

Whatcom Council Members, Whatcom County Planning Department,

Caitac is asking to be docketed for inclusion in Bellingham's UGA again. I honestly can not understand any reason the County would force Bellingham to add to Bellingham's boundary when they in fact do not want it. Bellingham is working within the GMA to build urban villages, infill and keep a small footprint. This is what the Growth Management Act stresses. Give it a chance.

Bellingham's budget is stretched beyond the limit and having to annex a 600 acre piece of property they do not want just doesn't make any sense. Whatcom County would lose that land base when annexed.

This was looked at, discussed and argued about for over a year during the last Comprehensive Plan Update. It was shown at that time, Bellingham has enough land and will be proven when they do their next update. At that time contractors were building as fast as they could and people were buying. Well, we have seen the financial problems that caused. That is the main reason the entire country is in the financial straits it is now. Too much building, realtors and financial institutions making promises no one could keep so the bottom fell out.

Every time a poll is taken in Whatcom County people say over and over they want to keep the County rural, protect farm and forest land. The Caitac property IS farm land, WAS farmland when it was purchased and should STILL be farmland. Whatcom County soil is some of the best growing soil there is. Long term ag land is directly across the road from the Caitac property.

The paperwork they submitted for the request is filled with flawed/slanted information. "Characterized by urban growth". False...It is surrounded by rural areas, no urban zoning nor urban characteristics and is and has farmland to the west and north.

When the 2006 Bellingham Comprehensive Plan was being worked on the Mayor at that time was being courted by Caitac, thus the City Planners were encouraged to enlarge the boundary, especially to the north! That changed with new leadership in Bellingham. The new administration knows a larger UGA is not needed and they want to follow Growth Management mandates.

Another falsehood presented in their information is: "the area is presently developed to the extent prohibitive of using the property primarily for the production of food, other agricultural products, or fiber." THE PROPERTY IS NOT DEVELOPED AND PRODUCES FIBER EVERY YEAR. If the land were properly taken care of it could produce food for thousands, if not millions of people and livestock.

On Page 8 of the Addendum they bring up the work from Jones Engineering. First I think any information brought forth from Jones Engineering must be questioned because they are an employee of Caitac and have been for years. Now to the 2% annual growth rate they cite, in fact the growth rate from 2007 to 2008 was 1.4% and in 2008 to 2009 was down to 1.1%.

On Page 11 of the Addendum it says and I quote: "Parcels not owned by Caitac, but included as part of this application are presently zoned R5A—rendering the properties essentially without value for current owners." This blew my mind!!! WITHOUT VALUE!!! The surrounding properties have homes on them with people living in them, raising families, growing vegetable gardens and fruit trees. If they are of no value, why is the County collecting our tax dollars?

Then to top it all off they ask that the County Council waive the fees for the application "because" of benefit to the community AND it will not be for private financial gain! Do they honestly believe they will not gain financially from this? If not them, then who? The taxpayers will certainly not gain financially. No, it will end up and cost all of us more in the long run. Schools, fire, police, roads, parks upkeep, sewer,

water, garbage, etc. etc. If the information that is in their paperwork is an idea of what their promises are, then it isn't of much value.

I am not going to go into all the many reasons there are for not forcing Bellingham to take in land they do not want. Myself and many others over the years have spoken of this ad nauseam. Bellingham has asked that you NOT add to their UGA. The City Council voted unanimously to request you NOT docket this. That in itself is reason enough.

Please do NOT docket this request.

Thank you.

Mac and Donna Macomber

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