

Adam Zack

From: joe symons <joesymons@me.com>
Sent: Tuesday, May 14, 2019 4:22 PM
To: Lynda Guernsey; Timothy P. Blanchard; Comp Plan Update
Subject: Testimony for PC hearing Friday May 17 re Docket Request 19-0002
Attachments: PC hearing letter may 19.pdf

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

I attach a pdf of my testimony for Friday's PC hearing. As you will read, I very likely may not be able to attend due to an ongoing bout with shingles.

Please acknowledge receipt.

Thanks

Joe Symons

—

carpe diem

To: San Juan County Planning Commission and related parties
From: Joe Symons, Olga WA
Date: 14 May 2019
Re: DCD Staff report regarding Docket submission 19-0002 submitted by me and 37 additional co-applicants

I realize how important it is to testify in person on this matter. Unfortunately I have been afflicted by a severe case of shingles for the past 2 months. Consequently all matters, personal and professional, have been tabled; given the importance of your recommendation on this topic, I hope you can receive this as if I were testifying in person.

(It was 2 years ago that I asked SJC to re-establish a/v communications among the islands so that non San Juan Island residents could testify remotely. A series of emails and zero followup occurred in 2017 and 2018. While not the subject of this communication, it suggests a very casual approach to accepting public input. Given the importance of the work under consideration, this is inexcusable.)

I sent an email to Linda, Erika, Bill, Rick and Jamie on 1 Jan 2017 (2+ years ago) expressing my concerns about the upcoming/underway update to the Comp Plan. I attach the text at the end of this document. I wish to re-emphasize the points made (and unaddressed, even unresponded to by those addressed) here.

GMA requires the comp plan to be internally consistent. The Vision Statement serves as the controlling document for the CP. The SJC density map which is all but indecipherable has never been reviewed for buildout since it was created in 1979. SJC lost most of its court cases in the 1999-2007 period regarding the implications of "density".

The first FDO by the WWGMHB (21 July 1999) noted the following:

"Intervenor Symons correctly pointed out that the maps were also significantly inconsistent with the vision statement set forth as the guiding principle for the CP. These inconsistencies, caused by the retention of 1980 densities, do not comply with the GMA."

Those densities have been modified, under duress, by SJC in order to remove WB invalidity orders about 20 years ago. There has never been a full public description of these densities, or what they imply or would require, ever.

As noted in the docket request, your predecessors felt that this same docket request, in 2001, should be honored. It was ignored by the then CC. As you know, last year an updated version of the same request was made and again ignored/discounted by the CC.

DCD's rationale that since it was rejected last year and because they are working on an LCA that the docket request be assigned an F status (obsolete, not recommended for further action).

I am not “simply” asking for a buildout number using staff’s LCA process. I am requesting not just a “simple” build out number (currently estimated at 80,000 not counting visitors) but an impact analysis of this number and proof that the total number of people residing in the county (including visitors) is consistent with the Vision Statement. This consistency request has been routinely ignored, most likely under the “last man standing” rule.

I would wager serious money that the majority of residents in the county don’t know what a CP is, have not read our CP, and if they have read it, they’ve only read a bit (it’s ~3” thick printed out) and would not be able to answer a single question about the size of the county as it grows. If they read page one of the introduction to the CP, they’d read that the Vision Statement was the foundation of the entire plan. If they read page 2, they’d read the Vision Statement. That might be all they need: sounds good (slow, small, rural, isolated...you all know the language and the look and feel implied).

Refusing to examine the implications of the density map (at buildout and as stages along that path) by default is a structural and procedural violation of DCD’s fundamental mission.

I realize that if you advance this docket request to the CC, it is likely that they will, once again, reject it as ...irrelevant? Unnecessary? Absurd? On the other hand, with sufficient public awareness of what is at stake, the CC might be persuaded that adding this task to DCD’s list is in everyone’s best interests.

What few want to speak openly about is that humans have shown themselves to be an invasive species, a term humans invented to give them license to wipe out or control plants and animals they felt were a nuisance or worse. We have to set limits to our own invasion consistent with community values, with carrying capacity and with sustainability goals; otherwise we lose what we, and visitors, came, and come, here for. How can we set any limits if we don’t know what is “reasonable” and refuse to have a conversation about it?

