

Greater Maple Valley Unincorporated Area Council  
P.O. Box 101  
Maple Valley, WA 98038

February 7, 2011

[Four Creeks UAC](#)  
[Upper Bear Creek UAC](#)

Re: BLACK DIAMOND MASTER PLANNED DEVELOPMENT (MPD) HEARINGS

Hello. The GMVUAC has been following the subject MPDs for over a year and several members have testified in Hearings before the City of Black Diamond Hearing Examiner and the Black Diamond City Council in 2010. This letter is a request to your Rural Area UACs to consider providing Oral Testimony and/or Written Statements at Hearings to commence tentatively on March 1. Below is some background and the reasons why this issue is so important to the GMVUAC and its Rural Area constituents and why we believe it also should be important to your UACs and constituents.

Yarrow Bay, a well-known major land developer in Western WA, has proposed two major MPDs comprising over 6,000 homes and over 1.1 million sq ft of commercial/business space in the City of Black Diamond. This would quintuple (not a misprint!) the current population of 4,000. These are the largest MPDs in King County history!

These MPDs would: (1) clearcut 750 acres of forest and despoil wildlife habitat, (2) add an additional 10,000 to 15,000 vehicles on two-lane roads throughout southeast King County, (3) exploit the Rural Area by enabling adjacent urban development by siting at least three schools and a large Detention "Lake" outside the Urban Growth Boundary, and (4) set a dangerous precedent in Western WA--if you can build these oversized developments in small Black Diamond, you can build them anywhere!

Where are we in the process? FEISs were released a year ago. Hundreds of comments were received from citizens, adjacent cities, King County, and WSDOT--99+% negative! Citizens banded together to appeal those FEISs. In March 2010, those appeals were heard by the City's Hearing Examiner, who found the FEISs met the very low threshold of SEPA adequacy, but imposed over 150 conditions on the MPDs. Concurrently, the Hearing Examiner held public hearings on the MPD Applications submitted to the City by Yarrow Bay. He recommended approval of those applications, but imposed the same FEIS conditions plus more.

In the summer the City Council received the Hearing Examiner's recommendations and held Public Hearings. Hundreds of citizens attended and testified orally or in writing. Once again, adjacent cities and King County testified --99+% negative, again! When Council deliberations ended on September 20, it decided to approve the MPD Applications, but once again with over 150 conditions.

On September 21 (yes, the very next day!) Yarrow Bay submitted to the City DRAFT Development Agreements that provide the plan over the next 15 - 20 years for the design, development, and build-out of the MPDs. City Staff currently is "negotiating" with Yarrow Bay to "finalize" the Development Agreements. Once ready, those Development Agreements will be submitted to the City's Hearing Examiner to conduct Public Hearings to commence tentatively on March 1.

An abridged list of issues includes (alphabetically): Domestic Wells (Impacts); Fiscal Analyses (Mitigation Costs, Risks of less Commercial/Business and Jobs after Buildout); Greenhouse Gas Emissions; Growth/Rural Character; Historical Preservation (Green Valley Road Corridor, Rural Towns); Noise (Construction, Magnitudes, Durations); Open Space (impacts); Parks (Locations, Joint-Use Agreements); Public Safety (Increased wind damage due to loss of tree cover, Landslides, Lakes flooding with less land left open to absorb high downpours); Rural Area (Enabling Urban Development); Schools (Locations, Services Required, Impacts); Sensitive Areas (Preservation); Solid Waste Management (Sewerage, Facilities); Storm Water Management; Transfer of Development Rights (Wetlands "developable" for TDR); Transportation; Water Quality (Lakes, Rivers, Streams); Wetlands Preservation & Protection; and Wildlife Preservation (Species Protection, Habitat Protection). All official MPD documents can be found on the [City of Black Diamond's MPD web page](#). If you have any questions on the process or would like more information on the issues, please contact our [GMVUAC Growth Management Committee Chair, Peter Rimbo](#)s or (425) 432-1332.

Thank you. We look forward to your participation.

Sincerely,

[Steve Hiester](#)

Chairman, Greater Maple Valley Unincorporated Area Council