, including:

- spectator investment (in March 2023, investors accounted for 27% of all single-family home purchases [in the US] [1])
- Airbnb's (2.25 million homes in the US are Airbnbs--this doesn't count Vrbo, Guesty, Vacasa, or any other AirBnB alternatives [2])
- general use of homes as not homes (Nearly 1/3 of the 62 homes in the south Capital neighborhood are owned or used by lobbyists, corporations, or unions--meaning they are not used as houses but as overnight accommodations or meeting spaces for businesses [3]).

The creation of more homes will simply drive up the cost of living and desirability of the area—it will NOT make homes more affordable for working families.

For these and many other reasons, we do not want this development project to take place. You can expect my presence at the Project Information Meeting and Public Hearing.

**Jackson Ewing**

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**From:** Shauna G <shaunagood21@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 7, 2025 11:21 AM  
**To:** Jackson Ewing  
**Cc:** CityCouncil; Kyle G  
**Subject:** Springwood Gardens Plat Feedback

Hello -

We are writing today to share our thoughts about the Springwood Gardens Plat proposal (File # 25-0980). We live in the NorthPointe neighborhood adjacent to the Springwood Gardens Plat site.

**First, thank you for the professionalism displayed in this process so far** - We would like to commend the city planners for the thorough documentation they provided, the open communication, and the opportunity to share our thoughts. Many of our neighbors' comments have been over emotional, unreasonable and unproductive. Our intention is to help resolve the conflict between competing interests.

**Second, we support market rate homes being built in Olympia, and development being people centric and not vehicle centric.** Housing is in short supply and middle class folks need access to homes too. We generally support building densely in urban areas to prevent urban sprawl and to make Olympia more walkable and bikeable. We don't love giving up the green space behind our neighborhood, but we understand it's a prime area to build in order to meet the city's goals.

**Third, we request the city widen Springwood Ave and not open vehicle access through Central or Marion Street.** Bethel Street is a main road so it makes the most sense to have cars access Springwood Gardens plat from Springwood. Adding additional access points for cars will save motorists and emergency vehicles no time. We have one access point for our neighborhood (the same size as the proposed project) and we experience no delays. Also, again, we support making Olympia more people centric and not car centric. Connecting Central and Marion Street for bicycle and pedestrian access would increase walkability and allow folks to walk or bike to bus stops, parks, and schools. This would also keep most cars driving slowly on our neighborhood streets.

**At the very least, we request traffic calming measures.** If the City decides Marion and Central must be opened to cars, we implore the city to require the developer to install traffic calming measures. Best practices suggest chicanes or speed humps, rather than speed bumps, could slow traffic while not damaging vehicles.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment.

Kyle and Shauna Good  
1645 Bright Star Way NE  
Olympia, WA 98506

City of Olympia:

Honorable Mayor Dontae Payne

Honorable Mayor Pro-tem / Community Livability and Public Safety Comm. Chair Yen Huynh

Honorable City Councilmember / Land Use and Environment Comm. Chair Dani Madrone

Honorable City Councilmember Clark Gilman

Honorable City Councilmember Kelly Green

Honorable City Councilmember Robert Vanderpool

Honorable City Councilmember Jim Cooper

City Manager Jay Burney

Hearing Examiner Mark C. Scheibmeir, esq.

Lead Planner Jackson Ewing

*Email & hand delivered*

Re: Springwood Garden Development

[City of Olympia Community Planning & Development](#)

31 March 2025

Dear City Officials,

I am writing to you today regarding the proposed Springwood Meadow Development located at 1609 Springwood Ave NE Olympia, WA. 98506. I have numerous concerns regarding this proposal and hope the City of Olympia employees, elected officials, vendors / contractors, etc. will consider.

I am a 25 year resident of Olympia. My wife Tracie and I have raised our 4 children here, with the majority of their lives in the City of Olympia on Bright Star Way NE (Northpointe HOA), a development which borders the above proposed development.

Here are several concerns:

**Wetlands, water pooling, water runoff**

When we moved into our current home (within the Northpointe HOA) we experienced quite a bit of water run off within our own backyard and that of our neighbor directly behind us. This water was so bad that the City of Olympia had to obtain an easement on our property and install a drainage system. All this work was completed by City employees and thus was completed at the city taxpayer expense. This development was approved by the City (Hearing Examiner, etc.) and the developer was permitted to build the homes, make their profit, and leave (this development went through the approval process just as the Springwood Garden is doing currently). Even though a project may be 'within minimum' requirements due to current codes and regulations does not mean that it should be allowed to move forward without looking at the specific area. I am surprised that a professional company can survey an area and claim that there is little to no concern for

major wetland areas as there is free standing / pooled water currently on the proposed development as well as areas adjacent to this development (photos attached). I would please ask the city employees, elected officials, etc. just take an actual walk on this property and surrounding areas. **It is well within the City's authority to require** additional surface areas / lots for the excess water runoff that will occur – let's make this the out of town developer's responsibility now and not on the taxpayer's shoulders later. Therefore, please consider this notice from our HOA to the City and request that this is handled correctly now to avoid possible future litigation. There are already currently water pooling issues with some of our Quasar Way neighbors (backyards, sump pumps, etc.) and do not want to see this problem exacerbated by the proposed developers lack of green space between the developments, etc.

Northpointe Homeowners Association would love to host and walk anyone through the areas of concern (our backyards, etc.). I have attached my contact information below.

### **Traffic (vehicle and pedestrian)**

The traffic study is showing an increase of 300 + daily trips through this area (please think of where you currently live and try to imagine 300 extra vehicles driving by). We would ask that neither of the proposed street extensions (Marion and Central) be granted. I have attached photos of a couple areas the City has allowed to mitigate this request. The Miller Ave. allows **pedestrian access only** and the Jabbok Way allows **emergency vehicles only**. We only ask for this same consideration permitted to developments which are within a 2 mile radius of this proposed development.

Also, there are at least 6 other neighboring developments that do not permit through access (photos attached). Nonetheless, we recognize the importance of our emergency personnel in protecting life and property and ask that the Marion extension allow for emergency vehicle and pedestrian access only and the Central extension allow pedestrian access only. **It is well within the City's authority to require** the developer to widen their proposed roadways within their proposed development to allow better emergency personnel access and not put this burden on taxpayers living outside this proposed development. With wider streets, there would be no need for vehicular through traffic.

I have heard that the City is not requiring a sidewalk from the proposed development to the main arterial street (Bethel). If true, I find this hard to believe that the City would not require the developer to complete a sidewalk from their development to Bethel (the City has an easement currently). This will allow the increased pedestrian traffic from their proposed development, to include the safety of the school age children, etc. safer access. **It is well within the City's authority to require** this request of increased pedestrian safety.

The smaller width of the proposed streets are purely for increased numbers of lot developments (i.e. increased profit) and does nothing to increase livability or safety. The

City should require all of the proposed roadway widths to be increased to allow for better firetruck, school bus, etc. access. **It is well within the City's authority to require** this improvement as to not put the burden on surrounding neighborhoods of increased and unsafe vehicular traffic (i.e. if the developers widen their streets then there would be no need to have the Marion and Central street extensions open for vehicle traffic).

Unfortunately, the City has a history of approving / allowing a proposed development to move forward since it meets "current guidelines and regulations" without any consideration of additional measures listed above. The City has the authority to require additional items above and beyond the minimum regulations when it is warranted. We believe these additional requests are warranted and ask the City to require them. We feel that without these additional requirements the aftermath of this proposed development puts an extreme onus on the City's budget and ultimately all taxpayer's within our city as the City will be responsible for any issues which arise after this developer has made their money and left. I invite each of you to personally look into our very own development within Northpointe HOA.

My personal experience is when the City had City employees working in our very own backyard approximately 3 years after the developer had left the area. An easement had to be granted (listed on our title – attached) and thus the City placed a responsibility and financial burden on ALL of our taxpayers for installation and ongoing maintenance of this drain / manhole. Even though the City recognized and corrected their error **after** allowing our development to move forward (since it met the 'minimum requirements'), taxpayers lost in the end by spending precious City resources then and STILL ONGOING resources due to the required upkeep and maintenance.

We hope that any or all of you take us up on our offer and look forward to seeing you (boots on the ground) soon. Please do not just sit back and take the submitted reports at face value. Come and see for yourselves the wildlife that flourish on this site (which is specifically listed as not there), come and see for yourself the free standing and pooled water that is currently there and only stands to increase (which again is not listed in the submitted reports), etc. The above concerns are real and must be mitigated by the ones proposing the development NOW and not put on the shoulders of taxpayers LATER through litigation, etc.

Respectfully submitted,

Northpointe Homeowners Association  
John L. Adams, President  
1604 Bright Star Way NE  
Olympia, WA. 98506  
253-209-9949 cellular

April 7, 2025

To: Olympia City Council:

[citycouncil@ci.olympia.wa.us](mailto:citycouncil@ci.olympia.wa.us)

Honorable Mayor Dontae Payne

Honorable Mayor Pro-tem / Community Livability and Public Safety

Comm. Chair Yen Huynh

Honorable City Councilmember / Land Use and Environment Comm. Chair

Dani Madrone

Honorable City Councilmember Clark Gilman

Honorable City Councilmember Kelly Green

Honorable City Councilmember Robert Vanderpool

Honorable City Councilmember Jim Cooper

City Manager Jay Burney, [jburney@ci.olympia.wa.us](mailto:jburney@ci.olympia.wa.us)

Lead Planner Jackson Ewing, [jewing@ci.olympia.wa.us](mailto:jewing@ci.olympia.wa.us)

**Re: Springwood Gardens Development, File Number: 25-0980**

Dear City Officials,

We are writing to you today regarding the proposed Springwood Gardens Development, File Number: 25-0980, located at 1609 Springwood Ave NE, Olympia, WA. 98506. Below we have outlined several concerns regarding this proposal. We request that the City of Olympia staff, elected officials, AHBL and affiliated contractors, etc. consider and provide responses to our concerns and proposed alternatives.

We have lived at 1601 Quasar Way NE in the North Pointe development since July 1999. The North Pointe subdivision was developed in the late 1990's and early 2000's and borders the proposed Springwood Gardens development to the south.

Below is a list of our primary concerns with the proposed Springwood Gardens development:

### **Traffic (vehicle and pedestrian)**

The traffic study shows an increase of 300 + daily trips through this area. This is far more traffic than the North Pointe streets and community were designed to handle. The current proposal includes opening up both Central St. and Marion St. to through traffic. We ask that neither of these proposed street extensions be granted. The North Pointe neighborhood was approved and developed with only one ingress/egress option via Marion St. There are countless other developments within the city that only include one ingress/egress. Below are just a few examples, all located less than a mile from the proposed development:

- Bethel Park – Located north of Springwood parcel and on the east side of Bethel Street, Bethel Park Court ends in a cul-de-sac instead of providing a second access onto 26<sup>th</sup> Ave NE
- Brandon Court – Located directly south of Bethel Park. Like Bethel Park, it also ends in a cul-de-sac and has only one ingress/egress via Bethel St.
- Devon Place – Located west of Bethel Street and across from Springwood Avenue. This community is a closed loop with one ingress/egress onto Bethel Street.

We ask that the same ingress/egress designs, such as the examples above, be included in the Springwood Gardens development. However, we recognize the importance of access by emergency personnel as well as the benefits of having pedestrian and bicycle access between communities. Therefore, we ask that the Marion Street extension allow for emergency vehicle and pedestrian/bicycle access only and the Central Street extension allow pedestrian/bicycle access only.

We also request that the right-of-way improvements on Springwood Avenue include widening and sidewalks all the way to Bethel Street. This will provide safer pedestrian access from the development to Bethel Street, especially for school age children who walk to school. It is our understanding that the City currently has an easement along this section of Springwood Ave. The City should also include a crosswalk at the intersection of Springwood Avenue and Bethel Street to provide for safe crossing to the existing sidewalk on the west side of Bethel Street.

### **Stormwater drainage and groundwater levels**

Unfortunately, the North Pointe subdivision is an example of a plat that was approved by the City that did not meet code. After moving into our new home at 1601 Quasar Way NE in 1999, we discovered significant drainage issues. We

won't go into the details here. But you should be able to find the documentation of the City agreeing to install storm drains on lots 9 and 27 to divert stormwater from our lot (Lot 10). During heavy rain events, we had a river of water running down the middle of our back yard and had water pooling in our side yard and overflowing into our crawlspace. This was the result of the City allowing a poorly designed drainage plan to be approved and implemented. There were no stormwater easements on our property to let us know prior to purchase that our back yard was intended to capture stormwater. We would not have purchased a home on this lot had we known that the City had approved a noncompliant stormwater plan. All this work to correct the problem and bring it up to code was completed by City employees and thus was completed at taxpayer expense. We also incurred legal fees to get the City to correct the problem. This development was approved by the City (Hearing Examiner, etc.) and the developer was permitted to build the homes, make their profit, and leave (this development went through the approval process just as the Springwood Garden is doing currently). These errors by the City resulted in taxpayer dollars being spent to correct the issue instead of the developer being required to design and install a stormwater system that met city code requirements. We don't want to see drainage and stormwater issues generated by this new proposed development. We request that the City do its due diligence regarding groundwater, stormwater, and drainage designs prior to approving this project.

We know of at least two homeowners on the north side of Quasar Way NE who have sump pumps to deal with drainage issues. We have been aware of homeowners on the north side of Quasar having standing water issues ever since those lots were developed and homes were occupied. We know you're saying that there aren't classified wetlands on the Springwood parcel. But it's clear that there are groundwater and stormwater issues in this entire area. We request that you contact each homeowner on the north side of Quasar Way NE and talk with them to find out what, if any, stormwater and drainage concerns they have had in the past and/or continue to have.

The City has the authority to require additional items above and beyond the minimum regulations when it is warranted. We believe these additional requests are warranted and reasonable and ask the City to require them. We feel that without these additional requirements the aftermath of this proposed development puts an extreme onus on the City's budget and ultimately all taxpayers within our city as the City will be responsible for any issues which arise after this developer has made their money and left.

### **Screening Buffer Between Developments**

We also propose that an existing screening buffer be maintained between the northern border of North Pointe and the southern border of Springwood Gardens. The homes proposed to be built are large, multi-story structures while some of the existing housing that exist at the North Pointe boundary are smaller, single-story homes. Maintaining the existing buffer with vegetation for screening provides adequate height and width that will preserve some privacy between the homes. If maintaining the existing buffer is not possible, we propose that a new buffer be required with new vegetation that is tall enough to provide immediate benefits to new and existing homeowners.

We invite city employees, elected officials, etc. to please take an actual walk on this property and surrounding areas and talk with surrounding homeowners to hear their personal concerns and experiences, prior to a preliminary plat being submitted for approval by the Hearings Examiner.

We ask that you take our comments and concerns seriously so that we can avoid potential future expenses and burdens to correct problems after the developer has made their money and moved on. We look forward to working with the City, the developer, and surrounding neighbors to address concerns early in the process to ensure that potential issues are mitigated during the approval process.

Thank you for your serious consideration to the comments and recommendations presented in this letter.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Pritchett



360-250-1045  
1601 Quasar Way NE  
Olympia, WA 98506

Bruce Lund



360-970-9037

## Jackson Ewing

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**From:** Zach L <zleclair@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, April 6, 2025 8:25 PM  
**To:** Jackson Ewing  
**Subject:** Public Comment Submission for Record # 25-0980 (Springwood Gardens proposal)

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Hello Mr. Ewing,

My name is Zach LeClair and I'm writing with a public comment submission for Record #25-0980, the Springwood Gardens proposal. I'm a neighbor and homeowner on 1612 Springwood Ave NE, located right across the street from the proposed Tract D on the development. Thank you for your work and coordination on this project so far.

I am writing to name my objection to the proposed Springwood Gardens development and will outline below what I believe are the key elements of concern worth considering by your office and relevant departments before passing this forward for denial or confirmation to the hearing examiner:

- **Developers cutting corners on building code and environmental reporting:** Below you'll see what I as a layman was able to identify as contradictions when it came to Olympia building code (specifically, that houses are potentially over-promising square footage or set on too-small lots) and environmental reporting discrepancies in SEPA and Environmental Critical Areas Assessment reports.
- **Stormwater management plan concerns:** As a hydrologist who knows the area put it to one of our neighbors about the water and wetland concerns that have been named, "all the good land here has been developed, and all that's left is the stuff that has land or water issues where it's hard to develop or shouldn't be developed" -- the stormwater plan has lots of issues worth raising with the city and spending more time studying before saying yes (see below).
- **Expensive density misaligned with neighborhood character & comprehensive plan:** The developers are proposing to build thirty-nine \$800,000 homes in the midst of a currently semi-rural area where no houses on as small of lots cost nearly as much in the vicinity -- while we understand the R4-8 codes, this directly is in misalignment with comprehensive plan codes like PL20.1. I share more details around traffic and affordability below.

Other neighbors will be writing with more details about other elements of concern that are part of a larger letter I've also signed, but wanted to focus my public comment on these three specific areas of concern I believe are worth focusing on.

### I. City of Olympia R4-8 Building Code Violations (see particularly table 4.04)

*Four of the lots are smaller than 45' and should be eliminated or consolidated*

- Lots 5, 7, 8, and 39 do not meet the required minimum lot width of 45'

*Two of the lots do not meet the required minimum lot size of 4,000 square feet and should be eliminated*

- Lots 7 and 8 do not meet the required minimum lot size of 4,000 sq ft

*Proposed square footage on most lots seem too big/impossible with minimum set-backs, current building and lot dimensions, and 2-story maximums*

- Assuming minimum front and back yard set-backs of 20', side set-backs of 5', and maximum 2 stories that can be built above grade (see table 4.04), the square footage of many homes that are stated (e.g., lots 10-23, page 4 of

“Springwood Garden P-Plat-1”) are not accomplishable even when maximizing building footprints right up to the edge of those minimums

- For example, lot 10's building footprint could at its full maximum be 40'x50', which makes for 2,000 square feet per floor, so how can developers claim over double that square footage at 4,475 with a two-story maximum house (unless they're building a basement below the driveway)?
- The developers should demonstrate how they plan to manage such big square footage given code, or revise their square footage proposals (and housing price/cost estimates) to code

*Maximization of 45% impervious surfaces via impermeable roofing and permeable driveways puts lots at future risk for being remodeled out of code, needs to be accounted for in development HOA*

- Many of the lots are designed where the footprint of the home is right at the 45% of the lot maximum allowed by city code, with “permeable driveways” installed as a way to allow cars onto lots without making the impervious
- This means that any future remodeling of the driveways to asphalt or other impervious surfaces (or yards with concrete, patios, etc.) would immediately put many of the lots out of compliance with city code
- The best way to account for this is to make the houses be smaller proportions of the lots and the driveways asphalt like many people would prefer
- The second best way to account for this is to write protections against remodeling with any impervious surfaces past the 45% of the lot amount into the development HOA agreements

## **II. Environmental Reporting Discrepancies**

*Discrepancies in reporting of impervious surfaces in Arborist Plan and SEPA Environmental Plan*

- A. In the Arborist Plan's tree density calculations the developers claim 1.35 acres as "ROW" (right of way, to my understanding, or roads and sidewalks) exempt from tree density calculations, which at 19% of the 7.06 acres is on is remarkably higher than the estimate of 12% they provide in the SEPA environmental checklist page 4.
- B. Can you help to clarify the differences between the 0.85 acres estimated in the SEPA environmental checklist (p.4) and the 1.35 acres claimed in the Arborist plan?

*SEPA Environmental Checklist light interference (page 14 excerpt below):*

**b. Could light or glare from the finished project be a safety hazard or interfere with views?**

No.

All of the project's street lights and building exteriors lighting fixtures, will be directed generally downwards to

- (1) limit light or glare from the finished project on motorists traveling along the roadways within the residential development's site and within the commercial development's parking lots and driveways and
- (2) thereby avoid the lighting being a safety hazard.

Why did they only address the elements of light/glare being a safety hazard and not how it would interfere with views? It seems obvious to me that a neighbor's concern would be more related to the latter and each of us on the north end of the block would anticipate light and glare during the dark times that we've never experienced before and that would interfere with our views to the south, which many of our homes are oriented towards as that is where the sun comes from. Also, how tall are these townhomes proposed to be? We have south-facing plants who may fare differently if blocked from the sun in the new development.

## **III. Stormwater Management**

We are concerned about the stormwater management strategy for the proposed project. These include the documented limitations for infiltration in onsite soils which currently doesn't support the optimistic prediction that the onsite pond will indeed “infiltrate approximately 97% of all runoff from the Site.” Several community members have spoken about the proposed plan's failure to document the seasonal presence of standing water in the eastern side of the site, and to address water mitigation here. Finally the stormwater infrastructure design doesn't consider the changing precipitation

patterns, specifically the increasing intensity of precipitation. This is stated by the city of Olympia in the [City of Olympia's Climate Change Response](#), where the city responds to the question "How is climate change impacting Olympia?" with this: "New and growing impacts include rising temperatures, extreme heat, heavy precipitation, flooding, sea level rise and wildfires." If we know that we are experiencing heavy precipitation, we need building sites to plan for, be responsive to, and mitigate the effects of climate change.

## **The Use of Infiltration Strategy Needs Further Study**

### *Detention/Infiltration Pond*

Because this land is on and adjacent to a wetland, and has seasonal standing water on the property, we are concerned with the plan for how water movement will be mitigated. We noticed that the onsite stormwater is proposed to be collected by catch basins and conveyed via underground pipes to a combined detention/infiltration pond in the southwest part of the site, after which it will be discharged to the wetland buffer onsite (Drainage Design Report, p. 3). However, the use of infiltration as a main stormwater management strategy appears inconsistent with the conclusions and recommendations from the Preliminary Stormwater Soils Report (Geotechnical Report) which state that infiltration of stormwater runoff from the proposed residential plat is only feasible using relatively shallow Best Management Practices (BMPs) in portions of the site (without indicating which portions). This is confusing, and we need more information about this. Which part or portion of the site?

Additionally, the applicant states that based on their subsurface explorations, it is their opinion that infiltration trenches and basins are **not** feasible for this project due to the limited depth to impermeable glacial till and/or recessional silt deposits (p. 7). Yet the strategy proposed for the project is stated as a detention/infiltration basin, indicating that infiltration is part of the strategy, with the assumption that the onsite pond will infiltrate approximately 97% of all runoff from the Site (Drainage Plan p. 10). This is confusing, and appears to contradict itself. We need more information from the applicant and a proposal with backed research.

Also, we noticed that in the Preliminary Plat in the Drainage Design Report, the location of the Combined Detention and Infiltration Pond is in Tract C in the southwestern portion of the site. The Geotechnical Report, Appendix A - Subsurface Explorations, indicates that for Test Pit 5 (TP-5) which is located in the vicinity of the detention/infiltration pond (Figure 2, Site and Exploration Plan in the Geotechnical Report), mottling was observed from 2 feet to 10 feet indicating "slow percolation of surface water or seasonal high groundwater" (p. 6). The assumption that the onsite pond will infiltrate approximately 97% of all runoff from the Site appears overly optimistic and is not supported by the existing documentation. Here, additional study and research is needed to make sure that the design of the stormwater management strategy does what it is intended to do - at this time, it lacks research to support the claims made. At a minimum, more research needs to be done to determine whether 5 feet or more of vertical separation exists between the bottom of the proposed stormwater detention/infiltration basin/pond facility and seasonal high groundwater or impermeable soils, as required per 2022 COO DDECM, Volume V, Section V-5.6, BMPs T7.10 and T7.20, and a groundwater mounding analysis if a separation of 3 feet may be considered. (Geotechnical Report p. 6). There are contradiction in that the Geotechnical Report seems to differentiate, without explanation, "infiltration BMPs" from "Low Impact Development (LID) BMPs" that use infiltration (which it identifies as pervious pavement and biofiltration), and states the latter could be considered and potentially are feasible. This is confusing and requires explanation or correction.

### **Permeable pavement**

We also feel that additional study is needed to demonstrate that the proposed "permeable pavement" will accomplish the infiltration of stormwater goals that are stated. The current plan rests on analysis of grading that may change during construction: in Geotechnical Report, Appendix A - Subsurface Explorations (starting on page 105/178 in the Storm drainage report) indicates that for TP-6, potential water drainage issues occurred at 1.5 feet ("mottling was observed consistent with perched groundwater within the recessional silt and weathered glacial till at depths ranging between 1.5 and 4.5 feet below the ground surface in all the test pits", p. 6), while the observed mottling for TP-4 was 2.0 feet and for TP-7 was 2.5 feet. On page 97/178 the report states that "the use of permeable pavement is infeasible if saturated conditions would be created within 1 foot of the bottom elevation of the lowest layer and the seasonal high groundwater table or an underlying impermeable/low permeable layer." (referencing 2022 COO DDECM, Volume V, Section V-5.6, BMP T5.15). A grading plan is not included. If any grading of the site would occur in development, a reevaluation of the acceptability of permeable pavement is needed. The grading plan showing the final grade should be evaluated against the criterion identified above to conclude if and where permeable pavement as a "best management practice" might be acceptable. With the existing information in the documentation, there is doubt that the infiltration attributed to permeable pavement would be achieved.

"Infiltration" is also being relied on for the run-on from adjacent land to the east onto the project site, which the storm drainage report on page 7 identifies as 3.29 acres draining into the eastern edge of the project site. The report states that this runoff will be intercepted by a gravel trench located in the back yards of the eastern lots, which will capture and infiltrate runoff to the maximum extent feasible before sending the runoff to the proposed conveyance system. However, the Geotechnical Report states on page 97 that "Based on our subsurface explorations, it is our opinion that infiltration trenches and basins are not feasible for this project due to the limited depth to impermeable glacial till and/or recessional silt deposits." This is a concerning discrepancy to encounter in the report. Estimates of how much of the site's run-on will

be able to be infiltrated into these trenches should be researched further. In addition, all estimated volumes of stormwater must consider the changing precipitation patterns now occurring under climate change, which we have more information about below.

### **Project could increase risk of downstream property flooding**

The 100-year floodplain of Mission Creek is located just downstream of the property's stormwater discharge point, indicating that should the drainage and stormwater plan not operate as suggested, downstream properties could experience an increased risk of flooding, particularly those structures adjacent to or within the existing 100-year floodplain. This 100-year floodplain that the project documentation uses is based on mapping by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). These are widely known to be out of date and not an accurate representation of flood risk; [see this article](#), for example. This is because the maps don't take into account intense rainfall events being experienced under climate change, which [the city states](#) is an impact of climate change that we see here in Olympia.

In the Drainage Design Report (p. 9), the applicant indicates that they used the Western Washington Hydrology Model to plan for the stormwater management system, which uses long-term precipitation data but does not directly incorporate climate change projections for precipitation. Instead, it focuses on historical data from 1948 to 2009 to estimate total rainfall and peak events, not planning for or incorporating climate change. Climate change is projected to lead to changes in precipitation patterns, including more intense heavy rain events and shifts in the balance between snow and rain in western Washington, as stated by the City of Olympia. [Stormwater management system designs should consider potential future increases in peak flows.](#) We want to ensure that the applicant is effectively designing for future climate conditions, and is sufficiently protecting the homes and land that are downstream from the project site. We want to ensure that the applicant is incorporating the expected changes in rainfall intensity, frequency, and duration, and that the applicant is calculating stormwater runoff and designing stormwater infrastructure capacities with this in mind. We do not have evidence yet that the applicant has done their due diligence and research to incorporate this data into the design of this project. We request to see the updated plans at a future community meeting and be notified of the change in plans. The applicant needs to be accountable to both the city of Olympia, as well as the local residents.

### **Wildlife**

**Important Habitat and Species:** We are concerned about the safety of the wildlife, and request more information. The Environmentally Critical Areas Assessment identifies "important habitat and species" as defined by the City of Olympia to include areas that "serve a critical role in sustaining needed habitats and species for the functional integrity of the ecosystem", and these include movement corridors (p. 5). This Assessment also states that "the project site appeared well used by the daily movements of small to medium sized wildlife species" (p. 8). It is not clear to us if the daily use of the project site is used or functions as a movement corridor as this was not evaluated. Due to the location of the parcel, it appears likely that some wildlife could utilize the site since Setchfield Lake and its watershed are located to the east, and the project parcel could be used to provide a corridor to the wetland area to the Mission Creek corridor through forested lands to the west to Budd Inlet. This should be evaluated in the assessment for important habitat/movement corridors.