The road clearing on Orcas Road this spring serves as a perfect example of a gross failure to inform and educate the public about various public works. What took decades to create and craft was gone in less than a week.

It is no longer acceptable to keep playing re-runs of the Emperor’s New Clothes. We are the ancestors of those who will follow. As it stands today, there is only one place on the planet that attempts to give the real story about the evolution of land use decisions made here in the county. That place is not the SJC web site. That fact is unacceptable. Those that follow us will want to know why we allowed so much destructive activity for so long, desecrating a precious archipelago. They can go to KeepSanJuansWild.org Should DCD and CC feel that this site is inaccurate, incomplete and misleading, they can counter with their version of the truth, and let the residents decide.

I urge you to recommend that Docket 19-0002 advance to the CC with a strong recommendation for inclusion.

Contents of email sent to SJC on 1 Jan 2017:

Tis a new year and one in which I hope a wise approach to the CP revision process will occur. I write to thank you for the handouts that you gave me at our meeting on 13 December 2016 a few weeks ago. I note that Appendix A was not included. I found the following on the county's web site: <http://sanjuanoco.com/DocumentCenter/Home/View/10785>

I assume this is Appendix A. Please confirm.

For reference, you gave me appendices B, C, D and Resolution 21 - 2016

I am particularly concerned that the process by which Section 1 / Consistency (page 3 of Appendix A) will be dealt with. I note with some relief that "further review needed" has been checked for all items (a, b, c).

If you have read my first [brief](http://www.doebay.net/appeal/jsbrief.pdf) (<http://www.doebay.net/appeal/jsbrief.pdf>) challenging the 1998 CP, you'll see that the umbrella of my strategy was a consistency argument. We read on page one of the [Introduction to the CP](http://www.sanjuanoco.com/DocumentCenter/Home/View/1052) (<http://www.sanjuanoco.com/DocumentCenter/Home/View/1052>) the following:

"The Vision Statement (Table 1) is the foundation upon which the entire Comprehensive Plan is based."

Page 2 of the CP shows the Vision Statement.

I believe there still exists a serious inconsistency between the CP's actual growth potential of SJC's future and the Vision as adopted and approved by the BOCC and which, I believe, is still valid in the hearts and minds of the citizens of SJC.

I note that there appears to be zero discussion of buildout in Section 1- Land Use Element (page 1 of Appendix B) nor in any other element of Appendix B.

In short, while the location, size, color, shape and variety of deck chairs of the Titanic are going to be discussed, I do not see anywhere a discussion of the direction of the ship.

Given that the process used to craft the original density maps, in 1979, was flawed, and that the BOCC prohibited the discussion of density in the revision of the CP beginning in 1992 (triggering a flock of lawsuits on various topics, most of which SJC lost), absent a clear and intentional conversation about density in this revision, the consistency red flag will again come out of the ref's back pocket.

The first FDO by the WWGMHB (21 July 1999) noted the following:

"Intervenor Symons correctly pointed out that the maps were also significantly inconsistent with the vision statement set forth as the guiding principle for the CP. These inconsistencies, caused by the retention of 1980 densities, do not comply with the GMA."

These inconsistencies have not been resolved. The CP is non-compliant with GMA.

I don't believe it is too late to raise the bar on the strategic CP rewrite process; if no where else, it would be via the consistency section as noted above.

However, that approach is procedural and technical and could wind its way toward litigation. It would be *so much better* if this topic were put on the table, up front, right now, big time, pretty much in accord with my January 2001 request to the planning commission, which you can read here.

<http://doebay.net/forthcoming.html>

As noted, the PC unanimously supported this request

<http://www.doebay.net/SJC%20PC%20findings%20Oct%202001.pdf>

which was ignored by the BOCC.

It's time to get real. At a minimum respond immediately to the PC's recommendation on my request, and go big here. Do it right. Make it clear. Get it out there. The fundamentals haven't changed (much) since 1979, and they were simply wrong. You have the power, the ability, and the moral authority and obligation to do this.

Please do it.

Happy New Year! We might not be able to do much about the other Washington, but, as the bumper sticker says, "we do it differently here than on the mainland."

And we should.

Joe Symons
Olga, WA