



**LANDERHOLM**

Legal advisors. Trusted advocates.

Steve C. Morasch  
805 Broadway Street  
Suite 1000  
PO Box 1086  
Vancouver, WA 98666

T: (360) 558-5912  
T: (503) 283-3393  
F: (360) 558-5913  
E: stevem@landerholm.com

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Ms. Sarah Fox  
City of Camas Community Development  
616 NE Fourth Avenue  
Camas, WA 98607

**Re: Dawson's Ridge Subdivision Exception Request for Arterial Setback**

Dear Ms. Fox:

We represent the applicant and are submitting this request for an exception to the arterial setback standard for the record.

The proposed Dawson's Ridge subdivision has frontage and primary access from NW McIntosh Road which is classified as a 3 Lane Arterial according to the 2016 Camas Transportation Comprehensive Plan map. The minimum intersection setback requirement for an arterial is 300 feet according to the General Guidelines for Geometry of Roadways within the Camas Design Standards. The applicant, McIntosh Ridge PRD, LLC, is requesting an exception to the minimum intersection setback requirements to allow a setback of approximately 165 feet in order to dedicate right-of-way for a future public road extension to Parcel# 986028-088 to the east.

Per Camas Municipal Code (CMC) 17.23.010A, an exception shall not be granted unless:

- a. There are special physical circumstances or conditions affecting the property, such that the strict application of the provisions of this code would deprive the applicant of the reasonable use or development of the applicant's land.
- b. The exception is necessary to insure such property rights and privileges as are enjoyed by other properties in the vicinity and under similar circumstances; and
- c. The granting of the exception will not be detrimental to the public welfare or injurious to other property in the vicinity.

In this case, there are special physical circumstances and conditions that affect the property and the adjacent property to the east. Those circumstances include topography, wetlands, riparian conservation areas, steep slopes and previous ownership and development patterns, each of which are discussed below.

Both the subject property and the adjacent property are constrained by wetlands and riparian conservation areas along NW McIntosh Road at the northerly end of each property. The adjacent property also has a smaller second wetland near the northwest corner just south of the existing driveway that runs between the two wetlands.

Both the subject property and the adjacent property are also constrained by very steep slopes to the south.

Additionally, the adjacent property is constrained by its long and relatively narrow horseshoe shaped configuration.

Finally, the adjacent property is constrained by the existing 12,000 square foot mansion toward the southern end of the parcel and an additional outbuilding toward the northern end of the parcel, which have been assessed by Clark County at well over \$2 million just for the improvements (total assessed value, including land and buildings, is \$3,165,684.00).

The applicant is proposing a public turnaround and cul-de-sac (NW Sacajawea Circle) to provide the opportunity for a public road stub to the east for Parcel# 986028-088 to meet the requirements of CMC 17.19.040.<sup>1</sup> CMC 17.19.040.B.6.a states that “streets and pedestrian/bicycle paths shall be extended to the boundaries of the plat to ensure access to neighboring properties, unless the presence of critical areas or existing development render such extension infeasible. The design shall contribute to an integrated system of vehicular and pedestrian circulation.” The turnaround (NW Sacajawea Circle) is proposed to be a public cul-de-sac in order to meet the turnaround requirement and to provide the opportunity for a public road stub to the east for Parcel# 986028-088 to meet the requirements of CMC 17.19.040.B.6.a.

Given the special physical circumstances and conditions affecting both the subject property and the adjacent property, as described above, the location of the public turnaround and cul-de-sac less than 300 feet from McIntosh Road is necessary to prevent deprivation of reasonable use and development of the subject property and the adjacent property.

Due to the existing valuable improvements on Parcel# 986028-088, this estate property is not likely to ever develop. However, if it were to develop, the most likely area that would be subdivided or developed would be the northerly portion of the property because the existing home and steep slopes are located on the southern portion of the property. The northerly portion of the property is constrained by its relatively narrow configuration, the riparian corridor and two existing wetlands, as well as the existing improvements including the driveway running between the wetlands and a very significant existing outbuilding.

Parcel# 986028-088 is zoned R-15, which has a minimum lot depth requirement of 100 feet. According to the General Guidelines for Geometry of Roadways, the smallest road allowed for development of Parcel# 986028-088 is a “2 lane local sprinklered” road, which requires a minimum 52 foot right-of-way. Based on the relatively narrow width of the northerly developable portion of Parcel# 986028-088, the most likely potential subdivision design would include a row of lots along the parcels western boundary with a public road in the middle and another row of lots along the eastern boundary.

