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memorandum

date October 30, 2020

to Robin Proebsting, Senior Planner – City of Mercer Island

from Amanda Brophy, Ecologist, and Scott Olmsted, Senior Ecologist – Environmental Science Associates

subject 6420 E Mercer Way (Tax Parcel 3024059120) Critical Areas Determination (CAO20-002) Third Party Review

Environmental Science Associates (ESA) has prepared this memorandum on the behalf of the City of Mercer Island (City). The purpose of this memo is to verify the accuracy of the critical areas determination report submitted as part of the development application for the property at 6420 E Mercer Way (King County Tax Parcel 3024059120). The proposed project would build a 55 square foot (sf) addition to the existing single-family residence and a new 1,150 sf detached garage and guest suite. This review memo focused on determining if a stream mapped by the City on the property meets the City's definition for a regulated watercourse according to Mercer Island City Code (MICC) Chapter 19.16 – *Definitions*.

At the request of the City, ESA reviewed the *Critical Areas Determination Report for King County Tax Parcel 3024059120, Located at 6420 E Mercer Way, in the City of Mercer Island* (report), prepared by Wetland Resources, Inc. and dated August 4, 2020. A site visit was conducted on October 29, 2020 by ESA biologist Amanda Brophy. Project review was limited to the determination of fish and wildlife habitat conservation area, watercourse, and wetland presence.

Report Review

According to the report, a regulated watercourse does not exist onsite despite City mapping that depicts a Type Ns stream. In addition to the stream mapping, City GIS also mapped a culvert beneath E Mercer Way that outlets at the northwest corner of the property and private storm main that nearly aligns with the Type Ns stream. The Type Ns stream, culvert outlet, and private storm main features were shown originating in the northwest corner of the property and flowing southeast across the property.

The report indicates that the area mapped as a Type Ns stream is within a topographic low point. However, according to the report, the low point did not contain wetland indicators or a defined bed and bank. The lack of a defined bed and bank lead the applicant to request a utilities survey to determine if there was a buried pipe at this location. This survey did not result in the identification of buried pipe. Therefore, the applicant filed a public records request to the City for information regarding private and public stormwater infrastructure existing on the property. Mike Helten from the City informed the applicant that the mapping of the private storm main was an error and that this feature is not known to exist. The private storm main feature was removed from City GIS.

No wetlands are mapped on or near the property according to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) National Wetlands Inventory (NWI). The nearest wetland is mapped approximately 488 feet downslope to the southeast of the property. No fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas are mapped within the property according to Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) Priority Habitat and Species (PHS) mapper. However, a large biodiversity corridor is mapped by WDFW approximately 160 feet southwest of the property and is associated with Pioneer Park.

Review and Site Findings

During the October 29, 2020 site visit, ESA located the area mapped as a Type Ns stream, within a slight topographic depression, in the northwest corner of the property. No culvert outlet, bed, banks, or scour were observed within the feature. The feature continues west along the property's northern boundary and ends at multiple large big leaf maple (*Acer macrophyllum*) trees. Additionally, the feature did not meet the definition of a wetland per MICC Chapter 19.16 – *Definitions* as no hydrophytic vegetation, hydric soils, or hydrology were present. In the two weeks prior to the site visit, the Seattle region received approximately 2.5 inches of precipitation, which is average for the area; however, no flow or hydrology was observed within the feature.

Conclusion

Based on our review of the report and our observations made during the October 29, 2020 site visit, ESA agrees that no critical areas are present onsite, and the mapped Type Ns stream does not meet the City's definition of a watercourse and is not a regulated feature under MICC 19.07 – *Environment*.



CITY OF MERCER ISLAND

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November 9, 2020

Katherine Zeim
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Via Email

RE: Decision for File No. 20-002 – Welch Critical Area Review 1
6420 E Mercer Way, Mercer Island, WA 98040; King County Tax Parcel # 302405-9120

Dear Kathy,

The City of Mercer Island has reviewed the above referenced application and associated file materials submitted on August 26, 2020 for a Critical Area Review 1 for the property located at 6420 E Mercer Way, Mercer Island, WA 98040 (parcel # 302405-9120).

The City's environmental consultant, ESA, reviewed the findings of the Wetland Resources report dated August 4, 2020 and conducted a site visit on October 29, 2020. Pursuant to their attached review memo dated October 30, 2020, ESA agrees with the determination of the Wetland Resources that the mapped Type Ns watercourse does not meet the City's definition of a watercourse and that it is not a feature regulated by the City's critical areas code. ESA also found that the mapped area did not meet the definition of a wetland according to the City's code.

Please do not hesitate to contact me at 206-275-7717 or via e-mail at robin.proebsting@mercergov.org if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Robin Proebsting, Senior Planner
Community Planning & Development

cc: Craig Welch (*via e-mail*)