**State Threatened and Endangered Species:** We noticed that the Environmentally Critical Areas Assessment does not identify the State threatened and endangered species, but only indicates that "the project site did not appear to provide, and has not been documented to provide, direct critical habitats for State Threatened species" (p. 9). It is not clear how this determination was made. The report should be amended to identify the State listed species, the kinds of habitat utilized by them, and the methodology used to determine whether the project site provides such conditions. This requires further explanation and research.

### **IV. Negative impacts of this kind of density/development: undesired traffic, unaffordability, loss of nature/potential communal space**

Other neighbors will share similar thoughts, but I'll note around these issues that:

- **Traffic:** the development will increase traffic and folks will lose the quiet dead-end streets that they appreciate being able to have children play on or take strolls on -- [please consider pedestrianizing one of the roads?](#)
- **Affordability:** in the informational meeting developers agreed that after upcoming tariffs that \$800,000 was a reasonable estimate for the cost of homes, which is difficult to reconcile with the "likely be middle income housing" claim put in page 13 of the SEPA checklist -- [how can developers claim that \\$800,000 homes are "middle income" housing \(when a mortgage payment for that would be ~\\$4500\)?](#)
- **Comprehensive plan:** In the informational meeting we were encouraged to reference the comprehensive plan for why the city was inclined to say yes to the development, but statements like "*PL20.1 Require development in neighborhoods to be of a type, scale, orientation, and design that maintains or improves the character, aesthetic quality, and livability of the neighborhood.*" feel in misalignment with a

development like this, unless the city believes that these homes are going to "improve the aesthetic quality and character of the neighborhood" (though I hope they see the accumulated concerns from neighbors as evidence that this is indeed not so)

I appreciate you taking time to consider this and other public comment from neighbors who are invested in the outcomes of this project and its impact on our lives. I am certainly open to this land being developed in a way that is in accordance with city and state development goals, but am concerned that this particular development strays away from the best of what we can build during a time of rapid change.

With appreciation,  
Zach LeClair

## Jackson Ewing

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**From:** Brit Schneider <brit.schneider@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, April 6, 2025 7:56 PM  
**To:** Jackson Ewing  
**Subject:** Public Comment for File Number 25-0980

Dear Mr. Ewing,

I am writing to voice my objection to the proposed Springwood Gardens development.

I am a community member, a home owner on Springwood St., an elementary educator, and I care immensely about the land and the wildlife that will be impacted by this development.

As an educator, It is my responsibility to speak for the children in our community right now, but also for their future - they deserve green spaces, trees, protected wetlands, clear and healthy water, thriving ecosystems and habitat; the City of Olympia has the opportunity to think about what we want for generations to come.

*Your decisions impact us all, and will have lasting impact for generations to come.*

Below are the comments I would like to leave for the city.

### Environmental/Water Needs

#### 1. Impact on Salmon Habitat & Setchfield Lake Ecosystem

Mission Creek is a salmon-bearing stream that flows into Budd Inlet. Running just southwest of the development site, **it is connected via wetlands within the project bounds**. In the mid-2010s with support from the state Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO), the South Puget Sound Salmon Enhancement Group completed a \$200k [project](#) that restored tidal and fish access to the creek. Coho salmon and chum salmon have been documented to use the lower reaches of Mission Creek, and their passage upstream is only partially blocked by a culvert under Bethel Street. As such, full restoration faces lower hurdles compared to other more heavily impacted streams. Surveys by WDFW predict that this single barrier correction could potentially restore chum, coho, steelhead, and sea-run cutthroat to the upstream. Runoff from the housing development will likely enter into this stream system, impacting salmon habitat. The sediment associated with extensive construction and deforestation on the development site would be especially harmful to spawning. The proposed development does not adequately address the negative impacts to this system in terms of water quality, stream hydrology, and canopy cover, especially as extreme winter rain events and summer droughts increasingly alter stream flows and increase water temperatures.

The second salmon-bearing stream that could potentially be impacted is Ellis Creek, due to the project's proximity to the creek and Setchfield Lake. **At least \$1.3 million has been spent on restoring salmon in this waterway**. The creek maintains salmonid-bearing scour width parameters until it connects to Setchfield Lake, its headwaters. In 2006 with RCO support, the City of Olympia looked to [replace](#) two downstream culverts that prevented migration of chum salmon, coho salmon, cutthroat trout, rainbow trout and steelhead. Removal would restore access to 1.5 miles of largely intact habitat. According to the Recreation and Conservation Office's project description: "Rural zoning densities as well as stream and wetland buffers designated under Thurston County's Critical

Areas Ordinance will protect the stream habitat outside of [Squaxin] park.” **The Ellis Creek watershed is “one of the only nearly intact basins in Budd Inlet.”** As barriers to full restoration are minimal, this makes the creek a priority for restoration according to SRFB funding metrics. The proposed development is set back from the lake itself, however it would destroy several acres of riparian woodland integral to the lake ecosystem. Further, **if developments such as Springwood Gardens continue to be approved, they will encircle Setchfield lake, drastically degrading ecosystem’s capacity to support salmon** and a myriad other native species. Therefore it is of critical importance that the proposed plan not be implemented. Any development must be aligned with ongoing salmon recovery efforts in the area.

Additionally, as a wetland specialist noted, for years, the developers have been swallowing up land for housing, and the only land left for developers to use is land that was never a good investment to begin with. All the good land for new development is gone. The only land left is land that builders do not like to build on due to so many environmental issues. The proposed development area is one of them. The water level of Setchfield lake is only 5-8 feet lower than the land surrounding it This is known as a Kettle Lake because all the rain water runoff eventually seeps back into the lake due to the surrounding layers of land and its composition. The surrounding land is therefore riparian habitat integral to the lake system itself. Moreover, it is wet, with open pools of standing water on the ground for a significant amount of the year.

## 2. Important Habitat and Species

We are concerned about the safety of the wildlife, and request more information. The Environmentally Critical Areas Assessment identifies “important habitat and species” as defined by the City of Olympia to include areas that “serve a critical role in sustaining needed habitats and species for the functional integrity of the ecosystem”, and these include movement corridors (p. 5). This Assessment also states that “the project site appeared well used by the daily movements of small to medium sized wildlife species” (p. 8). It is not clear to us if the daily use of the project site is used or functions as a movement corridor as this was not evaluated. Due to the location of the parcel, it appears likely that some wildlife could utilize the site since Setchfield Lake and its watershed are located to the east, and the project parcel could be used to provide a corridor to the wetland area to the Mission Creek corridor through forested lands to the west to Budd Inlet. **This should be evaluated in the assessment for important habitat/movement corridors.**

## 3. State Threatened and Endangered Species

We noticed that the Environmentally Critical Areas Assessment does not identify the State threatened and endangered species, but only indicates that “the project site did not appear to provide, and has not been documented to provide, direct critical habitats for State Threatened species” (p. 9). **It is not clear how this determination was made. The report should be amended to identify the State listed species, the kinds of habitat utilized by them, and the methodology used to determine whether the project site provides such conditions. This requires further explanation and research.**

### **Areas of Concern in Proposed Plan; More Research Needed**

#### 1. Stormwater Management

We are concerned about the stormwater management strategy for the proposed project. These include the documented limitations for infiltration in onsite soils which currently doesn’t support the optimistic prediction that the onsite pond will indeed “infiltrate approximately 97% of all runoff from the Site.” Several community members have spoken about the proposed plan’s failure to document the seasonal presence of standing water in the eastern side of the site, and to address water mitigation

here. Finally the stormwater infrastructure design doesn't consider the changing precipitation patterns, specifically the increasing intensity of precipitation. This is stated by the city of Olympia in the [City of Olympia's Climate Change Response](#), where the city responds to the question "How is climate change impacting Olympia?" with this: "New and growing impacts include rising temperatures, extreme heat, heavy precipitation, flooding, sea level rise and wildfires." If we know that we are experiencing heavy precipitation, we need building sites to plan for, be responsive to, and mitigate the effects of climate change.

## 2. The Use of Infiltration Strategy Needs Further Study

### *Detention/Infiltration Pond*

Because this land is on and adjacent to a wetland, and has seasonal standing water on the property, we are concerned with the plan for how water movement will be mitigated. We noticed that the onsite stormwater is proposed to be collected by catch basins and conveyed via underground pipes to a combined detention/infiltration pond in the southwest part of the site, after which it will be discharged to the wetland buffer onsite (Drainage Design Report, p. 3). **However, the use of infiltration as a main stormwater management strategy appears inconsistent with the conclusions and recommendations from the Preliminary Stormwater Soils Report (Geotechnical Report) which state that infiltration of stormwater runoff from the proposed residential plat is only feasible using relatively shallow Best Management Practices (BMPs) in portions of the site (without indicating which portions).** This is confusing, and we need more information about this. Which part or portion of the site?

Additionally, the applicant states that based on their subsurface explorations, it is their opinion that infiltration trenches and basins are **not** feasible for this project due to the limited depth to impermeable glacial till and/or recessional silt deposits (p. 7). Yet the strategy proposed for the project is stated as a detention/infiltration basin, indicating that infiltration is part of the strategy, with the assumption that the onsite pond will infiltrate approximately 97% of all runoff from the Site (Drainage Plan p. 10). This is confusing, and appears to contradict itself. We need more information from the applicant and a proposal with backed research.

Also, we noticed that in the Preliminary Plat in the Drainage Design Report, the location of the Combined Detention and Infiltration Pond is in Tract C in the southwestern portion of the site. The Geotechnical Report, Appendix A - Subsurface Explorations, indicates that for Test Pit 5 (TP-5) which is located in the vicinity of the detention/infiltration pond (Figure 2, Site and Exploration Plan in the Geotechnical Report), mottling was observed from 2 feet to 10 feet indicating "slow percolation of surface water or seasonal high groundwater" (p. 6). **The assumption that the onsite pond will infiltrate approximately 97% of all runoff from the Site appears overly optimistic and is not supported by the existing documentation.** Here, additional study and research is needed to make sure that the design of the stormwater management strategy does what it is intended to do - at this time, it lacks research to support the claims made. At a minimum, more research needs to be done to determine whether 5 feet or more of vertical separation exists between the bottom of the proposed stormwater detention/infiltration basin/pond facility and seasonal high groundwater or impermeable soils, as required per 2022 COO DDECM, Volume V, Section V-5.6, BMPs T7.10 and T7.20, and a groundwater mounding analysis if a separation of 3 feet may be considered. (Geotechnical Report p. 6). There are contradiction in that the Geotechnical Report seems to differentiate, without explanation, "infiltration BMPs" from "Low Impact Development (LID) BMPs" that use infiltration (which it identifies as pervious pavement and biofiltration), and states the latter could be considered and potentially are feasible. **This is confusing and requires explanation or correction.**

## 3. Permeable pavement

We also feel that additional study is needed to demonstrate that the proposed "permeable pavement" will accomplish the infiltration of stormwater goals that are stated. The current plan rests

on analysis of grading that may change during construction: in Geotechnical Report, Appendix A - Subsurface Explorations (starting on page 105/178 in the Storm drainage report) indicates that for TP-6, potential water drainage issues occurred at 1.5 feet (“mottling was observed consistent with perched groundwater within the recessional silt and weathered glacial till at depths ranging between 1.5 and 4.5 feet below the ground surface in all the test pits”, p. 6), while the observed mottling for TP-4 was 2.0 feet and for TP-7 was 2.5 feet. On page 97/178 the report states that “the use of permeable pavement is infeasible if saturated conditions would be created within 1 foot of the bottom elevation of the lowest layer and the seasonal high groundwater table or an underlying impermeable/low permeable layer.” (referencing 2022 COO DDECM, Volume V, Section V-5.6, BMP T5.15). **A grading plan is not included. If any grading of the site would occur in development, a reevaluation of the acceptability of permeable pavement is needed. The grading plan showing the final grade should be evaluated against the criterion identified above to conclude if and where permeable pavement as a “best management practice” might be acceptable. With the existing information in the documentation, there is doubt that the infiltration attributed to permeable pavement would be achieved.**

“Infiltration” is also being relied on for the run-on from adjacent land to the east onto the project site, which the storm drainage report on page 7 identifies as 3.29 acres draining into the eastern edge of the project site. The report states that this runoff will be intercepted by a gravel trench located in the back yards of the eastern lots, which will capture and infiltrate runoff to the maximum extent feasible before sending the runoff to the proposed conveyance system. However, the Geotechnical Report states on page 97 that “Based on our subsurface explorations, it is our opinion that infiltration trenches and basins are not feasible for this project due to the limited depth to impermeable glacial till and/or recessional silt deposits.” This is a concerning discrepancy to encounter in the report. Estimates of how much of the site’s run-on will be able to be infiltrated into these trenches should be researched further. In addition, all estimated volumes of stormwater must consider the changing precipitation patterns now occurring under climate change, which we have more information about below.

#### 4. Project could increase risk of downstream property flooding

**The 100-year floodplain of Mission Creek is located just downstream of the property’s stormwater discharge point, indicating that should the drainage and stormwater plan not operate as suggested, downstream properties could experience an increased risk of flooding, particularly those structures adjacent to or within the existing 100-year floodplain.** This 100-year floodplain that the project documentation uses is based on mapping by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). These are widely known to be out of date and not an accurate representation of flood risk; [see this article](#), for example. This is because the maps don’t take into account intense rainfall events being experienced under climate change, which [the city states](#) is an impact of climate change that we see here in Olympia.

**In the Drainage Design Report (p. 9), the applicant indicates that they used the Western Washington Hydrology Model to plan for the stormwater management system, which uses long-term precipitation data but does not directly incorporate climate change projections for precipitation.** Instead, it focuses on historical data from 1948 to 2009 to estimate total rainfall and peak events, not planning for or incorporating climate change. Climate change is projected to lead to changes in precipitation patterns, including more intense heavy rain events and shifts in the balance between snow and rain in western Washington, as stated by the City of Olympia. [Stormwater management system designs should consider potential future increases in peak flows](#). We want to ensure that the applicant is effectively designing for future climate conditions, and is sufficiently protecting the homes and land that are downstream from the project site. We want to ensure that the

applicant is incorporating the expected changes in rainfall intensity, frequency, and duration, and that the applicant is calculating stormwater runoff and designing stormwater infrastructure capacities with this in mind. We do not have evidence yet that the applicant has done their due diligence and research to incorporate this data into the design of this project. We request to see the updated plans at a future community meeting and be notified of the change in plans. The applicant needs to be accountable to both the city of Olympia, as well as the local residents. **Proposal Elements Out of Alignment or Compliance with City of Olympia Municipal Code 1. [Olympia Comprehensive Master Plan](#) - Land Use and Urban Design**

The following is a list of Comprehensive Plan codes that we see as out of alignment with this development proposal as this will be **high-density, high-cost, low-grade development requiring the destruction of 7.06 acres of greenspace and felling of 160+ trees that has high likelihood of Indigenous cultural artifact presence, with an inadequate water filtration plan that will pollute and otherwise negatively impact adjacent wetland and waterways for salmon and other wildlife, depleting the character and livability of a low-density neighborhood.** The Olympia Comprehensive Plan was adopted by Ordinance 6945 on December 16, 2014, and is current through Ordinance 7301, passed November 23, 2021.

PL5.5 Provide incentives and assistance for preserving, restoring, redeveloping and using historic buildings, districts, neighborhoods, streets, structures, objects and sites.

PL5.6 Support public or non-profit acquisition of the most important historic resources to ensure their preservation.

PL6.2 The design review process should recognize differences in the city with the objective of maintaining or improving the character and livability of each area or neighborhood

PL7.1 Provide urban green spaces in which to spend time. Include such elements as trees, garden spaces, variety of vegetation, water features, "green" walls and roofs, and seating.

PL7.2 Provide urban green spaces that are in people's immediate vicinity and can be enjoyed or viewed from a variety of perspectives.

PL7.3 Establish a maximum distance to urban green space for everyone in the community.

PL7.4 Increase the area of urban green space and tree canopy within each neighborhood proportionate to increased population in that neighborhood.

PL7.5 Establish urban green space between transportation corridors and adjacent areas.

PL14.2 Concentrate housing into three high-density Neighborhoods: Downtown Olympia, Pacific/Martin/Lilly Triangle; and the area surrounding Capital Mall.

PL14.3 Preserve and enhance the character of existing Low-density Neighborhoods. Disallow medium or high-density development in existing Low-density Neighborhood areas except for Neighborhood Centers.

PL16.13 Encourage adapting non-residential buildings for housing.

PL20.1 Require development in neighborhoods to be of a type, scale, orientation, and design that maintains or improves the character, aesthetic quality, and livability of the neighborhood.

PL22.1 Use trees to foster a sense of neighborhood identity.

PL22.2 Identify, protect and maintain trees with historic significance or other value to the community or specific neighborhoods.

PL22.3 Encourage the use of appropriate fruit and nut trees to increase local food self-sufficiency.

PL25.3 Collaborate with community partners to ensure that everyone within Olympia is within biking or walking distance of a place to grow food.

PL25.8 Work with community organizations to develop strategies, measure, and set goals for increasing local food production.

PL25.9 Work with local governments throughout the region to help protect existing agricultural lands and develop and promote a vibrant local food economy.

PN2.1 Acquire and preserve land by a set of priorities that considers environmental benefits, such as stormwater management, wildlife habitat, or access to recreation opportunities.

PN6.4 Use regulations and other means to prevent a net loss in the function and value of existing wetlands, while striving to increase and restore wetlands over the long-term.

## 2. [City of Olympia R4-8 Building Code](#) Violations (see particularly table 4.04)

*Four of the lots are smaller than 45' and should be eliminated or consolidated*

- Lots 5, 7, 8, and 39 do not meet the required minimum lot width of 45'

*Two of the lots do not meet the required minimum lot size of 4,000 square feet and should be eliminated*

- Lots 7 and 8 do not meet the required minimum lot size of 4,000 sq ft

*Proposed square footage on most lots seem too big/impossible with minimum set-backs, current building and lot dimensions, and 2-story maximums*

- Assuming minimum front and back yard set-backs of 20', side set-backs of 5', and maximum 2 stories that can be built above grade (see table 4.04), the square footage of many homes that are stated (e.g., lots 10-23, page 4 of "Springwood Garden P-Plat-1") are not accomplishable even when maximizing building footprints right up to the edge of those minimums
- For example, lot 10's building footprint could at its full maximum be 40'x50', which makes for 2,000 square feet per floor, so how can developers claim over double that square footage at 4,475 with a two-story maximum house (unless they're building a basement below the driveway)?
- The developers should demonstrate how they plan to manage such big square footage given code, or revise their square footage proposals (and housing price/cost estimates) to code

*Maximization of 45% impervious surfaces via impermeable roofing and permeable driveways puts lots at future risk for being remodeled out of code, needs to be accounted for in development HOA*

- Many of the lots are designed where the footprint of the home is right at the 45% of the lot maximum allowed by city code, with "permeable driveways" installed as a way to allow cars onto lots without making the impervious
- This means that any future remodeling of the driveways to asphalt or other impervious surfaces (or yards with concrete, patios, etc.) would immediately put many of the lots out of compliance with city code

- The best way to account for this is to make the houses be smaller proportions of the lots and the driveways asphalt like many people would prefer
- The second best way to account for this is to write protections against remodeling with any impervious surfaces past the 45% of the lot amount into the development HOA agreements

*Discrepancies in reporting of impervious surfaces in Arborist Plan and SEPA Environmental Plan*

A. In the Arborist Plan's tree density calculations the developers claim 1.35 acres as "ROW" (right of way, to my understanding, or roads and sidewalks) exempt from tree density calculations, which at 19% of the 7.06 acres is on is remarkably higher than the estimate of 12% they provide in the SEPA environmental checklist page 4.

B. Can you help to clarify the differences between the 0.85 acres estimated in the SEPA environmental checklist (p.4) and the 1.35 acres claimed in the Arborist plan?

C.

**Concerns / Discrepancies from Environmental Assessment Report**

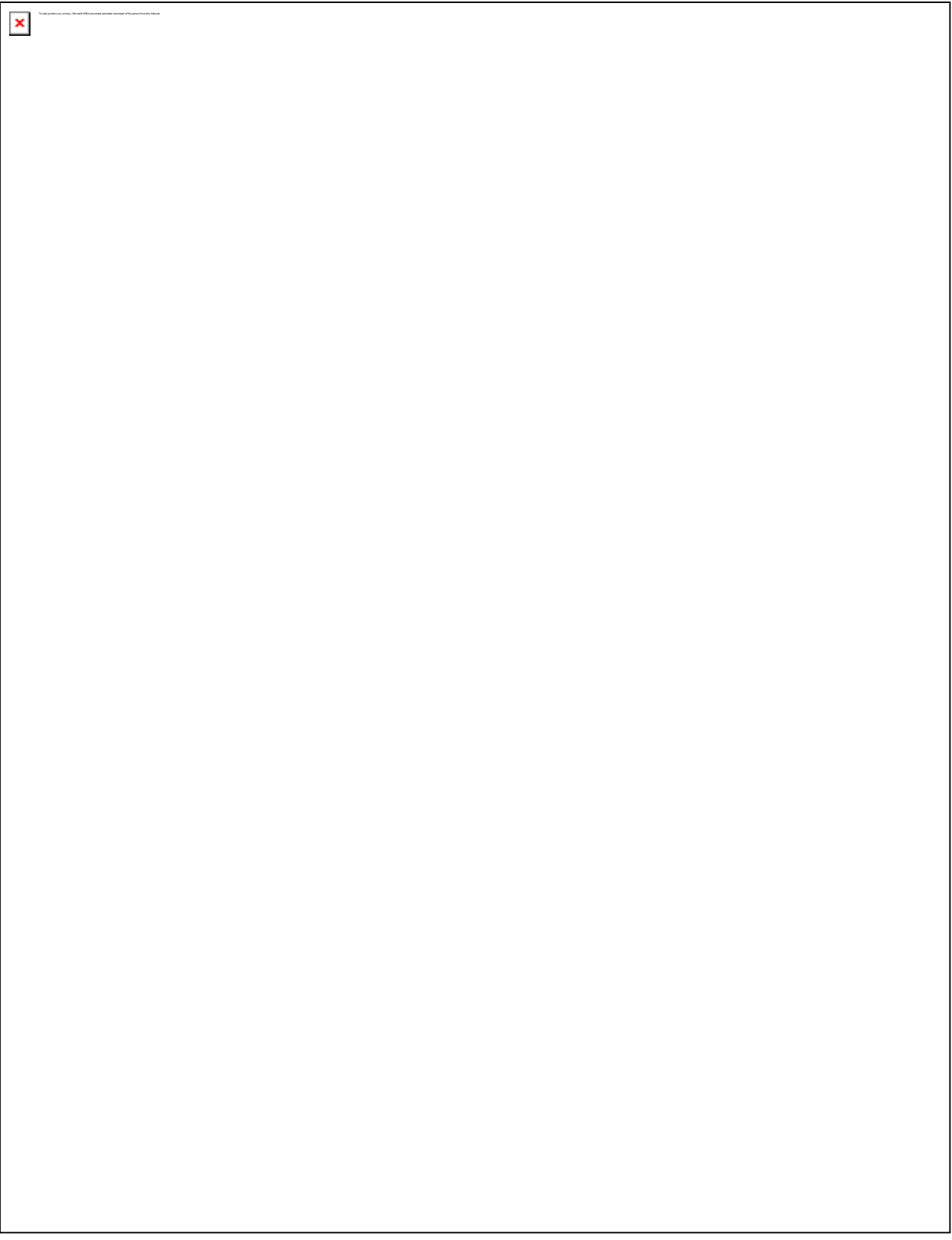
1. Below are screenshots of discrepancies regarding priority habitat and priority species pulled from the [Environmental Critical Assessment Report](#).

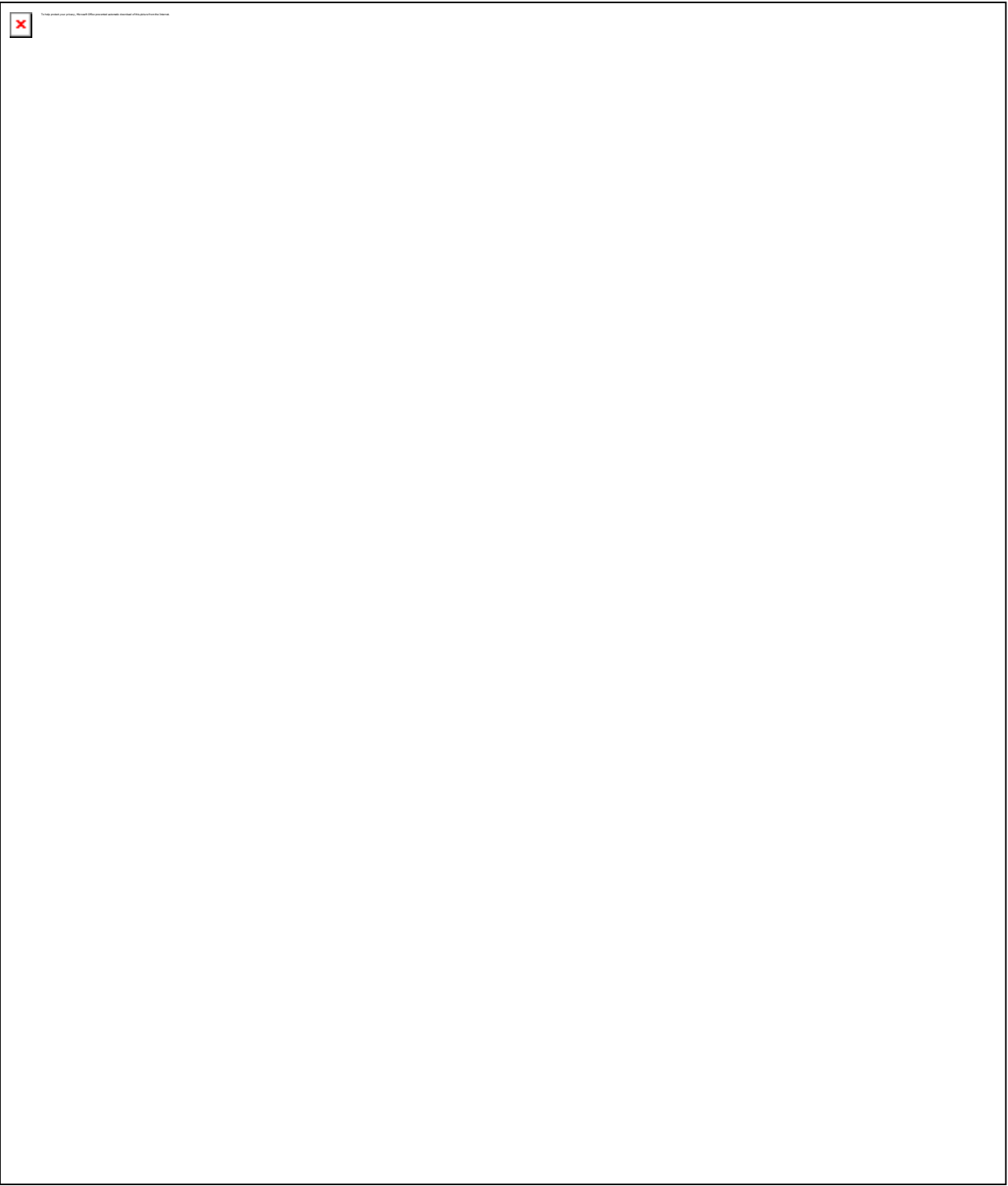
Basically, Page 2 says there ARE NO priority species habitats in or adjacent to site.

Page 8 says there ARE priority species observed onsite that may utilize the project site.

