

**BEFORE THE**  
**SNOHOMISH COUNTY HEARING EXAMINER**  
**DECISION of the DEPUTY HEARING EXAMINER**

In the Matter of the Application of )  
 ) **FILE NO. 05 126570**  
**FLEMING-ECHELBARGER, LLC** )  
 )  
Rezoned from R-8,400 to Low Density Multiple )  
Residential (LDMR) )

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DATE OF DECISION: May 26, 2006

PLAT/PROJECT NAME: *Cole's Corner II*

DECISION (SUMMARY): The requested rezoned from R-8,400 to Low Density Multiple Residential (LDMR) is **APPROVED**.

**BASIC INFORMATION**

GENERAL LOCATION: This project is located on the south side of 231<sup>st</sup> Street SW, approximately 250 feet east of 88<sup>th</sup> Avenue W at 8720 231<sup>st</sup> Street SW, Edmonds, Washington.

ACREAGE: 1.4 acres

ZONING:                   CURRENT:       R-8,400  
                              PROPOSED:     LDMR

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN DESIGNATION:

General Policy Plan Designation: Urban Medium Density Residential (UMDR 6-12 du/ac)  
Subarea Plan: Southwest County  
Subarea Plan Designation: Medium Density (3.5 – 5.4 du/ac)

UTILITIES:

Water/Sewer: Olympic View Water and Sewer District

SCHOOL DISTRICT: Edmonds No. 15

FIRE DISTRICT: No. 1

SELECTED AGENCY RECOMMENDATIONS:

Department of:

Planning and Development Services: Approval

Public Works: No recommendations at this time

### INTRODUCTION

The applicant filed the Master Application on December 16, 2005. (Exhibit 1)

The Department of Planning and Development Services (PDS) gave proper public notice of the open record hearing as required by the county code. (Exhibits 16, 17 and 18)

A SEPA determination was made on March 15, 2006. (Exhibit 15) No appeal was filed.

The Examiner held an open record hearing on May 11, 2006, the 118<sup>th</sup> day of the 120-day decision making period. Witnesses were sworn, testimony was presented and exhibits were entered at the hearing.

### PUBLIC HEARING

The public hearing commenced on May 11, 2006 at 2:08 p.m.

1. The Examiner announced that he has read the PDS staff report, reviewed the file and viewed the area and therefore was generally apprised of the particular request involved.
2. The applicant, Fleming-Echelbarger, LLC was represented by Don Miller of GWC Consulting. Snohomish County was represented by Paul Lechter of the Department of Planning and Development Services.
3. Pre-hearing letters of concern or opposition were submitted into the record by residents of six neighborhood households. One of those letters attaches a petition signed by approximately 20 households. (Exhibit 26, Thayers) At the hearing, two of those writers and five who had not written testified to concerns summarized in the letter of Heidi E. MacDonald (Exhibit 22) stating, in part:

“I purchased my home because of the neighborhood. It is a quiet, undisturbed neighborhood...fourteen additional houses in my backyard...would totally change the area into a more urban type rather than nature focused area....” (Exhibit 22)

The hearing concluded at 3:08 p.m.

**NOTE:** For a complete record, an electronic recording of this hearing is available in the Office of the Hearing Examiner.

## FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND DECISION

### FINDINGS OF FACT

Based on all the evidence of record, the following findings of fact are entered.

1. The master list of exhibits and witnesses which is a part of this file and which exhibits were considered by the Examiner is hereby made a part of this file as if set forth in full herein.
2. The PDS staff report has correctly analyzed the nature of the application, the issues of concern, the application's consistency with adopted codes and policies and land use regulations, and the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA). That staff report is hereby adopted by the Examiner as if set forth in full herein.
3. The request is for a rezone of 1.4 acres from R-8,400 to LDMR. No critical area (steep slope, wetland, or stream) is on or near the site.
4. The applicant points out that the dwellings will be townhomes rather than a monolithic structure and, thus, more in character with the surrounding neighborhood although on smaller lots. A total of up to eight homes could exist on the site as now zoned. Therefore, the rezone adds six homes, not 14. The rezone will add the additional traffic of six homes to impact local streets, not the impact of 14 dwellings.
5. The above-mentioned vicinity residents assert that the requested rezone would allow 14 homes where two now stand with another six homes expected on land recently sold behind the church on 84<sup>th</sup> and 231<sup>st</sup> Street SW. (Exhibit 25, Thompsons) A stop sign and a fence have been knocked down in the vicinity. They assert that 231<sup>st</sup> Street SW, although not classified an arterial, is used extensively by hundreds of drivers to access 8th Avenue W. from Edmonds Way at all hours of the day and night. (Exhibit 23, Kessler) If two large parcels to the east of the subject site are developed, 30 homes would exist there where now there are four. (Exhibit 24, Assink) The schools serving the vicinity are Sherwood Elementary and Edmonds Woodway High School: both closed to transfer students for the year 2007 because they are at or near capacity.
6. The Hearing Examiner can condition or deny a rezone if there is substantial evidence in the record of the need to do so in the interest of the public health, safety and welfare. However, none of the assertions listed above achieves that evidentiary level in this record at this stage.
7. The subject site and the surrounding community are zoned primarily R-8,400 with a few LDMR projects in the vicinity. Single-family residential subdivisions predominate.
8. Chapter 30.42A covers rezoning requests and applies to site specific rezone proposals that conform to the Comprehensive Plan. The decision criteria under SCC 30.42A.100 provides as follows:

The hearing examiner may approve a rezone only when all the following criteria are met:

- (1) The proposal is consistent with the comprehensive plan;
- (2) the proposal bears a substantial relationship to the public health, safety, and welfare;
- and
- (3) where applicable, minimum zoning criteria found in chapters 30.31A through 30.31F SCC are met.

