

February 28th, 2017

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter is in response to the comments regarding DEV17-001 submitted by Bill and Erin Ellis.

I have lived on the Mercer Island for the better part of 35 years. I grew up on the south end of the Island, not far from our construction site. I chose to return here to raise my family so we could enjoy the Mercer Island community much like I did years ago. Like Dr. Ellis, I have enjoyed Mercer Island's community atmosphere and character. Over the years, I have seen tremendous change in residential construction all over the Island and, in particular, along West Mercer Way. I believe these changes are to Mercer Island's benefit, keeping with current trends in construction.

Our construction projects is well within code, and we have been compliant with all building regulations thus far. Our plans were reviewable at the City for over year before construction started. All along West Mercer Way, there are homes of all different sizes and types (some larger than ours), something we believe that adds to Mercer Island's diversity.

We do understand the possible disruptions that our construction may have caused and do sincerely apologize for the delays. While certainly a lengthy process, it has not taken 4 years as Dr. Ellis suggests. Construction actually began less than three years ago. We, too, were not anticipating construction would take so long, but there were several weather delays beyond our control. Fortunately, however, we are coming closer to the end of this project.

Most of the vegetation that was removed from our site before construction was either dead, dying, or thorn laden blackberry bushes, not conducive to a home landscape or a construction project. As part of our landscaping plan and approved building permit, we are adding back more vegetation than we removed, including large trees such as maples and cedars. It will be a much more inviting yard and landscape than present before.

We do not believe, as Dr. Ellis suggests that there are very few fences in the neighborhood. As one drives in either direction along West Mercer Way, there are innumerable tall fences and some gates present (please see attached pictures). Many of these are much closer to West Mercer Way than our intended fence and many do not have any substantial vegetation in front (unlike ours). Most recently, the City approved a similar height fence and gate which is currently under construction just three homes south of our property (please see attached pictures). In addition, tall fences already exist on Eden Lane itself (please see attached pictures). In fact, Dr. Ellis has a similar fence in location and height on his own property bordering West Mercer Way.

Our intended fence and gate will be located on our property in a similar location, and we do intend to plant vegetation in front of these structures to “soften” their appearance from West Mercer Way. The intended fence and gate is also on the downslope away from West Mercer Way, which will mitigate the visual impact from the road.

There is also a request for fence height deviation along our southern property line, as well. This was shown on the Fence Plan and Elevation document submitted with our original application. We believe the higher fence in that location will enhance safety and security for our family and will not affect traffic safety or the character of the neighborhood at all. There is already a tall fence along that shared driveway on our western neighbor’s property.

Thank you for your consideration. Please let us know if you have any further questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Gautam R. Velamoor". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Gautam R. Velamoor