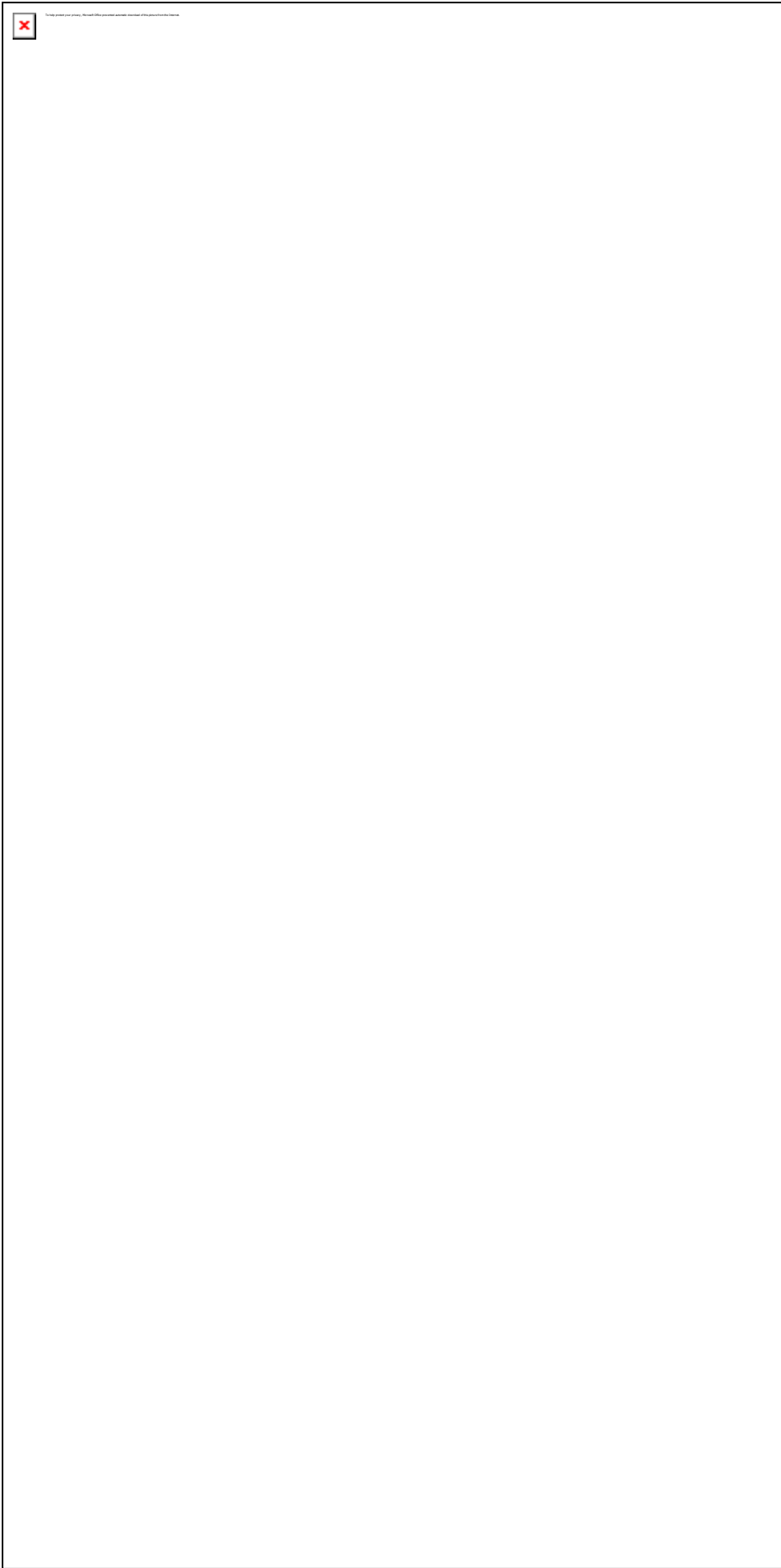
Page 14 says there ARE TWO priority habitats.

Pages 15-16 CHECKS THREE separate priority habitats.

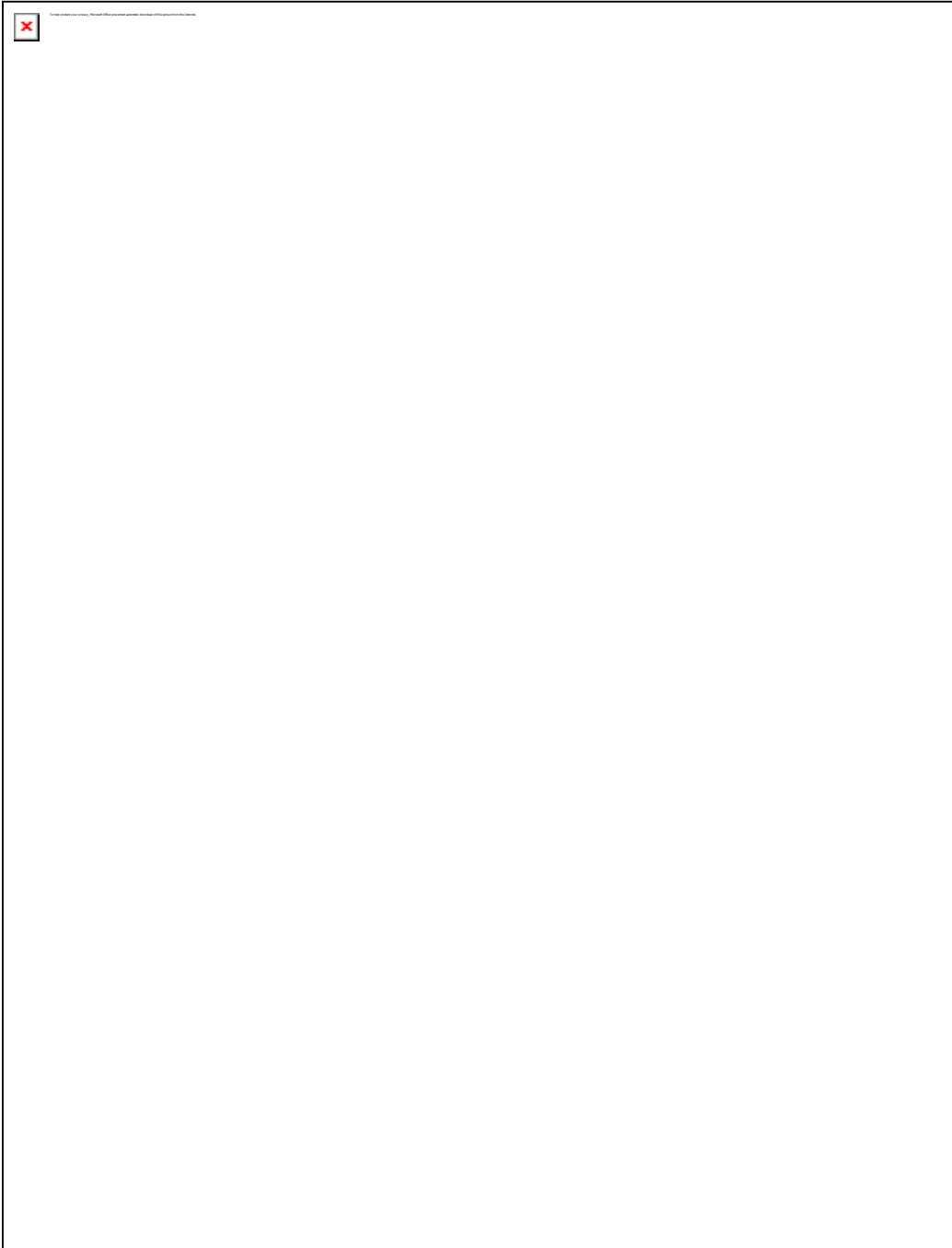








Despite this, the [SEPA Environmental Checklist](#) says there is no priority habitat:



Additionally, note that they only mention plant species, not animal species, when they say there are no threatened or endangered plant species.

## **This Housing Development Ignores Olympia’s Promise to Work Towards Mitigating Climate Crisis**

1. US population is projected to flatten out and then decline in the next couple of decades. Read [here](#) (Article: U.S. Population Projected to Begin Declining in Second Half of Century) for more information. Regional population growth projections are based on the misconception about the vitality of the tech sector, which is due for a correction, presently [shedding thousands of jobs and paying lower salaries to new hires](#). This coincides with a massive increase in severe heatwaves and torrential precipitation as a result of climate breakdown. Rather than replacing urban forest with asphalt and a plan that’s detrimental to the community, we need to be enhancing green space—our only buffer to severe

heatwaves and weather events. This should coincide with the establishment of more community gardens, expansion of our trail system, and the creation of truly affordable and socialized housing in the downtown core by renovating existing vacant or single-story commercial real estate into multi-story apartments with courtyard gardens. [Seattle's Urban Heat Island Index \(UHI\) is 8.2 degrees hotter on average](#) than surrounding green space, while national public health monitor Heat.gov notes that [UHI temperature spikes of 15 to 20 degrees have been observed](#). Urban heat islands are caused by a loss of tree cover, but also the overuse of asphalt, and by heat sources like cars and air conditioning units. A higher UHI increases strain on the power grid, acting as a threat multiplier by increasing the likelihood of power outages during severe weather events.

Additionally, according to the [Thurston Climate Action Plan](#), Olympia has made a 12 point commitment to mitigating climate crisis and related issues in Olympia. This development project is in direct conflict with eight of those twelve points:

1. Create vibrant centers, corridors, and neighborhoods while accommodating growth.
  - a. The development project will consist of cheaply built homes that maximize housing square footage on each minimally sized lot--not a vibrant center or corridor. This "growth" is not green by any means.
2. Preserve environmentally sensitive lands, farmlands, forest lands, prairies, and rural lands, and develop compact urban areas.
  - a. The development project sits on historic farmland and forestland which will be destroyed, not preserved, in this new development project.
3. Protect and improve water quality, including groundwater, rivers, streams, lakes and Puget Sound.
  - a. This development project is in marshy land (a non-irrigated blueberry bog sits in the middle of the proposed site), consists of riparian forest habitat, is directly adjacent to a wetland that feeds into a salmon-bearing stream no more than 300 meters away. Toxic runoff and groundwater from both the toxic materials being used to create these homes in addition to the addition of 50-70 more cars and ~339 more road trips per day will drastically harm, rather than improve, water quality.
4. Plan and act toward zero waste in the region.
  - a. The development project will result in plenty of waste, both during construction as they bulldoze an existing single family home, and two other dwellings that currently sit on the property, and as 39 new single family units contribute to increased waste.
5. Ensure that residents have the resources to meet their daily needs.
  - a. Residents of Olympia need clean air, clean water, green spaces, and climate mitigation plans. We do not need more poorly made, unaffordable homes that are not green.
6. Support a local food system to increase community resilience, health and economic prosperity.
  - a. As this site is historic farmland, it poses an opportunity to be a site that includes a community farm or garden space (see Reasonable Alternatives section for more).
7. Provide opportunities for everyone in the Thurston Region to learn about and practice sustainability.
  - a. If the City of Olympia invested in a green development project instead, we could work together to find opportunities for our neighbors both near and far to practice sustainable work in the form of farming or gardening, habitat restoration, etc.
8. Make strategic investments to advance sustainability regionally.
  - a. A greener or more affordable development project in this space could pose inspiration for regional residents near and far.

## **5. Increased Housing does NOT Increase Affordability**

1. We recognize that these homes will also do nothing to amend the housing crisis we are in. They are clearly not affordable nor quality homes that will serve to increase neighbor's property tax such that some are forced to move.

Regardless, the increase of housing (even affordable housing) in Olympia does not address the housing crisis. Olympia's specific housing crisis is fueled by several factors, including:

- Real estate speculation (in March 2023, investors accounted for 27% of all single-family home purchases [in the US] [1])
- Airbnb's (2.25 million homes in the US are Airbnbs--this doesn't count Vrbo, Guesty, Vacasa, or any other AirBnB alternatives [2])
- Non-residential use of homes (Nearly 1/3 of the 62 homes in the south Capital neighborhood are owned or used by lobbyists, corporations, or unions--meaning they are not used as houses but as overnight accommodations or meeting spaces for businesses [3]).

While the idea that increased supply will meet demand and increase affordability can be applied to a variety of different products in our economy, housing is not one of them. This is for a couple reasons.

1. Land is subject to what is called a "natural monopoly" because there is only a finite amount of land in any given area. More housing can be built but there is no way to increase the supply of land to meet demand. Without price controls, land will actually skyrocket in value as density increases.
2. Housing is treated as an investment. Speculators and wealthy investors buy up housing and hold it until they can get a better price for it later. They treat homes like stocks. This means any lull in market rate will be met with investors simply squatting on their investments until the market rate increases again. And if market rates do actually drop, which only happens during a crisis, investors will attempt to seize all the available housing for the same reason that people buy stock when a highly profitable firm suffers a temporary drop in its price. They will then rent out their investment property as a landlord or sell the investment property when they can make a lot of money off that home.

All this to say: there is no market solution to housing affordability, because [decommodification is the only proven strategy for creating truly affordable housing](#). The creation of more market-rate homes will simply drive up the cost of living of the area—it will NOT make homes more affordable for working families. Additionally, the increase of property taxes that coincide with increased expensive development means that working-class families and long-term residents are more likely to be pushed out of their own homes as they aren't able to keep on top of increased monthly bills. We need only look at other urban regions that grew quickly and increased housing extensively (like Portland and Seattle) to see this trend that more homes in urban regions with growing populations increase the price of those homes, increasing the cost of living, while also decreasing the quality of life for those living there (due to lack of green spaces, increased traffic, increased noise, environmental pollution, etc).

So, instead of increased housing development, I see a plethora of easier solutions to the housing affordability problem. In Olympia's downtown core, we could emulate and expand upon efforts like [House Our Neighbors](#) and [Seattle Social Housing](#), two initiatives which are balancing climate-smart design with truly affordable, decommodified housing. Other ideas include: below-market rent control, eliminating the use of homes not as homes, creating a time limit (10 months?) on a home being allowed to be vacant before it is converted into affordable, below-market housing (for sale or for rent), a standard basic income, decreasing prices (rent or sale) on buildings that have been vacant for years and converting them into lower-profit commercial business & affordable below-market housing (this piece is actually in Olympia's current Comprehensive Plan!), outlawing anyone from owning a home who does not live in the region (city, county, state, or even country--anything would be better than what we have now) where the home is, making landlordism a non-profit venture with a focus on housing people rather than prioritizing rent increases to match market rates...

A combination of these and similar ideas seems to me to be the best way to work towards a root cause of housing unaffordability, which is essentially that wage increases haven't been anywhere close to matching housing price increases in many decades. And that wealthy people treat housing like stocks and buy it all up.

### **Impact on Tribal Land**

1. The pre-submission meeting letter 4 states that “This project is located in an area noted to be very high for the risk of encountering archaeological material during ground disturbing activities. An Inadvertent Discovery Plan must be reviewed, signed and on site during all ground disturbing activities, including any pre-construction activities.” Please discuss this in the final documentation, and please provide documentation of the ways the City of Olympia is upholding its' commitment to the Squaxin Tribe in relation to this specific article of land.

### **Impact on Personal Property on Springwood St.**

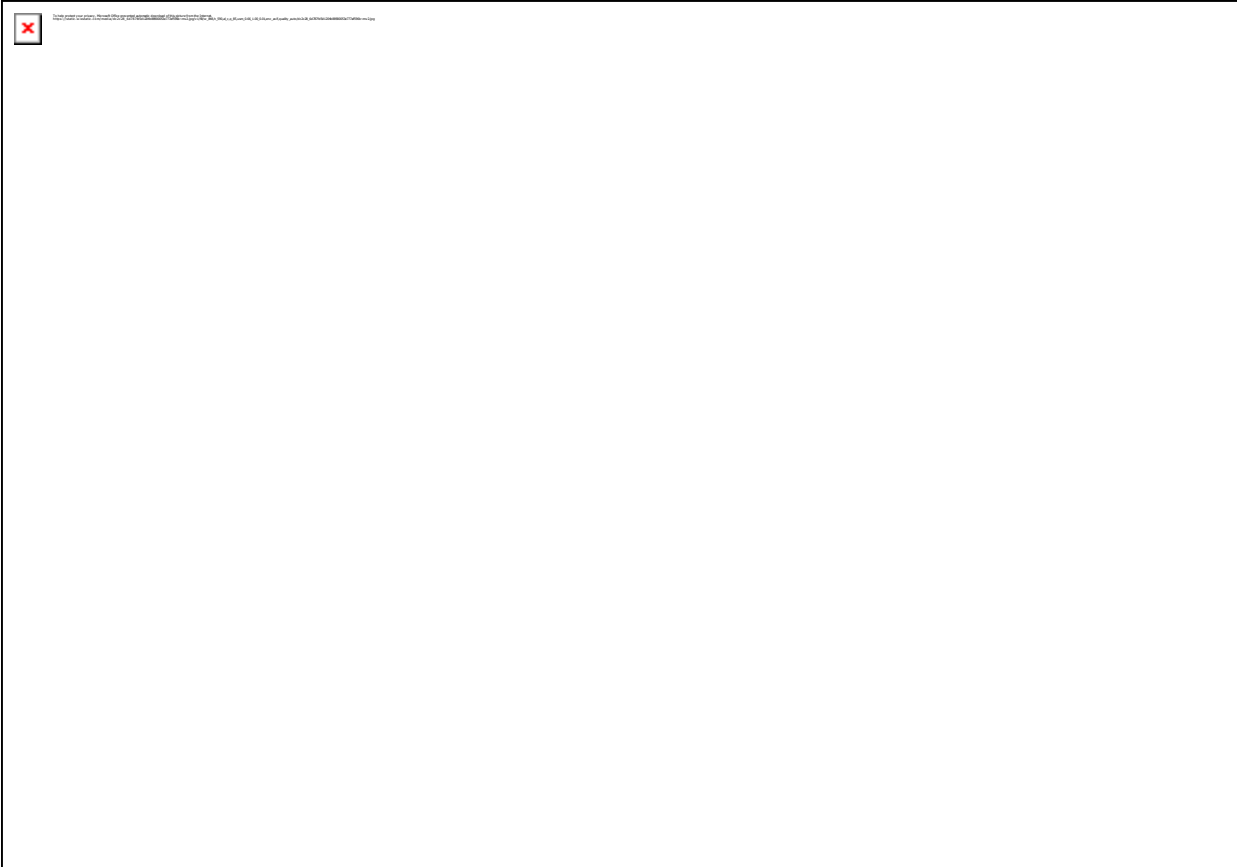
1. We want to know what the impact of this development will have on our source of water, at 1612 Springwood St. We have a well, and are concerned what plans are in place or how the developer/applicant will be responsible if the development impacts or contaminates our well water.

### **Reasonable Alternatives**

For all the reasons listed above, we hope you can now recognize how this particular development project will negatively impact the City of Olympia in a vast variety of ways. We propose the following alternative development projects for your team to consider.

#### **Smaller, Green Housing Development!**

A smaller development project cultivated with environmental priorities would be a great boon to the neighborhood and habitat that the current project threatens. We can look at [Woodard Housing Co-op](#) for inspiration: buildings made with green materials and outfitted with solar power, where 18 residential units are integrated with green space, community gardens, and forest. We know this kind of project is possible in Olympia, because Woodard already exists.



Green development should be the priority of the City of Olympia so that it remains in alignment with its Climate Action Plan. A smaller development project would be cheaper in both the short and long term (remember Garrette Custom Homes reputation for building poorly made homes that will need ongoing maintenance and upkeep!). Additionally, as inflation increases, as tariffs impact building materials, and with the threat of a looming recession, we should be looking to smaller, more affordable development projects. With the ongoing threat of climate crisis and drastic weather events, we should prioritize environmental standards within all of those development projects as well.

#### A Park and Restoration Project for Wildlife Including Salmon!

Another alternative could be a new park or an extension of the beloved Springwood Parcel across the street from this planned development project. The origin story of this parcel is actually quite similar to this development plan. An owner of a broad acreage of land sold it to the city, and it was converted into a gorgeous park teeming with a diverse array of species and life. We suggest that instead of a collection of poorly made homes packed in like sardines, that the City consider extending the Springwood Parcel, allowing the marshy meadow and nearby wetlands and (generally essential ecosystem that this development project intends to impeded upon) to help protect vital salmon, owls, frogs, and other wildlife habitat. After all, this was owner's intended use of the space! Additionally, the parcel upon which this development project is intended to be built feeds water into both Mission Creek and Ellis Creek, home for local salmon to spawn. A new park in combination with a salmon restoration project that works to alter the existing culvert barriers would see salmon spawning further up both the creeks, even returning to Setchfield lake—something that hasn't happened in hundreds of years.

#### Community Garden or Farm!

There are no eastside community gardens, and we know that the City of Olympia has recently completed an Urban Farm Park feasibility study, which pointed to the need for a site that could

provide mixed functions of farmer training (including youth farmers), food production, land and garden access, educational values, community gathering, etc. They emphasized interrelated food security and ecological and community benefits, especially for marginalized groups. Although the city doesn't have the resources to move this forward at this time, we believe the space designated for Springwood Gardens could actually become a garden!

The neighbors expressing their refusal of this development project are made up of a wide array of environmentalists, working families, architects, artists, musicians, writers, construction workers, architects, and activists. We are creative thinkers, and we would be more than happy to work with the City of Olympia to find a solution that benefits us all.

**In Conclusion** As is apparent in the comments above, we, the community, have a lot of questions for both the City of Olympia and the development team to respond to. It appears that the development plan has been rushed, or that it has not been thoroughly attended to; I notice this in particular when reviewing the SEPA Checklist, and the Environmental Critical Areas Assessment Areas Report. We are a group of concerned community members that want the best for the city of Olympia, the best for impending climate change and mitigation, the best for all of our neighbors, and the best for the precious habitats, local ecology and waterways. We have an opportunity with this piece of land to do something for our future, and for the future of generations to come.

We urge you to take these considerations to heart, and to choose to support the growth of Olympia outside of an unaffordable housing project that will further degrade the surrounding precious ecosystem.

Sincerely,

Britany Schneider  
[brit.schneider@gmail.com](mailto:brit.schneider@gmail.com)

# Regarding File Number 25-0980

Dear Mr. Ewing,

I am voicing my objection to the proposed Springwood Gardens development.

A project of this size will drastically increase traffic dangers and pollution, negatively impact wildlife and local ecosystems, increase noise pollution, and will only exacerbate the affordable housing crisis we are experiencing. I also know there are other options that would not have these negative impacts on our community and wildlife. I have organized this letter to cover 8 topics to convince you to rethink this development:

- 1. This Housing Development Ignores Olympia's Promise to Work Towards Mitigating Climate Crisis**
- 2. Proposal Elements Out of Alignment or Compliance with City of Olympia Municipal Code**
- 3. Impact on Salmon Habitat & Setchfield Lake Ecosystem**
- 4. Impact of Traffic**
- 5. Increased Housing does NOT Increase Affordability**
- 6. Pacific Lifestyle Homes & Garrette Custom Homes Are Not Good Homes**
- 7. Areas of Concern in Proposed Plan and More Research Needed**
- 8. Reasonable Alternatives**

# 1. This Housing Development Ignores Olympia's Promise to Work Towards Mitigating Climate Crisis

US population is projected to flatten out and then decline in the next couple of decades. Read [here](#) (Article: U.S. Population Projected to Begin Declining in Second Half of Century) for more information. Regional population growth projections are based on the misconception about the vitality of the tech sector, which is due for a correction, presently [shedding thousands of jobs and paying lower salaries to new hires](#). This coincides with a massive increase in severe heatwaves and torrential precipitation as a result of climate breakdown. Rather than replacing urban forest with asphalt and a plan that's detrimental to the community, we need to be enhancing green space—our only buffer to severe heatwaves and weather events. This should coincide with the establishment of more community gardens, expansion of our trail system, and the creation of truly affordable and socialized housing in the downtown core by renovating existing vacant or single-story commercial real estate into multi-story apartments with courtyard gardens. [Seattle's Urban Heat Island Index \(UHI\) is 8.2 degrees hotter on average](#) than surrounding green space, while national public health monitor Heat.gov notes that [UHI temperature spikes of 15 to 20 degrees have been observed](#). Urban heat islands are caused by a loss of tree cover, but also the overuse of asphalt, and by heat sources like cars and air conditioning units. A higher UHI increases strain on the power grid, acting as a threat multiplier by increasing the likelihood of power outages during severe weather events.

Additionally, according to the [Thurston Climate Action Plan](#), Olympia has made a 12 point commitment to mitigating climate crisis and related issues in Olympia. This development project is in direct conflict with eight of those twelve points:

1. Create vibrant centers, corridors, and neighborhoods while accommodating growth.
  - a. The development project will consist of cheaply built homes that maximize housing square footage on each minimally sized lot--not a vibrant center or corridor. This "growth" is not green by any means.
2. Preserve environmentally sensitive lands, farmlands, forest lands, prairies, and rural lands, and develop compact urban areas.
  - a. The development project sits on historic farmland and forestland which will be destroyed, not preserved, in this new development project.
3. Protect and improve water quality, including groundwater, rivers, streams, lakes and Puget Sound.
  - a. This development project is in marshy land (a non-irrigated blueberry bog sits in the middle of the proposed site), consists of riparian forest habitat, is directly adjacent to a wetland that feeds into a salmon-bearing stream no more than 300 meters away. Toxic runoff and groundwater from both the toxic materials being used to create these homes in addition to the addition of 50-70 more cars and ~339 more road trips per day will drastically harm, rather than improve, water quality.
4. Plan and act toward zero waste in the region.

- a. The development project will result in plenty of waste, both during construction as they bulldoze an existing single family home, and two other dwellings that currently sit on the property, and as 39 new single family units contribute to increased waste.
5. Ensure that residents have the resources to meet their daily needs.
  - a. Residents of Olympia need clean air, clean water, green spaces, and climate mitigation plans. We do not need more poorly made, unaffordable homes that are not green.
6. Support a local food system to increase community resilience, health and economic prosperity.
  - a. As this site is historic farmland, it poses an opportunity to be a site that includes a community farm or garden space (see Reasonable Alternatives section for more).
7. Provide opportunities for everyone in the Thurston Region to learn about and practice sustainability.
  - a. If the City of Olympia invested in a green development project instead, we could work together to find opportunities for our neighbors both near and far to practice sustainable work in the form of farming or gardening, habitat restoration, etc.
8. Make strategic investments to advance sustainability regionally.
  - a. A greener or more affordable development project in this space could pose inspiration for regional residents near and far.

We urge the city to reconsider this development project in lieu of greener alternatives that would better benefit the city and our neighbors alike!

## 2. Proposal Elements Out of Alignment or Compliance with City of Olympia Municipal Code

### A. [Olympia Comprehensive Master Plan](#) - Land Use and Urban Design

The following is a list of Comprehensive Plan codes that we see as out of alignment with this development proposal as this will be **high-density, high-cost, low-grade development requiring the destruction of 7.06 acres of greenspace and felling of 160+ trees that has high likelihood of Indigenous cultural artifact presence, with an inadequate water filtration plan that will pollute and otherwise negatively impact adjacent wetland and waterways for salmon and other wildlife, depleting the character and livability of a low-density neighborhood.** The Olympia Comprehensive Plan was adopted by Ordinance 6945 on December 16, 2014, and is current through Ordinance 7301, passed November 23, 2021.

PL5.5 Provide incentives and assistance for preserving, restoring, redeveloping and using historic buildings, districts, neighborhoods, streets, structures, objects and sites.

PL5.6 Support public or non-profit acquisition of the most important historic resources to ensure their preservation.

PL6.2 The design review process should recognize differences in the city with the objective of maintaining or improving the character and livability of each area or neighborhood

PL7.1 Provide urban green spaces in which to spend time. Include such elements as trees, garden spaces, variety of vegetation, water features, “green” walls and roofs, and seating.

PL7.2 Provide urban green spaces that are in people’s immediate vicinity and can be enjoyed or viewed from a variety of perspectives.

PL7.3 Establish a maximum distance to urban green space for everyone in the community.

PL7.4 Increase the area of urban green space and tree canopy within each neighborhood proportionate to increased population in that neighborhood.

PL7.5 Establish urban green space between transportation corridors and adjacent areas.

PL14.2 Concentrate housing into three high-density Neighborhoods: Downtown Olympia, Pacific/Martin/Lilly Triangle; and the area surrounding Capital Mall.

PL14.3 Preserve and enhance the character of existing Low-density Neighborhoods. Disallow medium or high-density development in existing Low-density Neighborhood areas except for Neighborhood Centers.

PL16.13 Encourage adapting non-residential buildings for housing.

PL20.1 Require development in neighborhoods to be of a type, scale, orientation, and design that maintains or improves the character, aesthetic quality, and livability of the neighborhood.

PL22.1 Use trees to foster a sense of neighborhood identity.

PL22.2 Identify, protect and maintain trees with historic significance or other value to the community or specific neighborhoods.

PL22.3 Encourage the use of appropriate fruit and nut trees to increase local food self-sufficiency.

PL25.3 Collaborate with community partners to ensure that everyone within Olympia is within biking or walking distance of a place to grow food.

PL25.8 Work with community organizations to develop strategies, measure, and set goals for increasing local food production.

PL25.9 Work with local governments throughout the region to help protect existing agricultural lands and develop and promote a vibrant local food economy.

PN2.1 Acquire and preserve land by a set of priorities that considers environmental benefits, such as stormwater management, wildlife habitat, or access to recreation opportunities.

PN6.4 Use regulations and other means to prevent a net loss in the function and value of existing wetlands, while striving to increase and restore wetlands over the long-term.

