

From: [Nicole Gaudette](#)
To: [Nicole Gaudette](#)
Subject: FW: File # CAO19-015 Comments
Date: Thursday, April 16, 2020 8:58:09 AM
Attachments: [image004.png](#)
[image006.png](#)
[image005.png](#)
[image008.png](#)

From: Susan Penoyar <penoyarsj@outlook.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 15, 2020 6:11 PM
To: Nicole Gaudette <nicole.gaudette@mercergov.org>
Subject: RE: File # CAO19-015 Comments

Thanks for the reply, Nicole.

I noticed I had mislabeled one set of pictures as looking west instead of looking east (corrected below).

Kind regards,

- [Susan](#)

From: Angie Moreau <angie.moreau@mercergov.org>
Sent: Wednesday, April 15, 2020 1:43 PM
To: Nicole Gaudette <nicole.gaudette@mercergov.org>
Subject: FW: File # CAO19-015 Comments

[Angie Moreau](#)
Permit Technician
City of Mercer Island - Community Planning & Development
206.275.7727 | mercergov.org/cpd | [_](#)

Notice: Emails and attachments may be subject to disclosure pursuant to the Public Records Act (chapter 42.56 RCW).

*Due to the COVID-19 outbreak, Community Planning and Development has modified our operations. The City Hall and the Permit Center are closed to the public as of Friday, March 13. There is no "walk in" permit service; staff are working remotely. **Please note** that the Governor has issued a Stay at Home order. More information is available on the City's website: www.mercergov.org/cpd. Most services will be continuing via remote operations. We encourage customers to contact staff directly via email or their office number - phone lines are set up to forward calls to staff. Please contact us by phone or email for general customer support at 206-275-7605 or epermittech@mercergov.org.*

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From: Susan Penoyar <penoyarsj@outlook.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 15, 2020 1:05 PM
To: ePermit Tech <epermit.tech@mercergov.org>

Subject: File # CAO19-015 Comments

To the Community & Development Board/City of Mercer Island:

I wish to comment on File # CAO19-015/ Permit Type III.

I have concerns with the proposed development for several reasons:

1. Plans lacking clarity on proposal, making review/assessment challenging
2. Ecology block wall founded on steep slope
3. Negative impact of roadway modification plan and option to reduce width requirement
4. Nesting eagles in close proximity

1. Plan clarity:

I have been reviewing the plans provided for the road development and believe there are a number of inaccuracies/uncertainties that make it impossible to review the proposed modifications with clarity. I would like to request an on-site walk-through with someone who can explain the proposal.

Items that are inaccurate or difficult to interpret include:

- The south end of the rockery on the west side – the drawing shows a non-linear wall and an apparent step that appear inaccurate and perhaps implies inaccurate surveying
- The property line on the north side of the proposed development is not clearly shown
- Trees targeted for removal are not easy to identify, and it is not clear if all impacted and nearby trees are shown.

2. Ecology blocks:

There is an apparent Ecology concrete wall proposed on the upslope side of the development to intercept offsite drainage. Ecology blocks are typically 2' x 2' x 6' eyesores. The placement of these blocks appears to be along a steep slope (identifying the planned location at the site is not clear with the inaccuracies in references like the rockery and the lack of a clear property line). Founding an ecology block on a steep slope is at best risky and at worst will result in failure (settling and tipping) over time, well after the developer is no longer available for corrective measures. It will require significant excavation into the steep slope to a depth likely to impact the roots of trees it is shown upslope of, resulting in stress on those trees, which are valuable to the neighborhood. It also appears that the block wall would require removal of several 8 – 10 inch shading maple trees. Use of ecology blocks in this setting should be scrutinized for all of these reasons. I included two pictures showing the steep slope where ecology blocks are proposed below.

3. Negative impact of full-width development:

The roadway proposed for redevelopment serves as a neighborhood oasis, a lovely transitional area from the paved, developed street to the greenbelt trail. Dozens of residents use this walkway daily, and enjoy the mature stand of 25+ year old cherry trees that add beauty to the neighbors who walk there, flower in April and fruit in the summer, providing beauty and habitat/food for a vibrant bird population.

Removing the mature cherry trees and associated salal, ferns, seasonal wildflowers, and other natural woodland plants, and installing a concrete retaining wall up to 8 feet tall would result in visual and habitat degradation, and food source removal. To illustrate the current pretty area that is proposed for destruction, I included pictures of the current condition, showing some of the trees and vegetation that would be removed.

I respectfully request the city council consider reducing the required width in accordance with 19.09.030 E. **Exceptions from Width Requirements Authorized.** *In cases where it is found by the city council that special conditions of topography, right-of-way width, traffic flow and the like exist, and that a lesser improvement width will not create a vehicular or pedestrian traffic hazard, the city council may, in its discretion, grant exceptions from the minimum width requirements. [\(Ord. 09C-17 § 2; Ord. 99C-13 § 1\)](#)*

Reducing the width requirement will allow preservation of several beautiful, mature cherry trees, reduce the stress on the significant fir tree on the south side of the proposed roadway development, and reduce the height of the proposed concrete retaining wall. The proposed retaining wall will be a significant visual degradation compared to the current woodland landscaping. The city has the opportunity to retain a special collection of cherry trees and woodland

landscaping that is appreciated daily by residents without creating any vehicular or traffic hazard.

