

From: "Kathy A. O'Halloran" <ocusack1@comcast.net>
To: <devsvcs@ci.tumwater.wa.us>
Date: 6/29/2006 6:47:43 pm
Subject: Comments on the WalMart SEIS

CC: <Nanpartlow@aol.com>, "Sherry Buckner" <buckner...
Roger Gellenbeck, please accept my comments on the WalMart SEIS. I did not see specific instructions about submitting the comments, so I assume that you will accept comments sent via email.

I do want to be sure that my comments are accepted, so I am sending a copy to Sherry Buckner as well as she will be coming into the office tomorrow.

Thank you.

Kathy A. O'Halloran

To: Roger Gellenbeck
Development Services Director
City of Tumwater
555 Israel Road SW
Tumwater, WA 98501

From: Kathy A. O'Halloran
6221 Miner DR SW
Tumwater, WA 98512

Date: June 29, 2006

Re: Tumwater Retail Store Supplemental Draft EIS

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the DEIS relating to the Littlerock Road subarea and the potential of a WalMart store. I care deeply about sustaining a livable city and I appreciate the opportunity to help shape this community. I want to see a viable, livable community develop that many generations can enjoy, where we have a high quality of life. I hope that my comments will be useful to this vision and goal.

I remain very concerned that the DEIS is tiered to an outdated EIS. This is inadequate and the basis of faulty analysis. This is a point of process and I believe that this invalidates the full DEIS. The vision that was set forth in the guiding documents must be addressed and should not be ignored. There are many examples where this is simply overlooked in this current DEIS. I raised this issue in the scoping comments, but this was not addressed in this DEIS.

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I find this problematic in many situations. For example, one of the goals of the original guiding documents was that Tumwater would be a pedestrian friendly community. This type of large development would not promote a pedestrian friendly community. The pedestrian impacts should be linked to the vision of the original guiding documents for the city of Tumwater. The only types of impacts discussed in the DEIS relate to potential conflicts with increased traffic. The City should be looking for a proposal that will draw foot traffic into the area and help to tie the community together, this concept is not even discussed in this DEIS. With the potential impacts of climate change, forward looking communities are making steps toward a community where pedestrians can walk from their community to nearby stores. This proposal will be likely to deter people from walking, creating a more alienating situation.

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The proposal is of such scale and scope that one alternative would allow the movement of a road so that an enormous parking lot could be built in an uninterrupted manner! Further irony is that the document discloses that the parking would not be sufficient to handle the needs in high volume shopping times (December). The original vision for Tumwater was for smaller scale developments and the ability to walk from store to store and to and from the community. The DEIS states the proposal is in keeping with the Tumwater Comprehensive Plan and goals for this area. Although the guiding documents did

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propose this area for commercial development, there is a very clear disconnect from what the citizens of Tumwater agreed to and what is now proposed. This proposal will take the city of Tumwater in a very different direction than what is envisioned by the guiding documents and the citizens of Tumwater. Not only are the guiding documents out of date, but the current proposal does not follow them.

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cont.

The cumulative impacts of all of the changes that have occurred recently need to be taken into account. There have been several annexations and a strong likelihood that there will be many more new homes near the Littlerock road subarea. This increased pressure on the infrastructure needs to be addressed in light of this proposal. The nature of my neighborhood will be degraded due to the cumulative impacts of the recent changes and imminent changes. A full new EIS would better address this and should be completed instead of a supplemental one.

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Traffic remains a very significant concern for me. The impacts in this document indicate that we already have issues with the level of service in the Littlerock Road subarea. The proposal will exacerbate this greatly. Impact fees will not be adequate to mitigate the likely change to the area. Improvements should be implemented and paid in full by the proponent before any land is developed or the area will become a poster child for traffic problems. The road infrastructure, particularly around the I5 interchanges, is not adequate to handle this level of projected use. The improvements planned will not be timely nor adequate to ensure a livable community. The Tumwater Blvd and I5 ramps are a particular concern to me. The impact fees would only generate a minor portion of the funding that would be needed to address the problems that would be created. What is in the proposal is grossly inadequate.

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Impacts near the Tumwater Middle school are too severe. The DEIS dismisses much of the potential impacts related to traffic. I do not agree with the assessments within the DEIS and find much of what is written in here to be unsubstantiated. Further there should be restrictions on what items can be sold in close proximity of a school. For example, fire arms should not be sold near the school.

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The traffic impacts related to this proposal are of a negative manner that it would be in the best interest of the citizens of Tumwater to reject this proposal. While there are many issues related to this proposal, this issue alone is basis for rejecting this project. The City of Tumwater must get the current traffic issues addressed before there can be any further large developments. We must find a way to address the current situation without compounding the problem. This proposal will make the situation much worse. That alone has significant negative economic impacts to Tumwater. I am personally concerned about my own property values as this area is being built up. The cumulative negative effect of the rapid growth of this area is negatively changing the nature of the community that I live in. One of the assets of my neighborhood is the walking paths. More and more traffic is now coming through my neighborhood as people look for alternate routes for over-crowded streets. This makes the ability to walk safety greatly compromised.

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The City should commission a comprehensive economic analysis prior to granting permission for WalMart. If even a portion of the claims made at the public hearings are true about the type of employer WalMart is, then we have basis for concern to what will happen to the local retailers. These worries are simply dismissed in the DEIS by statements such as “Tumwater does not have a downtown area, therefore downtown retailers will not be hurt”. While we do not have a traditional downtown area, we do have local retailers and they will be negatively impacted if this proposal is allowed to move forward.

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I am not satisfied with the way that the trees were addressed in this proposal. I urge the City to not allow any waivers for removal of trees. The proposal should be scaled back to the vision of the community, to allow for the required trees with an emphasis on retaining the largest trees. Parking should be adequate for all time periods, recognizing that this may mean that a smaller store will be dictated. All traffic issues should be addressed in advance of any building, and the City should hold a bond in the event that the building is vacated within the next 20 years.

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This proposal is not in keeping with the guiding documents. The ‘tiering’ to these original documents is not supportable. There are numerous other flaws in this analysis, with traffic being the biggest issue. I urge the City to reject this proposal and work toward making Tumwater a city where our children and grandchildren will want to live.

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Thank you for your time and attention to my comments.

Sincerely,

/s/ Kathy A. O'Halloran
KATHY A. O'HALLORAN