**B. [City of Olympia R4-8 Building Code](#) Violations (see particularly table 4.04)**

*Four of the lots are smaller than 45' and should be eliminated or consolidated*

- Lots 5, 7, 8, and 39 do not meet the required minimum lot width of 45'

*Two of the lots do not meet the required minimum lot size of 4,000 square feet and should be eliminated*

- Lots 7 and 8 do not meet the required minimum lot size of 4,000 sq ft

*Proposed square footage on most lots seem too big/impossible with minimum set-backs, current building and lot dimensions, and 2-story maximums*

- Assuming minimum front and back yard set-backs of 20', side set-backs of 5', and maximum 2 stories that can be built above grade (see table 4.04), the square footage of many homes that are stated (e.g., lots 10-23, page 4 of "Springwood Garden P-Plat-1") are not accomplishable even when maximizing building footprints right up to the edge of those minimums
- For example, lot 10's building footprint could at its full maximum be 40'x50', which makes for 2,000 square feet per floor, so how can developers claim over double that square footage at 4,475 with a two-story maximum house (unless they're building a basement below the driveway)?
- The developers should demonstrate how they plan to manage such big square footage given code, or revise their square footage proposals (and housing price/cost estimates) to code

*Maximization of 45% impervious surfaces via impermeable roofing and permeable driveways puts lots at future risk for being remodeled out of code, needs to be accounted for in development HOA*

- Many of the lots are designed where the footprint of the home is right at the 45% of the lot maximum allowed by city code, with “permeable driveways” installed as a way to allow cars onto lots without making the impervious
- This means that any future remodeling of the driveways to asphalt or other impervious surfaces (or yards with concrete, patios, etc.) would immediately put many of the lots out of compliance with city code
- The best way to account for this is to make the houses be smaller proportions of the lots and the driveways asphalt like many people would prefer
- The second best way to account for this is to write protections against remodeling with any impervious surfaces past the 45% of the lot amount into the development HOA agreements

*Discrepancies in reporting of impervious surfaces in Arborist Plan and SEPA Environmental Plan*

- A. In the Arborist Plan's tree density calculations the developers claim 1.35 acres as "ROW" (right of way, to my understanding, or roads and sidewalks) exempt from tree density calculations, which at 19% of the 7.06 acres is on is remarkably higher than the estimate of 12% they provide in the SEPA environmental checklist page 4.
- B. Can you help to clarify the differences between the 0.85 acres estimated in the SEPA environmental checklist (p.4) and the 1.35 acres claimed in the Arborist plan?

### **C. Concerns / Discrepancies from Environmental Assessment Report**

Below are screenshots of discrepancies regarding priority habitat and priority species pulled from the [Environmental Critical Assessment Report](#).

Basically, Page 2 says there ARE NO priority species habitats in or adjacent to site.

Page 8 says there ARE priority species observed onsite that may utilize the project site.

Page 14 says there ARE TWO priority habitats.

Pages 15-16 CHECKS THREE separate priority habitats.

Continue northerly on Bethel Street NE to Springwood Avenue NE. Turn east onto Springwood Avenue NE and continue to the project site located at 1609 Springwood

On page 8:  
 Avenue NE.  
 Several species identified by the State of Washington as "Priority Species" were observed onsite or potentially may utilize the project site. Priority species require protective measures for their survival due to their population status, sensitivity to habitat alteration, and/or recreational, commercial, or tribal importance.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

### NATIONAL WETLAND INVENTORY

The *National Wetland Inventory (NWI) Mapping* completed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service was reviewed as a part of this assessment (Figure 2). This mapping resource did not identify any wetlands or drainage corridors within or immediately adjacent to the project site. This mapping resource identified offsite wetlands well offsite to the east of the project site associated with Setchfield Lake and surface water drainages offsite to the north and south of the project site.

### STATE OF WASHINGTON PRIORITY HABITATS AND SPECIES

The State of Washington *Priority Habitats and Species (PHS) Mapping* was reviewed as a part of this assessment (Figure 3). This mapping resource did not identify any priority habitats within or immediately adjacent to the project site. This mapping resource identified Setchfield Lake well offsite to the east and Mission Creek well offsite to the south of the project site. This mapping resource identified the potential presence of Yuma myotis (*Myotis yumanensis*), little brown bat (*Myotis lucifugus*), and big brown bat (*Eptesicus fuscus*) within the same township as the project site.

### STATE OF WASHINGTON DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

The State of Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) *SalmonScape Mapping* was reviewed as a part of this assessment (Figure 4). This mapping resource did not identify any wetlands or stream corridors within or immediately adjacent to the project site. This mapping resource identified wetland areas offsite to the east of the project site and Mission Creek offsite to the south.

### STATE OF WASHINGTON DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

The State of Washington Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) *Water Type Mapping* was reviewed as a part of this assessment (Figure 5). This mapping resource did not identify any stream corridors or wetlands within or immediately adjacent to the project site. This mapping resource identified wetland areas offsite to the east of the

The majority of observed wildlife species are commonly present within urban areas. Species observed onsite, species that would be expected to utilize the habitats provided by the project site, and species that may potentially utilize the habitats provided by the project site include red tailed hawk (*Buteo jamaicensis*), merlin (*Falco columbarius*), mourning dove (*Zenaida macroura*), American crow (*Corvus brachyrhynchus*), Northern flicker (*Colaptes auratus*), violet green swallow (*Tachycineta thalassina*), tree swallow (*Tachycineta bicolor*), American robin (*Turdus migratorius*), song sparrow (*Melospiza melodia*), black capped chickadee (*Parus atricapillus*), dark-eyed junco (*Junco hyemalis*), bats (*Myotis* spp.), purple finch (*Carpodacus purpureus*), house finch (*Carpodacus mexicanus*), white crowned sparrow (*Zonotrichia leucophrys*), brown creeper (*Certhia americana*), bushtit (*Psaltriparus minimus*), evening grosbeak (*Coccothraustes vespertina*), rufous sided towhee (*Pipilo erythrophthalmus*), starling (*Sturnus vulgaris*), rock dove (*Columbia livia*), Steller jay (*Cyanocitta stelleri*), Anna's hummingbird (*Calypte anna*), rufous hummingbird (*Selasphorus rufus*), black tailed deer (*Odocoileus hemionus*), coyote (*Canis latrans*), raccoon (*Procyon lotor*), striped skunk (*Mephitis mephitis*), opossum (*Didelphis virginianus*), Western screech owl (*Otus kennicotti*), deer mouse (*Peromyscus maniculatus*), shrew (*Sorex* spp.), mole (*Scapanus* spp.), bats (*Myotis* spp.), eastern gray squirrel (*Sciurus carolinensis*), Douglas squirrel (*Tamiasciurus douglasi*), eastern cottontail (*Sylvilagus floridanus*), Norway rat (*Rattus norvegicus*), black rat (*Rattus rattus*), and vole (*Microtus* spp.).

The project site was not identified to provide spawning or juvenile rearing habitats for amphibians and was not observed, and has not been documented, to provide direct habitats for fish species.

**MOVEMENT CORRIDORS:** The project site was generally located within a well urbanize residential area. The project site appeared well used by the daily movements of small to medium sized wildlife species and was within the seasonal migratory pathways for a variety of passerine birds. The project site was also identified to be well used by domestic pets. In addition, the entire project site has been modified and managed for residential uses for several decades. As a result of this manipulation, no portion of the project site exhibited characteristics typically associated with a "prairie ecosystem."

We know there is spawning or juvenile rearing habitat for amphibians and the wetland (& runoff) would feed into Mission Creek, which contains salmon habitat. Creating basins to infiltrate water per the SEPA review still results in polluted water seeping into the ground, streams, pond, and watershed.

### **State Priority Species**

Several species identified by the State of Washington as "Priority Species" were observed onsite or potentially may utilize the project site. Priority species require protective measures for their survival due to their population status, sensitivity to habitat alteration, and/or recreational, commercial, or tribal importance.

Wetland name or number A

H 1.5. Special habitat features: Check the habitat features that are present in the wetland. The number of checks is the number of points. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Large, downed, woody debris within the wetland (> 4 in. diameter and 6 ft long). <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Standing snags (dbh > 4 in.) within the wetland <input type="checkbox"/> Undercut banks are present for at least 6.6 ft (2 m) <b>and/or</b> overhanging plants extend at least 3.3 ft (1 m) over open water or a stream (or ditch) in, or contiguous with the wetland, for at least 33 ft (10 m) <input type="checkbox"/> Stable steep banks of fine material that might be used by beaver or muskrat for denning (> 30 degree slope) OR signs of recent beaver activity are present (cut shrubs or trees that have not yet weathered where wood is exposed) <input type="checkbox"/> At least ¼ ac of thin-stemmed persistent plants or woody branches are present in areas that are permanently or seasonally inundated (structures for egg-laying by amphibians) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Invasive plants cover less than 25% of the wetland area in every stratum of plants (see H 1.1 above for the list of strata and H 1.5 in the manual for the list of aggressive plant species)	3
Total for H 1	4

**Rating of Site Potential** If score is: 15-18 = H 7-14 = M  0-6 = L *Record the rating on the first page*

<b>H 2.0. Does the landscape have the potential to support the habitat functions of the site?</b>	
H 2.1. Accessible habitat (include only habitat polygons accessible from the wetland). <i>Calculate:</i> % relatively undisturbed habitat $\frac{3.6 + [( \% \text{ moderate and low intensity land uses} ) / 2]}{1} \times 10 = 8.7$ % Total accessible habitat is: > 1/3 (33.3%) of 1 km Polygon points = 3 20-33% of 1 km Polygon points = 2 10-19% of 1 km Polygon points = 1 < 10% of 1 km Polygon points = 0	0
H 2.2. Total habitat in 1 km Polygon around the wetland. <i>Calculate:</i> % relatively undisturbed habitat $\frac{6 + [( \% \text{ moderate and low intensity land uses} ) / 2]}{2} \times 24 = 30$ % Total habitat > 50% of Polygon points = 3 Total habitat 10-50% and in 1-3 patches points = 2 Total habitat 10-50% and > 3 patches points = 1 Total habitat < 10% of 1 km Polygon points = 0	2
H 2.3. Land use intensity in 1 km Polygon: > 50% of 1 km Polygon is high intensity land use points = (- 2) ≤ 50% of 1 km Polygon is high intensity points = 0	(-2)
Total for H 2	0

**Rating of Landscape Potential** If score is: 4-6 = H 1-3 = M  < 1 = L *Record the rating on the first page*

<b>H 3.0. Is the habitat provided by the site valuable to society?</b>	
H 3.1. Does the site provide habitat for species valued in laws, regulations, or policies? <i>Choose only the highest score that applies to the wetland being rated.</i> Site meets ANY of the following criteria: points = 2 — It has 3 or more Priority Habitats within 100 m (see next page) — It provides habitat for Threatened or Endangered species (any plant or animal on the state or federal lists) — It is mapped as a location for an individual WDFW Priority Species — It is a Wetland of High Conservation Value as determined by the Department of Natural Resources data — It has been categorized as an important habitat site in a local or regional comprehensive plan, in a Shoreline Master Plan, or in a watershed plan Site has 1 or 2 Priority Habitats (listed on next page) within 100 m points = 1 Site does not meet any of the criteria above points = 0	2

**Rating of Value** If score is:  2 = H 1 = M 0 = L *Record the rating on the first page*

Wetland name or number   A  

### WDFW Priority Habitats

See complete descriptions of Priority Habitats listed by WDFW, and the counties in which they can be found, in: Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife. 2008 (current year, as revised). [Priority Habitat and Species List](#).<sup>133</sup> This list was updated for consistency with guidance from WDFW.

This question is independent of the land use between the wetland unit and the Priority Habitat. All vegetated wetlands are by definition a Priority Habitat but are not included in this list because they are addressed by this rating system.

Attempting to determine if site has this priority habitat as well

Count how many of the following Priority Habitats are within 330 ft (100 m) of the wetland unit:

- **Aspen Stands:** Pure or mixed stands of aspen greater than 1 ac (0.4 ha).
- **Biodiversity Areas and Corridors:** Areas of habitat that are relatively important to various species of native fish and wildlife. This habitat automatically counts if mapped on the PHS online map within 100m of the wetland. If not mapped, a determination can be made in the field.
- **Caves:** A naturally occurring cavity, recess, void, or system of interconnected passages under the earth in soils, rock, ice, or other geological formations and is large enough to contain a human.
- **Cliffs:** Greater than 25 ft (7.6 m) high and occurring below 5000 ft elevation.
- **Fresh Deepwater:** Lands permanently flooded with freshwater, including environments where surface water is permanent and often deep, so that water, rather than air, is the principal medium within which the dominant organisms live. Substrate does not support emergent vegetation. Do not select if Instream habitat is also present, or if the entire Deepwater feature is included in the wetland unit being rated (such as a pond with a vegetated fringe).
- **Herbaceous Balds:** Variable size patches of grass and forbs on shallow soils over bedrock.
- ✗ **Instream:** The combination of physical, biological, and chemical processes and conditions that interact to provide functional life history requirements for instream fish and wildlife resources. Do not select if Fresh Deepwater habitat is also present.
- **Nearshore:** Relatively undisturbed nearshore habitats. These include Coastal Nearshore, Open Coast Nearshore, and Puget Sound Nearshore.
- **Old-growth/Mature forests:** **Old-growth west of Cascade crest** – Stands of at least 2 tree species, forming a multi-layered canopy with occasional small openings; with at least 8 trees/ac (20 trees/ha) > 32 in. (81 cm) diameter at breast height (dbh) or > 200 years of age. **Mature forests** – Stands with average diameters exceeding 21 in. (53 cm) dbh; crown cover may be less than 100%; decay, decadence, numbers of snags, and quantity of large downed material is generally less than that found in old-growth; 80-200 years old west of the Cascade crest.

On Page two, it says: The State of Washington Priority Habitats and Species (PHS) Mapping was reviewed as a part of this assessment (Figure 3). This mapping resource did not identify any priority habitats within or immediately adjacent to the project site. This mapping resource identified Setchfield Lake well offsite to the east and Mission Creek well offsite to the south of the project site. This mapping resource identified the potential presence of Yuma myotis (*Myotis yumanensis*), little brown bat (*Myotis lucifugus*), and big brown bat (*Eptesicus fuscus*) within the same township as the project site. This page shows 3 priority habitats

<sup>133</sup> <http://wdfw.wa.gov/publications/00165/wdfw00165.pdf>  
Wetland Rating System for Western WA: 2014 Update  
Rating Form – Version 2, July 2023

15

Wetland name or number   A  

- **Oregon White Oak:** Woodland stands of pure oak or oak/conifer associations where canopy coverage of the oak component is important. For single oaks or oak stands <0.4 ha in urban areas, [WDFW's Management Recommendations for Oregon White Oak](#)<sup>134</sup> provides more detail for determining if they are Priority Habitats
- ✗ **Riparian:** The area adjacent to freshwater aquatic systems with flowing or standing water that contains elements of both aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems which mutually influence each other.
- ✗ **Snags and Logs:** Trees are considered snags if they are dead or dying and exhibit sufficient decay characteristics to enable cavity excavation/use by wildlife. Priority snags have a diameter at breast height of > 20 in. (51 cm) in western Washington and are > 6.5 ft (2 m) in height. Priority logs are > 12 in. (30 cm) in diameter at the largest end, and > 20 ft (6 m) long.
- **Talus:** Homogenous areas of rock rubble ranging in average size 0.5 - 6.5 ft (0.15 - 2.0 m), composed of basalt, andesite, and/or sedimentary rock, including riprap slides and mine tailings. May be associated with cliffs.
- **Westside Prairies:** Herbaceous, non-forested plant communities that can either take the form of a dry prairie or a wet prairie.

Despite this, the [SEPA Environmental Checklist](#) says there is no priority habitat:

- water plants: water lily, eelgrass, milfoil, other  
 other types of vegetation

Refer to the Level V Soil and Vegetation Plan prepared by Sound Urban Forestry dated January 30, 2025 for a full list of existing vegetation.

**(3) What kind and amount of vegetation will be removed or altered?**

Vegetation within the project area will be removed. Vegetation within Tract B (Wetland Buffer) and Tract D (Soil & Vegetation Protection Area) will remain undisturbed.

**b. List threatened and endangered species known to be on or near the site.**

According to the Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife's "*Priority Habitats and Species (PHS on the Web)*," no threatened or endangered plant species are known to be on or near the site.

**c. Proposed landscaping, use of native plants, or other measures to preserve or enhance vegetation on the site, if any.**

Landscaping will be in accordance with the city of Olympia Municipal Code. Tracts B and D will retain trees and vegetation in their natural state.

**d. List all noxious weeds and invasive species known to be on or near the site.**

No noxious weeds or invasive species are known to be on or near the site.

**This appears to be in contradiction to page 8, 15, and 16 of the Environmental Critical Areas Assessment**

**5. Animals**

**a. List any birds and other animals that have been observed on or near the site or are known to be on or near the site.**

Songbirds and small mammals (including squirrels and rodents typical of an urban area). See Environmentally Critical Areas Assessment dated October 23, 2024 for a full list of birds and animals observed onsite.

**Examples include:**

- **Birds: hawk, heron, eagle, songbirds, other:**
- **Mammals: deer, bear, elk, beaver, other:**
- **Fish: bass, salmon, trout, herring, shellfish, other:**

**b. List any threatened and endangered species known to be on or near the site.**

Per the Environmentally Critical Areas Assessment dated October 23, 2024, no threatened or endangered species are known to be on or near the site.

Additionally, note that they only mention plant species, not animal species, when they say there are no threatened or endangered plant species.

### 3. Impact on Salmon Habitat & Setchfield Lake Ecosystem

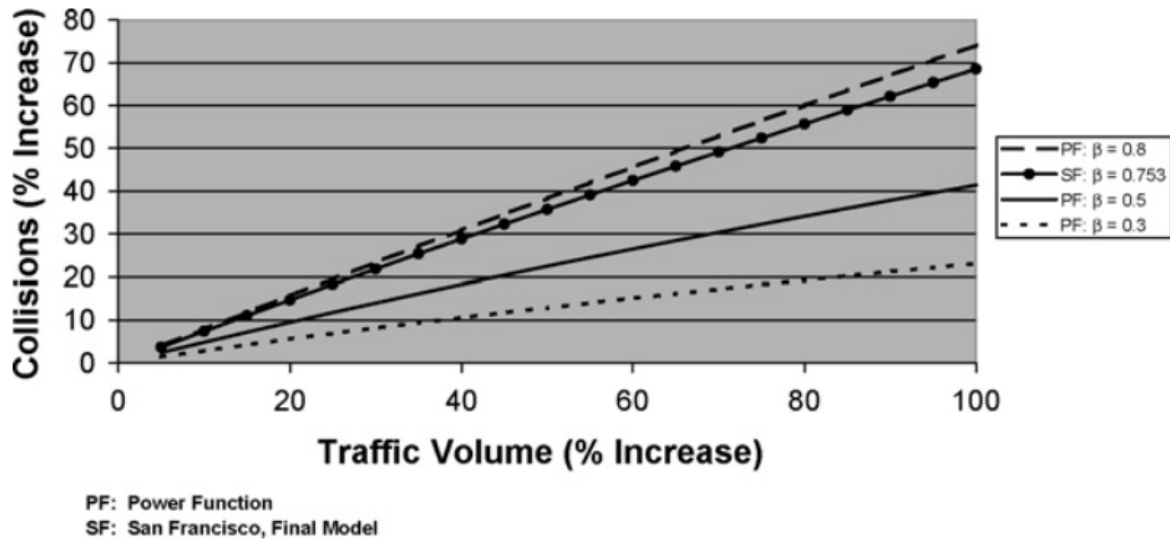
Mission Creek is a salmon-bearing stream that flows into Budd Inlet. Running just southwest of the development site, **it is connected via wetlands within the project bounds**. In the mid-2010s with support from the state Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO), the South Puget Sound Salmon Enhancement Group completed a \$200k [project](#) that restored tidal and fish access to the creek. Coho salmon and chum salmon have been documented to use the lower reaches of Mission Creek, and their passage upstream is only partially blocked by a culvert under Bethel Street. As such, full restoration faces lower hurdles compared to other more heavily impacted streams. Surveys by WDFW predict that this single barrier correction could potentially restore chum, coho, steelhead, and sea-run cutthroat to the upstream. Runoff from the housing development will likely enter into this stream system, impacting salmon habitat. The sediment associated with extensive construction and deforestation on the development site would be especially harmful to spawning. The proposed development does not adequately address the negative impacts to this system in terms of water quality, stream hydrology, and canopy cover, especially as extreme winter rain events and summer droughts increasingly alter stream flows and increase water temperatures.

The second salmon-bearing stream that could potentially be impacted is Ellis Creek, due to the project's proximity to the creek and Setchfield Lake. **At least \$1.3 million has been spent on restoring salmon in this waterway**. The creek maintains salmonid-bearing scour width parameters until it connects to Setchfield Lake, its headwaters. In 2006 with RCO support, the City of Olympia looked to [replace](#) two downstream culverts that prevented migration of chum salmon, coho salmon, cutthroat trout, rainbow trout and steelhead. Removal would restore access to 1.5 miles of largely intact habitat. According to the Recreation and Conservation Office's project description: "Rural zoning densities as well as stream and wetland buffers designated under Thurston County's Critical Areas Ordinance will protect the stream habitat outside of [Squaxin] park." **The Ellis Creek watershed is "one of the only nearly intact basins in Budd Inlet."** As barriers to full restoration are minimal, this makes the creek a priority for restoration according to SRFB funding metrics. The proposed development is set back from the lake itself, however it would destroy several acres of riparian woodland integral to the lake ecosystem. Further, **if developments such as Springwood Gardens continue to be approved, they will encircle Setchfield lake, drastically degrading ecosystem's capacity to support salmon** and a myriad other native species. Therefore it is of critical importance that the proposed plan not be implemented. Any development must be aligned with ongoing salmon recovery efforts in the area.

Additionally, as a wetland specialist noted, for years, the developers have been swallowing up land for housing, and the only land left for developers to use is land that was never a good investment to begin with. All the good land for new development is gone. The only land left is land that builders do not like to build on due to so many environmental issues. The proposed development area is one of them. The water level of Setchfield lake is only 5-8 feet lower than the land surrounding it. This is known as a Kettle Lake because all the rain water runoff eventually seeps back into the lake due to the surrounding layers of land and its composition. The surrounding land is therefore riparian habitat integral to the lake system itself. Moreover, it is wet, with open pools of standing water on the ground for a significant amount of the year.

## 4. Impact of Increased Traffic

Traffic studies have determined that a linear relationship exists between increased traffic and frequency of vehicle-pedestrian accidents. See for example this chart and quotations from Wier et al. Published in *Accident Analysis & Prevention*, February 2009.



**Fig. 1.** Vehicle-pedestrian injury collision increases associated with traffic volume increases: power function and San Francisco final model predictions.

“A scatter plot of traffic volume by vehicle-pedestrian injury collisions shows a positive linear association. [...] Consistent with previous national and international findings, our study provides additional evidence that traffic volume is a primary environmental cause of vehicle-pedestrian injury collisions at the area level.”

## 5. Increased Housing does NOT Increase Affordability

We recognize that these homes will also do nothing to amend the housing crisis we are in. They are clearly not affordable nor quality homes that will serve to increase neighbor's property tax such that some are forced to move.

Regardless, the increase of housing (even affordable housing) in Olympia does not address the housing crisis. Olympia's specific housing crisis is fueled by several factors, including:

- Real estate speculation (in March 2023, investors accounted for 27% of all single-family home purchases [in the US] [1])
- Airbnb's (2.25 million homes in the US are Airbnbs--this doesn't count Vrbo, Guesty, Vacasa, or any other AirBnB alternatives [2])
- Non-residential use of homes (Nearly 1/3 of the 62 homes in the south Capital neighborhood are owned or used by lobbyists, corporations, or unions--meaning they are not used as houses but as overnight accommodations or meeting spaces for businesses [3]).

While the idea that increased supply will meet demand and increase affordability can be applied to a variety of different products in our economy, housing is not one of them. This is for a couple reasons.

- 1) Land is subject to what is called a "natural monopoly" because there is only a finite amount of land in any given area. More housing can be built but there is no way to increase the supply of land to meet demand. Without price controls, land will actually skyrocket in value as density increases.
- 2) Housing is treated as an investment. Speculators and wealthy investors buy up housing and hold it until they can get a better price for it later. They treat homes like stocks. This means any lull in market rate will be met with investors simply squatting on their investments until the market rate increases again. And if market rates do actually drop, which only happens during a crisis, investors will attempt to seize all the available housing for the same reason that people buy stock when a highly profitable firm suffers a temporary drop in its price. They will then rent out their investment property as a landlord or sell the investment property when they can make a lot of money off that home.

All this to say: there is no market solution to housing affordability, because [decommodification is the only proven strategy for creating truly affordable housing](#). The creation of more market-rate homes will simply drive up the cost of living of the area—it will NOT make homes more affordable for working families. Additionally, the increase of property taxes that coincide with increased expensive development means that working-class families and long-term residents are more likely to be pushed out of their own homes as they aren't able to keep on top of increased monthly bills. We need only look at other urban regions that grew quickly and increased housing extensively (like Portland and Seattle) to see this trend that more homes in urban regions with

growing populations increase the price of those homes, increasing the cost of living, while also decreasing the quality of life for those living there (due to lack of green spaces, increased traffic, increased noise, environmental pollution, etc).

So, instead of increased housing development, I see a plethora of easier solutions to the housing affordability problem. In Olympia's downtown core, we could emulate and expand upon efforts like [House Our Neighbors](#) and [Seattle Social Housing](#), two initiatives which are balancing climate-smart design with truly affordable, decommodified housing. Other ideas include: below-market rent control, eliminating the use of homes not as homes, creating a time limit (10 months?) on a home being allowed to be vacant before it is converted into affordable, below-market housing (for sale or for rent), a standard basic income, decreasing prices (rent or sale) on buildings that have been vacant for years and converting them into lower-profit commercial business & affordable below-market housing (this piece is actually in Olympia's current Comprehensive Plan!), outlawing anyone from owning a home who does not live in the region (city, county, state, or even country--anything would be better than what we have now) where the home is, making landlordism a non-profit venture with a focus on housing people rather than prioritizing rent increases to match market rates...

A combination of these and similar ideas seems to me to be the best way to work towards a root cause of housing unaffordability, which is essentially that wage increases haven't been anywhere close to matching housing price increases in many decades.

## 6. Pacific Lifestyle Homes & Garrette Custom Homes Are Not Good Homes

*“This builder is going to rip you off and your documents that you sign will hamstring what you can do legally. I would find a different builder no matter the price point you're looking to build in.”*

Garrette Custom Homes has a reputation that speaks for itself. Their [Yelp Page](#) shows a 1.7 star rating, with horror stories from reviewers. Of the staff, one reviewer writes:

“Our sales guy (Tom) was fired after lying to several clients. **Our contract was laced with problems and we had hundreds of emails discussing scopes of work or product selection that were all lies.** Our site manager was fired after not showing up to our red line meeting. Our interim site manager (Brian) only worked with us long enough to get the dirt work and foundation done. **During this time, they ran \$70k over budget on dirt work and didn't tell us until a future scheduled meeting.** This far exceeded our reserve fund and could not be included in the loan. Our next site manager lasted about 3 weeks before he quit in the middle of framing (Paul). Our next site manager (David) was new to the company and showed zero leadership skills when with the sub-contractors. Under David's supervision work was shoddy and the site was unsanitary. We had laborers pooping in the wetland, urinating under the house leaving puddles of piss on the vapor barrier, we had 3" trim on one side of a window and 2" on the other. The warranty person (Melina) who was horrible to work with and eventually fired after she tried to break into our house with the painters while we were on vacation so they could do touch up work. We had this on video and had to call top level management at Garrett to get resolution. The new warranty person (Holly) spent the next 12 months ghosting us and playing dumb on every problem.”

Of the workmanship, this reviewer writes:

“Buyer beware. Bought a brand new Garrette home last February. Beautiful home, great floorplan, but many, many, many issues with finishing work. Mostly small detail work, though **there was a large drainage and run off issue that has cost us personally over \$40,000 to date to fix.** It appears that there was no follow up on any of the work that contractors did. **Almost every issue is still unresolved from our 60 day walk through and now approaching one year in the house.** I understand that covid slowed things down, but Customer Service is non-existent. Simple communication is all together missing. I'd be very careful before making a purchase.”