4. Active Bald Eagle nest:

There is an active Bald Eagle nesting tree in close proximity to the subject lot that should be carefully protected with any proposed development. In addition, the eagles use the trees on the south side of the proposed roadway modification on a regular basis for perching, calling to each other, and eating fish.

Thank you for your consideration.

Susan Penoyar, PE, LEG, BCEE, EnvSP

Penoyarsj@outlook.com

206-715-5971

Approximate area of steep slope where ecology blocks are proposed, looking east:

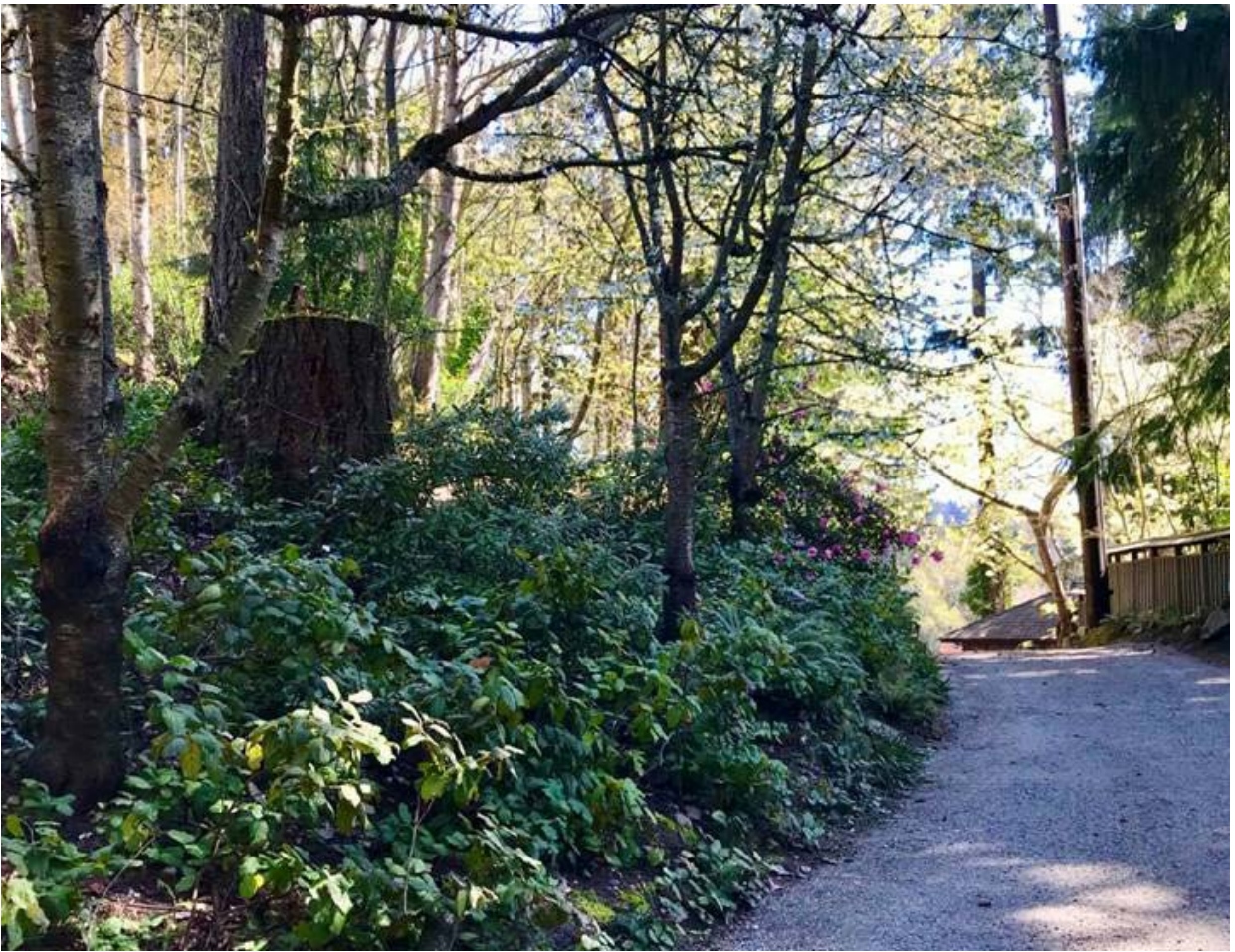


Approximate area of steep slope where Ecology blocks are proposed, looking west:



Multiple cherry trees and woodland plants on the left side would be removed to install a tall retaining wall (looking **east**):





Multiple Cherry and other trees and landscape enhancements on the right side would be removed (looking west):



Susan Penoyar, PE, LEG, BCEE, EnvSP

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