

April 17, 2019

City of McMinnville Planning Dept

Re: Proposed Oak Ridge Meadows development

RECEIVED

APR 18 2019

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
CENTER

Why do our neighborhoods, who have been here for 15+ years, who have developed into safe, well cared for neighborhoods now have to suffer and take the brunt of a new (high density) development's traffic? Why do the wetlands, wildlife and homeowners who would see water damage from flooding due to wetland destruction have to suffer for this? Why is our safety expendable?

What did we do to deserve three times the number of cars streaming through our barely-enough-room-for-two-car streets? The degradation of ours and our children's ability to safely cross a street to go play with friends because of the traffic? To walk a dog? To ride a bike? To go get the mail? To go to school? Or the birds, deer and other wildlife being pushed out of their natural habitats? Too often we think that "mitigating" wetlands is justified when we just need to leave them alone and find somewhere else for us humans to go, or in this case, maybe reduce the size of the development.

Putting cars through a neighborhood they don't live in does NOTHING to preserve the safety and livability of the existing neighborhood, it only degrades it. Nor does destroying a wetland in the name of "progress". I'm sure everyone would be appalled to see pictures of trees being bulldozed to the ground in an elephant's natural habitat – we should be just as appalled by this proposal's impact to wetlands.

The cars that come into Compton Crest currently are those that belong to homes in our neighborhood – they watch out for the children of the neighborhood and each other. Cars who are just passing through will do just that and not pay attention because it's not THEIR kids, THEIR neighborhood. It's a HUGE safety issue. These are the same residents who also make it a point to walk to the dead-end street or slow down as they turn the corner and marvel and watch with joy the wildlife who graze in the field and land in the pond.

I live on the corner of Merlot and Zinfandel Loop and can't stand the idea of huge construction equipment and eventually 300+ more cars driving past my house if this plan goes through unabated, and my child having to navigate them to go to and from school; to walk across the street to go see friends in the cul-de-sac; or ride his bike around the neighborhood. You are putting his and every other child and adult's safety at risk, and for what? We lived through our construction 15 years ago as our neighborhood was being built. The construction burden of this new development should lie solely on the shoulders of the new development, not ours. I also can't stand the idea of the pond and wetlands getting paved over. That is just not the precedent the City should be setting.

Our developers were required to put an access directly to Baker Creek, so were Crestbrook's, Michelbook's, Shadden's, as was Premier when it did Oak Ridge. So why are they not being required to once again? Because it's cheaper for them not to, but oh so costly for others (people and animals alike). It seems that the "neighborly" and right thing to do would be to require Premier to put in a direct access to their new development to Baker Creek just as they did before and not use someone else's. This should have been addressed when making the Oak Ridge Master plan. Connected streets to make Great Neighborhoods – ok – one entry/exit "choke point" and destruction of wetlands for multiple ones and the construction of one – NOT ok. The burden of access to their development, any phase of it, should not be placed on the property owners in a completely separate development. Neither should the destruction of a natural wetlands be a means to access it.

I've been in starter home neighborhood before, with houses so close to each other the neighbor's tv or music could be heard over my own, with all the windows closed; with the streets so jammed packed

with cars there is no safe place for children to play hoops in the driveway, or ride a bike. I "moved up" to a quieter place with a little more elbow room and a place I feel safe enough letting my child shoot hoops in the driveway or ride a bike around. Why are you now considering taking that away? Why tell all of us living in these neighborhoods that what we worked so very hard to achieve is going to be forever altered in a way we never expected?

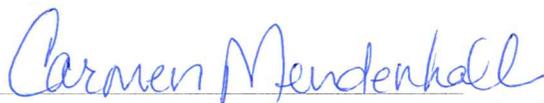
It comes down to safety and livability for me. I can't and don't want to imagine all the extra cars generated by this new development coming into the neighborhood as only a means of getting somewhere else as they do down Baker Creek, with NO REGARD FOR THE HOUSES THEY SPEED BY AND THOSE WHO LIVE THERE.

Please, I implore you to consider how you would feel about having construction equipment or an extra 300 to 600 cars driving by your house EACH AND EVERY DAY for the next five years and beyond. Perfect strangers only using it to go from point A to point B – not your neighbors who wave, who stop to talk, who slow down knowing children are around, or who whose children are best friends with yours, but strangers who don't care about you or your safety. This is a a cheap option for Premier but a very costly one for us.

I urge you and the Planning Commission to consider what your high density, lot size averaging policies are doing to the livability of McMinnville. I've seen a high-density area you've allowed in this city – no room to park because lots aren't wide enough for a two-car garage house, making the streets ridiculously packed with cars and that's just with the cars that live at those houses. Heaven forbid you have a birthday, barbeque, or other family gathering as there is absolutely NO room for your guests and if there is it's because someone who lives there has left and when they return home, they now have nowhere to park. This is not livability; and I do not think that this is what people who move to McMinnville want.

These types of policies are creating another Portland, Beaverton, Hillsboro – so highly densely populated areas that a fire in one home can take out an entire neighborhood (the Villebois neighborhood fire just a couple weeks ago in Wilsonville is a prime example). Tiny lots with little to no yards also take away from livability and are not healthy for kids or their parents. Kids need safe outdoor places to play – AT HOME – not just a park shared by hundreds of homes. Working parents, be it a single parent or two parent home, need to be able to send their children to the back yard without worry while they do the things they can't get done during the week because they are working.

While parks are nice, the larger a city grows the more dangerous its parks and public spaces become – larger cities come with larger problems and parks are notorious places where these things happen – our own upper city park is an example of this. The play structure is amazing but not the trash and needles that have been found, nor is the harassment experienced by those using the park or pool from those who loiter and camp out in their cars in the parking lot. This is what density brings. Density will erode what has drawn people to McMinnville all these past years. It's up to you to stop the erosion and put policies back in place that make for sensible growth, while maintaining the livability and safety of the city's residents, and not just the human variety. Yes, more homes are needed but at what price? Paid by who? McMinnville isn't Portland for a reason – people move here to get away from Portland, stop trying to be them.



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