The other reviews echo the same frustrations:

“This was our first home-building experience and it was very disappointing to say the least. The construction and project team were terrible, if they were around long enough to see updates through. **There were lots of turnover with the folks we worked with, which is very telling about the lack of management support.** Buyers in our property were promised the surrounding fence would be fixed by the site manager but when he left the company, Garrett said they wouldn't fix it. They also installed the wrong cabinet in my laundry room (doesn't line up with the wall) and they refuse to fix it.

This was escalated to the manager supporting our property, Brian, but he clearly had no intention on trying to address our concerns and brushed us off. **Because we had such a terrible experience, I won't be recommending the services of Garrett or Pacific Lifestyle homes to family or friends.**"

Meanwhile, Pacific Lifestyle Homes also has a reputation that speaks for itself. Their [Yelp Page](#) shows a 2.6 star rating, with horror stories from reviewers. One reviewer writes:

"Lack of finishing detail. **Lived in this new construction home for less than one year and compared to other national builders buying from PLH is not worth the extra money.** During walkthrough they will say if you can't see the defect from a certain distance it isn't going to be worked on. I'll include photos but you can definitely tell they just rush builds out. This includes dry paint on carpet, mice dropping issue during inspection in the crawl space they responded that they didn't see any when they went down. Now as a more seasoned home owner mice do hide in the daytime and have caught over 50 in the crawl space. Very poor paint in the garage with dried paint drip. Another image includes the center of our fireplace with the wood being cut very unevenly."

Another writes,

"I have been dealing with a poorly constructed home built in late 2022 by Garrette Custom Homes and purchased from Pacific Lifestyle Homes in the Ridgefield WA area. **A repeatedly leaking roof and mold issues have been going on since the house was built creating extended problems of getting the warranty repair work done in a timely manner.** 2 1/2 months in each occurrence with two different rental tenants being unable to use areas of the house is unacceptable. If you are planning to purchase a new or existing home, first look at the reviews and complaints about Pacific Lifestyle Homes, at the B.B.B. website before committing your self; make sure to completely read the 2-10 warranty offering as well."

It goes on:

"**I would not build with this company.** We walked through our home during the process and had to keep pointing out mistakes where they left off outlets, windows to shower and smurf tub for TV, ect. so nice to catch a few things wrong during building. Then when we arrived to get our keys. There was paint all in the carpet walls bowed from sheetrock not being hung correctly and rooms and ceilings painted incorrect and insulation under the house hanging from the floor where it fell off.ECT. When we pointed these things out they said they would fix it by giving us a check. which we wanted things fixed in the home so it was nice, not money. When the manager went to get ok from their company we got nothing and the video on camera system was erased of the painter dripping all over. (...) The floor plan is great, I just wish it would have been built by a company that had quality houses as important, not their pocket book. Please do your homework before making this mistake."

In conclusion, we want housing to be provided here that is well-built, quality craftsmanship, and that will last for decades to come. The residents of Olympia deserve that. There is plenty of evidence that Pacific Lifestyle Homes & Garrette Custom Homes do not have that reputation, and trust, of the communities where they have worked before. Like named before, we need accessible, affordable housing - not housing that has a reputation of being hastily and inefficiently built, that costs residents even more money to fix (on top of being pricey and inaccessible homes).

## 7. Areas of Concern in Proposed Plan and More Research Needed

### **Stormwater Management**

We are concerned about the stormwater management strategy for the proposed project. These include the documented limitations for infiltration in onsite soils which currently doesn't support the optimistic prediction that the onsite pond will indeed "infiltrate approximately 97% of all runoff from the Site." Several community members have spoken about the proposed plan's failure to document the seasonal presence of standing water in the eastern side of the site, and to address water mitigation here. Finally the stormwater infrastructure design doesn't consider the changing precipitation patterns, specifically the increasing intensity of precipitation. This is stated by the city of Olympia in the [City of Olympia's Climate Change Response](#), where the city responds to the question "How is climate change impacting Olympia?" with this: "New and growing impacts include rising temperatures, extreme heat, heavy precipitation, flooding, sea level rise and wildfires." If we know that we are experiencing heavy precipitation, we need building sites to plan for, be responsive to, and mitigate the effects of climate change.

### **The Use of Infiltration Strategy Needs Further Study**

#### *Detention/Infiltration Pond*

Because this land is on and adjacent to a wetland, and has seasonal standing water on the property, we are concerned with the plan for how water movement will be mitigated. We noticed that the onsite stormwater is proposed to be collected by catch basins and conveyed via underground pipes to a combined detention/infiltration pond in the southwest part of the site, after which it will be discharged to the wetland buffer onsite (Drainage Design Report, p. 3).

**However, the use of infiltration as a main stormwater management strategy appears inconsistent with the conclusions and recommendations from the Preliminary Stormwater Soils Report (Geotechnical Report) which state that infiltration of stormwater runoff from the proposed residential plat is only feasible using relatively shallow Best Management Practices (BMPs) in portions of the site (without indicating which portions).**

This is confusing, and we need more information about this. Which part or portion of the site? Additionally, the applicant states that based on their subsurface explorations, it is their opinion that infiltration trenches and basins are **not** feasible for this project due to the limited depth to impermeable glacial till and/or recessional silt deposits (p. 7). Yet the strategy proposed for the project is stated as a detention/infiltration basin, indicating that infiltration is part of the strategy, with the assumption that the onsite pond will infiltrate approximately 97% of all runoff from the Site (Drainage Plan p. 10). This is confusing, and appears to contradict itself. We need more information from the applicant and a proposal with backed research.

Also, we noticed that in the Preliminary Plat in the Drainage Design Report, the location of the Combined Detention and Infiltration Pond is in Tract C in the southwestern portion of the site. The Geotechnical Report, Appendix A - Subsurface Explorations, indicates that for Test Pit 5 (TP-5) which is located in the vicinity of the detention/infiltration pond (Figure 2, Site and

Exploration Plan in the Geotechnical Report), mottling was observed from 2 feet to 10 feet indicating “slow percolation of surface water or seasonal high groundwater” (p. 6). **The assumption that the onsite pond will infiltrate approximately 97% of all runoff from the Site appears overly optimistic and is not supported by the existing documentation.** Here, additional study and research is needed to make sure that the design of the stormwater management strategy does what it is intended to do - at this time, it lacks research to support the claims made. At a minimum, more research needs to be done to determine whether 5 feet or more of vertical separation exists between the bottom of the proposed stormwater detention/infiltration basin/pond facility and seasonal high groundwater or impermeable soils, as required per 2022 COO DDECM, Volume V, Section V-5.6, BMPs T7.10 and T7.20, and a groundwater mounding analysis if a separation of 3 feet may be considered. (Geotechnical Report p. 6). There are contradiction in that the Geotechnical Report seems to differentiate, without explanation, “infiltration BMPs” from “Low Impact Development (LID) BMPs” that use infiltration (which it identifies as pervious pavement and biofiltration), and states the latter could be considered and potentially are feasible. **This is confusing and requires explanation or correction.**

### **Permeable pavement**

We also feel that additional study is needed to demonstrate that the proposed “permeable pavement” will accomplish the infiltration of stormwater goals that are stated. The current plan rests on analysis of grading that may change during construction: in Geotechnical Report, Appendix A - Subsurface Explorations (starting on page 105/178 in the Storm drainage report) indicates that for TP-6, potential water drainage issues occurred at 1.5 feet (“mottling was observed consistent with perched groundwater within the recessional silt and weathered glacial till at depths ranging between 1.5 and 4.5 feet below the ground surface in all the test pits”, p. 6), while the observed mottling for TP-4 was 2.0 feet and for TP-7 was 2.5 feet. On page 97/178 the report states that “the use of permeable pavement is infeasible if saturated conditions would be created within 1 foot of the bottom elevation of the lowest layer and the seasonal high groundwater table or an underlying impermeable/low permeable layer.” (referencing 2022 COO DDECM, Volume V, Section V-5.6, BMP T5.15). **A grading plan is not included. If any grading of the site would occur in development, a reevaluation of the acceptability of permeable pavement is needed. The grading plan showing the final grade should be evaluated against the criterion identified above to conclude if and where permeable pavement as a “best management practice” might be acceptable. With the existing information in the documentation, there is doubt that the infiltration attributed to permeable pavement would be achieved.**

“Infiltration” is also being relied on for the run-on from adjacent land to the east onto the project site, which the storm drainage report on page 7 identifies as 3.29 acres draining into the eastern edge of the project site. The report states that this runoff will be intercepted by a gravel trench located in the back yards of the eastern lots, which will capture and infiltrate runoff to the maximum extent feasible before sending the runoff to the proposed conveyance system. However, the Geotechnical Report states on page 97 that “Based on our subsurface explorations, it is our opinion that infiltration trenches and basins are not feasible for this project

due to the limited depth to impermeable glacial till and/or recessional silt deposits.” This is a concerning discrepancy to encounter in the report. Estimates of how much of the site’s run-on will be able to be infiltrated into these trenches should be researched further. In addition, all estimated volumes of stormwater must consider the changing precipitation patterns now occurring under climate change, which we have more information about below.

### **Project could increase risk of downstream property flooding**

**The 100-year floodplain of Mission Creek is located just downstream of the property’s stormwater discharge point, indicating that should the drainage and stormwater plan not operate as suggested, downstream properties could experience an increased risk of flooding, particularly those structures adjacent to or within the existing 100-year floodplain.** This 100-year floodplain that the project documentation uses is based on mapping by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). These are widely known to be out of date and not an accurate representation of flood risk; [see this article](#), for example. This is because the maps don’t take into account intense rainfall events being experienced under climate change, which [the city states](#) is an impact of climate change that we see here in Olympia.

**In the Drainage Design Report (p. 9), the applicant indicates that they used the Western Washington Hydrology Model to plan for the stormwater management system, which uses long-term precipitation data but does not directly incorporate climate change projections for precipitation.** Instead, it focuses on historical data from 1948 to 2009 to estimate total rainfall and peak events, not planning for or incorporating climate change. Climate change is projected to lead to changes in precipitation patterns, including more intense heavy rain events and shifts in the balance between snow and rain in western Washington, as stated by the City of Olympia. [Stormwater management system designs should consider potential future increases in peak flows](#). We want to ensure that the applicant is effectively designing for future climate conditions, and is sufficiently protecting the homes and land that are downstream from the project site. We want to ensure that the applicant is incorporating the expected changes in rainfall intensity, frequency, and duration, and that the applicant is calculating stormwater runoff and designing stormwater infrastructure capacities with this in mind. We do not have evidence yet that the applicant has done their due diligence and research to incorporate this data into the design of this project. We request to see the updated plans at a future community meeting and be notified of the change in plans. The applicant needs to be accountable to both the city of Olympia, as well as the local residents.

### **Wildlife**

#### **Important Habitat and Species**

We are concerned about the safety of the wildlife, and request more information. The Environmentally Critical Areas Assessment identifies “important habitat and species” as defined by the City of Olympia to include areas that “serve a critical role in sustaining needed habitats and species for the functional integrity of the ecosystem”, and these include movement corridors (p. 5). This Assessment also states that “the project site appeared well used by the daily movements of small to medium sized wildlife species” (p. 8). It is not clear to us if the daily use

of the project site is used or functions as a movement corridor as this was not evaluated. Due to the location of the parcel, it appears likely that some wildlife could utilize the site since Setchfield Lake and its watershed are located to the east, and the project parcel could be used to provide a corridor to the wetland area to the Mission Creek corridor through forested lands to the west to Budd Inlet. **This should be evaluated in the assessment for important habitat/movement corridors.**

#### State Threatened and Endangered Species

We noticed that the Environmentally Critical Areas Assessment does not identify the State threatened and endangered species, but only indicates that “the project site did not appear to provide, and has not been documented to provide, direct critical habitats for State Threatened species” (p. 9). **It is not clear how this determination was made. The report should be amended to identify the State listed species, the kinds of habitat utilized by them, and the methodology used to determine whether the project site provides such conditions. This requires further explanation and research.**

## 8. Reasonable Alternatives

For all the reasons listed above, we hope you can now recognize how this particular development project will negatively impact the City of Olympia in a vast variety of ways. We propose the following alternative development projects for your team to consider.

### Smaller, Green Housing Development!

A smaller development project cultivated with environmental priorities would be a great boon to the neighborhood and habitat that the current project threatens. We can look at [Woodard Housing Co-op](#) for inspiration: buildings made with green materials and outfitted with solar power, where 18 residential units are integrated with green space, community gardens, and forest. We know this kind of project is possible in Olympia, because Woodard already exists.



Green development should be the priority of the City of Olympia so that it remains in alignment with its Climate Action Plan. A smaller development project would be cheaper in both the short and long term (remember Garrette Custom Homes reputation for building poorly made homes that will need ongoing maintenance and upkeep!). Additionally, as inflation increases, as tariffs impact building materials, and with the threat of a looming recession, we should be looking to smaller, more affordable development projects. With the ongoing threat of climate crisis and drastic weather events, we should prioritize environmental standards within all of those development projects as well.

### A Park and Restoration Project for Wildlife Including Salmon!

Another alternative could be a new park or an extension of the beloved Springwood Parcel across the street from this planned development project. The origin story of this parcel is actually quite similar to this development plan. An owner of a broad acreage of land sold it to the city, and it was converted into a gorgeous park teeming with a diverse array of species and life. We suggest that instead of a collection of poorly made homes packed in like sardines, that the City consider extending the Springwood Parcel, allowing the marshy meadow and nearby wetlands and (generally essential ecosystem that this development project intends to impeded upon) to help protect vital salmon, owls, frogs, and other wildlife habitat. Afterall, this was owner's intended use of the space! Additionally, the parcel upon which this development project is intended to be built feeds water into both Mission Creek and Ellis Creek, home for local salmon to spawn. A new park in combination with a salmon restoration project that works to alter the existing culvert barriers would see salmon spawning further up both the creeks and even returning to Setchfield lake—something that hasn't happened hundreds of years.

### Community Garden or Farm!

There are no eastside community gardens, and we know that the City of Olympia has recently completed an Urban Farm Park feasibility study, which pointed to the need for a site that could provide mixed functions of farmer training (including youth farmers), food production, land and garden access, educational values, community gathering, etc. They emphasized interrelated food security and ecological and community benefits, especially for marginalized groups. Although the city doesn't have the resources to move this forward at this time, we believe the space designated for Springwood Gardens could actually become a garden!

The neighbors expressing their refusal of this development project are made up of a wide array of environmentalists, working families, architects, artists, musicians, writers, construction workers, architects, and activists. We are creative thinkers, and we would be more than happy to work with the City of Olympia to find a solution that benefits us all.

For these and many other reasons, we do not want this development project to take place. You can expect my presence at the Public Hearing to bring up these and more points.

Sincerely,

Clare Follmann

## Jackson Ewing

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**From:** Esther Grace Kronenberg <wekrone@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, April 6, 2025 6:01 PM  
**To:** Jackson Ewing  
**Subject:** Springwood Garden development

Hello Mr. Ewing,

I write to comment on the proposed Springwood Garden development in Northeast Olympia. I am opposed to it in its current configuration and believe the City can demand a project that is more aligned with its values and its own municipal code.

I understand the City is obliged to approve projects that meet code. However, it appears the City is not considering all its policies under the 2021 Comprehensive Master Plan.

I also have noted over the years that the City is not enforcing environmental regulations that might interfere with development. A prime example is the Green Cove Park Project which the City abetted for 16 years until public clamor finally caused Ecology to place the site under MCTA.

Under the City's Comp Plan and the Thurston Climate Mitigation Plan (TCMP), which the City adopted, impacts of development to critical areas, to aquifers, endangered species and habitat must be considered. As the climate crisis worsens, this becomes ever more imperative. The loss of biodiversity in the last few decades has been staggering, with tens of thousands of species going extinct including right here in Budd Inlet. The 1972 Club of Rome report, the Limits to Growth, which predicted a societal collapse around 2040 due primarily to climate change and resource depletion, has [recently been corroborated by actual data](#). One sentence that stood out for me was this:

"Of all our natural resources, freshwater is arguably the most crucial for the maintenance of human life, let alone advanced civilization, and localized water scarcity seems extremely likely in the coming decades."

As we rely solely on groundwater, the City must make the protection of our water supply its primary responsibility. Any development that further compromises our aquifers should not be approved. It appears that Springwood Gardens would, indeed, further impair the wetlands on site that feed Mission Creek, a salmon bearing stream in which the South Puget Sound Salmon Enhancement Group recently invested \$200K to restore downstream habitat.

The City purports many laudable goals that should constrain approval of this development as is. Preserving the character of neighborhoods, providing green spaces in people's immediate vicinity, using regulations and other means to prevent a net loss in the function and value of existing wetlands, while striving to increase and restore wetlands over the long-term are examples of these stated goals.

This development also violates the TCMP which requires the City to "preserve environmentally sensitive lands, farmlands, forest lands...and develop compact urban areas. This proposal sits on both historic farmland and forest, and its 39 large market rate houses are far from the best way to increase density. Can the City envision a better use for this site? The TCMP requires the City to "support a local

food system to increase community resilience, health and economic prosperity," and "ensure that the region's water supply sustains people in perpetuity while protecting the environment." Can a smaller, denser project that preserves the forest and wetlands better meet the City goals?

These objectives are not easy and will take some new and imaginative thinking. But they are reasonable and necessary. The usual business as usual development is too costly in the long term and does not serve our beautiful city or its residents now or in the future.

The City cannot rely on the judgment of a Hearing Examiner who has never said no to a development, and who is a real estate attorney and a member of the Chamber of Commerce, the most pro-development organization in the country. We rely on our city planners to put the best interests of the people first by diligently ensuring that environmental impacts are minimal to none. The health of the environment should be the first consideration, and then we can figure how a development can fit in. Unfortunately, the City does it backwards. It gets a development proposal and then figures out how to get it past environmental rules. This does not benefit anyone except the developer who does not have the community's interests at heart.

I urge you to do a complete environmental assessment of the cumulative impacts of this proposal on the wetlands, Mission Creek and Setchfield Lake. How much poisonous 6PPD-quinone will be released into this salmon bearing creek from the projected 339 more car trips a day? How will the additional pollution from more impervious surfaces and these 39 houses affect the groundwater? What will the cumulative impacts be of this and other projects? These are questions the developer must consider and the City must know before approving more unsustainable business-as-usual development that degrades our quality of life and does not provide the housing that is most needed.

Beyond that, I hope the City begins to envision and encode a different type of development that benefits people and nature instead of further degrading our precious home.

Thank you for your consideration.

Esther Kronenberg  
Olympia WA

## Jackson Ewing

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**From:** Debbie Arnold <meinoly1959@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, April 6, 2025 4:02 PM  
**To:** Jackson Ewing  
**Subject:** File 25-0980

Dear Mr. Ewing,

Please consider this my written comment opposing Springwood Gardens Development for the following reasons:

I am low income senior citizen I have lived here for 35 yrs and I planned to retire here however the increase in property taxes will force me to sell my home.

I have witnessed a little girl hit on Marion St NE she landed in the culvert the traffic on Marion is already horrible and dangerous we have kids, walkers and animals everywhere 330 more vehicles traveling Marion St NE is insane and dangerous.

Fish and wild life wetlands will all be endangered as well.

Please reconsider this Development it will be detrimental to our neighborhood.

Sincerely,

Debra Arnold

**Jackson Ewing**

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**From:** Silvia Behrend <revdocsil@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, April 6, 2025 9:05 AM  
**To:** Jackson Ewing  
**Subject:** comment on Springwood proposal  
**Attachments:** Letter to Jackson Ewing.docx

Dear Mr. Ewing, I am both attaching my comments and objections and attaching the text.

Regarding File Number 25-0980

Dear Mr. Ewing,

I am voicing my objection to the proposed Springwood Gardens development.

A project of this size will drastically increase traffic dangers and pollution, negatively impact wildlife and local ecosystems, increase noise pollution, and will only exacerbate the affordable housing crisis we are experiencing. We also know there are other options that would not have these negative impacts on our community and wildlife. We have organized our letter to cover 7 topics to convince you to rethink this development:

- 1. This Housing Development Ignores Olympia's Promise to Work Towards Mitigating Climate Crisis**
- 2. Proposal Elements Out of Alignment or Compliance with City of Olympia Municipal Code**
- 3. Impact on Salmon Habitat & Setchfield Lake Ecosystem**
- 4. Impact of Traffic**
- 5. Increased Housing does NOT Increase Affordability**
- 6. Pacific Lifestyle Homes & Garrette Custom Homes Are Not Good Homes**
- 7. Reasonable Alternatives**

1. This Housing Development Ignores Olympia's Promise to Work Towards Mitigating Climate Crisis  
 US population is projected to flatten out and then decline in the next couple of decades. Read [here](#) (Article: U.S. Population Projected to Begin Declining in Second Half of Century) for more information. Regional population growth projections are based on the misconception about the vitality of the tech sector, which is due for a correction, presently [shedding thousands of jobs and paying lower salaries to new hires](#). This coincides with a massive increase in severe heatwaves and torrential precipitation as a result of climate breakdown. Rather than replacing urban forest with asphalt and a plan that's detrimental to the community, we need to be enhancing green space—our only buffer to severe heatwaves and weather events. This should coincide with the establishment of more community gardens, expansion of our trail system, and the creation of truly affordable and socialized housing in the downtown core by renovating existing vacant or single-story commercial real estate into multi-story apartments with courtyard gardens. [Seattle's Urban Heat Island Index \(UHI\) is 8.2 degrees](#)

[hotter on average](#) than surrounding green space, while national public health monitor Heat.gov notes that [UHI temperature spikes of 15 to 20 degrees have been observed](#). Urban heat islands are caused by a loss of tree cover, but also the overuse of asphalt, and by heat sources like cars and air conditioning units. A higher UHI increases strain on the power grid, acting as a threat multiplier by increasing the likelihood of power outages during severe weather events.

Additionally, according to the [Thurston Climate Action Plan](#), Olympia has made a 12 point commitment to mitigating climate crisis and related issues in Olympia. This development project is in direct conflict with eight of those twelve points:

1. Create vibrant centers, corridors, and neighborhoods while accommodating growth.
  - a. The development project will consist of cheaply built homes that maximize housing square footage on each minimally sized lot--not a vibrant center or corridor. This “growth” is not green by any means.
2. Preserve environmentally sensitive lands, farmlands, forest lands, prairies, and rural lands, and develop compact urban areas.
  - a. The development project sits on historic farmland and forestland which will be destroyed, not preserved, in this new development project.
3. Protect and improve water quality, including groundwater, rivers, streams, lakes and Puget Sound.
  - a. This development project is in marshy land (a non-irrigated blueberry bog sits in the middle of the proposed site), consists of riparian forest habitat, is directly adjacent to a wetland that feeds into a salmon-bearing stream no more than 300 meters away. Toxic runoff and groundwater from both the toxic materials being used to create these homes in addition to the addition of 50-70 more cars and ~339 more road trips per day will drastically harm, rather than improve, water quality.
4. Plan and act toward zero waste in the region.
  - a. The development project will result in plenty of waste, both during construction as they bulldoze an existing single family home, and two other dwellings that currently sit on the property, and as 39 new single family units contribute to increased waste.
5. Ensure that residents have the resources to meet their daily needs.
  - a. Residents of Olympia need clean air, clean water, green spaces, and climate mitigation plans. We do not need more poorly made, unaffordable homes that are not green.
6. Support a local food system to increase community resilience, health and economic prosperity.
  - a. As this site is historic farmland, it poses an opportunity to be a site that includes a community farm or garden space (see Reasonable Alternatives section for more).
7. Provide opportunities for everyone in the Thurston Region to learn about and practice sustainability.
  - a. If the City of Olympia invested in a green development project instead, we could work together to find opportunities for our neighbors both near and far to practice sustainable work in the form of farming or gardening, habitat restoration, etc.
8. Make strategic investments to advance sustainability regionally.
  - a. A greener or more affordable development project in this space could pose inspiration for regional residents near and far.

We urge the city to reconsider this development project in lieu of greener alternatives that would better benefit the city and our neighbors alike!

## 2. Proposal Elements Out of Alignment or Compliance with City of Olympia Municipal Code

## **A. Olympia Comprehensive Master Plan - Land Use and Urban Design**

The following is a list of Comprehensive Plan codes that we see as out of alignment with this development proposal. The Olympia Comprehensive Plan was adopted by Ordinance 6945 on December 16, 2014, and is current through Ordinance 7301, passed November 23, 2021.

PL5.5 Provide incentives and assistance for preserving, restoring, redeveloping and using historic buildings, districts, neighborhoods, streets, structures, objects and sites.

PL5.6 Support public or non-profit acquisition of the most important historic resources to ensure their preservation.

PL6.2 The design review process should recognize differences in the city with the objective of maintaining or improving the character and livability of each area or neighborhood

PL7.1 Provide urban green spaces in which to spend time. Include such elements as trees, garden spaces, variety of vegetation, water features, “green” walls and roofs, and seating.

PL7.2 Provide urban green spaces that are in people’s immediate vicinity and can be enjoyed or viewed from a variety of perspectives.

PL7.3 Establish a maximum distance to urban green space for everyone in the community.

PL7.4 Increase the area of urban green space and tree canopy within each neighborhood proportionate to increased population in that neighborhood.

PL7.5 Establish urban green space between transportation corridors and adjacent areas.

PL14.2 Concentrate housing into three high-density Neighborhoods: Downtown Olympia, Pacific/Martin/Lilly Triangle; and the area surrounding Capital Mall.

PL14.3 Preserve and enhance the character of existing Low-density Neighborhoods. Disallow medium or high-density development in existing Low-density Neighborhood areas except for Neighborhood Centers.

PL16.13 Encourage adapting non-residential buildings for housing.

PL20.1 Require development in neighborhoods to be of a type, scale, orientation, and design that maintains or improves the character, aesthetic quality, and livability of the neighborhood.

PL22.1 Use trees to foster a sense of neighborhood identity.

PL22.2 Identify, protect and maintain trees with historic significance or other value to the community or specific neighborhoods.

PL22.3 Encourage the use of appropriate fruit and nut trees to increase local food self-sufficiency.

PL25.3 Collaborate with community partners to ensure that everyone within Olympia is within biking or walking distance of a place to grow food.

PL25.8 Work with community organizations to develop strategies, measure, and set goals for increasing local food production.

PL25.9 Work with local governments throughout the region to help protect existing agricultural lands and develop and promote a vibrant local food economy.

PN2.1 Acquire and preserve land by a set of priorities that considers environmental benefits, such as stormwater management, wildlife habitat, or access to recreation opportunities.

PN6.4 Use regulations and other means to prevent a net loss in the function and value of existing wetlands, while striving to increase and restore wetlands over the long-term.

### 3. Impact on Salmon Habitat & Setchfield Lake Ecosystem

Mission Creek is a salmon-bearing stream that flows into Budd Inlet. Running just southwest of the development site, **it is connected via wetlands within the project bounds**. In the mid-2010s with support from the state Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO), the South Puget Sound Salmon Enhancement Group completed a \$200k [project](#) that restored tidal and fish access to the creek. Coho salmon and chum salmon have been documented to use the lower reaches of Mission Creek, and their passage upstream is only partially blocked by a culvert under Bethel Street. As such, full restoration faces lower hurdles compared to other more heavily impacted streams. Surveys by WDFW predict that this single barrier correction could potentially restore chum, coho, steelhead, and sea-run cutthroat to the upstream. Runoff from the housing development will likely enter into this stream system, impacting salmon habitat. The sediment associated with extensive construction and deforestation on the development site would be especially harmful to spawning. The proposed development does not adequately address the negative impacts to this system in terms of water quality, stream hydrology, and canopy cover, especially as extreme winter rain events and summer droughts increasingly alter stream flows and increase water temperatures.

The second salmon-bearing stream that could potentially be impacted is Ellis Creek, due to the project's proximity to the creek and Setchfield Lake. **At least \$1.3 million has been spent on restoring salmon in this waterway**. The creek maintains salmonid-bearing scour width parameters until it connects to Setchfield Lake, its headwaters. In 2006 with RCO support, the City of Olympia looked to [replace](#) two downstream culverts that prevented migration of chum salmon, coho salmon, cutthroat trout, rainbow trout and steelhead. Removal would restore access to 1.5 miles of largely intact habitat. According to the Recreation and Conservation Office's project description: "Rural zoning densities as well as stream and wetland buffers designated under Thurston County's Critical Areas Ordinance will protect the stream habitat outside of [Squaxin] park." **The Ellis Creek watershed is "one of the only nearly intact basins in Budd Inlet."** As barriers to full restoration are minimal, this makes the creek a priority for restoration according to SRFB funding metrics. The proposed development is set back from the lake itself, however it would destroy several acres of riparian woodland integral to the lake ecosystem. Further, **if developments such as Springwood Gardens continue to be approved, they will encircle Setchfield lake, drastically degrading ecosystem's capacity to support salmon** and a myriad other native species. Therefore it is of critical importance that the proposed plan not be implemented. Any development must be aligned with ongoing salmon recovery efforts in the area.