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<sup>1</sup> This turnaround also meets the requirements of CMC 12.36.040.



As discussed above, the northerly portion of Parcel#986028-088 also includes at least two known wetland areas as shown on the Preliminary Plat. The proposed 52 foot right of way extension shown on the Preliminary Plat for the Dawson's Ridge subdivision is positioned to allow the required 52 foot right-of-way to be extended in between the existing wetlands, along the general path of the existing driveway, to avoid the critical areas to the greatest extent possible while still leaving adequate depth for a single row of lots along the parcel's westerly boundary.

Locating the cul-de-sac and right-of-way connection in this particular location, ensures that the owner of Parcel# 986028-088 can redevelop in compliance with the City's Design Standards and General Guidelines for Geometry of Roadway without losing valuable developable property or reducing density and losing potential lots due to an inefficient road design originating from the Dawson's Ridge subdivision site. Any other location would cause a loss of reasonable use or development due to the special circumstances described above, including topography, wetlands, riparian conservation areas, steep slopes and previous ownership and development patterns.

In addition to causing a loss of reasonable use and development on the adjacent property, strict application of the intersection setback requirement of 300 feet would deprive the applicant of additional lots in the Dawson's Ridge which is an integral part of the proposed development and the financial feasibility of the project. The exception is also necessary to insure the owner of Parcel# 986028-088 will be able to redevelop the property in a fashion that protects both the existing wetlands and the valuable existing improvements.

Thus, Criterion a for an exception is met. Criterion b is also met. One need look no further than the opposite side of McIntosh for an example of another property in the vicinity that enjoys the same privilege of being able to develop with less than a 300 foot intersection setback.

Many other properties in the vicinity have been subdivided and they do not meet this minimum arterial setback of 300 feet. For example, refer to the Hidden Leaf Phase 1 subdivision immediately to the north of NW McIntosh Road, Deer Creek, Parker's Landing, and Holly Hills. In fact, this development pattern is encouraged by other provisions of the Camas Design Manual which are in direct conflict with the 300 foot setback from arterials.

When a vacant site has frontage along an arterial road, the City discourages creating new lots that directly access the arterial. The Camas Design Standards Manual indicates that direct lot access to arterial level streets is discouraged where reasonable alternatives exist. Therefore, a typical residential subdivision design will include an entry local access road that will provide access to a single row of lots which abut the arterial. The minimum lot depth for lots in the R-5, R-6, R-7.5, R-10, R-12, R-15, and R-20 zoning districts ranges from 80 to 100 feet and so a typical single row of lots will result in an intersection that does not meet the minimum intersection setback requirement of 300 feet. Thus the exception is necessary to allow the applicant to subdivide their property similar to other properties in the vicinity and under similar circumstances, while complying with the provision discouraging direct access to arterials.

Finally, Criterion c for an exception is also met here. Granting of this exception will not be detrimental to the public welfare or injurious to other property in the vicinity. As discussed

above, there are several existing subdivisions within the City of Camas with similar intersections, including one directly across the street, and they do not create unsafe conditions for the public and the granting of the exception will actually benefit the adjacent property in the immediate vicinity.

Further, the safety of the proposed cul-de-sac location has been verified by applicant's traffic engineer Kittlelson & Associates, which found that the queues northbound at the NW McIntosh Road/Site Access are expected to be short, at no more than one vehicle (25 feet) and can be contained within the proposed queue storage lengths of 50 feet for the specified turning movements. Criterion c for an exception is therefore satisfied by the report from applicant's traffic engineer demonstrating that there will be no public safety issues resulting from less than a 300 foot intersection setback.

In summary, based on special circumstances discussed above an undue hardship to both the applicant and the owner of Parcel# 986028-088 would be created as a result of strict compliance with the arterial setback standards as discussed in this letter. This request meets the approval criteria identified in CMC 17.23.010 and therefore we respectfully request that this exception be approved to allow the reduced intersection setback as shown on the Preliminary Plat.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me or Kurt Stonex at (360) 695-1385.

Sincerely,

LANDERHOLM, P.S.



STEVE C. MORASCH  
Attorney at Law

SCM/jsr

cc: Robert Maul

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