DAVID EVANS
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City of Lake Forest Park

April 19th, 2016

Mr. Steve Bennett, Director
Lake Forest Park Planning & Building Dept.
17425 Ballinger Way NE
Lake Forest Park, WA 98155

SUBJECT: LaBossiere Short Plat – Critical Area Buffer Encroachment Justification

Dear Mr. Bennett:

This letter is to outline the justification for critical area buffer encroachment for the project site located at 3035 NE 195th Street. The proposed project is to include the construction of a 16' wide access road providing access from NE 195th Street to the 4 lots proposed to be constructed on the south-west portion of the project site. The critical area on site is a Category III wetland located along the eastern portion of the site. The justification for wetland buffer encroachment is as follows:

1. Lack of space between wetland buffer and adjacent property.
2. Grading necessary for the access road and utilities.
3. Improved wetland buffer mitigation/restoration.

Site Description

The subject property is located in King County, within the city of Lake Forest Park.

The property consists of tax parcel 6152900033 (4.05 acres) and is currently vacant with single family residences adjacent to the east, south, and west property lines.

Topography is moderately sloped with the steepest slope of approximately 20% near the middle of the project site. The downward slope toward the east allows for runoff to flow to the existing category III wetland.

Minimal Space between Critical Area and Adjacent Property

Upon boundary line adjustment of parcel 6152900030 (BLA 2015-LL-0004), there was a minimum clearance of 20 feet left between the property line and the edge of the wetland buffer on parcel 6152900033. As the critical area takes up 1.56 of the north-east portion of the site, this space is the only option which would allow a 16' wide access road to be constructed without directly impacting the wetland. Due to design constraints on the curvature of access roads, there will be approximately 325 sq. ft. (0.48%) of wetland buffer permanently encroached upon by the pavement of the access road.

Grading Necessary for Design

The proposed access road extends south through the middle of the project site where the steepest eastward slope occurs making excavation and fill activities necessary in order to conform to access road design standards. Therefore, a 2:1 side slope is proposed to be constructed adjacent to the east side of the access road. The grading necessary for appropriate access to the proposed lots will require

vegetation to be removed, temporarily impacting 3,219 sq. ft. (4.74%) of the wetland buffer. Upon completion of construction activities, the side slope shall be vegetated with native plants.

An alternative design to use a wall along the east side of the road was evaluated. This alternative was rejected because required utilities to serve the project would conflict with the geotextile grid necessary to support the fill. The construction of a wall along the roadway would also result in the need for some form of barrier, resulting in greater constraints to traffic.

Wetland Mitigation & Restoration

The wetland buffer is currently in degraded condition as it has been impaired by the significant presence of non-indigenous invasive species. The buffer area has been dominated by dense thickets of blackberries, holly, and hawthorne.

A total of 3,544 sq. ft. of wetland buffer encroachment is proposed; 90 % in which will be re-vegetated with native species upon completion of construction activities. Additionally, there is to be 8,245 sq. ft. of buffer added to the critical area tract (Tract 996) as to further compensate for permanent buffer impacts.

The use of a fill slope rather than a wall will result in the eradication of invasive species and replacement with native species. The slope becomes restored buffer. This is a superior result compared to a wall, which would not necessarily require the eradication of invasive, non-native species.

Conclusion

Due to the limited amount of non-critical area on the northern portion of the project site and the existing sloped topography, the proposed location for the access road and associated grading was designed to minimize impact to the critical area, while at the same time creating long term improvements to the buffer. The currently degraded critical area together with the additional 8,249 sq.ft. of compensatory buffer will be cleared of invasive species and re-vegetated with appropriate native plantings upon completion of construction. The end result will enhance present conditions, and provide equal or greater protection to the existing wetland.

Upon consideration of the information above, approval is requested to allow encroachment of the existing degraded buffer area.

Sincerely,
DAVID EVANS & ASSOCIATES, INC.

Jack Molver, P.E.
Vice President