Additionally, as a wetland specialist noted, for years, the developers have been swallowing up land for housing, and the only land left for developers to use is land that was never a good investment to begin with. All the good land for new development is gone. The only land left is land that builders do not like to build on due to so many environmental issues. The proposed development area is one of them. The water level of Setchfield lake is only 5-8 feet lower than the land surrounding it. This is known as a Kettle Lake because all the rain water runoff eventually seeps back into the lake due to the surrounding layers of land and its composition. The surrounding land is therefore riparian habitat integral to the lake system itself. Moreover, it is wet, with open pools of standing water on the ground for a significant amount of the year.

#### 4.0 Impact of Increased Traffic

Traffic studies have determined that a linear relationship exists between increased traffic and frequency of vehicle-pedestrian accidents. See for example this chart and quotations from Wier et al. Published in *Accident Analysis & Prevention*, February 2009.

“A scatter plot of traffic volume by vehicle-pedestrian injury collisions shows a positive linear association. [...] Consistent with previous national and international findings, our study provides additional evidence that traffic volume is a primary environmental cause of vehicle-pedestrian injury collisions at the area level.”

#### 5. Increased Housing does NOT Increase Affordability

We recognize that these homes will also do nothing to amend the housing crisis we are in. They are clearly not affordable nor quality homes that will serve to increase neighbor's property tax such that some are forced to move.

Regardless, the increase of housing (even affordable housing) in Olympia does not address the housing crisis. Olympia's specific housing crisis is fueled by several factors, including:

- Real estate speculation (in March 2023, investors accounted for 27% of all single-family home purchases [in the US] [1])
- Airbnb's (2.25 million homes in the US are Airbnbs--this doesn't count Vrbo, Guesty, Vacasa, or any other AirBnB alternatives [2])
- Non-residential use of homes (Nearly 1/3 of the 62 homes in the south Capital neighborhood are owned or used by lobbyists, corporations, or unions--meaning they are not used as houses but as overnight accommodations or meeting spaces for businesses [3]).

While the idea that increased supply will meet demand and increase affordability can be applied to a variety of different products in our economy, housing is not one of them. This is for a couple reasons.

1. Land is subject to what is called a “natural monopoly” because there is only a finite amount of land in any given area. More housing can be built but there is no way to increase the supply of land to meet demand. Without price controls, land will actually skyrocket in value as density increases.
2. Housing is treated as an investment. Speculators and wealthy investors buy up housing and hold it until they can get a better price for it later. They treat homes like stocks. This means any lull in market rate will be met with investors simply squatting on their investments until the market rate increases again. And if market rates do actually drop, which only happens during a crisis, investors will attempt to seize all the available housing for the same reason that people buy stock when a highly profitable firm suffers a temporary drop in its price. They will then rent out their investment property as a landlord or sell the investment property when they can make a lot of money off that home.

All this to say: there is no market solution to housing affordability, because [decommodification is the only proven strategy for creating truly affordable housing](#). The creation of more market-rate homes

will simply drive up the cost of living of the area—it will NOT make homes more affordable for working families. Additionally, the increase of property taxes that coincide with increased expensive development means that working-class families and long-term residents are more likely to be pushed out of their own homes as they aren't able to keep on top of increased monthly bills. We need only look at other urban regions that grew quickly and increased housing extensively (like Portland and Seattle) to see this trend that more homes in urban regions with growing populations increase the price of those homes, increasing the cost of living, while also decreasing the quality of life for those living there (due to lack of green spaces, increased traffic, increased noise, environmental pollution, etc).

So, instead of increased housing development, I see a plethora of easier solutions to the housing affordability problem. In Olympia's downtown core, we could emulate and expand upon efforts like [House Our Neighbors](#) and [Seattle Social Housing](#), two initiatives which are balancing climate-smart design with truly affordable, decommodified housing. Other ideas include: below-market rent control, eliminating the use of homes not as homes, creating a time limit (10 months?) on a home being allowed to be vacant before it is converted into affordable, below-market housing (for sale or for rent), a standard basic income, decreasing prices (rent or sale) on buildings that have been vacant for years and converting them into lower-profit commercial business & affordable below-market housing (this piece is actually in Olympia's current Comprehensive Plan!), outlawing anyone from owning a home who does not live in the region (city, county, state, or even country--anything would be better than what we have now) where the home is, making landlordism a non-profit venture with a focus on housing people rather than prioritizing rent increases to match market rates...

A combination of these and similar ideas seems to me to be the best way to work towards a root cause of housing unaffordability, which is essentially that wage increases haven't been anywhere close to matching housing price increases in many decades. And that wealthy people treat housing like stocks and buy it all up.

## 6. Pacific Lifestyle Homes & Garrette Custom Homes Are Not Good Homes

*"This builder is going to rip you off and your documents that you sign will hamstring what you can do legally. I would find a different builder no matter the price point you're looking to build in."*

Garrette Custom Homes has a reputation that speaks for itself. Their [Yelp Page](#) shows a 2.5 star rating, with horror stories from reviewers. Of the staff, one reviewer writes:

**"Our sales guy (Tom) was fired after lying to several clients. Our contract was laced with problems and we had hundreds of emails discussing scopes of work or product selection that were all lies.** Our site manager was fired after not showing up to our red line meeting. Our interim site manager (Brian) only worked with us long enough to get the dirt work and foundation done. **During this time, they ran \$70k over budget on dirt work and didn't tell us until a future scheduled meeting.** This far exceeded our reserve fund and could not be included in the loan. Our next site manager lasted about 3 weeks before he quit in the middle of framing (Paul). Our next site manager (David) was new to the company and showed zero leadership skills when with the sub-contractors. Under David's supervision work was shoddy and the site was unsanitary. We had laborers pooping in the wetland, urinating under the house leaving puddles of piss on the vapor barrier, we had 3" trim on one side of a window and 2" on the other. The warranty person (Melina) who was horrible to work with and eventually fired after she tried to break into our house with the painters while we were on vacation so they could do touch up work. We had this on video and had to call top level management

at Garrett to get resolution. The new warranty person (Holly) spent the next 12 months ghosting us and playing dumb on every problem.”

Of the workmanship, this reviewer writes:

“Buyer beware. Bought a brand new Garrette home last February. Beautiful home, great floorplan, but many, many, many issues with finishing work. Mostly small detail work, though **there was a large drainage and run off issue that has cost us personally over \$40,000 to date to fix.** It appears that there was no follow up on any of the work that contractors did. **Almost every issue is still unresolved from our 60 day walk through and now approaching one year in the house.** I understand that covid slowed things down, but Customer Service is non-existent. Simple communication is all together missing. I'd be very careful before making a purchase.”

The other reviews echo the same frustrations:

“This was our first home-building experience and it was very disappointing to say the least. The construction and project team were terrible, if they were around long enough to see updates through. **There were lots of turnover with the folks we worked with, which is very telling about the lack of management support.** Buyers in our property were promised the surrounding fence would be fixed by the site manager but when he left the company, Garrett said they wouldn't fix it. They also installed the wrong cabinet in my laundry room (doesn't line up with the wall) and they refuse to fix it. This was escalated to the manager supporting our property, Brian, but he clearly had no intention on trying to address our concerns and brushed us off. **Because we had such a terrible experience, I won't be recommending the services of Garrett or Pacific Lifestyle homes to family or friends.**”

Meanwhile, Pacific Lifestyle Homes also has a reputation that speaks for itself. Their [Yelp Page](#) shows a 2.6 star rating, with horror stories from reviewers. One reviewer writes:

“Lack of finishing detail. **Lived in this new construction home for less than one year and compared to other national builders buying from PLH is not worth the extra money.** During walkthrough they will say if you can't see the defect from a certain distance it isn't going to be worked on. I'll include photos but you can definitely tell they just rush builds out. This includes dry paint on carpet, mice dropping issue during inspection in the crawl space they responded that they didn't see any when they went down. Now as a more seasoned home owner mice do hide in the daytime and have caught over 50 in the crawl space. Very poor paint in the garage with dried paint drip. Another image includes the center of our fireplace with the wood being cut very unevenly.”

Another writes,

“I have been dealing with a poorly constructed home built in late 2022 by Garrette Custom Homes and purchased from Pacific Lifestyle Homes in the Ridgefield WA area. **A repeatedly leaking roof and mold issues have been going on since the house was built creating extended problems of getting the warranty repair work done in a timely manner.** 2 1/2 months in each occurrence with two different rental tenants being unable to use areas of the house is unacceptable. If you are planning to purchase a new or existing home, first look at the reviews and complaints about Pacific Lifestyle Homes, at the B.B.B. website before committing your self; make sure to completely read the 2-10 warranty offering as well.”

It goes on:

“**I would not build with this company.** We walked through our home during the process and had to keep pointing out mistakes where they left off outlets, windows to shower and smurf tub for TV, ect. so nice to catch a few things wrong during building. Then when we arrived to get our keys. There was

paint all in the carpet walls bowed from sheetrock not being hung correctly and rooms and ceilings painted incorrect and insulation under the house hanging from the floor where it fell off.ECT. When we pointed these things out they said they would fix it by giving us a check. which we wanted things fixed in the home so it was nice, not money. When the manager went to get ok from their company we got nothing and the video on camera system was erased of the painter dripping all over. (...) The floor plan is great, I just wish it would have been built by a company that had quality houses as important, not their pocket book. Please do your homework before making this mistake.”

In conclusion, we want housing to be provided here that is well-built, quality craftsmanship, and that will last for decades to come. The residents of Olympia deserve that. There is plenty of evidence that Pacific Lifestyle Homes & Garrette Custom Homes do not have that reputation, and trust, of the communities where they have worked before. Like named before, we need accessible, affordable housing - not housing that has a reputation of being hastily and inefficiently built, that costs residents even more money to fix (on top of being pricey and inaccessible homes).

## 7. Reasonable Alternatives

For all the reasons listed above, we hope you can now recognize how this particular development project will negatively impact the City of Olympia in a vast variety of ways. We propose the following alternative development projects for your team to consider.

### Smaller, Green Housing Development!

A smaller development project cultivated with environmental priorities would be a great boon to the neighborhood and habitat that the current project threatens. We can look at [Woodard Housing Co-op](#) for inspiration: buildings made with green materials and outfitted with solar power, where 18 residential units are integrated with green space, community gardens, and forest. We know this kind of project is possible in Olympia, because Woodard already exists.

Green development should be the priority of the City of Olympia so that it remains in alignment with its Climate Action Plan. A smaller development project would be cheaper in both the short and long term (remember Garrette Custom Homes reputation for building poorly made homes that will need ongoing maintenance and upkeep!). Additionally, as inflation increases, as tariffs impact building materials, and with the threat of a looming recession, we should be looking to smaller, more affordable development projects. With the ongoing threat of climate crisis and drastic weather events, we should prioritize environmental standards within all of those development projects as well.

### A Park and Restoration Project for Wildlife Including Salmon!

Another alternative could be a new park or an extension of the beloved Springwood Parcel across the street from this planned development project. The origin story of this parcel is actually quite similar to this development plan. An owner of a broad acreage of land sold it to the city, and it was converted into a gorgeous park teeming with a diverse array of species and life. We suggest that instead of a collection of poorly made homes packed in like sardines, that the City consider extending the Springwood Parcel, allowing the marshy meadow and nearby wetlands and (generally essential ecosystem that this development project intends to impeded upon) to help protect vital salmon, owls, frogs, and other wildlife habitat. Afterall, this was owner’s intended use of the space! Additionally, the parcel upon which this development project is intended to be built feeds water into both Mission Creek and Ellis Creek, home for local salmon to spawn. A new park in combination with a salmon restoration project that works to alter the existing culvert barriers would see salmon spawning further up both the creeks and even returning to Setchfield lake—something that hasn’t happened hundreds of years.

Community Garden or Farm!

There are no eastside community gardens, and we know that the City of Olympia has recently completed an Urban Farm Park feasibility study, which pointed to the need for a site that could provide mixed functions of farmer training (including youth farmers), food production, land and garden access, educational values, community gathering, etc. They emphasized interrelated food security and ecological and community benefits, especially for marginalized groups. Although the city doesn't have the resources to move this forward at this time, we believe the space designated for Springwood Gardens could actually become a garden!

The neighbors expressing their refusal of this development project are made up of a wide array of environmentalists, working families, architects, artists, musicians, writers, construction workers, architects, and activists. We are creative thinkers, and we would be more than happy to work with the City of Olympia to find a solution that benefits us all.

For these and many other reasons, we do not want this development project to take place. You can expect my presence at the Public Hearing to bring up these and more points.

Sincerely,

Dr Silvia Behrend  
360-259-2971

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## Jackson Ewing

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**From:** Leah Ouellette <springwoodcg@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, April 5, 2025 10:10 AM  
**To:** Jackson Ewing  
**Subject:** Springwood parcel

Jackson Ewing,

I am the property owner of 1735 Springwood Ave Ne. I have lived in the Ne neighborhood for 25 years and this spot for 6. I bought this parcel/home to grow my outdoor preschool business. I am very concerned about the size and quality of development being proposed for my neighboring lot.

The main concern I have is the water management. My lot is WET. I run a sump most of the year, if I don't my basement (built in 1930) will flood massively. My school children dig a hole in the yard, they find water. Our water table is very high most of the year.

Not only is the water a concern but also the safety of the Eastside neighborhood. I moved off of Miller Ave Ne mainly because of the speeding and unsafe traffic conditions for my preschool children and their families. I approached the city 15 years ago to install speed bumps and was told I had to raise the money myself for installation. Below are the requests myself and neighbors have made in regards to this development. Our goal is to make sure the water has an actual place to go and making repairs to a system that is lacking before a giant development makes it worse. We want safe roads and streets for our children and neighbors to walk to parks, to school and for general activity. Not only do us humans want a safe place but the animals too. My property and the surrounding land is home to deer, coyotes, Douglas squirrels, every songbird and birds of prey, owls, long toed newts and rough belly salamanders toads and tree frogs on my property. It would be a major loss to those creatures to lose their wooded space for a road a few homes. The property proposed to demolish is mostly native plants, another loss to the land.

1. The C Frontage Section on C4.0, showing roadpavement edge improvements, curb, landscape area, and sidewalk, all stop abruptly at the western end of the development line.

A. Pedestrians of all ages, school students enroute to their bus, anyone walking to the bus stop on Bethel, will be then forced off the sidewalk and out into the substandard existing narrow portion of Springwood Ave trafficenroute to Bethel and back when returning.

B. The City of Olympia, as part of this Preliminary Review, must require the developer to acquire the land necessary for the continuation of the road lane, edge improvements, catch basins, curb, and safe sidewalk, design to the corner of Springwood Ave NE and Bethel, and then complete this extension as part of the Development.

C. In addition to the above, speed deterrents such as speed bumps need to be required as a provision of the Development approval for additional safety of all concerned.

D. In addition to the above, roadside water drainage must be adequate to provide for drainage on the north side of Springwood.

E. Note that the existing Springwood Ave NE paved width will not safely accommodate utility vehicles, emergency vehicles, various delivery vehicles, and common automobiles passage at the same time.

We, and our neighbors, await your response, and implementation of the action necessary for the above Development upgrades.

Please add me to any email list so i can be kept in the loop.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Leah Ouellette

## Jackson Ewing

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**From:** Richard Williams <richardjohnwilliams3@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, April 4, 2025 3:58 PM  
**To:** mscheibmeir@ci.olympia.wa.us; Kelly Green; rvanderpool@ci.olympia.wa.us; Jim Cooper; Jay Burney; Clark Gilman; Dani Madrone; Yến Huỳnh; Dontae Payne; Jackson Ewing  
**Subject:** Springwook Garden plat concerns/formal comments  
  
**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

City of Olympia Community Planning & Development

4 April 2025

Dear City Officials,

I am writing to you today regarding the proposed Springwood Meadow Development located at 1609 Springwood Ave NE Olympia, WA. 98506. I have numerous concerns regarding this proposal and hope the City of Olympia employees, elected officials, vendors / contractors, etc. will consider.

I am a lifetime resident of Olympia and raise my 9-year-old daughter in the Northpointe neighborhood (at 1614 Quasar Way, directly adjacent to the proposed site). One of the greatest benefits of this neighborhood is the privacy and safety provided by being in a dead-end loop, with no thru traffic.

Here are several concerns:

### **Wetlands, water pooling, water runoff**

Even though a project may be 'within minimum' requirements due to current codes and regulations does not mean that it should be allowed to move forward without looking at the specific area. I am surprised that a professional company can survey an area and claim that there is little to no concern for major wetland areas as there is free standing / pooled water currently on the proposed development as well as areas adjacent to this development. I would please ask the city employees, elected officials, etc. to take an actual walk on this property and surrounding areas. It is well within the City's authority to require additional surface areas / lots for the excess water runoff that will occur – let's make this the out-of-town developer's responsibility now and not on the taxpayer's shoulders later. Therefore, please consider this notice from our HOA to the City and request that this is handled correctly now to avoid possible future litigation. Upon purchasing my home in 2020, I had to install a sump-pump system from the excessive water collection and runoff into the crawlspace of my home. I do not want to see this problem

exacerbated by the proposed developers' lack of green space between the developments, etc. The proposed building of homes would place construction directly behind my home and would surely increase our already concerning water runoff issues. A buffer area of ~20 feet would help mitigate this problem, as well as providing a wildlife passage area for the deer, racoons, coyotes, rabbits, and countless other species that I know occupy the proposed building site.

I ask that the city require an independent wetland and water runoff assessment, and this should occur during the rainy season (ideally between December and February) to fully grasp the consequences of building on the proposed site. Conducting this assessment in the spring or summer will very likely yield false results to the issues stated above.

### **Traffic (vehicle and pedestrian)**

The traffic study shows an increase of 300+ daily trips through this area (please think of where you currently live and try to imagine 300 extra vehicles driving by). We would ask that neither of the proposed street extensions (Marion and Central) be granted. The City has allowed to mitigate this in the past with several connected developments. We only ask for this same consideration permitted to developments which are within a 2 mile radius of this proposed development. Also, there are at least 6 other neighboring developments that do not permit through access. It is well within the City's authority to require the developers to widen their proposed roadways within their proposed development to allow better emergency personnel access and not put this burden on taxpayers living outside this proposed development. With wider streets, there would be no need for vehicular through-traffic. I have heard that the City is not requiring a sidewalk from the proposed development to the main arterial street (Bethel). If true, I find it hard to believe that the City would not require the developer to complete a sidewalk from their development to Bethel (the City has an easement currently). This will allow the increased pedestrian traffic from their proposed development, to include the safety of school age children, etc. safer access. It is well within the City's authority to require this request of increased pedestrian safety.

The smaller width of the proposed streets are purely for increased numbers of lot developments (i.e. increased profit) and do nothing to increase livability or safety. The City should require all the proposed roadway widths to be increased to allow for better firetruck, school bus, garbage collection etc. access. It is well within the City's authority to require this improvement as to not put the burden on surrounding

neighborhoods of increased and unsafe vehicular traffic (i.e. if the developers widen their streets then there would be no need to have the Marion and Central Street extensions open for vehicle traffic). The Northpointe neighborhood is bustling with activities in our streets from the number of families riding bicycles, throwing a football, or a pickup game of basketball. Connecting to these neighborhoods unnecessarily puts our families at unneeded risk.

Unfortunately, the City has a history of approving / allowing a proposed development to move forward since it meets “current guidelines and regulations” without any consideration of additional measures listed above. The City has the authority to require additional items above and beyond the minimum regulations when it is warranted. We believe these additional requests are warranted and ask the City to require them. We feel that without these additional requirements the aftermath of this proposed development puts extreme pressure on the City’s budget and ultimately all taxpayers within our city as the City will be responsible for any issues which arise after this developer has made their money and left. I invite each of you to personally investigate our very own development within Northpointe HOA.

We hope that any or all of you take us up on our offer and look forward to seeing you (boots on the ground) soon. Please do not just sit back and take the submitted reports at face value. Come and see for yourselves the wildlife that flourishes on this site (which is specifically listed as not there), come and see for yourself the free standing and pooled water that is currently there and only stands to increase (which again is not listed in the submitted reports). The above concerns are real and must be mitigated by the ones proposing the development NOW and not put on the shoulders of taxpayers LATER through litigation, etc. I thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

Richard J. Williams – Concerned Neighbor

[RichardJohnWilliams3@gmail.com](mailto:RichardJohnWilliams3@gmail.com)

360.920.0091

1614 Quasar Way NE

Olympia, WA 98506

## Jackson Ewing

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**From:** Jennifer Kocina <jenniferjoy777@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, April 4, 2025 2:10 PM  
**To:** Jackson Ewing  
**Subject:** Springwood Gardens

Dear Mr. Ewing,

My husband and I reside at 1602 Quasar Way. The proposed development could affect our lives drastically. We are now living on a quiet dead end that could become a through street. Our private backyard could become wide open and devoid of wildlife and plant life.

Most importantly, I would hope the laurel hedge that runs right behind our backyard fence, and along the length of Quasar Way, that is home to hundreds of species of birds and small animals, could remain in place.

Secondly, I would hope traffic in and out of Springwood Gardens would not have to be routed through the quiet streets of Northpointe through an extended Central Ave. A road in and out on Marian ( with speed bumps) and off Bethel should suffice with a foot path at Central. After all, Northpoint has only had one road in and out for 25 years now.

Thank you for your kind consideration.

Sincerely,  
Ms.Jennifer Kocina  
360-490-5785

## Jackson Ewing

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**From:** Aud Seamons <draudrules@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, April 4, 2025 10:23 AM  
**To:** Jackson Ewing  
**Subject:** Comments about the Springwood Gardens Proposed Development 25-0980

April 4, 2025

Dear Jackson Ewing and City Officials who may read my comments,

I am writing to you today regarding the proposed Springwood Meadow Development located at 1609 Springwood Ave NE Olympia, WA. 98506. I have numerous concerns regarding this proposal and hope the City of Olympia employees, elected officials, vendors / contractors, etc. will consider my concerns.

I have lived in Olympia since 2010. My husband and I raised our 2 children here from when they were 5 and 3 years old, with the majority of their lives so far lives in the City of Olympia on Central St NE (Northpointe HOA), a development which borders the above proposed Springwood development. Our house is located near the site of the proposed Central extension.

Our house is also where our kids, neighbor kids and current children in our neighborhood spent/spend many hours playing games outside. All of these activities were/are safe because there was not a through street at Central and it is a dead end spot great for playing a variety of games: basketball, soccer, baseball (wiffle ball), nerf gun wars, skateboarding, biking, pickleball, hide & seek and frisbee. Our neighborhood is a safe and destination walking place for many walkers, joggers, and dog walkers from all the surrounding areas; is a favorite spot for trick-or-treating; and a place where kids can go out and roam in a semi-contained place where everyone knows who they are. The current version of the proposed Springwood development plans would drastically impact the quality of life within our neighborhood and would decrease the quality of life for all of our neighbors, including those who may live in Springwood in the future. I am writing to express my concerns about the proposed development.

### ***Wetlands, bird and wildlife habitat, water runoff***

The proposed area for the new development is very wet. The neighbors on Quasar way all have sump pumps that pump a lot of water into the ditch running through their front yards all late fall, winter and spring. There is free standing / pooled water currently on the proposed development as well as areas adjacent to this development.

The alder stands, and black cottonwoods on the development site provide habitat for an amazing variety of birds, many that I noted were not listed on the species lists compiled by the developer. There are many species of migrating birds that feed in those stands including multiple species of warblers, vireos, kinglets, rufous hummingbirds, downy and hairy woodpeckers, and northern flickers. Small raptors and owls also perch and hunt in those tree stands. I have regularly seen or heard Great horned owls, barred owls (though they don't like to hang out when the great horned owls set up camp), merlins, Coopers hawks and sharpshinned hawks. I believe that removing all of the alders would significantly impact the bird habitat in this area. I suggest including a larger tree-tract buffer between the development and the Northpointe neighborhood to at least preserve a portion of this habitat. Please ask the city employees to visit this property and surrounding areas before making decisions about this development. Excess water

runoff impacting existing housing and loss of habitat for resident and migrating birds should be given more consideration than the out-of-town developer's pocket book.

### ***Traffic (vehicle and pedestrian)***

The traffic study is showing an increase of 300 + daily trips through this area (please think of where you currently live and try to imagine 300 extra vehicles driving by). I ask that neither of the proposed street extensions (Marion and Central) be granted. There are multiple neighborhoods in our areas (e.g., Miller Ave. to Quince St) that allow **pedestrian access only** and the Jabbok Way allows **emergency vehicles only**. Please allow this option that has been permitted to developments which are within a 2 mile radius of this proposed development. Also, there are at least 6 other neighboring developments that do not permit through access.

I recognize the importance of our emergency personnel in protecting life and property and ask that the Marion extension allow for emergency vehicle and pedestrian/bike access only and the Central extension allow pedestrian/bike access only. This will make both neighborhoods more friendly to kids playing safely in the neighborhood, walkers and bikers and deemphasize all focus on vehicles. We as a City and a community should be moving away from always prioritizing vehicle access to everything.

Please request the developer to widen their proposed roadways within their proposed development to allow better emergency personnel access and not put this burden on taxpayers living outside this proposed development. With wider streets in the proposed development there would be no need for vehicular through traffic.

It appears that the original developer plans did not include making Marion/Central St through streets; this was a City request because those streets are slated to be neighborhood collectors in the existing (and soon-to-be-updated) city plan. The City should be forward-thinking in this development instead of focusing on a plan prioritizing vehicles over safety/quality of life for people. The developer initially recognized that it is much nicer for residents to not have to live on busy roads. Why not support this line of thinking? Further, the obvious route that everyone takes southbound from existing neighborhoods, including Northpointe, all lead to Bethel Street. Why not provide easy direct access from the new development to the main arterial route! The City is NOT requiring road improvements all the way out to Bethel which is absurd. Also, the City is not requiring a sidewalk from the proposed development to the main arterial street (Bethel). The City should require the developer to complete a sidewalk from their development to Bethel (the City has an easement currently). This will allow the increased pedestrian traffic from their proposed development, to include the safety of the school age children, etc. and safer access to the main arterial route.

The smaller width of the proposed streets in the new development are purely for increased numbers of lot developments (i.e., increased profit) and does nothing to increase livability or safety. The City should require all of the proposed roadway widths to be increased to allow for better firetruck, school bus, etc. access. This burden of increased and unsafe vehicular traffic should not be placed on surrounding neighborhoods of (i.e., if the developers widen their streets then there would be no need to have the Marion and Central street extensions open for vehicle traffic).

### ***Affordable Housing***

The City has a commitment to increase affordable housing. The housing units proposed for the new

development do not even come close to "affordable". This is disappointing and highlights the willingness of the City to help an out-of-town developer maximize their own profits rather than addressing safety and affordability for the people that live here. Wider roads, smaller, more affordable houses or duplexes would improve quality of life, safety for people, and affordability. I read an executive summary prepared by some of our neighbors and appreciate their recommendations and thoughtfulness about this proposed development. Though I was not in town to be able to sign their document in time for them to turn it into the city, I support most of their recommendations and will reiterate the components of their recommendations here:

### **1.Environmental and Water Needs**

- a. Require state-of-the-art surface and groundwater mitigation measures, e.g., multiple stormwater catchment basins, permeable paving for all driveways, new streets/extensions
- b. Expand/enhance existing wetlands and construct new wetlands (reduce flooding, increase water quality, enhance habitat quality)
- c. Preserve all important environmental features (trees, shrubs, wetlands, habitat patches/corridors)

### **2.Traffic Needs**

- a. Pedestrian path for Central Extension (rather than a new street to Springwood)
- b. 1407 sidewalk/curb extension out to Bethel
- c. Speedbumps on Springwood, Marion (if extension is required), and nearby on Bethel
- d. Marked crosswalk at intersection of Springwood and Bethel to accommodate school children and bus riders
- e. Placement of IT bus shelter at same intersection on Bethel

### **3. Springwood Parcel/Park Needs**

- a. Tract D enlarged to include open area/playground (adjacent to Springwood Parcel across the road), including the marked trees to be saved
- b. Helps satisfy a city goal of a park (with open space and wooded area) in walking distance for everyone.
- c. Increased park maintenance and implement measures to mitigate increased visitation by people and dogs to protect from negative impacts

### **4. Types of Housing Desired**

- a. Some units to be permanently affordable (benefit to the city)
- b. Some townhouses (increase affordability, increase internal open space, reduce environmental impact)
- c. Mixed-use development to include fewer homes and alternative community land uses
- d. Cluster housing units with open spaces between (increase livability and reduce environmental impact)
- e. Eco-friendly, quality housing

I respectfully submit these comments, concerns and recommendations for your consideration.

