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Dear Mayor and Councilors:

I am Steve Dow, and operate under the name of Black Hawk Homes LLC. We are an active builder here in McMinnville and have constructed 12 homes in McMinnville over the past 18 months, of which 9 were in the Baker Creek East Development. Our intention is to continue to build homes to help meet the housing needs in McMinnville.

You as a Council should be proud of the community you have helped to create, as McMinnville is a thriving community and is perceived to be a great place to raise a family or retire.

The reason I am writing is to go on the record for the Baker Creek North land use application by Stafford Development Company you presently have under consideration.

We anticipate being able to continue to buy finished lots from Stafford, and they have alerted me to the some of the Proposed Conditions of Approval which I find very troubling. I have had the opportunity to review multiple versions of the proposed Condition 20, and I can tell you that these standards will probably have the unintended consequence of homogenizing the neighborhood instead of adding variety.

As a spec home builder, it is important to understand that we invest our money in the community on a purely speculative basis. This means we have to be able to respond to the market demands and be able to build what the consumer wants, in all price points.

What McMinnville buyers want are homes with a three car garage. We need to be able to respond to this desire and the retirees really want a single level home with a three car garage. My review of the proposed condition 20 precludes such. While I was reviewing Condition 20, I also noticed Condition 18. Why limit the driveway approach width? Seems odd to me.

Additionally, many of the proposed features in Condition 20 as proposed to be included on a home appear to be outdated, and we need to have more flexibility in so far as the front porch size, configuration and designs. It seems to me that these standards were pulled from a dated planning document, and not created by an actual home builder.

The bottom line is that the building department staff does a good job at making certain we are building a variety of housing that are not simply "cookie cutter" neighborhoods. The proposed standard would force us to re-design even our most popular plans, and significantly increase the delays and overall construction costs of each and every home.

The added delays and costs, and being locked into dated design standards, are not a wise decision and I would urge you to either eliminate the Condition 20, (as I feel it is not needed at all), or at the very least give strong consideration to the revisions Stafford has proposed.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Steve Dow