It is the finding of the Examiner that the request meets these requirements generally and should be approved. The Snohomish County General Policy Plan designates the subject area for Urban Medium Density Residential and this proposal is consistent with that Comprehensive Plan designation.

9. There are no mitigation requirements required for parks, schools or roads and the DPW has no comments or objections but will provide its input during the approval process for the administratively approved site plan.
10. The Snohomish County Health District has no objection to this proposal provided that public water and sewer are furnished.
11. Public water, sewer service and electrical power will be available for this development.
12. The property is designated Urban Medium Density Residential (UMDR 6-12 du/ac) on the General Policy Plan (GPP) Future Land Use Map (FLUM) and is located within an Urban Growth Area (UGA). According to the GPP, the Urban Medium Density Residential designation "covers various sub-area plan designations which allow a combination of detached homes on small lots, townhouses, and apartments in low density, multifamily residential developments. Land in this category may be developed up to a maximum density of twelve dwelling units per acre. Land in this category may be developed at a density of 6-12 du/ac and one of the implementing zones is the LDMR zone which is the case here.
13. The request is consistent with Section 30.70.100 SCC (Section 32.50.100 SCC), which requires, pursuant to RCW 36.70B.040, that all project permit applications be consistent with the GMACP, and GMA-based county codes.
14. Any finding of fact in this decision which should be deemed a conclusion is hereby adopted as such.

### **CONCLUSIONS OF LAW**

Based on the findings of fact entered above, the following conclusions of law are entered.

1. The Examiner having fully reviewed the PDS staff report hereby adopts said staff report as properly setting forth the issues, the land use requests, consistency with the existing regulations, policies, principles, conditions and their effect upon the request. It is therefore hereby adopted by the Examiner as a conclusion as if set forth in full herein, in order to avoid needless repetition. There are no changes to the recommendations of the staff report.
2. The request is for a rezone and, therefore, must be consistent with the GMACP; GMA based county codes. In this regard, the request is consistent with those plans and codes. The type and character of land use permitted on the project site is consistent with the General Policy Plan (GPP) ULDR designation of the property and meets the required regulatory codes as to density, design and development standards.
3. The vicinity is a long-established, quiet neighborhood of single-family homes. Letters and testimony of residents clearly express frustration at the change this proposal and similar proposals will bring. However, as noted herein, the applicable Comprehensive Plan policies and the consistent regulations which implement that plan allow the proposed density.

4. The request is for a rezone and therefore must comply with Chapter 30.42A. This is a site specific rezone that conforms to the Comprehensive Plan. Because no substantial evidence was submitted contrary to the requirements of Chapter 30.42A, the evidence is presumed to meet these requirements.
5. The request should be approved as submitted.
6. Any conclusion in this decision which should be deemed a finding of fact is hereby adopted as such.

## **DECISION**

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

The request for a rezone from Residential-8,400 to Low Density Multiple Residential for this property is hereby **APPROVED**.

Decision issued this 26<sup>th</sup> day of May 2006.

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Ed Good, Deputy Hearing Examiner

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

### **Reconsideration**

Any party of record may request reconsideration by the Examiner. A petition for reconsideration must be filed in writing with the Office of the Hearing Examiner, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, County Administration-East Building, 3000 Rockefeller Avenue, Everett, Washington, (Mailing Address: M/S #405, 3000 Rockefeller Avenue, Everett WA 98201) on or before **JUNE 5, 2006**. There is no fee for filing a petition for reconsideration. **“The petitioner for reconsideration shall mail or otherwise provide a copy of the petition for reconsideration to all parties of record on the date of filing.” [SCC 30.72.065]**

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

The grounds for seeking reconsideration are limited to the following:

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

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

### **Appeal**

An appeal to the County Council may be filed by any aggrieved party of record. Where the reconsideration process of SCC 30.72.065 has been invoked, no appeal may be filed until the reconsideration petition has been disposed of by the hearing examiner. An aggrieved party need not file a petition for reconsideration but may file an appeal directly to the County Council. If a petition for reconsideration is filed, issues subsequently raised by that party on appeal to the County Council shall be limited to those issues raised in the petition for reconsideration. Appeals shall be addressed to the Snohomish County Council but shall be filed in writing with the Department of Planning and Development Services, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, County Administration-East Building, 3000 Rockefeller Avenue, Everett, Washington (Mailing address: M/S #604, 3000 Rockefeller Avenue, Everett, WA 98201) on or before **JUNE 9, 2006** and shall be accompanied by a filing fee in the amount of five hundred dollars (\$500.00); PROVIDED, that the filing fee shall not be charged to a department of the County or to other than the first appellant; and PROVIDED FURTHER, that the filing fee shall be refunded in any case where an appeal is dismissed without hearing because of untimely filing, lack of standing, lack of jurisdiction or other procedural defect. [SCC 30.72.070]

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

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

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

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

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Staff Distribution:

Department of Planning and Development Services: Paul Lechter

Department of Public Works: Norm Stone

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