Sincerely,  
Audrey Seamons (2145 Central St NE)

Sent from Samsung Galaxy smartphone.  
Get [Outlook for Android](#)

## Jackson Ewing

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**From:** Nena Vice President <nenavicepresident@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, March 29, 2025 5:42 PM  
**To:** Nena Vice President  
**Subject:** Neighborhood updates - new residential development proposed in NE Olympia

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Dear neighbors and friends,

I hope this note finds you well. Since 1989, the NE Neighborhood Association (NENA) has been working to make our neighborhood a safer, more beautiful, more walkable, and more vibrant place to live. And now, as most of NENA's board members have moved out of the neighborhood, its future is uncertain. To begin the process of rebuilding NENA, I'll be reaching out to you again in the next few weeks with updates on our current projects, and with ideas on how you can get involved in shaping the future of your neighborhood.

I'm writing to you now to make you aware, if you weren't already, about a proposed development in our neighborhood called Springwood Gardens. Garrette Custom Homes has applied to the City of Olympia for permits to subdivide the property at [1609 Springwood Avenue NE](#) into 39 single family residential lots. To provide access to the new homes, Marion and Central streets would be extended to the north from Quasar Way to connect with Springwood Avenue. At the end of this email, I've pasted in some drawings and maps showing the project location. An informational meeting about the project was held on March 19th, and **the initial public comment period for the project closes at 5 pm on Monday, April 7**. There will also be a public hearing about the project that has not been scheduled yet. An [article about the project](#) was published in The Olympian on March 23.

### ***How to provide comments and become a party of record...***

The City's lead planner for this project is Jackson Ewing - 360-570-3776 - [jweing@ci.olympia.wa.us](mailto:jweing@ci.olympia.wa.us). Comments on the project should be sent to him. You can also contact him if you have questions or if you want to be added as a party of record for the project. As a party of record, you'll receive notices about the project including information about the upcoming public hearing.

### ***For more information...***

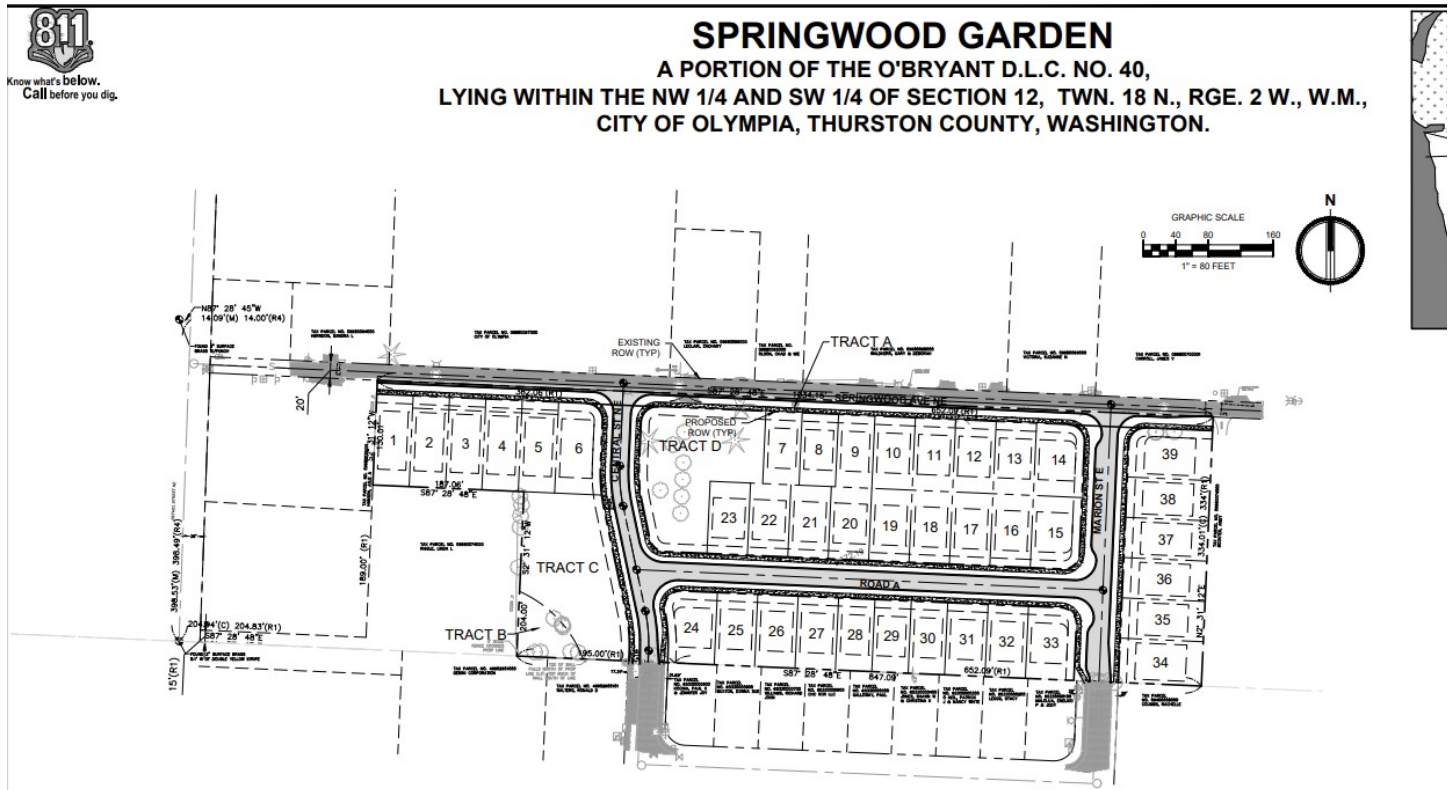
I've uploaded all the documentation I was able to find about the project on the City's website into this [Google Drive folder](#) to make it easier to access. These include [detailed site plans and maps](#), and reports and studies including the Critical Areas Assessment, landscaping and stormwater plans, and lots more. Most of this information can also be found on the [City's Permit Portal](#) for this project in the "Notes" section. In the portal, you'll also find a detailed list of approval steps and more background information.

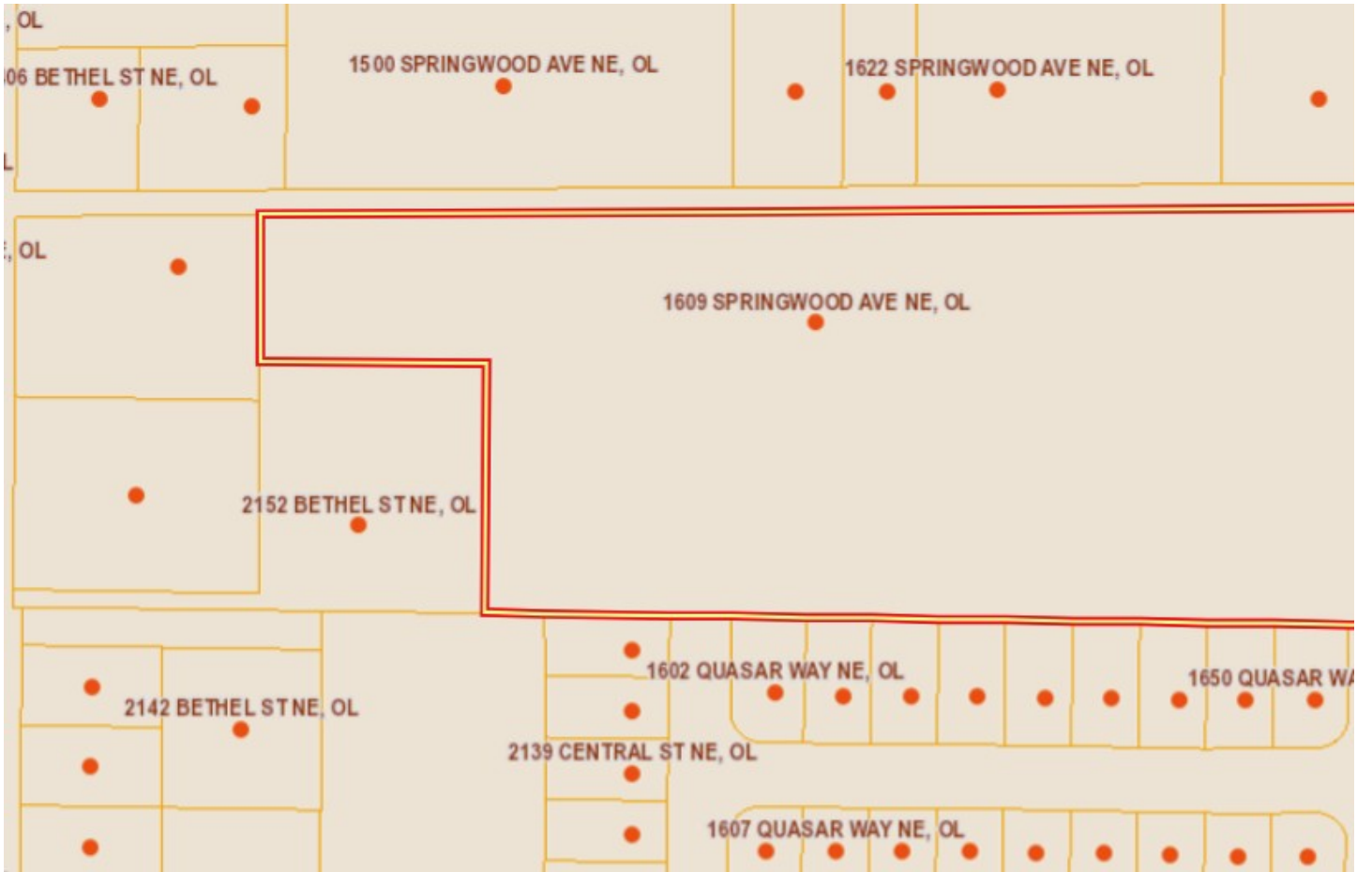
In addition, a group of neighbors with concerns about the project have set up a [BlueSky account](#) where you can connect with others you are tracking this project.

In community and with appreciation,

Peter Guttchen  
NENA Vice-President

The screenshots below show the site plan and the location of the proposed development. The first is the preliminary plat plan provided by the developer showing where the home sites would be located, followed by a map from Thurston Geodata that shows the parcel boundaries, followed by a screenshot of the area from Google Maps.







## Jackson Ewing

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**From:** Nancy Neel <nancy.neel3@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 28, 2025 4:37 PM  
**To:** Jackson Ewing  
**Subject:** Fwd: Springwood Garden plat

>  
> Dear Mr Ewing  
> I am opposed to the proposal to open Central St NE and the Springwood  
> housing project This opening will impact 18 houses on Quasar and 18 houses on Bright Star and 5 on Central.  
> If only Marion St NE is cut though Northpointe would be far less  
> impacted with no detrimental effect on the Springwood development  
> Thank you Nancy Neel  
> 1619 Quasar Way NE  
> Olympia, WA 98506

**Jackson Ewing**

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**From:** Josh Meek <joshismeek@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 28, 2025 8:38 AM  
**To:** Jackson Ewing  
**Subject:** Springwood Gardens Public Comment

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Hello,

I'm writing to express my personal comments about the Springwood Gardens subdivision proposal. While I don't necessarily agree with or look forward to the proposed subdivision, I recognize the rights of the landowner/developer and believe that if they are in compliance with all applicable rules and regulations that there is not much for me to say.

However, as a home owner on Marion St NE, I am concerned about the impacts of increased traffic on our local road system. These roads are already not in the best of shape in regards to surfacing/potholes, are narrow with minimal/intermittent sidewalks, are experiencing fairly heavy traffic with folks travelling above the speed limit with seemingly minimal enforcement, and frankly, can be a bit terrifying as the father of a young kid that just wants to walk around the neighborhood safely. I can't imagine adding the amount of cars associated with 39 new homes to this existing road situation. All that to say, if this project goes through, please consider appropriate traffic control measures and mitigations. As many neighbors have said, the current North Pointe subdivision is a bit of a rare gem in that kids can play safely in/around the subdivision loop; connecting Marion and Central would certainly change that and likely not for the better. My family will likely look into moving elsewhere if this project moves forward without appropriate mitigations, as ensuring a safe and walkable community is a high priority for us.

Please consider traffic controls and mitigations if this project moves ahead. Thank you for your consideration.

Josh Meek

**Jackson Ewing**

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**From:** Debbie Arnold <meinoly1959@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 21, 2025 2:36 PM  
**To:** Jackson Ewing  
**Subject:** Re: Springwood Gardens plat 25-0980  
**Attachments:** Screenshot\_20250318-083148\_Nextdoor.jpg

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

Mr. Ewing,

Thank you for your response. After reading the letter from the City of Olympia again dated March 10, 2025 re: Springwood Garden Project I am writing to request a list of homes that this letter was mailed to, specifically neighbors on Marion St N.E. Olympia Wa.

If you remember I mentioned this at the meeting on March 19, 2025 and you said you could get that to me as well as wetlands on the property my ex and I tried buying it and it had wetlands on it at the time the city if Olympia denied due to wetlands. Our business was SPSI Investors approximate date 1988 or 89.

Thank you,

Debra Arnold

On Wed, Mar 19, 2025, 1:06 PM Jackson Ewing <[jewing@ci.olympia.wa.us](mailto:jewing@ci.olympia.wa.us)> wrote:

Good afternoon,

Sometimes folks get cut off of the 300-foot mailing radius requirement that live nearby. The good thing is you are here at the right time, this is the very beginning of the review process.

Please try the link in the attached notice, if you are interested all project submittals have been uploaded to the public permit portal. To view all documents, including the site plan, SEPA checklist, and critical area report please use the following link and enter the project number 25-0980

[https://ci-olympia-wa.smartgovcommunity.com/ApplicationPublic/ApplicationSearch?query=25-0980&\\_\\_submitFormValidator\\_\\_=g1741986zgp578000t&\\_conv=1](https://ci-olympia-wa.smartgovcommunity.com/ApplicationPublic/ApplicationSearch?query=25-0980&__submitFormValidator__=g1741986zgp578000t&_conv=1)

You have been added to the party of record list for this project. This means that you will receive email notice of any future public processes. Including a future public hearing and decision.

Best regards,

**Jackson Ewing | Associate Planner**

City of Olympia Community Planning & Development Department

P.O. Box 1967 | [601 4th Avenue E | Olympia, WA 98507-1967](#)

(360) 570-3776

[jewing@ci.olympia.wa.us](mailto:jewing@ci.olympia.wa.us)

*\*All correspondence to and from this address is a public record*

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**From:** Debbie Arnold <[meinoly1959@gmail.com](mailto:meinoly1959@gmail.com)>

**Sent:** Tuesday, March 18, 2025 4:40 PM

**To:** Jackson Ewing <[jewing@ci.olympia.wa.us](mailto:jewing@ci.olympia.wa.us)>

**Subject:** Springwood Gardens plat

Deae Mr. Ewing,

My name is Debra Arnold I am located at [2013 Marion St NE Olympia Wa 98506](#).

I have lived here 35 yrs and I strongly oppose access to Marion St and North Pointe development for Springwood Gardens plat file number 25-0980 in the city of Olympia.

Having lived here for many years I've seen Marion St turn into a freeway I have seen a child hit, and more and an increase in traffic of 39 more homeowners and their family and friends traffic in this area is neither safe or sustainable.

I am also wondering why I did not recieve the letter attached as my home is on Marion St NE ? I got a copy from my neighbor.

Would you please email me the link to register for the Zoom meeting on 3/19/25?

Please consider this my written comment and add it to the file.

Thank you,

Debra Arnold

## Jackson Ewing

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**From:** Matt Newton <matthewnnewton@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, March 23, 2025 9:49 AM  
**To:** Jackson Ewing  
**Subject:** Springwood

I'm writing you to state my support for this project. We need more housing in Olympia to help with housing costs and inequality. We have been walking this neighborhood daily for the last 20 years. While we wish there were more sidewalks in NE Olympia, this part of the neighborhood has sidewalks and is right next to another existing development. I believe that we can not continue to deal with housing inequality while we create barriers to housing development. The current building codes in Olympia are incredibly successful in dealing with environmental concerns.

We welcome more neighbors.

Sincerely, Matt Newton

## Jackson Ewing

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**From:** Brit Schneider <brit.schneider@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, March 23, 2025 10:13 AM  
**To:** Jackson Ewing  
**Subject:** Questions for Application 25-0980 - Springwood

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Good Morning Jackson,

I have the following questions for you, regarding application 25-0980, on Springwood.

1. What is the date you have scheduled to do the environmental assessment?
2. Who will be leading the environmental assessment?
3. Which tribes have you reached out to for input, and who within the tribe have you contacted?

The following is not a question, but a comment.  
 Your office did not make the meeting accessible.  
 Here are the following ways it did not:

- Numerous people who will be impacted by this decision were not notified, and therefore were unaware there was a meeting.
- We were given notice of the meeting only 5 business days in advance
- The QR code to register for the meeting did not work
- The link to register for the meeting did not work
- Community members had difficulty logging on
- Some community members were skipped or not called on in the meeting to provide a comment
- You provided one meeting, which was held at 5:30 pm on a Wednesday, which is not accessible to all people (i.e., people who work evenings, people with children who do not have access to childcare)

I am copying the following from city government's own statement towards finalizing the Olympia's Community Values and Vision, which gathered feedback from Olympia residents about their vision for their community:

"The City of Olympia places a high priority on engaging community members early and often and regularly demonstrates how the voices of the community are heard. When issues come up, the City's healthy public participation process helps each segment of the community to understand the larger picture and the need to act in the best interest of the City as a whole. Olympia engages the public in major decisions through a variety of methods, including community conversations, public forums, and interest-based negotiation, and makes sure these community members know how their input was used. Because of this, the City has built trust with the community."

This is taken from [this](#) document.

The actions of your office build, or break trust with the Olympia community. The actions your office has taken so far regarding the decisions around this application lend to breaking trust, rather than building it.

I request that you and the applicant send out additional mailers, provide at least 3 additional meetings for feedback from the community given with at least two weeks advance notice, and that you center accessibility - offer meetings online with working registration links, offer meetings in person, provide childcare, offer meetings on the weekend and in the evening, on different days.

I also request that the open period for feedback be increased by at least three months.

I would like a response addressing each numbered question I wrote above, as well as your response to my requests about accessibility.

Thank you,  
Britany Schneider  
[brit.schneider@gmail.com](mailto:brit.schneider@gmail.com)

## Jackson Ewing

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**From:** kristen.mcclintock@gmail.com  
**Sent:** Saturday, March 22, 2025 3:32 PM  
**To:** Jackson Ewing  
**Subject:** Springwood parcel project

Regarding File Number 25-0980

Dear Mr. Ewing,

I am expressing deep concern at the prospect of the Springwood Gardens development plan.

A project of this size will drastically increase traffic dangers and pollution, negatively impact wildlife and local ecosystems, decrease property value, increase noise pollution, and will do nothing to help the housing crisis we are experiencing but will rather contribute to an increased cost of living in the area.

With the building of three new roads to accommodate 39 new units, we can expect traffic, car pollution, runoff, and car-related accidents to drastically increase. <sup>[a]</sup>

This neighborhood is prized for its green spaces and park-like setting, and these roads and units will destroy both meadow and forest—critical habitat for our wildlife and to mitigate extreme climate-related weather events like flooding or heat. <sup>[b][c]</sup>

The proximity of this project to Setchfield Lake which feeds into the salmon-bearing Ellis Creek, suggests we can expect negative impacts from car pollution to drastically decrease water quality, which could affect salmon downstream. <sup>[d][e]</sup>

The valuation of my property will likely see a decrease of 8%-20% as the natural setting of the meadow and forest that contributed to the value of my property will be destroyed. <sup>f</sup>

### **This Housing Development Ignores Olympia's Promise to work towards Mitigating Climate Crisis**

US population is projected to flatten out and then decline in the next couple of decades. Read [here](#) (Article: U.S. Population Projected to Begin Declining in Second Half of Century) for more information. This coincides with a massive increase in severe heatwaves and torrential precipitation as a result of climate breakdown. So rather than new housing, the planning priorities should be in fortifying and expanding green spaces which are the only buffer to severe heatwaves and weather events.

Additionally, according to the [Thurston Climate Action Plan](#), Olympia has made a 12 point commitment to mitigating climate crisis and related issues in Olympia. This development project is in direct conflict with ten of those twelve points: <sup>[g]</sup>

1. Create vibrant centers, corridors, and neighborhoods while accommodating growth.
  1. The development project will consist of poorly built homes packed in like sardines--not a vibrant center or corridor. This "growth" is not green by any means.
2. Preserve environmentally sensitive lands, farmlands, forest lands, prairies, and rural lands, and develop compact urban areas.
  1. The development project sits on historic farmland and forestland which will be destroyed, not preserved, in this new development project.
3. Protect and improve water quality, including groundwater, rivers, streams, lakes and Puget Sound.
  1. This development project is in marshy land (a non-irrigated blueberry bog sits in the middle of the proposed site), consists of riparian forest habitat, is directly adjacent to a wetland that feeds into a salmon-bearing stream no more than 300 meters away. Toxic runoff and groundwater from both the toxic materials being used to create these homes in addition to the addition of 50-70 more cars and ~339 more road trips per day will drastically harm, rather than improve, water quality.
4. Plan and act toward zero waste in the region.
  1. The development project will result in plenty of waste, both during construction as they bulldoze an existing single family home, and two other dwellings that currently sit on the property, and as 39 new single family units contribute to increased waste.
5. Ensure that residents have the resources to meet their daily needs.

1. Residents of Olympia need clean air, clean water, green spaces, and climate mitigation plans. We do not need more poorly-made, unaffordable <sup>[h]</sup>homes that are not green.
6. Support a local food system to increase community resilience, health and economic prosperity.
  1. As this site is historic farmland, it poses an opportunity to be a site for a community farm or garden space (see Reasonable Alternatives section for more).
7. Ensure that the region's water supply sustains people in perpetuity while protecting the environment.
  1. As this development project is not green<sup>[i]</sup>, it will negatively impact the environment and water supply.
8. Provide opportunities for everyone in the Thurston Region to learn about and practice sustainability.
  1. If the City of Olympia invested in a green development project instead, we could work together to find opportunities for our neighbors both near and far to practice sustainable work in the form of farming or gardening, habitat restoration, etc.
9. Make strategic investments to advance sustainability regionally.
  1. A green development project in this space could pose inspiration for regional residents near and far.<sup>[j]</sup>

We urge the city to reconsider this development project in lieu of greener alternatives that would better benefit the city and our neighbors alike!

### **Impact on Salmon Habitat**<sup>[k]</sup>

The housing development will be situated near two bodies of water influencing salmon stream habitat. The first that could be most impacted is a tributary of Mission Creek just southwest of the site with associated wetlands within the project bounds. Mission Creek is a salmon-bearing stream that flows into Budd Inlet. In the mid-2010s with support from the state Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO), the South Puget Sound Salmon Enhancement Group completed a [project](#) that restored tidal and fish access to the creek. Coho salmon and chum salmon have been documented to use the lower reaches of Mission Creek, and their passage upstream is only partially blocked by a culvert under Bethel Street. As such, full restoration faces lower hurdles compared to other more heavily impacted streams. Surveys by WDFW predict that this single barrier correction could potentially restore chum, coho, steelhead, and sea-run cutthroat to the upstream. Despite a limited fish presence in the area at present, runoff from the housing development will likely enter into this stream system, impacting salmon habitat. The possible introduction of fines associated with extensive construction would be especially harmful to spawning. Development should take into consideration impacts to water quality, stream hydrology, and canopy cover, especially as extreme winter rain events and summer droughts increasingly alter stream flows and increase water temperatures.

The second salmon-bearing stream that could potentially be impacted is Ellis Creek due to the project's proximity to the creek and Setchfield Lake. The creek maintains salmonid-bearing scour width parameters until it connects to Setchfield Lake, which appears to be its headwaters. In 2006 with RCO support, the City of Olympia looked to [replace](#) two downstream culverts that prevented migration of chum salmon, coho salmon, cutthroat trout, rainbow trout and steelhead. Removal would restore access to 1.5 miles of largely intact habitat. According to the Recreation and Conservation Office's project description: "Rural zoning densities as well as stream and wetland buffers designated under Thurston County's Critical Areas Ordinance will protect the stream habitat outside of the park<sup>[l]</sup>." The Ellis Creek watershed is "one of the only nearly intact basins in Budd Inlet." As barriers to full restoration are minimal, this makes the creek a priority for restoration according to SRFB funding metrics. The housing development is set back from the lake and has closer proximity and likely impact to Mission Creek. However, continued, unchecked development within either watershed without adequate respect to effective, instead of minimal, stream and wetland buffers could reduce the possibility to realize restoration in the future. Therefore, any development needs to be aware of and integrated with ongoing salmon recovery efforts in the area for fear of suffocating ecosystems that have been relatively protected to this day.

### **City of Olympia Code That You are Breaking By Building in this Way**

Olympia Comprehensive Master Plan - Land Use and Urban Design

The Olympia Comprehensive Plan was adopted by Ordinance 6945 on December 16, 2014, and is current through Ordinance 7301, passed November 23, 2021.

PL5.5 Provide incentives and assistance for preserving, restoring, redeveloping and using historic buildings, districts, neighborhoods, streets, structures, objects and sites.

PL5.6 Support public or non-profit acquisition of the most important historic resources to ensure their preservation.

PL6.2 The design review process should recognize differences in the city with the objective of maintaining or improving the character and livability of each area or neighborhood

- PL7.1 Provide urban green spaces in which to spend time. Include such elements as trees, garden spaces, variety of vegetation, water features, “green” walls and roofs, and seating.
- PL7.2 Provide urban green spaces that are in people’s immediate vicinity and can be enjoyed or viewed from a variety of perspectives.
- PL7.3 Establish a maximum distance to urban green space for everyone in the community.
- PL7.4 Increase the area of urban green space and tree canopy within each neighborhood proportionate to increased population in that neighborhood.
- PL7.5 Establish urban green space between transportation corridors and adjacent areas.
- PL14.2 Concentrate housing into three high-density Neighborhoods: Downtown Olympia, Pacific/Martin/Lilly Triangle; and the area surrounding Capital Mall.
- PL14.3 Preserve and enhance the character of existing Low-density Neighborhoods. Disallow medium or high-density development in existing Low-density Neighborhood areas except for Neighborhood Centers.
- PL16.13 Encourage adapting non-residential buildings for housing.
- PL20.1 Require development in neighborhoods to be of a type, scale, orientation, and design that maintains or improves the character, aesthetic quality, and livability of the neighborhood.
- PL22.1 Use trees to foster a sense of neighborhood identity.
- PL22.2 Identify, protect and maintain trees with historic significance or other value to the community or specific neighborhoods.
- PL22.3 Encourage the use of appropriate fruit and nut trees to increase local food self-sufficiency.
- PL25.3 Collaborate with community partners to ensure that everyone within Olympia is within biking or walking distance of a place to grow food.
- PL25.8 Work with community organizations to develop strategies, measure, and set goals for increasing local food production.
- PL25.9 Work with local governments throughout the region to help protect existing agricultural lands and develop and promote a vibrant local food economy.

PN2.1 Acquire and preserve land by a set of priorities that considers environmental benefits, such as stormwater management, wildlife habitat, or access to recreation opportunities.

### **Increased Housing does NOT Increase Affordability**

We recognize that these homes will also do nothing to amend the housing crisis we are in. Olympia’s specific housing crisis is fueled by several factors, including:

- spectator investment (in March 2023, investors accounted for 27% of all single-family home purchases [in the US] [1])
- Airbnb’s (2.25 million homes in the US are Airbnbs--this doesn’t count Vrbo, Guesty, Vacasa, or any other AirBnB alternatives [2])
- general use of homes as not homes (Nearly 1/3 of the 62 homes in the south Capital neighborhood are owned or used by lobbyists, corporations, or unions--meaning they are not used as houses but as overnight accommodations or meeting spaces for businesses [3]).

While the idea that increased supply will meet demand and increase affordability can be applied to a variety of different products in our economy, housing is not one of them. This is for a couple reasons.

1. Land is subject to what is called a “natural monopoly” because there is only a finite amount of land in any given area. More housing can be built but there is no way to increase the supply of land to meet demand. Without price controls, land will actually skyrocket in value as density increases.
2. Housing is treated as an investment. Spectators and wealthy investors buy up housing and hold it until they can get a better price for it later. They treat homes like stocks. This means any lull in market rate will be met with investors simply squatting on their investments until the market rate increases again. And if market rates do actually drop, which only happens during a crisis, investors will attempt to seize all the available housing for the same reason that people buy stock when a highly profitable firm suffers a temporary drop in its price. They will then rent out their investment property as a landlord or sell the investment property when they can make a lot of money off that home.

All this to say: there is no market solution to housing affordability. The creation of more homes will simply drive up the cost of living of the area—it will NOT make homes more affordable for working families.

### **Pacific Lifestyle Homes & Garrette Custom Homes Are Not Good Homes**

*“This builder is going to rip you off and your documents that you sign will hamstring what you can do legally. I would find a different builder no matter the price point you’re looking to build in.”*

*"This builder is going to rip you off and your documents that you sign will hamstring what you can do legally. I would find a different builder no matter the price point you're looking to build in."*

Garrette Custom Homes has a reputation that speaks for itself. Their [Yelp Page](#) shows a 2.5 star rating, with horror stories from reviewers. Of the staff, one reviewer writes:

"Our sales guy (Tom) was fired after lying to several clients. Our contract was laced with problems and we had hundreds of emails discussing scopes of work or product selection that were all lies.

Our site manager was fired after not showing up to our red line meeting. Our interim site manager (Brian) only worked with us long enough to get the dirt work and foundation done. During this time, they ran \$70k over budget on dirt work and didn't tell us until a future scheduled meeting. This far exceeded our reserve fund and could not be included in the loan.

Our next site manager lasted about 3 weeks before he quit in the middle of framing (Paul).

Our next site manager (David) was new to the company and showed zero leadership skills when with the sub-contractors. Under David's supervision work was shoddy and the site was unsanitary. We had laborers pooping in the wetland, urinating under the house leaving puddles of piss on the vapor barrier, we had 3" trim on one side of a window and 2" on the other.

The warranty person (Melina) who was horrible to work with and eventually fired after she tried to break into our house with the painters while we were on vacation so they could do touch up work. We had this on video and had to call top level management at Garrett to get resolution.

The new warranty person (Holly) spent the next 12 months ghosting us and playing dumb on every problem." Of the workmanship, this reviewer writes:

"The siding company only hydrated with Modelo and was a case in daily by lunch. The lap siding wasn't level. The house was painted the wrong color. The roofing had waves in it and hundreds of nails showing. Anything "custom" that we paid for was forgotten about and it was an argument to get it back with everyone playing dumb."

"Water from the driveway didn't run into the drain and ran into the flower bed? It was supposed to be like that. Paint was watered down and only 1 coat used and bare spots could be seen? No one could see it but us. Floor was scratched when the moved the fridge in? That's part of the pattern with the LVP. Cabinet doors didn't close all the way? That was so the trash didn't smell. Exterior caulking bubbling in the sun? That's how the hose breathed. Crack in the foundation with water running through? She couldn't get in the crawlspace because she was scared of small places. HVAC made a weird squeaking noise and wasn't level? No one could hear the squeak but us."

The other reviews echo the same frustrations:

"Buyer beware. Bought a brand new Garrette home last February. Beautiful home, great floorplan, but many, many, many issues with finishing work. Mostly small detail work, though there was a large drainage and run off issue that has cost us personally over \$40,000 to date to fix. It appears that there was no follow up on any of the work that contractors did. Almost every issue is still unresolved from our 60 day walk through and now approaching one year in the house. I understand that covid slowed things down, but Customer Service is non-existent. Simple communication is all together missing. I'd be very careful before making a purchase."

"Poor quality and not responsive. Bought a home in Oct 2021 and sales team was great. Then I made the mistake of trusting they would fix all the issues prior to move in.....bad mistake!!!! They lied and told me after closing that my shower doors were on backorder, they shrugged their shoulders about the paint spilled on the hardwood floors, they ghosted me repeatedly about fixing things that should have been fixed prior to move in. I contacted the president of the company who also didn't respond with any resolution. Buyer beware - there are better builders and builders who actually respond and correct issues."

"This was our first home-building experience and it was very disappointing to say the least. The construction and project team were terrible, if they were around long enough to see updates through. There were lots of turnover with the folks we worked with, which is very telling about the lack of management support. Buyers in our property were promised the surrounding fence would be fixed by the site manager but when he left the company, Garrett said they wouldn't fix it. They also installed the wrong cabinet in my laundry room (doesn't line up with the wall) and they refuse to fix it. This was escalated to the manager supporting our property, Brian, but he clearly had no intention on trying to address our concerns and brushed us off. Because we had such a terrible experience, I won't be recommending the services of Garrett or Pacific Lifestyle homes to family or friends."

Meanwhile, Pacific Lifestyle Homes also has a reputation that speaks for itself. Their [Yelp Page](#) shows a 2.6 star rating, with horror stories from reviewers. One reviewer writes:

“Lack of finishing detail. Lived in this new construction home for less than one year and compared to other national builders buying from PLH is not worth the extra money. During walkthrough they will say if you can't see the defect from a certain distance it isn't going to be worked on. I'll include photos but you can definitely tell they just rush builds out. This includes dry paint on carpet, mice dropping issue during inspection in the crawl space they responded that they didn't see any when they went down. Now as a more seasoned home owner mice do hide in the daytime and have caught over 50 in the crawl space. Very poor paint in the garage with dried paint drip. Another image includes the center of our fireplace with the wood being cut very unevenly.”

Another writes,

I have been dealing with a poorly constructed home built in late 2022 by Garrette Custom Homes and purchased from Pacific Lifestyle Homes in the Ridgefield WA area. A repeatedly leaking roof and mold issues have been going on since the house was built creating extended problems of getting the warranty repair work done in a timely manner. 2 1/2 months in each occurrence with two different rental tenants being unable to use areas of the house is unacceptable. If you are planning to purchase a new or existing home, first look at the reviews and complaints about Pacific Lifestyle Homes, at the B.B.B. website before committing your self; make sure to completely read the 2-10 warranty offering as well.

Another warns,

Do not buy from them or ANYONE in these new construction areas. Especially in Ridgefield as the dirt work they do (they basically change natural topography of the land and bring in fill dirt. So many homes in the area have issues and of course it's after the home warranty is up. Stay away from any subdivision in Ridgefield (as it is hilly and lots of wetlands). Choose places the land was flat.

Another states,

We had our home built in Ridgefield in 2020, so we've been living in it for about three years now. Definitely expected to find some kind of minor issues pop up, but nothing has come up so far aside from needing to replace the front sod and regrout some tile after the house settled. The build quality and attention to detail was fantastic overall. All of our concerns during the walk through were taken care of. Throughout the process, they were responsive to questions, friendly, and helpful. The design process was very enjoyable and the design studio was impressive. Taking off three stars, however, because they set our HOA up for failure. Future costs were hidden, irrigation systems were improperly installed, they cheaped out on landscaping that had to be replaced at significant cost, obligations for maintenance items were not disclosed, and they intentionally set an artificially low HOA fee to lure buyers in while not providing an adequate reserve fund. Extremely shady in that respect. Our HOA is still finding out about costly new expenses three years in.

It goes on:

“For the past 18 months we have been trying to work with the warranty and quality teams of PLH based on numerous problems we encountered from day one of moving into our home. The mission statement and values on their website are simply words and based on our experience, we cannot recommend them. We highly suggest anyone considering purchasing a home from PLH to visit Viewridge Hollow in Ridgefield, Washington. Feel free to knock on doors and ask just about anyone about their experience. We are more than happy to share. Buyer deeply beware.”

“I would not build with this company. We walked through our home during the process and had to keep pointing out mistakes where they left off outlets, windows to shower and smurf tub for TV, ect. so nice to catch a few things wrong during building. Then when we arrived to get our keys. There was paint all in the carpet walls bowed from sheetrock not being hung correctly and rooms and ceilings painted incorrect and insulation under the house hanging from the floor where it fell off.ECT. When we pointed these things out they said they would fix it by giving us a check. which we wanted things fixed in the home so it was nice, not money. When the manager went to get ok from their company we got nothing and the video on camera system was erased of the painter dripping all over. Also had neighbors telling us that the employees were telling them that we were complainers which is also what they told us about other neighbors that confronted them about the bad workmanship. The roof is also not being fixed, they say it is code, however it runs off the top of the house in my plants, splashing mud all over my house and windows as well as boards at top of roof line already split and separated. Again I was told it is up to their code so again will be my bill to fix the house. This is just a few things but think you have the idea. The floor plan is great, I just wish it would have been built by a company that had quality houses as important, not their pocket book. Please do your homework before making this mistake.”

“We are starting our process and I'm a bit nervous. After reading some of the experience from previous people who purchased- I'm even more concerned.

They build beautiful homes- the big reason why we have chosen this builder. ( Looks like we have to keep an eye on details)

I don't know how to feel about our sales agent. I am getting a vibe that she does not want us to buy because we are not white. It's just a feeling.

Every time we ask about an available lot- she seems to discourage us....Luckily... we have signed the document for our lot. But.. she has not sent the information to where you send the \$\$.

I have this feeling she will say... oh we sold your lot because you didn't send the \$\$.

She has been discouraging every time we have spoken to her....

I am trying to reach the owner of this company to express my concerns but I am having the most difficult time finding his information.

This is one of the very few times I have experienced racism. I'm not sure who to contact at this point and hoping that I can get some kind of response by posting here."

"Will not build again with pacific lifestyle the house structure is great even enjoyed the building process but ALL the finish work is SHIT nothing but problems and they literally don't care about you after your house funds. The guy Andy refused to give me keys because I didn't want to sign off on our kitchen paint job and gave us a 6ft rule BS. After a fight I finally had the kitchen painters come out, who admitted it looked horrible before it even left their shop and fixed it but that should have been a sign for me for what the next year would be EVERYTHING has been a fight, it's never their fault or problem and just to do the simple things that should have been done correctly the first time. So in my two year experience building the house was fun but be prepared to redo all the interior."

"I was an agent 15 years and even back then Pacific Lifestyle was kafuffle but I went in ready to sign today and one agent... oh geez... she cracked the model home door and looked at me like it was a zombie attack... I finally said, "So you don't have any homes for sale here?" and she shook her head no and I said, "Okay Bye" and turned to leave when she said "Wait!" I had to pretty much beg to see the model home. I had originally scheduled an appointment through the guy who's picture is on their page but never received the emails he promised to give us an address so we set out on our own. We did finally catch up via phone with the agent who we had the appointment and she gave us the wrong address for where she was located... Completely wrong neighborhood and it was a private residence. Then the guy on the page tried to give me that address too... It was a very bizarre experience. update: guy on page had some combination of email addresses from back when I was a realtor. I filled out the contact info so I don't get how this simple project turned into "I will not work with those people." And wait for the wind to change. Builders are in the driver's seat right now. That changes."

### **Reasonable Alternatives**

For all the reasons listed above, we hope you can now recognize how this particular development project will negatively impact the City of Olympia in a vast variety of ways. We propose the following alternative development projects for your team to consider.

#### **Smaller, Green Housing Development!**

A smaller development project cultivated with environmental priorities would be a great boon to the neighborhood and habitat that the current project threatens. We can look at \_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_, for some inspiration, buildings made with green materials, solar panels, and with ample room for community gardens and rain gardens alike. Or even \_\_\_\_\_. <sup>[m]</sup>Green development should be the priority of the City of Olympia so that it remains in alignment with its Climate Action Plan. A smaller development project would be cheaper in both the short and long term (remember Garrette Custom Homes reputation for building poorly made homes that will need ongoing maintenance and upkeep!). Additionally, as inflation increases, as tariffs impact building materials, and with the threat of a looming recession, we should be looking to smaller, more affordable development projects. With the ongoing threat of climate crisis and drastic weather events, we should prioritize environmental standards within all of those development projects as well.

#### **A Park and Restoration Project for Wildlife Including Salmon!**

Another alternative could be a new park or an extension of the beloved Springwood Parcel across the street from this planned development project. The origin story of this parcel is actually quite similar to this development plan. An owner of a broad acreage of land sold it to the city, and it was converted into a gorgeous park teeming with a diverse array of species and life. We suggest that instead of a collection of poorly made homes packed in like sardines, that the City consider extending the Springwood Parcel, allowing the marshy meadow and nearby wetlands and (generally essential ecosystem that this development project intends to impeded upon) to help protect vital salmon, owls, frogs, and other wildlife habitat. Afterall, this was owner's intended use of the space! Additionally, the parcel upon which this development project is intended to be built feeds water into both Mission Creek and Ellis Creek, home for local salmon to spawn. A new park in combination with a salmon restoration project that works to alter the existing culvert barriers would see salmon spawning further up both the creeks and even returning to Setchfield lake—something that hasn't happened hundreds of years.

#### **Community Garden or Community Center**

There are no eastside community gardens, and we know that the City of Olympia has recently completed an Urban Farm Park feasibility study, which pointed to the need for a site that could provide mixed functions of farmer training (including youth farmers), food production, land and garden access, educational values, community gathering, etc. They emphasized interrelated food security and ecological and community benefits, especially for marginalized groups. Although the city doesn't have the resources to move this forward at this time, we believe the space designated for Springwood Gardens could actually become a garden!

The neighbors expressing their refusal of this development project are made up of a wide array of environmentalists, working families, architects, artists, musicians, writers, construction workers, architects, and activists. We are creative thinkers, and we would be more than happy to work with the City of Olympia to find a solution that benefits us all.

For these and many other reasons, we do not want this development project to take place. You can expect my presence at the Public Hearing to bring up these and more points.

Sincerely,  
Kristen McClintock  
Sent from my iPhone

**Jackson Ewing**

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**From:** Gregory Robinson <gregoryrobinson@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 21, 2025 6:51 PM  
**To:** Jackson Ewing  
**Subject:** Springwood Gardens

>> I was able to listen in this week and was struck by the clueless comments by some of my neighbors, neighbors I know by the way. "City staffers care more about following the law than making ME happy." Speaking as the husband of a retired city staffer in Bellevue and Lakewood, I would be dismayed if following the law wasn't your priority.

>> One comment I found very cogent was about the risks created by the sidewalk infrastructure ending before Springwood meets Bethel. Perhaps the code doesn't require the developer to solve this problem, but it will be a real issue for the city going forward. Devon Place and Springwood do not line up, but between those two almost contiguous intersections there is a school bus stop as well as an active Intercity Transit stop. Over 50 homes have only that one exit from the Devon Place subdivision, and the Springwood development would increase the pressure. Bethel is an arterial with higher speeds than the limit occurring regularly. Someone at the city should be thinking about this, even if it is outside your scope.

>> Can you provide me a link to a map of the proposed development? Thank you.

>> Gregory Robinson

>> 1254 Devon Loop NE

>> Olympia WA 98506

>> GregoryRobinson@yahoo.com

**Jackson Ewing**

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**From:** Alexander Prescott <alexanderthegreat7@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, March 24, 2025 8:59 AM  
**To:** Jackson Ewing  
**Subject:** Formal Comments on the Springwood Gardens Development Proposal

Hi Jackson,

Please find my formal comments on the Springwood Gardens development proposal below. I would appreciate a response to each point I make.

**Traffic:**

- I have serious concerns about the increase of flowing between the major roads of Bethel and Miller, using the proposed connection of Marion, Quasar, Bright Star, Central, and Road A. I strongly feel that a vehicular connection is not necessary between the Northpoint neighborhood and Springwood Gardens. I believe it would be much better for the residents of both communities to have a pedestrian/bike only path connecting the neighborhoods on Marion, not cars (similar to another neighborhood connector path east of here on Miller).
- Additionally, the proposed improvements of Springwood Ave, if not connected through the entire length of the street to Bethel, is largely pointless. Having pedestrians, and school children, navigating walking in the street for the last 100feet of Springwood (next to a busy street, Bethel) and then crossing said street without a lighted cross walk and/or stop sign is extremely dangerous and unacceptable.

**Environment:**

- The propose removal of the eastern forest of the Springwood Gardens tract is not acceptable. This stand of trees seem to be about 50 years old and provide an important wildlife and wetland connection to nearby Setchfield Lake. The whole area has wetland connections that should be a priority for preservation of the city. Marion especially should not be connected for vehicles and the trees in the stand should be retained.
- I have seen numerous species of birds that indicate a healthy forest ecosystem such as Downy Woodpeckers, Hairy Woodpeckers, Bald Eagles, and Blue Herons, all in the subject property and none of which were noted in the environmental report.
- If the development occurs, I find it unacceptable to be planting so many non-native trees. All newly planted trees should be native trees and shrubs that provide benefit to wildlife. This is very achievable as there are great local native plant nurseries and native trees that are well suited for urban settings.

**Development:**

- is the developer proposing to build the houses to order or all at once and sell them after. This would have a big impact of the timing of the project.
- If the development is approved, where will the construction trucks park?
- What will the work hours be?

- What traffic/pollution/noise abatement measures will be put in place?
- What are the next steps in the review timeline? When will the public see the City of Olympia's response to the developer proposal?

Thank you

--

Alexander Prescott

## Jackson Ewing

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**From:** Sandy Crowell <crowell.sandy10@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, March 24, 2025 8:22 AM  
**To:** Jackson Ewing  
**Subject:** Springwood

As a neighbor who cherishes Springwood Park and the natural beauty of the northeast neighborhood, I am highly opposed to the development of 39 homes in the area.  
Please do not bulldozer our neighborhood to create more traffic, pollution and crowded space.

Sincerely,  
Sandra Crowell  
Northwest Author

**Jackson Ewing**

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**From:** Connie D. <cadelis50@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, March 23, 2025 12:03 PM  
**To:** Jackson Ewing  
**Subject:** Proposed development East of Springwood Rd

Dear Mr Ewing,

I live in the Devon Loop neighborhood and my granddaughter happily attended the Springwood Children's Garden for several years.

I recall the increased water level in the earth during winter rains. She would be encased in mud when I picked her up and I would have to remove her boots, her snow/mud pants and coat before she could get in the car. Once, for several days, to the children's delight, for fun they would be in canoes as the whole yard was flooded!

I also want to share my experience in my yard. During the winter rains it is like walking on a sponge. I have to have a sump pump to keep my crawl space from flooding.

Thank you,  
Connie Delisio

**Jackson Ewing**

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**From:** Sandra Herndon <sherndon@hctc.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, March 23, 2025 12:23 PM  
**To:** Jackson Ewing  
**Cc:** David J Mackey  
**Subject:** Project 25-0980

**Importance:** High

TO: Jackson Ewing

RE: Comments on Proposed Residential Development on Springwood Ave NE, **Project 25-0980**

FROM: Sandra Herndon and David Mackey, 1416 Springwood Ave NE, Olympia 98506

We live in a single-family home at 1416 Springwood Ave NE, one of ten owner-occupied homes on this dead-end street. If approved, this proposed project would add 15+ homes facing this street as well as two streets emptying onto Springwood, **thereby at least tripling the existing traffic.**

Springwood Ave. NE is a sub-standard, narrow, no-outlet street, which lacks shoulders, sidewalks, and roadside drainage. This short street is used by pedestrians, students walking to the school bus stop on Bethel, daily resident-vehicle traffic, delivery vehicles, US Postal vehicles, utility vehicles, and emergency vehicles when needed.

There are already additional vehicle issues when Springwood Parcel visitors frequently park on the road, often obstructing traffic, since there is no space for parking on this street. Further, **surface water from the parcel periodically flows across the road due to inadequate drainage.**

The street is narrow. Two passenger vehicles on the pavement can barely pass each other. Larger delivery, utility, and emergency vehicles cannot pass if a passenger vehicle is in the roadway. If approved, this new proposed development must include bringing the entire length of Springwood Ave. NE into street compliance including width, sidewalks, drainage, curbs, and signage, to safely provide for the increased vehicle and pedestrian volume. **This street needs speed-bumps or other traffic-calming measures.**

Note that we support the request (which you should have received by U.S. mail) from our neighbor **Greg Hansen, 1407 Springwood, to include a sidewalk, curbing, and drainage from his northerly property line on Springwood out to Bethel.** In addition, an **Intercity Transit bus shelter is needed at the bus stop on Bethel just across from**

**Springwood**, to accommodate not only current riders but also additional riders from any new development.

Please keep us informed on all decisions regarding this proposed development. Thank you for your consideration.

Sandra Herndon and David Mackey, 360-943-5110

1416 Springwood Ave. NE, Olympia, WA 98506

**NOTE: I have sent several email messages to you with no reply, I attended the webinar and was not selected to speak even though I had my hand up for the entire time, I left a voicemail at your office and have heard nothing. Please confirm that you have received my messages as well as this letter.**

## Jackson Ewing

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**From:** Allison Sykes <sykes.allison@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 19, 2025 4:03 PM  
**To:** Jackson Ewing  
**Subject:** I am opposed to the development project planned for Springwood Ave NE

Hi Mr. Ewing,

I am writing to you as an Olympia community member who is opposed to the development project planned for Springwood Ave NE in Olympia. From my understanding this project is cutting corners, including lying about the space not being habitat to threatened species. The species that live here that are designated threatened include but are not limited to, Yuma myotis (*Myotis yumanensis*), little brown bat (*Myotis lucifugus*), and big brown bat (*Eptesicus fuscus*). In addition, the site is directly adjacent to Mission Creek which is inhabited by Great Horned Owls. It seems a proper environmental impact study has not been conducted since it would have highlighted the fact that this land is home to these species.

Thank you for your time,  
Allison Sykes

## Jackson Ewing

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**From:** SANDRA GRUVER <essjay.gruver@comcast.net>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 19, 2025 6:37 PM  
**To:** Jackson Ewing  
**Subject:** Springwood Garden plat project

Jackson,

I'm a homeowner facing Bethel Street and I'm concerned about additional traffic on Bethel Street due to the possibility of 39 new homes being constructed on Springwood Avenue, funneling traffic into Bethel Street.

There are no bike lanes and sidewalk only on one side of Bethel St. Will the street be improved and traffic calming to accommodate the additional traffic? The 25 mph speed limit is often ignored.

I'm also concerned about destruction of habitat because of development.

Thank you,  
Sandi

## Jackson Ewing

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**From:** Corina Allen <corinaforson@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 20, 2025 11:52 AM  
**To:** Jackson Ewing  
**Subject:** Springwood Parcel Development Inquiry

Hello Jackson,

I heard from a neighbor recently that there is a proposed development on Springwood Ave NE that would connect the NorthPointe neighborhood (off Marion NE). I heard there was a post on the city website about this but I cannot find it, can you please let me know what the proposed development is and share any other information you can provide?

The rumors I have heard suggest that the development is for expensive single family homes. We need more affordable housing in our neighborhood, not more gentrification and high price homes that locals who work in Olympia cannot afford. If this is true, I urge the city to please reconsider this proposal.

I live on Miller Ave NE in between Central and Bethel and I am concerned this development would create more traffic on an already busy street. We have young kids and people already go way too fast on Miller and I worry that more traffic will make this street more dangerous for our families and the animals that live here. I urge the city not to allow this development, and if the development goes through to not allow for cross through connection onto Miller Ave. If cross through connection is considered please develop a traffic management plan to account for the increased car use and include speed bumps, improved sidewalks, more crosswalks with signage and lights, and wider streets for increased traffic.

Please share any information you can so that I may be better informed of the plan.

Thank you,  
Corina Allen

## Jackson Ewing

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**From:** Christine Day <daystine851@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 19, 2025 1:09 PM  
**To:** Jackson Ewing  
**Subject:** Comment on Development Plan in NE neighborhood - Springwood Ave

To whom it may concern,

I live in this neighborhood and have lived here for over 25 years. I am writing you in strong disagreement with the development plan off of Springwood Ave.

This is a gentrification plan being rushed through the approval process by the city, in order to bulldoze 8 acres of woods and farm into a subdivision of 39 expensive cookie-cutter houses and 3 roads. The project is cutting corners.

This is a continuation of taking space away from wildlife, pushing them into the neighborhoods and endangering important species. This not a solution to the housing crisis. They are not affordable homes. The project does not reflect in any form that ethical considerations are being taken.

Please take this comment into consideration, thank you for your time.

Christine Day

## Jackson Ewing

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**From:** stonefly@comcast.net  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 19, 2025 8:59 AM  
**To:** Jackson Ewing  
**Subject:** Regarding File Number 25-0980 / Springwood Ave Parcel Development Plan

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Dear Sir:

I fully support the intelligent, well thought out plan for this parcel. This will provide much needed housing, while protecting the environment in general.

Thank you,

Thomas Baker  
7118 44<sup>th</sup> AVE NE  
Olympia WA 98516

**Jackson Ewing**

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**From:** Reed <wingulls@protonmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, March 19, 2025 9:13 AM  
**To:** Jackson Ewing  
**Subject:** Opposition to proposed development on Springwood

Springwood avenue is a special place in a special neighborhood. Its green spaces are hidden gems of the neighborhood. They provide important ecological benefits for Mission Creek and Budd inlet. Allowing a developer to build sprawling, unaffordable housing development in this land would be a huge mistake. In our neighborhood there are many abandoned properties much more suitable to development. They can and should be restored, but the forest can't. In general, I and my neighbors are opposed to large footprint developments like this proposal. But we are not opposed to development: There is a need for dense, affordable, accessible and sustainable housing options in our neighborhood. I would encourage the city to prioritize developments which 1) do not disturb or destroy existing green spaces 2) redevelop vacant or abandoned properties (i can point to a few within walking distance of my house on Bigelow Ave if you're curious) 3) are affordable multi family rental units like apartments, townhomes, duplexes, or similar.

Please reconsider this wasteful development proposal. We don't just need more housing, we need more of the right kind of housing. Otherwise we will just end up messing up the neighborhood, displacing current residents, and degrading the environment we all value.

Sincerely,  
Reed Ingalls

Sent from [Proton Mail](#) for iOS

**Jackson Ewing**

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**From:** DENNIS TILSON <dmtilson@comcast.net>  
**Sent:** Monday, March 17, 2025 8:39 AM  
**To:** Jackson Ewing  
**Subject:** Springwood Gardens plat

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

Hello Jackson,

Thank you for informing us of the proposed plat that lies north and west of our property. We live at 1728 Miler Ave. NE. and this proposal, if approved will impact our quiet lives considerably and we oppose this development. We have lived on our property that's been in the family since the early 20th century and have known the Leitgeb's since 1987 and they have been considerate neighbors. Here are some thoughtful and potential impacts to be considered when reviewing this project:

1. More traffic for the neighborhood
2. More crime
3. More noise
4. More pollution to Mission Creek, Setchfield Lake, and Ellis Creek
5. Loss of wildlife habitat
6. Loss of trees
7. Greater impact on parks and schools
8. More air pollution
9. Springwood Ave. is a substandard street and needs to be improved the entire distance to Bethel Street.
10. Impact on existing utilities

Respectfully,  
Dennis & Pam Tilson

## Jackson Ewing

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**From:** Clare Follmann <clarefollmann@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 14, 2025 10:42 AM  
**To:** Jackson Ewing  
**Subject:** Regarding "Springwood Gardens" Development

Dear Mr. Ewing,

On behalf of myself and my neighbors, I am expressing deep concern at the prospect of the Springwood Gardens "plat" which we received a letter about in the mail yesterday. For many reasons, we do not want this development project to take place.

It will increase traffic dangers and pollution, negatively impact wildlife and local ecosystems, decrease property value, increase noise pollution, and will do nothing to help the housing crisis we are experiencing but will rather contribute to an increased cost of living in the area.

My neighbors and I intend to attend the Project Information Meeting, but the letter sent out to the residents of Springwood Ave & beyond contains an inoperable link for the Project Information Meeting.

Since you sent the letter out on March 10th and it arrived on March 13th, it seems as though a corrected letter would likely not reach the neighborhood in time for us to be able to attend the meeting. Therefore, the only proper course of action is to push back the Project Information Meeting so neighbors have enough time to prepare and accommodate this meeting into their schedules.

Additionally, sending an entire URL link in a physical letter requires recipients to hand-type the URL into their browser. This is ridiculously inaccessible--in your amended letter, we require an operable QR code that can be scanned so neighbors are more easily able to attend this meeting and be informed of this project and its implications in addition to the lengthy link.

More soon,  
Clare